



Eugene Brooks Intermediate School



Mid-Year 2017



After a quiet winter, February has been a mix of snow, sleet, ice, and yes.....70-degree weather last week! We've been very busy at EBIS since our last newsletter. I will do my best to update you on our progress, as well as our plans for the rest of the year. ENJOY!





Academic Progress

EBIS students started taking the NWEA tests five years ago. The NWEA testing data that we receive helps our school in the following ways:

- Helps teachers tailor their instruction towards individual student needs based off of the results
- Gives parents and students an accurate snapshot of where they stand in comparison to their classmates and the national average
- Allows our administration and continuous school improvement team to find trends, create goals, and monitor progress

We have never had a group of students come to us (beginning of 4th grade year) on grade level, and we've never had a group of students leave us (end of 8th grade year) on grade level. While this is a concerning trend, I'm happy to announce that our students at EBIS have made an exceptional amount of progress in five years. Our current 8th grade class is the first group of students who could potentially leave our school on grade level (they are currently on pace). Our average Math score is 2.7 points off of the national norm, and our average ELA score is 1.7 points off. This group of 8th graders came to us in 4th grade, during the 2012-2013 school year, more than half a grade level below the national average in both Math and ELA. While I am conflicted on celebrating average, I recognize that average must come before exceptional. Our goal moving forward will be to have every single class that leaves our school be AT LEAST at grade level. When this goal becomes a reality, we will adjust our goals and expectations accordingly. I'd like to thank all of the faculty and staff, parents, coaches, and mentors that have helped to improve the academic performance of these students over the past five years. It takes a village, and I am grateful to be a part of this one. Let's keep it going!

Caught Doing Good



Several of our 4-8 students were selected as stand out students and treated to a trip to Marist College as a result of their leadership in the cafeteria. We watched a basketball game on campus, ate pizza, and received a guided tour of the university. Yes, we also rolled down the GIANT hill on a freezing cold day. I'm proud of these students for being role models in the cafeteria, and know that their peers continue to respect and follow them.

Holiday Breakfast



The breakfast this year was well organized, fun, and delicious! I'd like to thank our breakfast committee, our cafeteria staff, our PTA, our music department, and our custodial staff for helping put this incredible event on. We said goodbye to Ms. Sullivan at our Holiday Breakfast this year! Ms. Sullivan will continue to be missed by all, but I'd like to officially welcome Ms. Feeley to our Webutuck family as Ms. Sullivan's replacement in the office. We also have a new nurse at EBIS/WHS. Please stop by and introduce yourself to Nurse Charlie.

Jump Rope for Heart



Mrs. Howard once again organized an incredible Jump Rope for Heart event this year. Students raised awareness, raised money, learned about a healthy heart, and had fun! Our school raised over four thousand dollars this year for heart research! Thank you to all that participated and supported this event.

Winter Concert



As always, it was a joy to watch our young musicians put on a wonderful concert. Mrs. Gagne, Mr. Bradley, and Mr. Wiener had our band and chorus members wonderfully prepared, and all who attended enjoyed the musical history lessons, the humor in the songs, and our talented young performers!

Start with Hello - Say Something

Our PTA connected us with an organization that came to fruition following the tragic events in Newtown, Connecticut. Sandy Hook Promise is led by several family members whose loved ones were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School, along with a talented staff of seasoned professionals.

“Start with Hello” was presented to our entire school. The presentation centered around the importance of inclusion and the tragic results that can occur when people are, or feel excluded. All in attendance were given tools on how to break the ice, break down barriers and get to know one another (interpersonal interaction), as well as how to create and sustain an inclusive culture/community.

“Say Something” will be presented to our 6th - 8th graders. This presentation will inform and educate our staff and students as to the observable warning signs (written, spoken, photographed, in video) that are often present in behavior that could lead to someone hurting themselves or others. It will also educate individuals on how to safely and anonymously report potential threats.

Students of the Month



Since November, we've recognized several 5th and 6th grade students as Warriors of the Month. These students were invited to the Board of Education Meeting, and were recognized by myself

and their teachers. Over the next few months we will be recognizing our 7th and 8th grade students!

Fantastic Mr. Fox



Webutuck Central School District and the Wassaic Project present Fantastic Mr. Fox! Students from both EBIS and WHS will have significant roles. The play will take place March 10th and March 11th at 7pm in the auditorium. Tickets are available online at wassaicproject.org/fox and at the school.

NYS Tests

There are many opinions out there in regard to testing, especially when it comes to the Common Core NYS 3-8 Math/ELA Assessments. While I certainly understand both sides, I think it's important that you know that NYS has made some drastic changes in regard to what test information/data is given to districts almost immediately following the testing sessions. In the past we were only provided with pass/fail numbers. While that information wasn't worthless, it certainly was vague and didn't help us make specific changes in our instruction. NYS is now providing all schools with item analysis data for most of the questions on each test. This allows us to reflect and immediately make appropriate instructional adjustments in regard to specific weaknesses. Last year I met with each 4-8 grade teacher and discussed both strengths and weaknesses based off of that data. I'm confident that teachers made significant adjustments this year based off of this change in practice, and I know that it has benefited all of our students at EBIS. In the end, all of us at EBIS respect the right of the student to "opt out", however we have an obligation to inform you as to recent changes and EBIS data driven instruction. Below is a breakdown of our testing sessions.

2016–17 School Year

Test	Administration Dates	Make-up Dates	Scoring Dates	Final Dates to Submit Answer Sheets to Scanning Centers
Science and Social Studies	Monday, September 26 – Friday, December 9	Make-ups must be given within the testing window	Tuesday, January 17– Friday, February 24	Monday, February 27
English Language Arts and Math	Monday, March 20 – Friday, June 2	Make-ups must be given within the testing window	N/A	N/A
Paper-based	Tuesday, March 28 – Thursday, March 30	Friday, March 31 – Wednesday, April 5	Friday, March 31 – Friday, April 21	Friday, April 21
Computer- based	Monday, March 27 – Monday, April 3	Tuesday, April 4 – Thursday, April 6	Friday, March 31* – Friday, April 21	N/A
Paper-based	Tuesday, May 2 – Thursday, May 4	Friday, May 5 – Wednesday, May 10	Friday, May 5 – Wednesday, May 17	Wednesday, May 17
Computer- based	Monday, May 1 – Monday, May 8	Tuesday, May 9 – Thursday, May 11	Friday, May 5*– Wednesday, May 17	N/A
NYSESLAT Speaking	Monday, April 10 – Friday, May 19	Make-ups must be given within the testing window	Speaking is scored as it is administered	Thursday, June 1
NYSESLAT Listening, Reading, Writing	Monday, May 8 – Friday, May 19	Make-ups must be given within the testing window	Monday, May 22 – Thursday, June 1	Thursday, June 1

Capital Improvement Project

“An Investment In Our Future”

WCSD Capital Improvement Project

**VOTE: 12—9 pm Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at the
WHS Gym**

The Webutuck Central School District Board of Education has scheduled a second voter referendum for Wednesday, March 29, 2017. Residents will vote on a revised capital improvement proposal that addresses the needs of 21st century learners while remaining sensitive to district taxpayers. The revised project has been tailored to reflect community feedback collected after the first vote. Previously proposed improvements to Technology, Safety & Security, New Boiler for WHS & EBIS, Water System Improvements, Sidewalks and some

areas of the WES Parking Lot area remain intact and represent the majority of the project. In an effort to reduce the local share of the project's cost, items such as the WHS auditorium cooling & sound system, EBIS & WHS parking areas have been eliminated. Nearly all of the proposed work qualifies for state aid, significantly decreasing the local share by almost 60% to \$15.56 for the owner of a \$100,000 home who qualifies for STAR. Based on community feedback, the entire project will be divided into 4 propositions. Below is a cost-breakdown of the entire proposed project as well as each proposition. Please click on the link below for more details.

http://www.webutuckschools.org/dynimg/ZaAAA_/docid/0x49DC070B980D38A4/13/Vote%2B2%2BCost%2BBreakdown.pdf

Screenagers



We'd like to thank our Parent University Committee for researching, and our PTA for sponsoring SCREENAGERS!

Are you watching kids scroll through life, with their rapid-fire thumbs and a six-second attention span? Physician and filmmaker Delaney Ruston saw that with her own kids and learned that the average kid spends 6.5 hours a day looking at screens. She wondered about the impact of all this time and about the friction occurring in homes and schools around negotiating screen time—friction she knew all too well.

In SCREENAGERS, as with her award-winning documentaries on mental health, Delaney takes a deeply personal approach as she probes into the vulnerable corners of family life, including her own, to explore struggles over social media, video games, academics and internet addiction. Through poignant, and unexpectedly funny stories, along with surprising insights from authors, psychologists, and brain scientists, SCREENAGERS reveals how tech time impacts kids' development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world and find balance. Please click below to watch the trailer. We will be showing this film within the next two months during the day to our students and at night to parents.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQx2X0BXgZg>