



Wood Road Times

Wood Road's School Newspaper

Volume I - Issue 1 * June

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Congratulations to Wood Road's Class of 2015. Page 6



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Wood Road says goodbye to Mrs. Millington. Page 3

Excitement Abounds

Students and staff eager to get back into their school

By Mia Bedell, Abby Bednarczyk and Maddy Wilson

After spending a whole school year in the old Milton Terrace South building, staff and students eagerly await the opening of their newly renovated school.

"I can't wait to move back," said Mrs. Busch, Wood Road's art teacher. "It's beautiful."

Mrs. Busch is excited that her new classroom has four sinks, a separate contained kiln room, new tables and chairs, and a large storage closet.

Students and teachers are happy about the closed classrooms.

"I am very excited to have four walls and a door," said Mrs. Walz, a kindergarten teacher. "The kids often get distracted by the noise."

The Wood Road building was originally built with open classrooms with an idea of flowing movement and idea sharing. Over time, teachers realized the open



The renovated art room has new sinks and a new storage area.

classrooms were more of a distraction rather than beneficial.

Renovations also include new flooring, mechanical systems, bathrooms and the gymnasium.

Teachers and staff have had the

opportunity to visit the school and see their new space. Mrs. Williams, the school librarian, had to shut down the current library early in order to pack the library books for the move.

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Moving On

Mr. Blanchard leaves WR full of pride

By Maia Bianchi and Sarah Lewza

When the buses pull away on Thursday, Mr. Blanchard will wave goodbye to Wood Road students for the very last time.

The announcement

came in April that Mr. Blanchard will be leaving Wood Road Elementary School for a position as the superintendent of Schoharie Schools.

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Some of Mr. Blanchard's best memories are Fun Days at Wood Road.

Introducing Wood Road Times



Wood Road Times is a school newspaper created by the fourth-graders at Wood Road. Our news staff began work in May. We brainstormed ideas, conducted interviews and wrote the stories you see in this paper. We hope you enjoy this issue of the Wood Road Times. Look for us next year.

Have a great summer! See you in September.

-Wood Road Times Staff

Wood Road Times



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Summer Events

Fri., July 3
Movies in the Park - Paddington
The Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association presents free outdoor family movies at Wiswall Park in the Village of Ballston Spa on the First Fridays of summer, starting at dusk. Free popcorn and cotton candy.

Tues., July 21
Community Event 7th Annual Taste of Malta
5:30-7:30 p.m., TEC-SMART, 345 Hermes Road, Malta. Raffle and prize giveaways.

The proceeds will benefit the Ballston Spa Partnership for Innovation in Education Fund, a component fund of the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region. The fund supports mission related programs and initiatives including the Clean Technologies & Sustainable Industries Early College High School program.

July 21- 26
Saratoga County Fair - School Exhibit/Projects
Visit the educational exhibits under the Grandstand at this year's Saratoga County Fair.

Fri., Aug. 7
Community Event Movies in the Park - Cinderella
The Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association presents free outdoor family movies at Wiswall Park in the Village of Ballston Spa on the First Fridays of summer, starting at dusk. Free popcorn and cotton candy.

Wed., Sept. 2
Kindergarten Orientation
9:30 - 11 a.m., Wood Road Elementary School

Grand "Re-opening" Ceremony of Wood Road School
4:30 p.m., Wood Road Elementary School

Tues., Sept. 8
First Day of School

Goodbye Mrs. Millington

After 29 years, Mrs. Millington says farewell

By Cameron McKay and Lauren Wodzinski

Most people don't remember the day Mrs. Millington wasn't just inside the front door of Wood Road Elementary School greeting everybody with a smile, but when students and staff come back in September, a new face will be there.

For 29 years, Mrs. Millington has been welcoming students, staff and family, but this year Mrs. Millington will be retiring from Wood Road.

In 1986, Mrs. Millington started her career as a lunch monitor. Not long after, she began her position as a typist.

"A friend begged me to apply, Mrs. Millington said with a smile. "She said you can't compare the kids to other schools, and she was right."

Mrs. Millington has worked with seven different

principals during her 29 years in Ballston Spa and has always worked at Wood Road.

Staff members said they will miss her because she is a big part of the school.

"She is a very important part of our Wood Road family," said Mrs. Smith at The Beehive. "I love working with her. She is very nice and knowledgeable and makes me laugh."

Mrs. Smith said Mrs. Millington has taught her a lot of what she knows.

"The one thing that she taught me is that when kids come in late they would always say they slept in. She would say, 'you sleep in on the weekend, you slept over during the week,' and she would say it with a smile on her face," said Mrs. Smith. "I will miss her because she always brightens my day and she is like my second mom in my school family."

The students will also miss her.



Mrs. Millington recalls the seven principals she worked with during almost three decades at Wood Road Elementary School.

Fourth-grader, Olivia Cruskie, said that she has known her since she was in kindergarten and can't imagine someone else in her place.

Emma Jones, a third grader, said she was always there to cheer her up in the morning. "She is a nice lady. I think she shouldn't retire because she's very kind to every child in Wood Road. I will miss her," she said. "In the morning you usually need something to cheer you up, and Mrs. Millington cheers you up."

Mrs. Millington said she will miss seeing the staff and parents, but she will especially

miss interacting with the students and making them laugh. Her hope is that the right person will fill her shoes.

"Someone who will love the children as much as I do," she said.

Mrs. Millington said she is going to take next year as it comes.

"It will definitely take some getting used to after working at Wood Road for 29 years," she said adding that she will be back to volunteer when she can.

"Just when you think you are getting rid of me, you're not," laughed Mrs. Millington.

2014-2015 Attendance Awards

Perfect Attendance

These students have not missed any school this year.

Alexander Baitinger
Ethan Groff
Nicole Mooney
Nicholas Orzel
Alantic White

Outstanding Attendance

These students have not missed any full days of school this year.

Michael Andreadakis III
Hailie Evens
Aidan Fletcher
Kate Fletcher
Ayana Fredericks
Anthony Guarneri
Caden Hale
Ayla Hathaway
Ryan Hathaway
Averi Hemming
Markus Howard
Ashley Hu
William Hu
Faith Hudson
Christian Jenkins
Bridget Monast
Jonathan Moore

SCHOOL - From
Page 1

Chess club earns second place

"I have come up with a color scheme for fiction, nonfiction, and easy," said Mrs. Williams. "The hardest part is the work to do before the movers come."

The new library is the same space, but it has been redesigned with new carpeting and a wall-mounted smart board. A second computer lab has also been added to a space within the library.

"My goal is to make it student friendly," said Mrs. Williams.

The students are also anxious to see the changes in the new space.

"I am excited to be in the new school," said Julianna Cilione, a fourth-grader. "I can't wait to have walls and doors so you don't hear the other classrooms."

Wood Road was built in 1968 as a middle school. It later became an elementary school in the late 1990s. Wood Road is home to about 600 students.

A ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept 2.

Twenty-One Wood Road students compete in tournament

More than 200 students from across the Capital Region attended the Scholastic Chess Tournament at the NYS Museum in April. The team's advisor, Mr. Ferrone, parents and family members cheered on as the team came in second place overall.

Peter Hinckley was the only undefeated player in the Pawn Division (K-2) and took first place overall. Matthew Adams took second place with a near perfect score of



Wood Road's chess club was recognized for their accomplishments at a recent Board of Education Meeting.

3.5 points. Austin Valentine, Ciara'n Vandish and Natasha Oblisky tied for third place.

Emily Sayre and Sarah Himmelwright earned medals with two points

each. Alisabeth Dreher and Nathan Gurwiz earned medals in the Bishop (3-5) division.

Thoughts about...

Switching things up...

This year, on the first day of school fourth-graders met not one new teacher, but four. "Switching" is what the students like to call it. The teachers call it departmentalizing. Each day the students visit four different teachers - one for math, ELA, history and science - starting and ending the day at their "home base."

The thought behind departmentalizing is that teachers are able to concentrate more deeply in one subject area. The kids seem to think it is fun and feel it prepares them for fifth grade, which began departmentalizing a year before. Teachers say as there were a few quirks at first, but they have all been worked out and the kids are handling it very well.

"It takes a long time to go from place to place, but we get to have a different point of view from different teachers." *Chase Santoro, Fourth Grade*

"I like getting to know the whole fourth grade." - *Mrs. DeLeonardis, Fourth Grade ELA teacher.*

"I always leave my pencils in classrooms and have to borrow a friend's pencil." - *Maddy Wilson, Fourth Grade*

"I always drop my stuff while walking to the other classes." - *Madison Ballou, Fourth Grade*

"It got easier by the end of the year." - *Mia Bedell, Fourth Grade*

"I like seeing all the teachers." - *Maia Bianchi, Fourth Grade*

"I like seeing my friends in the hallway." - *Abby Bednarczyk, Fourth Grade*

"Sometimes the hallways are too crowded." - *Lauren Wodzinski, Fourth Grade*

"It prepares you for middle school." - *Sarah Lewza, Fourth Grade*

Person of the Month — Q&A with Mrs. Osinski



Mrs. Osinski and her family live in Ballston Spa. This is her first year teaching at Wood Road.

Mrs. Osinski is a fifth grade teacher here at Wood Road and our first Person of the Month. Reporter, Casey Reddon sat down with her and asked her a few questions.

What was going through your mind when we said you were chosen as the Person of the Month?

I was excited to hear that I was selected as the person of the month. There are so many fabulous staff members at Wood Road to choose from. I appreciate you taking the time to get to know me a bit better since I am a new teacher, and also because I'll be your teacher next year!

What were your expectations of Wood Road before you started?

I'm lucky because my kids go to Wood Road, so I already had some background knowledge about Wood Road before I came. I love the community, Wood Road and Ballston Spa as a

whole. Both offer many opportunities and are supportive of their students, families and teachers. It is important to me that my two sons, Jayden and Austin, see how invested I am not only in their learning and my student's learning, but also that they see that learning takes place outside of the classroom as well. That's one of the reasons I have gotten so involved in various committees and events here at Wood Road.

Where did you work before?

This is my twelfth year teaching in the classroom. I have taught fourth, sixth, and now fifth grade. I taught fourth grade for three years in Massachusetts, then seven years as a sixth grade teacher in North Colonie.

Was it hard having your classroom in the library this year?

Having a classroom in the

library wasn't as much of a concern of mine as not having a fourth wall or doors! I came in a lot of the summer to rearrange the classroom so that it was the best environment for my classes, as well as the library classes. Mrs. Williams and I made this arrangement successful I think! I think she and I (with the help of our students), really did a good job working so closely to one another, while at the same time respecting one another's class instruction. There have been some days when I've been a little too loud (I'm not really a quiet person!), and I may have disrupted Mrs. William's classes a bit, but I tried to keep that from happening

as much as I could!

What do you look forward to for next year?

Each new school year is exciting for me. I enjoy meeting new students and getting to learn from them. Each year is a fresh start and I get to put some of my new ideas into action. I always look forward to making some changes in what I've done the year before. I have a lot of new ideas for next year since this was my first year teaching grade five. I'd be holding back the truth a bit if I didn't share that I am also looking forward to having my own classroom with four walls and a door next year!



Students raise money for doing math

This year, the students at Wood Road participated in the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Math-A-Thon program. The school raised \$4,718 to help kids battling cancer and other deadly diseases.

Moving Up



Mixed emotions filled the air at Wood Road's fifth grade moving up ceremony on Monday, June 22. The ceremony took place in the Wood Road Cafetorium. Nathalie Chateauf, a fifth-grade student council member, opened up the ceremonies. Mr. Blanchard commended the students for their hard work, and numerous awards were given out. Finally, each student took their last walk across the Wood Road stage and with a single clap from the crowd, received their graduation certificate. Congratulations to the fifth grade class. Good luck in middle school next year!





BLANCHARD - From Page 1

Mr. Blanchard said though it will be sad to leave, it's a great opportunity that he couldn't pass up.

"Change is hard. It will be hard to leave the kids," he said. "But the district has a lot of things that work for me and they need what I have to offer. Sometimes when we do a job well, we want to grow more and learn. I've always believed in pushing myself more."

Mr. Blanchard has been the principal of Wood Road for six years. Students said they will miss how much fun he is, especially on days such as

Fun Day and at PARP events.

"He isn't the kind of principal that yells," said Payton Messina, a fourth grader at Wood Road. "He is fun."

Payton remembers the day Mr. Blanchard decked out Mrs. Leslie's office for her birthday with balloons.

"He decorated her car and handed out balloons," she said.

Mrs. Leslie, Wood Road's administrative aide, said she will also miss him.

"He really cares a lot about the kids," said Mrs. Leslie recalling how much fun the kids had the day Mr. Blanchard was running

around the school breaking all the rules as his alter ego "Davie."

Mr. Blanchard always enjoyed taking part in the school's PARP activities. In 2012, he dressed as Captain Underpants at an event to roll out the school reading season.

Second grade teacher, Mr. Fersch said Mr. Blanchard has always been fair, nice and helpful when he needed him, but he will especially miss having him around to talk to about sports and as a partner in crime for playing tricks on Coach Dayton.

Mr. Blanchard said he will miss a lot about Wood Road.

Some of his fondest memories are those when everyone is having a good time.

"I have always loved the end of the year kickball games, waving goodbye to the buses on the last day and watching Mr. Gronau's end-of-the-year gymnastics show," he said. "Everyone is excited and clapping."

He said he will miss the students and the staff and is proud of Wood Road's values. Mr. Blanchard hopes to visit for the grand opening of the renovated school in September.

Mr. Blanchard's last day is July 1.



Kindergarten students visit B. Spa community

On June 2, all five kindergarten classes visited the Village of Ballston Spa as part of an inquiry unit on Community Helpers. Stops along the way included the mayor's office, the firehouse, the public library and more.

(Left) The students were very excited as the mayor of Ballston Spa showed them the gavel.