

Hartland Board of Education

Fall 2016 Newsletter

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS...Dr. Anthony W. Distasio

We had a wonderful opening to the 2016-2017 school year thanks to the excellent leadership of our Principal, Ms. Hollingsworth and to our wonderful and dedicated teachers and staff. Additionally, thanks are in order to our middle school teachers and grades 4/5, for providing our Curriculum Night on September 22, 2016, and to our Parent Teacher Organization for organizing our Open House on September 21, 2016. Both events were extremely well attended and successful.



Additionally, I would like to extend our appreciation to our wonderful Hartland Board of Education. With their support, we are able to set a very positive direction for our school and have the resources to support our programs and children.

We have several new staff members that we welcomed to Hartland School. We are extremely pleased with the following new additions to the Hartland School family.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Kristin Branem | – Paraprofessional |
| Patti Frenette | -- Paraprofessional |
| Alissa Goguen | – Reading Consultant |
| Rachel Hille | -- Nurse |
| Amanda Seam | -- Paraprofessional |

Friendly Reminders:

- When a school bus is stopped with the red stop sign and flashers displayed, please remember to stop. There is a very expensive fine for passing a stopped school bus with the flashers displayed. This includes when buses are in the parking lot at dismissal. If the lights are flashing, cars cannot pull in or out of the parking lot.



- When visiting Hartland School, all visitors must report to the office to sign in and receive a visitor's pass from the school secretary. Keeping our school safe and secure is always a priority.

- The Hartland Board of Education meets on the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. with the exception of April when we meet on the third Monday due to vacation week. The Board welcomes public attendance and input at our meetings.



Ten Ways to Help Your Child Do Well In School

Dr. Anthony Distasio, Superintendent of Schools

Studies indicate over and over that the children who are most successful in school have parents who are intrinsically involved in their child's education. Education is not a 6 hour a day experience. Education is a perpetual and continual endeavor. In order for children to be most successful, parents need to support, encourage, and assist their children. Below are 10 ways parents can help their children achieve success in school.



1. Show you care. Your child needs hugs and words of support. Ask your child about school each day.
2. Read, read, and read. Read with your child or have him/her read every day. Make it fun—talk about what you've read.
3. Make home a place for learning. Help your child practice reading, writing, math, and science skills. Stimulate your child's creativity.
4. Promote healthy habits. Make sure your child gets plenty of sleep and exercise and eats balanced meals. Schedule regular checkups.
5. Be a role model. Your child learns from you. Be positive about education and show you enjoy learning.
6. Encourage independence. Allow your child to make mistakes and learn to accept their consequences. Give your child responsibilities, such as household chores.
7. Create a study routine. Set a time and quiet place for your child to work every day. Go over homework together.
8. Get involved. Meet with your child's teacher, attend school events and help out at school if you can.
9. Build success. Help raise your child's self-esteem by setting reachable goals and praising your child's efforts, not just results.
10. Make school important. Insist on good attendance and punctuality.

Please make your child's educational experience a family and team effort. Your children need your support and guidance. When the home, child, and school work together in concert, the child will reap the benefit of a sound and successful school experience.

(Taken from "The Positive Line" 2000)



Principal's Corner... Laura Hollingsworth

Dear Hartland Families,

The 2016-2017 school year is well on track to build on the successes of previous years. Hartland increased the number of students meeting or exceeding goal on the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) by 17.9% in English Language Arts and 9% in Math as compared to the State's 3.3% and 3.9% respectively. I'm excited to share with you the initiatives that are underway including the ways in which we are continuously improving how we track growth in student learning. We are also eager to address all that we learned from last spring's parent feedback survey.

Earlier this fall we posted information about the adoption of STAR360. Like the SBA, which all Connecticut children grades 3-8 take each spring, STAR360 is online and computer adaptive. Unlike the SBA, the tests are short and the results are both immediate and detailed. We will conduct a benchmark 3-4 times a year to make sure students are on track to success. This will replace the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP). Teachers and interventionists can also use STAR360 to develop mini-assessments of a small set of standards which we make the focus of extra help for students flagged by the benchmark. Additionally, the STAR360 generates instructional resources which also target the identified areas of need. We look forward to sharing the results and how we are using them at the upcoming parent-teacher conferences.

Hartland School's Climate and Safety Committee is comprised of parents, first responders, and mental health professionals as well as teachers and administrators. For years, this committee has provided broad based input to a range of issues including planning programs funded by the Board of Education and Parent Teacher Organization as well as grant monies from the Capitol Area Substance Abuse Council. Interested folks can find the purpose and membership of the committee as well as minutes from our meetings on the Hartland School website. Under the direction of this committee, we conduct parent feedback surveys annually, as well as every 3-5 years a survey of students to assess the safe school climate. We learned that Hartland families need more information and resources to support them in parenting in this digital age. Families need to be able to support students' academic uses of digital tools and literacies, and their social use as well. Keeping our kids safe online and guarding against overuse of devices is a clear priority. To this end, the Climate and Safety Committee is planning programs and sharing resources with parents/guardians and with students in school. We are also hoping to inform parents of what digital tools and platforms their children are using as part of their classroom instruction. These range from Google classrooms housing instructional resources in a protected online community in which students share work and get feedback, to building research and communication skills. We are committed to embedding these important 21st Century skills into meaningful learning experiences, as our students become responsible and effective digital citizens.

Both the parent and student surveys showed us that the very large majority of Hartland School students feel safe and respected by students and adults. There are some areas we have made plans to address. Some students still take advantage of the less structured environments of the school bus and the playground to test out mean spirited and inappropriate behavior. We have worked with the bus company to clarify the rules and effective ways of maintaining them. We are visiting the buses to review expectations and giving students who do not follow the rules fewer chances before there are consequences beyond contacting home and a moved seat. Through our rich cultural arts program we are also bringing programs to school that address bullying, civil discourse and build our sense of community as a school. Our learning community is built on a shared commitment to mutual respect, achievement, and citizenship.

Please be on the lookout for resources and information about all our efforts and events at Hartland School. It is easy to subscribe to have notices emailed to you when there are postings on the school's website which might interest you. As always, don't hesitate to call or come in to share ideas or resolve concerns. Thank you to the 61 families who participated in last spring's survey. We rely on your input to continuously improve students' and families' experience at Hartland School.



Cultural Arts Liaison, Ronnie Alicata

Our school-wide theme, *A Community of Achievement*, is certainly enhanced by the cultural experiences that continue to be offered to all our students. Additionally, this year many of our scheduled events complement our attempt to reach the whole person, to have the students reflect on who they are and what they can achieve. Antonio Rocha opened our season of learning with his program *Crossroads*, telling tales from around the world, urging better communication, self-esteem, conflict resolution and respect. Bright Star Touring Theater brought a performance of *Bullied* to Hartland, helping us all see both perspectives of the issue of bullying. Lou Del Bianco will visit as Abraham Lincoln before Election Day to remind us of his values: honesty, love of family, thirst for education, justice and perseverance. Our annual week-long residence with Hartford Stage will again expose our students to the uncertainties of life, Mary Jo Maichack will return as Mother Goose and the whole school will celebrate in the spring with Hip Hop Dimension. Our selections hope to magnify Leonardo da Vinci's famous quote, "One can have no smaller or greater mastery than mastery of oneself."

