



January 2017

From the Principal, Jeff Heaney

It is hard to believe that 2017 is only a few short weeks away. These first four months of school have certainly flown by. It seems like we were just welcoming all of the students back for the first day of school. As a child I learned that time passes quickly when you are enjoying something.

Last year I shared an article that I found to be helpful for the parents of 9-10 year olds. I thought it would be appropriate to share the article again for those who may have missed it.

"Half-time of Raising My Daughter(or son)" written by Whitney Fleming reminds us that simple little talks with our children can be very special. On our daughter's 9th birthday my wife and I were sad when we realized that we had reached "half-time" in raising her. It was scary to imagine that nine years from that point she would be out of the house and off to college. As an avid sports fan it made me think of how a great coach and a great parent are alike. A great coach, like a great parent, is a role model. A great coach, like a great parent, inspires and motivates. And a great coach, like a great parent, has a fantastic half-time speech. On my daughter's 9th birthday, I decided that this article had a message that I needed to share with her and would be the basis of my "half-time" speech. I will never forget that night. After I read the article to my daughter, we talked all about life. We cried together. We laughed together. And as I looked at this little girl that was growing up before my eyes I couldn't help but think about how the little conversations we have had about life are the things I have remembered most in the first half of raising her. I am excited about the second half. I know that it is going to get harder and there will be less times that she wants to just talk about life. But that is not going to stop me from trying. When you get a moment, click on the link for and enjoy the article. [\(To My Daughter at Half-time\).](#)

This year I have so much to be thankful for. I could not be in a better place than Woodland School. Our students are not only growing academically but socially and emotionally as well. They are working hard in their classrooms, developing good character traits, and always making the days at Woodland special. As always, I thank you for your consistent support and instilling good character in your child(ren). There is no doubt that the partnership between home and school is the most critical connection for a child's success. I hope that you have a fantastic holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year. I wish you all the best for 2017. [Woodland.](#)





The fourth grade students recently focused on the elements of realistic fiction writing. The students developed stories and characters that felt real by paying attention to moments/issues in their own lives. They used a story arc to help plan their ideas, drafted important scenes, and revised and edited their pieces. Throughout the unit, we used mentor texts as models for good writing and studied a variety of writing strategies such as leads, show, don't tell, figurative language, dialogue, and endings. The fourth graders ended this unit with a publishing party to celebrate their writing and their hard work as young authors. The students shared their stories in small groups at author's tables, and they wrote a compliment and/or gave a suggestion to each student that shared.



The third graders, under the direction and guidance of Mrs. Sutherland, performed an amazing musical production entitled, "Tribute to America". The best way to describe the performance is powerful and moving. Students paid tribute to the veterans as well as active members of the armed forces as they performed patriotic tunes. As one of the veterans in the audience commented with tears in his eyes, "That was the best performance dedicated to the members of the armed forces that I have ever seen...and I have seen quite a few."



Thank you to the PTO for sponsoring the "Dinosaurs Rock" assembly for the Woodland 3rd graders. Students have been learning all about rocks, minerals and their various uses during their science classes. They were excited to have the opportunity to learn more about rocks and minerals and were energized to work as teams to "uncover" their own rocks and minerals to bring home. This was a wonderful hand on connection to the curriculum that our students truly enjoyed.

Superintendent's Corner

At its meeting on December 12, 2016, the Warren Township Board of Education approved a revised district mission statement.

It reads:

The mission of the Warren Township School District is to provide, through a safe, nurturing yet challenging environment, all students with an outstanding education that engages students and fosters academic excellence, healthy social and emotional development, and a lifelong passion for learning.

This slight adjustment of the mission statement reflects the shared goal that we think about the whole child as we approach educational decision-making in the district. That is, the five tenets of a whole child approach to education - healthy, safe, supported, engaged, challenged - are embedded in everything we do.

*Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.*

*Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.*

*Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.*

*Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.*

*Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.*

I am excited to announce that on Wednesday, March 8, 2017, the District will be hosting a Community Conversation on the whole child at Watchung Hills Regional High School. Our featured speaker will be Sean Slade, Senior Director of Global Outreach for ASCD, a professional education association and international leader on the topic. There, attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about what a whole child approach to education entails and to provide feedback on areas where we excel and areas where we have work to do.

More details and the registration process will be announced in January. All members of the Warren Township community are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Matthew A. Mingle, Ed.D.

5th grade students have used their research & critiquing skills to look at the work of different artists and combine the "Elements of Design" the artists used to create their own original masterpieces. Through multiple group discussions and collaboration with one another, they decided to take an individualized approach to this task. The 5th graders helped each other decide how they would execute the task of celebrating two different artists through a new painting which combined their unique styles.



Mrs. Panos's and Mrs. Reis's students are using Padlet to communicate with a class from another country. The goal is to figure out where the other school is located and, conversely, they are trying to figure out where we are by asking yes/no questions. The students use their map skills to ask and answer these questions. So far, we know that they are in Asia, they do not border China (nor are they in China), and they are near the Pacific Ocean.



Woodland Pajama Spirit Day



Sometimes you
will never know
the value of a moment
until it becomes a
memory.
- Dr. Seuss

Top of Mt. Woodland recipients for the month of November



Students in the First grade participated in the American Red Cross Scrubby Bear program, presented by a health educator from Overlook Medical Center, on Wednesday, December 14th. During the program the students learned about germs and how to wash their hands properly to avoid getting sick. Thank you to Mrs. Stambaugh for arranging this program. Our kindergarteners will also have the program in mid-January.



From the Guidance Office

Mindfulness at Woodland School

Mindfulness continues to blossom at Woodland School! Mindfulness is the development of our ability to be fully aware of the present moment; our thoughts, emotions, physical sensations and surrounding environment. All classes in Grades 2nd through 5th have participated in Mindfulness Training. The training program consists of 15 minute lessons, twice a week, for 6 weeks. At the end of that time, I have each class complete a survey about their experience with Mindfulness. The program has been very beneficial and I have received many positive comments from students and teachers. I am very impressed with how the students have embraced the practices and recognized how much it can help them in their daily lives.

I would like to share just a few of the many comments the students wrote:

“When I couldn’t fall asleep I used mindful breathing and then I was fine.” (Many students shared that they had difficulty falling asleep and that mindfulness was helpful)

“Mindfulness is really relaxing, it keeps me calm.”

“I used Mindfulness during a test so I can stay calm and work my way through.”

“I used mindfulness before I gave a speech and it helped me feel less nervous.”

“My favorite thing about mindfulness is it makes me feel relaxed and confident.”

“I used Mindfulness when I was mad during a soccer game to calm down.”

“My favorite thing about Mindfulness is every time we have it I learn a new way to help myself avoid bad situations.”

“The thing I like about Mindfulness is that it helps me do better in school and out of school.”

“I used Mindfulness when I fought with my brother to calm down.”

“When I was frustrated that I had a lot of homework, I did Mindfulness and it helped me get all of the work done.”

An integral part of Mindfulness is Heartfulness, which encompasses compassion and kindness toward others. Several classrooms practiced Sending Kind Thoughts to their teachers who were out due to family and personal reasons. The students were eager to try to help their teachers feel better, and, by sharing many kind thoughts, they brought their teachers much happiness in knowing they were not alone during difficult times.

At this busy time of year it is easy to get caught up in “power doing” with long lists of what we want to accomplish each day while we respond to a multitude of texts, emails and Facebook posts, all while trying to work, decorate our houses, bake cookies and take care of our families! It is hard not to get caught up in rushing from one thing to the next and not allow any breaks for yourself and your family. This constant doing impacts the way we think and the way we relate to all of life as doing instead of allowing time for just being and experiencing the moment. Please ask your children to teach you mindfulness, if they haven’t already, and try some of the practices such as Mindful Breathing, Sending Kind Thoughts, and Gratitude. As the dash to the holidays is upon us, I hope you will take a few moments out of your day to give yourself the gifts of peace and joy.

Happy Holidays!

Diane Langworthy

The Woodland Students and Staff cannot thank the Kardos family enough for all of the hard work and dedication to the beautification of the outdoor garden area. We will be planning a “ribbon cutting” ceremony for the garden in the spring and look forward to the opportunity it will provide for outdoor learning and socialization.



At the culmination of the rock and minerals unit in Ms. Lenci's third grade class, the students were provided an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks using Starburst candy! First, the students identified characteristics of each type of rock and how they were formed. Next, the students created ways to use the Starbursts to represent a specific type of rock. The igneous "rocks" combined multiple Starbursts which were heated in a microwave and then cooled. Metamorphic rocks were constructed with multiple Starbursts rolled together using the pressure and heat of their hands. Finally, the sedimentary rocks were made with pieces of Starbursts layered on top of each other. Ms. Lenci's third grade had an amazing time combining fun with learning!



Mrs. Brink and the Service Club are proud to report that they collected \$275 to donate to UNICEF from Trick or Treating, 7 boxes of food as well as \$50 for the Somerset County Food Bank and they made over 25 cards to send to the troops for the holidays!!!

January Calendar

Monday 1/2	No School- Winter Break
Friday 1/6	Family Bingo Night
Tuesday 1/10	PTO Meeting 7pm–Library
Monday 1/16	No School- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday 1/30	End of Marking Period 2 (Grades 4-5)

