

Great Turn-out at our P.T.A. Meeting This Month!

At our P.T.A. meeting earlier this month I reviewed some of the initiatives that we are embracing in the Hartford School District and at the White River School. We included an opportunity for attendees to think about and give input on specific topics including:

- more participation at P.T.A.
- Academic Proficiency among our students
- School Climate and Culture

While the forum was helpful to me to learn more about what you as parents of our students value in your child's education, the typed responses are not easily interpreted by others if they didn't attend the evening. With that said, I will share these results on our school website later this week.

(www.wrsvt.com). In an effort to obtain more information from a larger portion of our school family, I will share a survey with you to complete next week. It will be in the form of a Google Survey.

I would like to thank our dedicated P.T.A. board and other P.T.A. members who provided really wonderful snacks and drinks for those who attended. Our P.T.A. generously provided childcare for those who needed it also.

Finally, most of our current board members for our P.T.A. are ending their term on the board and we need new parents to step up and become involved! As you may be aware, next year is our "Boston year". By that I mean that our entire student body in grades k-5 and staff will travel to Boston on an all school field trip. Our current P.T.A. has done a tremendous amount of coordinating and work to help us raise funds for this trip and for all of the many enrichment opportunities that our students participate in. Since their terms are ending, please consider becoming a board member. We'll train you, I promise! You can contact our current board president, Krystal Brown at wrspta@gmail.com or me at powerss@hsvt.com.

Reminders About Head Lice Management

Our Student/Family Handbook contains the following language:

"Head Lice

The Hartford School District follows Vermont Department of Health recommendations regarding head lice. Students should not share hats and other items that come in contact with hair. Students with head lice will be sent home at the end of the school day and guardians will be notified; they may not return until they have been treated to remove the head lice/nits. Students will be checked upon returning to school."

As you know, all of us are susceptible to getting head lice since head lice doesn't discriminate. It is important that you continue to check your child's hair routinely. Once children begin to shower/bathe independently and wash their hair independently, we as parents are less likely to check their hair. I encourage you to do so. If you find nits or head lice, the [American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations](#) are in the link. [The Center for Disease Control Guidelines](#) are here.

Spring Assessments in May

All of our students will complete assessments in May. Our students in grades k-2 will complete two assessments in a 1:1 setting with their teacher: Fountas & Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment and the Primary Number Operations Assessment (Math). Your child's teacher will have substitutes on the days when these tests are administered since they have to be completed 1:1. These assessments are part of the Hartford School District's local assessment plan and they provide us very valuable information that allow us to know which of the standards your child has mastered as well as the standards that your child still needs to learn. Teachers use the data from these assessments to create an instructional plan that will help your child learn the needed skills.

Our students in grades 3-5 will complete local and state assessments. All of our 3rd-5th graders will take the STAR assessments that provide teachers and students information on their progress in reading and mathematics. The STAR assessments also inform teachers' decisions about what your child needs to learn and practice to continue to grow as readers and math thinkers.

The state assessments are as follows:

Grades 3-5: Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) These assessments measure individual students' proficiency in meeting the Common Core State Standards in the English/Language Arts and Mathematics. You can learn more about the SBAC by [following this link](#)

Grade 4: FitnessGram: This new assessment will be piloted in Vermont Schools this year. [follow this link to learn more](#)

Grade 5: Vermont Science Assessment: This is a brand new assessment that will be administered for the first time this year. This is also a pilot year. To learn more about the VT Science Assessment [follow this link](#)

The very best way you can support your child as they prepare to take these assessments is to ensure that he/she is getting **adequate sleep!** I know this sounds simple and possibly silly but I've told so many over the years, lack of adequate sleep and sleep hygiene is our greatest barrier when trying to teach students. Recently our fourth grade teachers, Mike Duguay and Maryann Driscoll shared [this article about what time to put your kids to bed](#). While we want our students to always have adequate sleep so that they can do their best thinking and learning, it is very important during assessment periods since students sometimes become anxious about these assessments. If your child expresses these feelings, please contact her/his teacher and alert the teacher to your child's feelings.