



Berkshire Trail Elementary School
News

June 2011

The Central Berkshire Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Dear Parents and Guardians:

June! It got here so quickly! It's the last month of the school year, and a time for more transitions. The staff will work hard to keep the school days as "normal" as possible. Keeping to routines are especially important this time of year to avoid anxiety and to maintain relative calmness. It has been my pleasure to work with your children and to meet so many families. We bid "adieu" to our 5th grade class and wish them well in middle school. We will miss them.

We are always looking for ways to involve the family and the community. Your input is valuable to us. Call the office. Send an e-mail.

I will be opening the school library a few days during July and August. Stop in for a good book and a chat. Have a wonderful summer.

Warm Regards,

Lorraine

****Please Return all borrowed books to the Library by June 10th.***

School Library

Days and Hours: 10:00-12:00
July 6 July 13
August 1 August 15

Special Events in June

- June 2:** 3rd & 4th Grade Field Trips
June 2: 6:30 Ice Cream Social
June 4: 9:00 Spirit of Learning 5K- 9:00
June 6: Dress Rehearsal for concert
1:30 Lions Club Clown performance
11:00 5th Grade Step-up at Nessacus
June 8: Field Day
June 9: 7:00 School Committee at BTES
June 9-10: 5th Grade Camp Becket
June 10: 3rd & 4th Grades to Plimoth
June 13: 1:30 Spring Concert/Art Show
June 14: K and 2nd Grade Field Trip
June 17th: 8:45 Step-up at BTES
Last day for Preschool
June 20th: 1:00 5th Grade Graduation
Last Day of School

Beyond the Bell

Our coordinator, Jill Figlozzi, has done a terrific job of organizing such exciting after school activities. Our thanks to her and all the wonderful volunteers who helped to make this season such a success. If you have any feedback or ideas, please share them with us.

PTO

We end the year with an ice cream social on June 2nd at 6:30. Please join us at the pavilion in the park. We also hope to see you on June 4th at 9:00 for the fun run. Lace up your sneakers and walk or run with us. Kids too! Our last meeting for this school year is June 13th. Plan to attend. We want to hear your opinions and ideas as we reflect on past events and plan for the future. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make this past year a success!

Classroom News

Preschool

Whew it is June already! May was very busy. We worked with Kindergarten doing the mural with Robin Brickman, learning about safety with officer Perkins during our S.A.F.E program times, and waiting for our tadpoles to sprout legs. New in our room this month: dress up area is our “preschool café”, and block area is dedicated to farming. We are talking about how food for the restaurant comes from farms and in the next couple of weeks we will be putting our pizza garden in at the school garden.

The days are feeling summer like, so it is important to get sunscreen on before coming to school for our outside times. The last day of school for preschool is June 17th this year. On June 16th we will be having our end of the year picnic. More information on this will come home soon.

Happy June!
Mrs. Grallert

Kindergarten

We are counting down the days of school. In Math we are working on counting by fives, tens, and skip counting. We can all count to 100 and beyond! As the year comes to a close we will be working in the school garden planting potatoes for next fall's harvest.

We had a great field trip to Beckie Kravetz's Art Studio in Cummington. We tried on theatre masks and paraded around her yard. Then the children worked on their own masks using art supplies from the studio. We are fortunate to have this generous and gifted artist in our community.

We are working on theatre in our Kindergarten class too. We are practicing two plays, "Mrs. Wishy-washy" and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff", to be performed in front of an audience of parents. There are costumes and props to be made, scenery to be built and programs to be designed. It is great to see this group of learners come together and share their knowledge and talents.

First Grade

Our class has been busy with projects and activities. Last week we performed our play, "The Six Hungry Ants", for the second grade. All the ants, animals and narrators were terrific! The class also worked on a "Junk Art" sculpture. Some children worked with friends, and some preferred to work by themselves. All were very creative. The 2nd Grade and Kindergarten classes stopped in to see our creations.

We continue to work on Daily 5 to help us become better readers and writers. Math studies in June will cover measuring, probability and place value. This week we estimated how many Unifex cubes were in the classroom. When we put them all together, they snaked around the room. After estimating, children counted in pairs, then we added everything together using base ten blocks. The total number of blocks was 1011! Three children's estimates were very close with guesses of 1,001, 1,002 and 1,003. In science, we are learning about rocks. We will sort, group, and learn how rocks are made.

Second Grade

Greetings from Grade 2! We have had a busy yet wet month. In ELA we have been working on contractions, 3-D murals and helping verbs. We read “Let’s Go Rock Collecting,” “Lizard and the Sun,” and “Trip to California”. In math we have been studying probability and mastering vocabulary words including certain, probable and impossible. We have finished MAP testing and we led a spider web invasion throughout BTES in honor of Horrible Harry. We look forward to the last few weeks of school.

Third Grade

Even though the year is almost over, the class has been working really hard. We have been reading and learning about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Now we are reading the book *F is for Freedom*. This is a story about a slave family using the Underground Railroad to escape to Canada.

The 3rd and 4th grades had a tag sale on May 26 and 27 to help raise money for our bus trip to Plymouth Plantation and the Mayflower II. We sold many items that were in good condition. Our trip is planned for Friday, June 10.

The class is also working on an animal project. Everyone is researching an animal that they want to learn more about. We are going to write a report, design a poster, and create a special project for our animal. On Zoo Day, June 15 our work will be on display to parents and other students. We hope you can make it.

In class we have been learning all sorts of things about math especially fractions. And we are continuing to practice multiplication and division facts.

We think we are well prepared for the 4th grade.
Written by Serena and Abby

Fourth Grade

Thank you to everyone who helped with the third- and fourth-grade tag sale fundraiser! Between sales and donations, we raised over \$850, which is enough for a bus for our Plimoth Plantation field trip! Any extra money will be put toward a field trip to the Boston Museum of Science. We will probably do the museum trip in the fall with next year’s third, fourth, and fifth grades.

Here’s a quick summary of what we’ve been up to and what lies ahead:

Math: We finished the math MCAS tests in mid-May after a few weeks of review. We’ll finish off the year with more fractions, geometry, and probability.

Science: We released our salmon fry into the Westfield River on May 20. Mike Young and Mark Damon of the Westfield River Watershed Association and Westfield State College helped students measure stream flow (and boy was the river swollen that day!) as well as find and identify stream macroinvertebrates like dragonfly nymphs and stoneflies. Our former SCA/AmeriCorps intern, Anne Gottwald, was also on hand to help out. We'll finish out the year with studying electricity and magnetism.

Social Studies: The State Fair was held on May 6, and it was a great success! Students worked hard on their projects, and the grading rubrics have gone home (unless there is an incomplete part of the project). We'll finish our studies of the Western states and have our 50 states & capitals quiz during the last full week of school.

Writing: We've been mostly writing thank you letters for all of the support we've had from friends & family for the state interviews and the Westfield River Watershed Association for the Watershed Waltz. We'll finish out the year with some creative writing about this school year.

Reading: We have read fiction and non-fiction books in our reading groups, which just started up again after the math MCAS tests.

Fifth Grade

May has kept us hopping in fifth grade. MCAS tests were administered in math, and science. As always the tests were both challenging and comprehensive. I am pleased to report that all fifth graders worked hard to do their best on the tests. Results from the MCAS will be mailed to you at home. The whole class is very grateful to the Berkshire Trail PTO for putting together snack bags so that every student could have a bottle of water and a few special treats to enjoy during each test session. The snacks surely made a positive difference in students' attitude and comfort level during the tests. Thank you! Next week fifth graders will take the computerized Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) tests in math, and reading comprehension. Results from these assessments are used to measure individual student growth and make educational decisions. In the final weeks of language arts we will be reading about real people and their inspirational feats of courage. In math we will finish up the year with ratios and probability while continuing to work on individual goals in Accelerated Math. Math games in the afternoon keep learning fun. The expansion of our nation to the west and south is the focus for social studies. Students will learn about the gold rush and the war with Mexico. In science we continue our study of plants. It is a great time of year for observing flowers. We are all excited about our upcoming, overnight trip to Becket Chimney Corners YMCA Camp June 9th & 10th. This is a super way for fifth graders from across the district to get to meet each other before heading off to Nessacus next year. Additionally, we'll be going to Nessacus for step-up day Thursday on June 6th. See you soon!

- Mr. Westwood

Art: Mrs. Clark Art Class Mrs. Clark

Kindergarten: Textures crayon rubbings and bird collages. For the crayon rubbings project, we went on a “texture treasure hunt” around the art room and found all kinds of different textures of which to make crayon rubbings. After that, we used our rubbings to create a picture.

For the bird collage, we have looked at pictures of a variety of birds and we have discussed what we like about the birds. Next, we are going to create our own colorful birds and place the birds in a habitat.

1st and 2nd Grade: Tissue paper mosaics. We read Eric Carle’s *A Very Hungry Caterpillar* and using tissue paper and watered-down glue, we are making colorful mosaics.

3rd Grade: Natural Object Paintings. Students are looking closely at the silk flowers, leaves, pinecones, shells and acorns and they are painting them in very large scale. Once we have completed our paintings, we will weave our two paintings together for a sculptural effect.

4th Grade: Accordion Artist Books. We have started making accordion artist books using traditional book-making techniques. We have created front and back covers and we are adding paper. Now we are adding drawings to our books based on our lives and interests. The topics for the books are “A Day in My Life” or “All About Me.”

5th Grade: Furniture Design. We have started looking at furniture as sculpture and making paper mock-ups of our furniture designs. Once we have finished working in paper, we will translate our design into cardboard. The final step will be to add fabric, felt, and any other embellishments.



NOTES FROM THE BAND ROOM...

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL BAND MEMBERS who will be performing in the Spring Concert! I am so proud of you for learning and performing this music with so many different styles! The Concert schedule is listed below. **ALL STUDENTS** have been given some fun tunes to play over the summer so they will not forget all they learned and can do. You know the old saying...”If you don’t use it, you lose it”, so do some playing during the summer. **IDEAS FOR SUMMER PROJECTS** can include having friends from Band get together to practice and then put on an outdoor concert for family and neighbors, purchase music books with your favorite selections to play, go to a concert at

Tanglewood, at the Berkshire Music School, or see a concert by the Eagles Band. Check the papers, there are many music activities going on around the county. **DECISION TIME IS HERE AGAIN.** If you have been renting an instrument and feel now is the time to purchase it, remember you have several options from Gerry's Music Shop. I would not recommend returning the instrument because the money you have already paid goes toward owning the instrument. Returning the instrument means you automatically lose all of that credit and will have to start all over again in September. If you still feel you want to return the instrument, be sure to call Gerry's to let them know where to pick up the instrument. If they do not know you have returned it you will continue to be billed. **FIFTH GRADERS WHO HAD SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS** will need to get one of your own for Nessacus. Contact Mr. Garcia at Nessacus (684-0780) if you need help getting an instrument. Feel free to contact me too if I can help in any of these matters. **ENJOY THE SUMMER VACATION** and keep a song in your heart!

Concert Schedule:

Berkshire Trail Monday, June 13th at 1:30

Mrs. Campbell

mcampbell@cbrsd.org

684-0176 (h)

Greetings From The Physical Education Department:

The spring fitness testing has come to an end, and one school record has been broken! Isaiah Lazarus-Reed broke the 4th grade boy's record for the standing long jump at 6 feet 3 inches. The highlight of the spring testing was watching most of the students set personal bests in at least one event.

The school year will wind down with several new challenging activities, field day, and cooperative games; cooperative games being the biggest component. The purpose of cooperative games is to develop within the individual students, a sense of personal confidence, and to increase mutual support within a group. The aim of these games is to allow the student to view himself/herself as increasingly capable and competent. Everyone who conscientiously tries should be respected. Success and failure are less important than making an effort. In many cases, the success or failure of the group depends on the effort of the members. A cooperative, supportive atmosphere tends to increase participation.

Finally, Field day will be held June 8th this year down at the Cummington ball field. We are all looking forward to a fun filled day in the sun!

Sincerely,
Mr. Keefe

News from the Nurse

Dear Parents and Guardians,

If your child has medication in the nurse's office, please make arrangements to pick it up at the end of the school year.

I hope that you all are able to get lots of exercise this summer and perhaps try a new activity that the family can enjoy together. Being physically active helps promote a healthy metabolism. Remember to use properly fitting helmets for all activities on wheels. Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day helps provide essential vitamins and minerals for optimal health and growth. Summer provides us with a wonderful opportunity to eat locally grown produce.

I hope that all of you have a fun, safe and healthful summer.

Mrs. Bushway, School Nurse

Worried about where you're going to sleep tonight? Concerned about your education or your child's?

If you, your family, or someone you know...

- Usually sleeps on someone's couch or in a car or an abandoned building
- Lives with relatives or friends
- Lives in a temporary trailer park or campground
- Lost or left your/his/her home

...Then there are some things you should know about.

Students without a permanent place to live have the right to:

- ◆ **Go to school, including public pre-school**
 - No matter where they live or how long they've lived there.
 - Continue to go to the school they attended before they left their permanent home, if that is their choice and it is feasible.
 - Without giving a permanent address.
 - While the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records.
 - Even while the school and the student resolve disputes over enrollment.
- ◆ **Obtain free lunch (and breakfast, if offered)**
- ◆ **Receive transportation, if requested**
 - To the school they attended last, if they request.
 - To school and to school programs.
- ◆ **Participate in school programs (like athletics and other student activities)**
- ◆ **Receive the same support and services provided to all other students, as needed.**

For more information, contact Robert Putnam at (413) 684-0320 X106 or Peter Cirioni (781-338-6294) or Sarah Slautterback (781-338-6330)