

## Parents Ambassador Program

The Wallingford Public Schools has established a Parents Ambassador for each school. This came about as a result of a meeting with local realtors who asked for a contact person for their clients who are moving into Wallingford and have many questions regarding the school system. *Tammy Raccio*, PTAC President, has established a group of parents throughout the district who not only are very knowledgeable but enthusiastic about the schools their children attend. They will be available to answer questions, give tours and provide a packet of all the information a new parent to the district would need to help them become familiar with our district.

## Concerts with Causes

Concerts with Causes (CWC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, will begin its 4th season of fundraising events with a Benefit Concert for Fisher House CT and Soldiers' Angels. The concert will take place Friday February 6, 2015, at 7:00 pm at Lyman Hall High School. (Snow date is February 20th.) This concert is sponsored by Concerts With Causes in association with Wallingford Public Schools.

This is the first venture uniting Concerts with Causes with the Wallingford School District. Current and former students as well as performers from throughout the area will be giving their time and their talents to support the efforts of the Fisher House Project and Soldiers' Angels who are uniting to bring relief to veterans in need of support.

The West Haven Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital campus will soon (spring, 2015) be the site of a new Fisher House which will serve as a "home away from home" for families of hospitalized veterans as they receive medical care. Connecticut's new Fisher House will join 57 other such facilities that are committed to providing much needed support to our veterans.

The work of the Fisher House Project will, in turn, be supported by Soldiers' Angels who provide aid and comfort to the men and women of the United States Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard, and their families. Founded in 2003, by the mother of two American soldiers, Soldiers' Angels volunteers assist veterans, wounded and deployed personnel and their families in a variety of unique and effective ways. The Soldier Angels slogan, "May No Soldier Go Unloved," drives these dedicated volunteers to work tirelessly to provide active care and concern for our service men and women and their loved ones.

"Concerts with Causes' mission is to present uplifting, inspiring entertainment as a way to raise awareness and funding for individuals and community-based needs," says Lisa Catherine, CWC President/Executive Producer. "We work with local businesses and organizations along with local and national musical talents who are passionate about giving back to their communities. This event is a perfect example of how CWC works toward bringing community members, performers and volunteers together to help Make A Difference. I am very happy to see such an outpouring of support for these very important causes."

For more information about Concerts With Causes visit [www.ConcertsWithCauses.org](http://www.ConcertsWithCauses.org)

### Event Details

#### Benefit Concert for Fisher House CT and Soldiers' Angels

Friday February 6, 2015 7:00 PM (snow date Feb. 20)

Lyman Hall High School Auditorium 70 Pond Hill Road, Wallingford, CT 06492

**Ticket donation \$20 at the door**

**\$15 in advance at [www.concertswithcauses.ticketleap.com](http://www.concertswithcauses.ticketleap.com)**

**Seniors & Veterans \$10**

Contact Lisa Catherine for more information at 203-213-8355 or [lisa@concertswithcauses.com](mailto:lisa@concertswithcauses.com)

Concerts With Causes, Inc. P.O. Box 4255 Wallingford, CT 06492 203.213.8355

[www.ConcertsWithCauses.org](http://www.ConcertsWithCauses.org)

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 63  
06492

The Education Connection  
Your Wallingford Public Schools Community Newsletter

Winter 2015

43 Hall Avenue  
Wallingford, CT 06492

## Save the Date

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Distinguished Alumni Dinner will be held on April 24, 2015 at Zandri's Stillwood Inn. The honoree's for this year will be: Beth (Masselli) Brooks, Catherine (McCormack) Bonneau, Roz (Fishbein) Gallagher, Marie (Gannon) Russell, Joseph Pannone, and Phil Ottochian. Tickets are available through the Wallingford Education Foundation.

The WEF Spelling Bee will be held on February 20, with a snow date of the 27<sup>th</sup> at Moran Middle School. Get your teams together!! Great fun!!



The Education Connection  
Winter 2015  
Your Wallingford Public Schools Community Newsletter

## Superintendent's Message

Dear Wallingford Community Members:

As I shared in our last newsletter, the Wallingford Public School District set four focus areas in an effort to transform teaching and learning to best meet the needs of students. I would like to take a moment to update the community on these areas and our next steps.

### What is our overall district goal?

100% graduation/success for all students

### How do we achieve our goal?

We will achieve our goal by increasing and/or addressing student engagement, attendance, and social and emotional developmental needs of all students.

### What focus areas will assist us in achieving our goal?

The four focus areas - **Intervention, Models of Excellence, Proactive Student Supports, and Engaging and Empowering Learners** - assist in addressing our goals.

### What strategies in each focus area will assist us in achieving our goal?

- Intervention
- Models of Excellence
- Proactive Student Supports with a Future Focus
- Engaging and Empowering Learning Experiences

### Where do we plan to begin?

As we continue to better understand the four focus areas of the strategic plan for our district, the plan to begin the work can be best explained by understanding the **why, what, and how?**

In order to best move this work forward in Wallingford and provide a strong explanation, a **District Leadership Team** was developed to guide decision-making and investigation of best practices for our students and staff. The team consists of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and Board of Education members. The Teachers Union, Administrators Union, System-Wide PTAC, and teachers selected the participants representing their group.

In the coming months, the work of the District Leadership Team will be shared with all members of the Wallingford Community. We are very excited by this process and most importantly enthusiastic about the increased opportunities that lie ahead for our students.

Sincerely,

Salvatore F. Menzo, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



## Wallingford Public Schools Mission Statement and Vision

*Mission: To inspire, educate and support all students as they discover and pursue their best.*

**Vision: Wallingford Public Schools, with families and community, will distinguish itself with innovative teaching and learning experiences in a safe and supportive environment. Our goal is to ignite passion for learning and excellence in every student so that each becomes a life-long contributor to the local and global communities.**

## Capstone Pilot Program

The year, both Lyman Hall High School and Sheehan High School are piloting a Capstone Experience. The schools are currently running a semester course for the group of thirty-three juniors who were selected for the pilot. At the end of the course, the goal for each student is to have an approved Capstone Proposal and Action Plan. Students are being exposed to skills during the course that they will use towards successfully completing the Capstone Experience, and ultimately will need for their post-high school experience. The skills are centered on research, communication, problem solving, and writing. At the close of the first semester, students will be “on their own” to finish the implementation of their selected project. There will be periodic check-ins with their Capstone teachers and mentors for progress monitoring. The projects will be due in April and will conclude with a presentation to various faculty members, parents, community members, and other students.

Each student has a unique project and their end result will be in one of four categories: improving a system, building a product, writing an investigative composition, or planning an activity or event. All students will be immersed in various forms of research, making connections within the community, and producing a formal presentation.

The students from both high schools took a field trip to the HubCap in November to meet each other, discuss their topic ideas, and learn about the opportunities that the HubCap can offer to enhance their projects.

A Capstone Committee was formed at the beginning of last school year to plan for the pilot and the full Capstone Experience. This group of dedicated teachers meet on a regular basis to address needs of the course, re-evaluate the experience, and discuss its future. The group met at the beginning of December 2014 to read Letters of Intent from each student in regard to their proposed Capstone Experience. The group provided feedback and determined whether the student was set to forge ahead or if he or she needed to refine the scope of the project before continuing to the next step. In the process, the group began to form a common set of expectations around the many options available to students

The committee will continue to meet to discuss the progress of the pilot and to determine what Capstone will be next school year.

## Winter Concerts

On Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup>, the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade choruses and bands performed their winter concert selections in the Fred E. Rossomando auditorium at Moran Middle School. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade chorus sang traditional arrangements; holiday favorites and an acapella version of the Lion Sleeps Tonight. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade band played a similar selection as well as the pop favorite “Happy”. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade concert followed in similar fashion with the highlights being “All I Want for Christmas is You” sung by the chorus and a medley of songs from Frozen performed by the band.

On Wednesday December 10<sup>th</sup>, the 6<sup>th</sup> grade band and chorus performed their winter concert at Sheehan High School’s auditorium followed by a second concert which included the String Ensemble, Varsity Choir and Jazz Band. Of particular note was the acapella song “Yonder Come Day” by the 6<sup>th</sup> grade chorus and the Varsity Choirs’ independent break away quintet singing as arrangement by Pentatonix.

## Mastery Based Teaching and Learning

The three words of the district this year, Lead, Learn and Leverage are coming to life as we continue our journey as a district to move to a Mastery Based Teaching and Learning system. This fall through the continued collaboration with Great Schools Partnership from Maine, nearly 200 staff members have had the opportunity to learn firsthand about what this system of teaching and learning means. Through the coordination of our Great Schools coach, Jon Ingram, various K-12 staff, along with parents and Board members, have all engaged in this first step, learning.

As we begin the new year, Jon Ingram will continue his work with our district in the development of competencies in all content areas that span PreK-12. This work will be guided by the newly formed District Leadership Team which will be comprised of PreK-12 administrators, teachers, parents and the end consumer, our students. So what is a competency? What might this mean?

The table below shows the competency learning progressions that students are expected to demonstrate mastery of in mathematics but specifically in the domain of Numbers & Base Ten

Numbers & Base Ten		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5 <sup>th</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Round whole numbers to the nearest ten or hundred</li> <li>Multiply one digit whole numbers by multiples of ten.</li> <li>Fluently use strategies to add and subtract within 1,000.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Round multi-digit numbers to any place.</li> <li>Compare multi-digit numbers using greater than, less than and equal signs.</li> <li>Fluently uses strategies to add and subtract multi-digit whole numbers</li> <li>Multiply up to four digits by one digit and 2-two digit numbers.</li> <li>Divide up to four digit numbers by one digit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use place value to round decimals to any place.</li> <li>Read, write, and compare decimals to the thousandths.</li> <li>Understand the relationship of place value and the power of ten.</li> <li>Divide up to four digit numbers by two digit.</li> <li>Use all four operations with decimals to the hundredths place.</li> </ul>

Through this mastery based work, which will be a process and a journey, not a race, the outcomes will be a change in practices in how we teach, how we assess and allow students to demonstrate mastery and ultimately, higher achievement and engagement for all of our students.

REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION	REPORTING METHOD	ASSESSMENT METHOD
YES	Transcript	Graduation Standards Cross-Curricular Skills 5-8 school-wide standards
YES	Transcript and Report Cards	Demonstration by Body of Evidence Portfolios, exhibitions, other culminating demonstrations of learning are assessed
NO	Progress Reports	Graduation Standards by Content Area 5-8 standards per content area
NO	Feedback to Student	Verification of Proficiency Student progress toward the achievement of standards is determined and reported
		Performance Indicators 5-10 indicators per content area standard
		Common School - Wide Assessments Common summative assessments ensure greater consistency in the evaluation of student learning
		Unit-Based Learning Objectives Guided by essential questions, teachers use daily learning targets to create progressions that move students toward the demonstration of performance indicators
		Formative Teacher Assessment Ongoing formative assessment is used to evaluate student learning progress

The picture above is another graphic view of how this all fits together. At the pinnacle of the triangle you see graduation standards that will span PreK-12; these will be developed with our staff through the second half of the 2014-2015 school year; graduation standards are the content that is essential for students to know and be able to demonstrate; again this will be developed locally by our staff. Performance indicators and unit based learning objectives are where our curriculum documents will highlight the expected outcomes for students.

Imagine a system where all students, regardless of their grade, age or ability, are taught the competencies they need to be able to demonstrate mastery; imagine a system where time is the variable and learning is the constant; imagine a system where learning is personalized and all learners are engaged; imagine a system where learning occurs anytime, anywhere. Imagine the possible; Wallingford Public Schools for the future.

## Season for Giving

The start of November marked the beginning of the Titan Pride giving season at Sheehan High School. In conjunction with the town of Wallingford’s Holiday for Giving Campaign, students and teachers from Sheehan collected canned food for the annual food drive, raked leaves in the community on Veteran’s Day, and are currently collecting toys for the annual Toy Drive run by the National Honor Society.

Throughout November the Sheehan community collected a total of 4,851 cans for this year’s canned food drive. *Mr. Lombardozi’s* period 2A took first place and brought in a total of 649 cans. *Mr. Smolley’s* period 2A class came in a close second with 508 total cans collected. The students at Sheehan showed how dedicated and thoughtful they are and did a tremendous job of promoting the food drive and collecting the cans to make a difference in the lives of people in Wallingford.

On November 11<sup>th</sup> approximately 75 students and 12 teachers volunteered their time and raked leaves for the Wallingford community. They were able to get to 8 houses and used well over 500 bags in order to collect the leaves. Sheehan’s Student Council, National Honors Society, all class officers, and others were part of the 75 people who made up the student group. Faculty members *Dom Lombardozi, Kevin Ainsworth, Dan Wostbrock, Johann Rene, Josh Lambert, Jean Mellor, Carrie Hawkins, Christina Brozyna, Susan Hudson, Carrie Palange, Mike Tyrrell, and Heather Brinton* rounded out the teacher group. It was a great collaborative effort between students and teachers and highlighted the core values of Sheehan High School.

Lastly, the National Honor Society, advised by *Heather Brinton*, and the Sheehan community are taking part in a toy drive to support Wallingford’s Holiday for Giving program. Around forty toys will be dropped off at the school and brought by Sheehan’s Peer Advocates to the Holiday for Giving distribution at the Wallingford Grange. This annual event shows how caring and dedicated the students and staff are to making sure Wallingford’s children can all have something to look forward to this holiday season.

As we enter the new year, Titan Pride will be in full effect as we march into the second half of the school year and toward all of the Spring events that make Sheehan a special place to learn and work.

