

2013-2014 Opening of School Update

Assistant Superintendent for Administration: Tom Moore

The summer months were busy across the school system. The following summary reflects activities in the areas of buildings and grounds, summer school, information technology, transportation, and student enrollment.

Plant and Facilities Services

The summer months were active with a number of capital improvement projects, smaller improvement projects, and routine maintenance and cleaning.

Capital and smaller improvement projects undertaken this summer included:

Aiken Elementary School

- Replaced 28 student desks and 56 student chairs
- Replaced carpet with hard surfaced flooring in 19 classrooms
- Repaired pavement apron at King Philip Drive

Braeburn Elementary School

- Installed demonstration rapid response and building notification system

Bugbee Elementary School

- Refurbished auditorium seating in cooperative project with Bugbee PTO
- Installed new projector in auditorium

Conard High School

- Replaced roof on main academic building, added insulation and reflective PVC roof material for energy conservation
- Installed new sound system and projector in auditorium
- Installed Smartboards in 2 classrooms
- Installation of lighting for athletic field (scheduled completion in fall)
- Repaired pavement at bus drop off and cafeteria sidewalk

Duffy Elementary School

- Replaced carpet with hard surfaced flooring in 9 classrooms and adjacent hallways
- Repaired pavement near modular classrooms

**Agenda Item:
VI.A.1.c.**

Hall High School

- Reconstructed parking lot in front of the building with new drainage, curbing, pavement and traffic flow improvements
- Resurfaced pavement drop off area in front of school and student parking lot.
- Replaced carpet with hard surfaced flooring in 11 classrooms
- Installed Smartboards in 8 classrooms
- Installation of lighting for athletic field (scheduled completion in fall)

King Philip Middle School

- Fire code improvements including the replacement of hallway doors and improvements to emergency lighting system

Norfeldt Elementary School

- Replaced cafeteria tables and chairs (delivery expected in September)

Sedgwick Middle School

- Replaced carpet with hard surfaced flooring in 17 classrooms
- Repaired masonry on two exterior walls

Smith STEM School

- Sidewalk repairs at front entrance, replaced curbing and removed two retaining walls

Webster Hill Elementary School

- Replaced sidewalk near bike rack

Whiting Lane Elementary School

- Replaced cafeteria tables and chairs (delivery expected in September)
- Repaired parking lot near loading dock

Wolcott Elementary School

- Relocated teacher lounge to lower level area
- Repaired sidewalk/driveway at playscape

In addition to the projects listed, additional routine maintenance and cleaning work was completed including:

- Painted parking lots, playgrounds, classrooms, hallways, etc. throughout the school district
- Refinished 11 wood gym floors
- All buildings received a thorough cleaning of all spaces and inspection of life safety and emergency systems.

Summer Programs -- 2013

Summer High School

The program was held at Hall High School and enrolled 861 students this summer. Students from 24 area towns enrolled in 35 different courses taught by a certified faculty of 62 teachers, 53% of whom are from the West Hartford schools. Seventy percent of the students took courses to “get ahead” in their scheduled program, while 20% took courses to remediate low or failing grades. About 10% enrolled in non-credit courses such as Study Skills, Intensive Reading, Introduction to Algebra, SAT Prep and ESOL classes. Enrollment continues to decline in remedial English classes, while classes in social studies, health and physical education remain strong. A new class in Anatomy & Physiology was added successfully this year to accommodate students planning on entering the allied health field.

Summer Pre-Grade One Program

Programs were available for children ages 3 to 6 in the school readiness classes held at Whiting Lane School, and 92 students took advantage of these offerings, 80 of whom were students with special education needs.

Continuing Education – Adult Enrichment

In the Life Learn enrichment program, 71 courses and 26 bus trips were offered. Over 500 registrants took advantage of the courses housed at Hall High School in the evenings and of the trips to areas and events of interest.

Adult Education – High School Diploma Program

While there are no classes held in the mandated adult education program during the summer, the advisors in the National External Diploma Program (NEDP) continued to meet with twenty-three students seeking to complete that course of study over the summer. The graduation ceremony for students finishing the NEDP during the past year will be held on Wednesday, November 13 in the Town Hall Auditorium at 6:30 p.m.

Information Technology -- Summer 2013 Projects

- Collapsed four (4) [network] domains into one (1) for better interoperability between schools
- Through server virtualization reduced the number of physical servers from approximately forty-five (45) to nine (9) new powerful servers district-wide
- Addressed storage space issues by migrating every school’s data from the current sixteen (16) file servers that were old and out of space to the new high capacity virtual servers, increasing district data storage by a factor of four
- Improved network stability by adding automatic fail-over partners between servers
- Now utilizing the Town’s network operations center (NOC) which has full time generator backup and halon fire suppression for Board servers

- Implemented a demo for rapid-response alerting system between a school and ERC
- Implemented a managed printer solution; all toner and maintenance for printers now on service contract, estimated savings of 15-25% annually
- Implemented TalentEd, new paperless teacher evaluation system
- Implemented Destiny Asset Manager, advanced inventory tracking capabilities that are uniquely suited for K-12 schools, helping monitor resources from digital learning devices to special education equipment and everything in between
- Implemented Unitrends, a new Backup & Disaster Recovery system for all district servers
- Deployed 1,251 new computers. This is in addition to the 1,151 new computers deployed in the spring for a total of 2,402 new computers. 1,713 of these new computers are wireless devices (i.e. laptops, Chromebooks and iPads) utilizing our new wireless infrastructure.
- Started the implementation of Performance PLUS, a new assessment and curriculum management system
- Had extra help from summer interns from the high school, an extension of IT work study program we implemented this past school year

Transportation

During the 2013-2014 school year, we expect to transport approximately 5,600 students on 93 buses with 223 runs. This is the first year of the new 5-year contract with First Student, Inc.

First Student is located at 7A Andover Drive West Hartford, and their telephone number is 860-953-2030. Contract Manager is Ken Becker.

The Fleet has the following equipment:

- Digital video/audio monitoring system
- Child Check system - each bus is equipped so that the driver must walk to the back of the bus and engage a switch indicating they have walked to the rear of the bus, while checking for students. If a driver gets off the bus without activating the switch, an alarm will sound.
- Global Positioning System
- Each minibus has 6 positions each with permanently installed 5-point integrated car seats.

Buses were available at all of our elementary schools for the “kindergarten practice run” which took place on Monday, August 12, 2013 at 9:00. This practice run is scheduled to familiarize new kindergarten students with the feel of riding a school bus for the first time. The program is voluntary and the new kindergarten student attends with a parent or other adult with them. The purpose of the program is to allow a kindergarten student the experience of boarding a bus, the seating situation, the feel of the ride as well as the noises created by the bus.

First Student held their fall orientation and start up meeting on August 20th at Conard High School. Drivers practiced their routes for the start up of school the week of August 19, 2013 and ran a regular schedule on Monday August 26 to ensure the runs were set for the first school day, Wednesday, August 28.

Our major concern for the upcoming school year is the amount of road construction being done. We are and will continue to work with all interested parties to do whatever we can to maintain the timeliness of the buses.

Although there were a few delays the first morning of school, Wednesday, August 28, overall the 93 buses with 223 runs went extremely well.

Residency

As of August 28, 2013, the Residency Office has enrolled over 1,175 new students since the start of 2013. Included in this number are 485 new kindergarten students who will be entering the West Hartford Public Schools this year. The office has also completed fingerprinting and background checks of all new hires. We continue to work diligently to verify addresses of all students attending the West Hartford Public Schools.