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CONNECTIONS

With the West Hartford Public Schools

Connections is a districtwide publication presented to you by the Office of the Superintendent, West Hartford Public Schools, 50 South Main St., West Hartford, Connecticut 06107

Upcoming Events

Solisti, Chocolate Café

Feb. 27, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m.
Town Hall Auditorium
\$18 reserved table seating/\$15 general admission balcony seating
For more information call 860-232-4561, ext. 6389
Tickets: www.solisti.us/events; follow link to Chocolate Café tickets

ArtBeat

Townwide Student Art Exhibition
West Hartford Art League Clubhouse
Gallery on Buena Vista Road
March 9 – April 3
No charge
Opening reception, March 9, 4:30-6:30 p.m. For information, call 860-561-6638

School Art Shows

Throughout the spring there are student art shows at all schools in town. Call individual schools for specific information.

Hall, Pops 'n Jazz

March 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 7:30 p.m.
Hall High School Auditorium
Tickets: www.hallhighjazz.com, or Box Office opens Feb. 22, call 860-929-5151
Adults \$18; students \$14
Free performance for senior citizens: March 16 at 2 p.m.

Conard, Musical "The Addams Family"

March 11, 12, 18 & 19, 7 p.m.
March 13, 2 p.m.
Conard High School Auditorium
For more information and tickets (beginning Feb. 22), visit www.conardhighschoolmusical.com
Tickets are \$15, except \$5 performance for senior citizens: March 10, 2 p.m.



Spring Concerts

Throughout late April, May and June

Middle School Festival of Music

April 6, 7:30 p.m.
The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Mortensen Hall
Tickets: visit www.bushnell.org after March 1
For more information, call 860-561-6638

Inter-Elementary School Festival of Music

May 19, 2016, 7:30 p.m.
The Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts, Mortensen Hall
Tickets: visit www.bushnell.org after April 18
For more information, call 860-561-6638

Distribution Of **Connections**

An on-line version of **Connections** With the West Hartford Public Schools is now available at <http://www.whps.org/connections.pdf>. If you do not wish to have a copy of **Connections** mailed to your home, please email connectionsout@whps.org with your name, address, child's name and school. Thank you.



CONNECTIONS

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Clear Paths. Bright Futures. No Limits.



A New Language Offering at the Middle School: Chinese

For years, the World Language Program at the middle school level has offered French and Spanish to incoming sixth grade students. This coming fall, we are excited to add Chinese to the mix.

The new offering recognizes the usefulness of a diverse range of language offerings to our students that reflects the global community in which we live. Language learning also prepares students for opportunities internationally and helps them gain new perspectives on the world.

West Hartford's World Language Curriculum Review supported the addition of Chinese, and the Board of Education and the West Hartford Public Schools Executive Team enthusiastically backed the move. Early instruction is known to be critical to the mastery of a language. Just as with French and Spanish, students who continue taking Chinese will have the opportunity to advance their language studies and, once in high school, gain college credit through Advanced Placement courses. The teaching of Chinese also supports the World Language Mission Statement, which seeks to increase language fluency and student appreciation of other cultures and languages.

The World Language Program seeks to enable our students to:

- Enhance their college and career readiness by supporting their depth of world language proficiency, preparing them to be competitive and successful in rigorous academic measures to include the AP Chinese Language and Culture Exam;
- Parallel grades 6-12 World Language study pathways existing for French and Spanish language.



The implementation schedule is as follows:

2016-2017 add Chinese Grade 6

2017-2018 add Chinese 7

2018-2019 add Chinese 8

What's Next:

- World Language teachers will visit fifth grade classrooms to discuss the options for sixth grade;
- Discussions of middle school World Language pathways will take place at Middle School Parent Curriculum Evenings;
- A selection letter will be sent home from the middle schools.



3rd Issue

15-16

A Look Inside:

- *Summer Learning*
- *New Assistant Superintendent Named*
- *Enroll your child in Pre-K and Kindergarten*
- *Upcoming Events*



Summertime is a Terrific Time for Learning

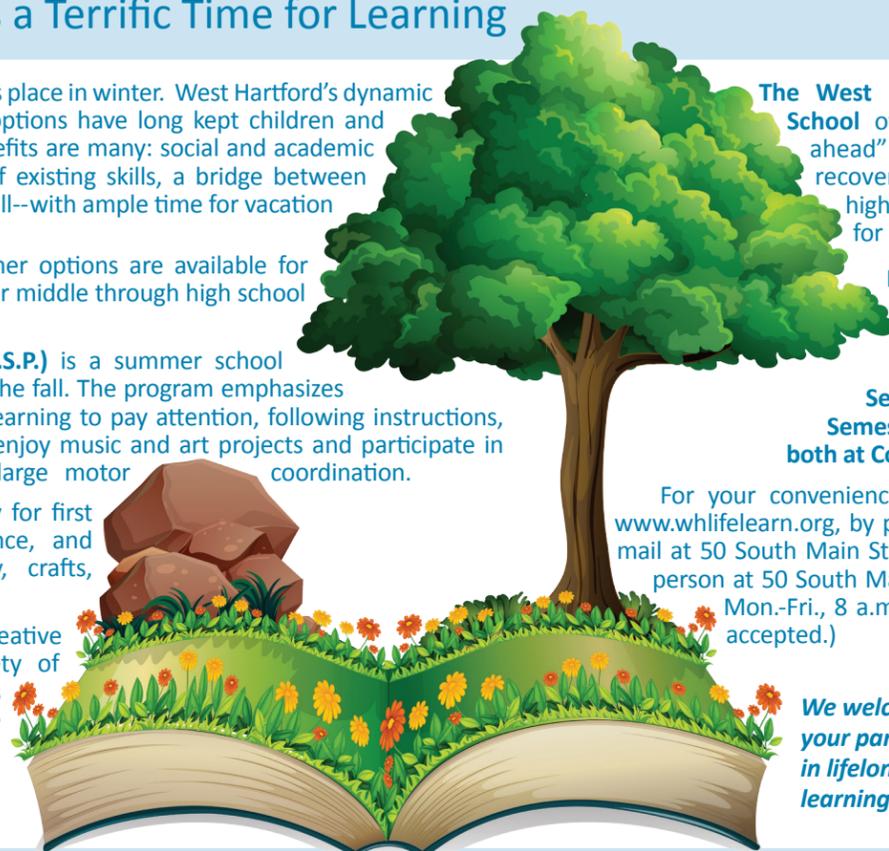
Much of the best summer planning takes place in winter. West Hartford's dynamic summer academic and enrichment options have long kept children and teens productively engaged. The benefits are many: social and academic development, reinforcement and retention of existing skills, a bridge between summer recess and the start of school in the fall--with ample time for vacation and relaxation, of course!

The following tuition-based summer options are available for Pre-K thru grade 1 students, and for middle through high school students.

Get Ready At Summer Pre-School (G.R.A.S.P.) is a summer school offering for children entering kindergarten in the fall. The program emphasizes experiences in early learning skills including learning to pay attention, following instructions, taking turns, and completing tasks. Children enjoy music and art projects and participate in activities designed to improve small and large motor coordination.

Moving On Up is a great way to get ready for first grade. Children learn reading, math, science, and listening skills. Activities include puppetry, crafts, singing, dancing, and videos.

Summer Fun for Preschoolers offers creative summer-fun activities that include a variety of learning, outdoor, and nature experiences where sensory, motor, and language activities will be specifically designed to meet the children's developmental needs (ages 3-5).



The West Hartford Inter-District Summer High School offers more than 40 courses for "get ahead" credit, for skills development, for credit recovery, and for enrichment experiences. The summer high school also offers a variety of non-credit offerings for middle school students.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Summer PreK - Grade 1 program: June 27- July 22
Whiting Lane Elementary School

2016 Summer High School:
Semester 1 - June 23 to July 13;
Semester 2 - July 14 to Aug. 2,
both at Conard High School.

For your convenience, our office also accepts registrations online at www.whlifelearn.org, by phone at 860-561-6900, by fax at 860-561-6907, by mail at 50 South Main St., room #419, West Hartford, CT 06107-2447, or in person at 50 South Main St., West Hartford, room #419 (Office hours are Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover are accepted.)

*We welcome
your partnership
in lifelong
learning!*



Popular Veteran Administrator Named Assistant Superintendent

Versatility can be a useful skill in education. For Paul Vicinus, a math whiz, Command Sergeant Major in the Connecticut National Guard, and longtime highly successful administrator in the West Hartford school system, it will come in handy in his new job as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

Superintendent of Schools Thomas Moore and the West Hartford Board of Education named Vicinus to his new position to replace retiring Assistant Superintendent Nancy DePalma, who served for 40 years as an educator. Talented educators tend to stay in West Hartford; Vicinus has worked in the West Hartford schools for more than 20 years.

"Paul's exceptional leadership skills and knowledge of curriculum and instruction



will be an asset to the district as we continue the work of strengthening our standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment," Moore said.

Vicinus began his career as a math teacher at Conard High School. He rose to math department supervisor, then became Conard's assistant principal in 2007. Four years later, he accepted the role of director of secondary education. A Command Sergeant Major in the Connecticut National Guard, he served in Afghanistan in 2010 and 2011.

"There is no shortage of work ahead," Vicinus said. "The opening of Charter Oak, the new high school graduation requirements, district efforts relative to Pre-K, new science and social studies standards are just a few of the very important topics that will consume

my energy."

A graduate of the University of Connecticut with a master's degree from Trinity College and a sixth year certificate from the University of Hartford, Vicinus has focused his career on West Hartford.

"I have been excited from the start to see the level of professionalism and dedication that every stakeholder in this district demonstrates on a daily basis," he said.

"Every child deserves a high-quality education, a caring adult in their corner willing to go the extra mile, and a supportive environment in which they are challenged to reach their full potential. West Hartford provides that every day for all students. I am proud to be a part of that culture."

-Paul Vicinus

Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Applications are now available for our school day pre-kindergarten program for the 2016-2017 school year. The application process for Pre-K programs and our K-5 magnet school lottery will be open through March 11, 2016.

- Our Pre-K programs at Charter Oak International Academy with expanded new offerings for three and four year olds and at Smith STEM School for four year olds follow the elementary school day and school year calendar. The Pre-K classrooms, located within our two West Hartford magnet schools, are open to all West Hartford residents. Tuition fees are on a sliding scale based on family income.
- We have an additional Pre-K program at Webster Hill School available to four year olds who reside in the Webster Hill district. Tuition fees are on a sliding scale based on family income.
- Our current Pre-K program at Braeburn School will transfer to the new Charter Oak International Academy building.

To learn more about the pre-kindergarten programs, plan to attend the open houses:

Charter Oak International Academy:
6:30 p.m. on Feb. 11 and March 3.
Florence E. Smith STEM School:
6:30 p.m. Feb. 25
Webster Hill School: 6 p.m. Feb. 2.

For more information, please visit our website at whps.org and search for "WHPS PreK Program" or contact the Residency Office at 860-561-6620 or Mary Stone, early childhood curriculum specialist, at 860-561-6635.

•Our Early Learning Centers (ELC) offer an integrated, half-day program for three and four year olds with and without special needs to learn and grow together. ELC Pre-K classrooms, located at Aiken and Whiting Lane Schools, are open to all West Hartford residents. Morning sessions run from 9-11:30 a.m.; afternoon hours are from 12:15-2:45 p.m.. School is not in session for the Early Learning Center on Wednesdays. Tuition for 2016-2017 will be determined based on state sliding-scale guidelines anticipated this spring.

For more information, please visit whps.org (search "ELC program"), contact the ELC secretary, Pam Macca, at 860-233-1455 or call the Residency Office at 860-561-6620, for an application.



How to Enroll Your Child in Kindergarten

1. If your child will be five years old on or before January 1, 2017, please contact your elementary school and let them know you have an incoming kindergartner for the 2016-2017 school year. (If you aren't sure of the elementary school for your neighborhood, or you would like to learn more about West Hartford's magnet school options, please visit www.whps.org.)
2. Schedule your child's well visit to your family doctor. Updated health forms are required for a student to start school.
3. Mark on your calendar the first day of school: Wed., Aug. 31, 2016.

What's Next:

- Each elementary school will host evening parent/guardian orientation sessions during the months of March and April. The dates and times of the orientation sessions are posted on the district website at www.whps.org. The search keyword is 'Kindergarten Transition.'

• Each elementary school will host a daytime kindergarten registration event for the child and adult to meet the teachers, visit the school, and review necessary registration paperwork.

• The first day of school will be a shortened day for kindergarten students to support their transition. More detailed information will be provided this summer by your elementary school.

• If you have questions about your child attending kindergarten next fall due to a number of factors that may include the child's chronological age, previous schooling experiences, or just a general uncertainty about readiness, please consider talking with your school's principal or curriculum specialist. Our staff has experience working with children to support all levels of learning and development.

•**Questions?** Visit www.whps.org, and click on Offices in the navigation bar to find the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, or contact Mary Stone, early childhood curriculum specialist, at 860-561-6635.