



# WEEKLY WARRIOR

**Webutuck Central Schools**

194 Haight Road, P.O. Box 405

Amenia, New York 12501

March 31, 2011

## REMINDER

Please be reminded that Thursday, April 14 and Friday, April 15 are now regular school days and all students are expected to attend.

### *Superintendent's Notes*

#### **What Is An APPR And Why Should I Care?**

As part of the federal "Race to the Top" (RTTT) grant process, New York State, like all of the funded states, is modifying how we do a number of things. First, we are all going to "Common Core Standards" in each subject area. This summer, we will be working to implement the Common Core for English/Language Arts and Mathematics with the other core subjects to follow over the next few years.

In addition to the Common Core Standards, there are new standards for teachers. These new standards establish the criteria for teacher evaluation and will, to some degree, standardize this process across the state. There are seven (7) standards that were approved by the New York State Board of Regents in February and will begin use in July of this year. The seven standards are as follows:

- 1. Knowledge of Students and Student Learning**
- 2. Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning**
- 3. Instructional Practice**
- 4. Learning Environment**
- 5. Assessment for Student Learning**
- 6. Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration**
- 7. Professional Growth**

Teachers will be evaluated on these seven standards annually. The process by which these evaluations will be completed is called the Annual Personal Professional Review or the APPR. For many years, evaluations have varied greatly from district to district and even among administrators in the same district. It is hoped that by having both specific standards and a defined process, the results of evaluations will be more accurate and consistent. Clearly, this should be the goal of everyone from teachers to administrators and school districts in general.

While the standards have been defined and the APPR is required to be submitted in July, the State Education Department has not yet provided the specific details for this process to be concluded. However, we will be working internally to try to move along on this process so that we are ready to submit our plans for compliance on time. By working collaboratively, I believe that we can improve our current practices of evaluation and meet the state requirements in the process. As always.....

**By working together, we can make it happen!**

*Steve Schoonmaker*

**Educational Quote of the Week**

*Handling Success*

“When a success is achieved, the organization needs to investigate what led to it with the same rigor and scrutiny it might apply to understanding the causes of failure.”

Francesca Gino and Gary Pisano

**READING AROUND THE WORLD -----**

**UPDATE**

In their efforts to read their way around the world, our students in grades 4 through 6 have now read 244,288 pages through Friday, March 25, 2011. In addition to their reading, the students have also completed visa forms and researched the following cities and countries.

Paris, France	Cairo, Egypt	Moscow, Russia
Tokyo, Japan	Istanbul, Turkey	Seoul, South Korea
Athens, Greece	Berlin, Germany	New Delhi, India
Santiago, Chile	Tehran, Iran	Beijing, China
Johannesburg, South Africa	Manila, Philippines	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
	London, England	

Through this activity, they have learned about languages, currencies, cultures, native music, dances, foods, as well as rivers, mountain ranges, continents, oceans, time zones, latitude and longitude. Along their trek, they have graphed and calculated their pages read and mileage to include mathematics as well. This is truly an integrated activity including all subject areas.

As always, we invite you to follow the travelers with us on the Peter’s Projection World Map mounted outside of our high school library as they traverse the globe. Also, please continue to look for our soon to be mounted Mercator World Map. It is very interesting to see the differences between the Mercator map, our traditional view, and the new, more accurate Peters Projection World View!

*Bon Voyage!*

# ***HIGH SCHOOL HAPPENINGS***

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**Kenneth H. Sauer, Principal  
Webutuck Jr./Sr. High School**

The skies are noticeably lighter in the mornings now and the days are obviously getting longer. It finally feels like old man winter has loosened his grip on us. The daffodils and crocuses are awake and ready to flower and the geese are heading back north. Spring holds such promise; a rebirth of possibilities. Boy, it has been a long winter!

The track, baseball, and softball teams are working hard to prepare for their seasons and it is finally nice enough for them to be practicing outside. There is a lot of hard work that students and coaches put in prior to the games starting in order to find success during the season. It comes as no surprise to many of us that hard work and dedication truly pay off and as the spring sports start, there is much optimism that our sports teams will experience success this year. The lessons of hard work, dedication, and commitment from the “curriculum of life” apply on and off the field and we are confident that our students will reap the benefits of their determination and perseverance in and out of school.

In another arena of competition, our Mock Trial team is once again finding success. They scored exceptionally high in the preliminary rounds, virtually guaranteeing them a spot in the quarter-finals. They should be moving into the next round of competition next week against an as yet undetermined opponent. Students involved this year include Lead Attorney Alyssa Biscoglio, Team Mentor Alura Penny, Student Attorneys Jeannie Boyd and Shane Corcoran, and witnesses Brooke Dahoney, Estefane Reyes, Chase Tetpon, Meagan McCoy, Caitlin Carmody, Sienna Finkle, and Evan Clune. Other students participating are Glen Gilbert, Shannon Wood, Claire Markonic, Courtney Spaulding, and Ryan Coffin. Good luck as you continue on!!

Lastly, we have a Blood Drive scheduled to take place next week on Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup> starting at noon. The National Honor Society is working closely with the Red Cross to help make this spring’s blood drive a success. If you would like to schedule an appointment to donate, feel free to call the High School main office at 373-4106 to schedule a time that suits your schedule.

A closing thought.....The first time we held a report card pick up night 7 years ago, when Scott Richards and I were here, we had 73% of our high school parents come in and 78% of middle school parents. By the end of the week we had over 95% of our parents stop by to pick up report cards/progress reports. These numbers impressed everyone including my colleagues who serve as principals in schools throughout the county. For some reason, those numbers have fallen significantly with only 57% of our parents in grades 7-12 coming to the recent report card/progress report pick up. Our goal is still to see 100% of our parents on those evenings. Please share any suggestions you might have as to how we might be able to inspire more parents to come on those evenings to meet with teachers and work in finding a path to success for your children, our students.

# *Elementary & Intermediate Schools*

*Kathleen A. McEnroe*  
*WES & EBIS Principal*

Why do We Teach Science?

Science has a significant influence on everyday life. For example, many of the factors that impact human health are science based, such as obesity and diabetes, smoking and cancer, and lead poisoning as a cause of brain damage. The understanding of climates is essential when discussing the use of fossil fuels and related energy policies. A better knowledge of astronomy helps us to make wise decisions concerning space exploration. Even the preparation of a healthy evening meal is based on science. Science exists all around us and is a part of everyone's normal daily routine.

Making informed decisions is one of the many skills adults need to do well in this world. These decisions are based on increased knowledge concerning the question or problem at hand, and understanding of the steps or procedures that can be used to investigate and perhaps address the issue. Unfortunately, many people have not developed the skills necessary to make good decisions. This is where science education in the schools steps in. Science education in the classroom takes shape in a variety of ways. There is always the content, the proven facts that scientists have learned over the years that helps to guide them. There are also the observations skills, those needed to clearly assess what is happening in a given situation. Finally, there are the experimental skills. These are the skills that we use to combine the content we already know, along with the observations we make, to see how changing some of the parameters may impact the final outcome. Students begin in the classroom by observing a given situation; combining that with what they already know, and then changing certain aspects to generate a different outcome. These skills help students learn to negotiate everyday situations and make the best decisions possible to create positive outcomes. However, these skills can also be developed outside of the classroom.

Parents can help students develop these scientific skills by asking children what they see, what they know about it, and how could they change it to make it better. They can always ask their child to explain why certain things happen. They can also complete science based activities at home. Anything that helps students develop these special inquiry skills will help them make better decisions in life and become successful adults. If you are interested in ideas for at home activities, take a look at the web sites below. <http://www.sciencebuddies.org/>, <http://www.sciencefair-projects.org/>, <http://www.easy-science-fair-projects.net/>.

**SCIENCE NIGHT AND MATH NIGHT - Dinner Available**  
Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>  
Look for more information to follow!