

Woodland Park School District e-Newsletter

May 18, 2018

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Building the road to success

Welcome to the Woodland Park School District e-Newsletter. We are excited to announce that this e-Newsletter will be sent out weekly when school is in session. This will serve as a glimpse of some of the wonderful things going on in our schools, as well as a point of reference for upcoming events.

Your Partner in Education,
Michele R. Pillari, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Important dates to note

Friday, May 18 - CO and BG
mid-trimester reports on the
Parent Portal

Monday, May 21, 7 p.m. -
Board of Education meeting
at Memorial School

School nurses: more than just Band-Aids

In addition to marking Teacher Appreciation Week last week, the Woodland Park School District also recognized National Nurses Week.

The three district nurses - Katie Beatty at Charles Olbon, Lynn Roehrich at Beatrice Gilmore and Terri Carbonelli at Memorial School - were saluted by the staff for their dedication to student health and safety.

There's a misconception that nurses are just giving out Band-Aids, according to Roehrich.

"Lots of students are on medications these days and there are constant changes to those medications that nurses need to be aware of," she said.

There is constant communication between parents and school nurses regarding students with chronic illnesses and conditions. And as school nurses are not doctors, they must have a doctor's order to give any child medications. As she spoke, two students visited the office during prior to their lunch period for daily medication they require.

This time of the year is challenging in schools due to spring allergies, Roehrich added. "We work to be proactive. Not letting children with severe allergies out during recess. A lot of washing hands."

In addition to daily duties, the school nurse accompanies each class field trip as well for the safety and welfare of the students. A sub will stay in the building that day. Having the regular nurse on the trip is important, Roehrich said, as they know the students and their needs well.

The prevalence of rising rates of ADHA, Autism and food allergies present challenges to nurses to stay on top of all the ever-changing needs of the school population. An important movement by the state is the law that EpiPens now be unlocked and available should a need arise. EpiPens are injectable medication used to treat severe allergic reactions to insect stings, bites and foods.

In addition to medical skills, a school nurse also needs to be a bit of a psychologist, Roehrich said. "Sometimes its not really a stomachache," she said. "You have to work to get to the root of their issue. Sometimes they just need break."

'Annie Jr.' opens up new avenue for student creativity, performance

Memorial Middle School staged a production of "Annie Jr." on Friday, May 11 and Saturday, May 12, led by BG fourth grade teacher Mrs. Yesenosky. A total of 40 students participated in the production from cast members to stage creation and crew.

"Most of the kids had never done a play/musical before and there were many challenges," Yesenosky said. "Although we teach drama and elements of drama in grade school it is very different from being immersed into a play. We had to delve into music a bit more than they were used to in order to learn songs they weren't all that familiar with."

The cast overcome the challenges of working with students they did not know, a small rehearsal space at BG, and juggling sports and other activities. "I was so proud of the hard work the kids put in," she said. "It wasn't easy. Many were outside their comfort zones while others were able to find their niche."

Some students who may have felt out of place before now they feel like they have something to love and a place they fit in, Yesenosky stressed. Theater opens up so much for kids as it's a positive outlet for their emotions.

"I saw the change in students who struggled," she said. "It was truly amazing. I wish these kids could see themselves the way other saw them during this process. They really took something hard to do and worked until they made it happen."

Theater is something that helps later in life, as it can help improve imagination and creativity. "They will be able to use this things in their working life," she said. "I wish every student had the chance to participate in theater, not every kid is a sports kid, and it really has a way of changing the dynamics of a school in a more positive way."

After a dress rehearsal on May 10 that worked through numerous glitches with music, lights and set changes, the productions went off without a hitch.

"It was amazing. The kids were so pumped up and excited," Yesenosky said. "It was the culmination of everything they had worked so hard for and they truly showed their best. I was immensely proud of their accomplishment!"

First graders take a musical journey with spring concert

The first grade classes at Charles Olbon, under the direction of music teacher Mrs. Beirne, performed "It's Showtime" for family and friends in two shows on May 16.

The classes were split into two groups so that each could share the stage. In the past, entire grade concerts necessitated children having to sit on chairs on the floor as the stage cannot accommodate the whole group. The children were then rotated mid-way through so that each could have a chance to be on the stage. "It's much easier to split them in half," Beirne said, "as the logistics are tricky."

Beirne started working on the show selections with the children in their music class in January. Classes meet for music once or twice weekly, depending on class schedules. The students then have two weeks of on-stage rehearsal and a performance for the kindergarten and second graders prior to the show.

During the time she works with the students, Beirne, who has been working in the district and putting on performances with various grade levels for 23 years, works with the students on vocal skills, annunciation and breathing. She also has the students learn and sing in different languages at their concerts.

Youth Month representatives run the Borough Council meeting

The 2018 Youth Month mayor and council members took to the dais on May 9 and conducted the Mayor and Council meeting, with their counterparts sitting alongside providing assistance as needed. The students led presentations to three championship basketball teams, read committee reports and approved and introduced a number of resolutions.

In addition participants took part in the May 15 municipal court session and will lead the May 21 Board of Education meeting.