

The Hurlbutt Buzz



UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS

Jan. 20	No School – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Jan. 21	No School – Professional Development Day
Jan. 21	Budget Workshop #2 at 7:00 p.m. WMS LRC Topics: Hurlbutt Elementary School, Weston Intermediate School, Weston Middle School, Weston High School, Athletics
Jan. 22	PTO Philanthropy Meeting (9:30 am at NH5)
Jan. 23	Budget Workshop #3 at 7:00 p.m. WMS LRC Topics: Facilities, Special Education, Pupil Personnel Services, Summary
Jan. 27	Board of Education - Monthly Meeting Monday, January 27, 2013 @ 6:00 pm Weston Middle School LRC Agenda TBD
Feb. 14	Early Dismissal/Teacher Prof. Dev.
Feb. 17-18	No School February Recess

PTO & SCHOOL NEWS

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Do you remember that old Bugs Bunny cartoon where Bugs and Daffy get into a very funny back and forth as they debate whether it is duck season or rabbit season in front of an Elmer Fudd all decked out in hunting gear? For some reason I can't get that image out of my head, and right now I wish I was there to interject to tell good ole Bugs and Daffy that they're both wrong. It's neither duck season nor rabbit season. It's better than that. It's BUDGET season!

This past Tuesday night I had the pleasure of attending the first of three budget workshops held at the Weston Middle School library. Not only did I learn a

bunch, but I also had the opportunity to try out the brand new (and very comfortable) furniture purchased by the WMS PTO. Trust me; it was a million times more comfortable than those hard wooden chairs. Anyway, even with my gift for brevity that has been on full display these past few months, it's hard to take a three hour presentation and boil it down into just a few paragraphs. But I'll try.

This is going to be a tough budget season. Not as tough as Daffy had it in the aforementioned cartoon (I mean seriously, his bill spun around his head like fifty times), but tough. Despite their best efforts, the district is presenting a budget that is a 4.66% increase over last year. This is due to a number of factors, but 95% of this increase can be attributed to contractual obligations and the cost of meeting state mandates. For you math folks out there, that means that 4.43 of the 4.66 percent increase is due to costs beyond the district's control. What this means to me is that administration did a phenomenal job of trying to meet their educational objectives without looking for more money. Be that as it may, a 4.66% increase is significant and is sure to be the topic of discussion over the next few months. To that end...if you have an opinion on the budget and want to make your thoughts public, there are a few key opportunities to do so in the upcoming months. On January 27 there will be a Board of Education meeting where the budget will be the topic of discussion. On April 2 there is a public hearing held by the Board of Finance. Finally, on April 23 there will be the ATBM where people will throw around legal terms like "quorum" and "Robert's Rules of Order". At this time I can neither confirm nor deny that the proceedings will be moderated by Judge Wapner with additional commentary provided by Doug Llewelyn; but that shouldn't stop you from attending. However, I do have it on good authority that Rusty will be there to keep everybody in line. (In case you were wondering, Rusty was the bailiff, and the fact that I need to explain that to some of you probably explains why he is available to work at our small town meeting). People's Court references aside, your takeaway should be that on each of these three dates you will have the opportunity to speak. Last year I used the opportunity to work on my freestyle rap battle skills before I was politely informed that the mic was exclusively for the use of those who had questions or comments about the budget. Lesson learned.

Anyway, I know that this is a lot of information, so I'll boil the entire newsletter into two ideas. First, I don't know how to be brief. Second, please feel free to ask us any questions you may have. As PTO co-presidents, Tammy and I represent ALL of our membership. That's means you. So if you have any questions, comments or concerns pertaining to any portion of the budget that you want us to share, please let either one of us know. We'll ask the questions at the next meeting and reap the fame and fortune that accompanies asking a question that is being broadcast live on local cable TV.

That's all for now!

Yours,
Dan and Tammy

BOARD OF EDUCATION REVIEW

By Tim Lawler

2014-2015 BOE Budget Update

The BOE is proposing a \$2,123,395 increase to the 2014-2015 budget. This is a 4.66% increase over the current 2013-2014 budget.

Last year's budget proposal was reduced to -0.03% by the Weston Board of Finance.

The Weston School Budget has increased 3.65% over the last 5 years. Weston Public School District is grouped with 8 other local towns called in DRG A. The DRG average school budget has increased 10.91% over the last 5 years.

There are many factors in the proposed budget, but there are four non-negotiable items that account for 95% of the overall increase. These are due to the increased cost of:

- Employee Benefits*
- Contractual Wages (salaries)*
- Special Education*
- Transportation and other Contractual Increases (state & federal mandates)*

The proposed budget is requesting a few additions to the current curriculum. Some of the changes include a 4th Grade Orchestra Program, an increased Computer Science Program and Spanish be brought back to Kindergarten & 1st Grade.

The Weston Public Schools administrative team is conducting workshops to present and discuss the proposed 2014-2015 budget. All workshops are open to the public, so please attend if you would like to learn more about the budget and voice your concerns. Here are the dates and times:

Budget Workshop #1

January 14, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. WMS LRC

Topics: Superintendent Overview, Instructional Program, District-Wide Services, District Administration, Technology

Budget Workshop #2

January 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. WMS LRC

Topics: Hurlbutt Elementary School, Weston Intermediate School, Weston Middle School, Weston High School, Athletics

Budget Workshop #3

January 23, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. WMS LRC

Topics: Facilities, Special Education, Pupil Personnel Services, Summary

Each budget workshop will be broadcast live on Channel 78 and recorded at <https://westonps.eduvision.tv/default.aspx> .

Shared Space / Co-mingling Update

The Space Renovation Study is complete (with the exception of security investigation) and available for public viewing.

If you want to see the results of The Space Renovation Study, please attend the next *BOE - Facilities Committee Meetings*:

Board of Education - Facilities Committee Meeting

Wednesday, January 22, 2014 @ 7:00 pm

Weston Middle School LRC

Agenda: The Weston Public School Space Renovation Study

The Board of Education has the authority to approve or deny co-mingling in the Weston Public School District, so please stay informed on this issue. There will time for public comment, so please voice your questions and concerns.

If you have immediate questions or concerns, please contact the Weston Board of Education, Superintendent Colleen Palmer and PTO.

Contact information is available at www.westonps.org

Upcoming meetings:

Board of Education - Monthly Meeting

Monday, January 27, 2013 @ 6:00 pm

Weston Middle School LRC

Agenda TBD

Board of Education - Facilities Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 11, 2014 @ 4:00 pm

Town Annex Conference Room

Agenda TBD

Board of Finance - Finance Committee Meeting

February 13, 2014 @ 8:00 AM to 9:30 AM

Office of the Director of Finance & Operations
Agenda TBD

[Board of Finance - Public Hearing on Budget Request](#)

April 2, 2014 @ 8:00 PM
Weston Middle School Cafeteria
Agenda: Public Hearing on Budget Request

[Board of Finance - Budget Deliberation Meeting](#)

April 8, 2014 @ 7:30 PM
Location: TBD
Agenda: Board of Finance to Discuss and Vote on Budget Request

[Annual Town Budget Meeting](#)

April 23, 2014 at 8:00 p.m.
Weston High School Auditorium

Please see www.westonps.org for full meeting calendar and agenda(s)
These meetings are open to the public.

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for the 2014-2015 school year has started.
Please register you children early as soon as possible. It is extremely important that the school has the most accurate enrollment numbers for planning the 2014-2015 budget and teacher placement.

HES PTO BOARD NOMINATIONS

2014-2015 HES PTO Board

Volunteers make it happen! Interested in serving on the 2014-2015 PTO Board? Know someone who would be a great addition to the HES PTO Board? Please complete the online nomination form <https://leagueathletics.com/UserForm.asp?RegID=57994&org=westonpspto.org> to nominate yourself or a candidate. We welcome nominations of in-coming Kindergarten parents who would like to get involved as well! For questions, please contact Katie Gregory wnkgregory@optonline.net or [203-258-1925](tel:203-258-1925) cell.

PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE

Please join us for a Philanthropy meeting on Wednesday January 22 at 9:30 am in North House Room 5 upstairs. We have several requests to discuss including an art project, entrance rugs, and banners. This is a great opportunity to have a voice in how our fundraising money can add value to the school. For more information, please contact Katie Gregory at wknkgregory@optonline.net.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Just a reminder, preparations for the kindergarten class of 2014-2015 are already underway. Children who will turn five years of age on or before January 1, 2015 are eligible to begin kindergarten next fall.

Registration packets can be obtained in any of the following ways:

- Your child's current preschool
- On the district website, www.westonps.org
- Hurlbutt Elementary School main office

Please bring the completed registration packet, along with copies of proof of residency (telephone, gas or electric bill) and your child's birth certificate. You will need all of these documents to register your child.

Should you have questions, or need registration materials, please call the Hurlbutt main office at (203) 291-1446.

NUTRITION NEWS

Food Allergies

January 2014

Food allergies are on the rise. Food allergies among children have increased approximately 50% between 1997 and 2011 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Fifteen million people are affected, and about one in every 13 children has a food allergy.

More than 170 foods are known to cause a reaction in some people. These top eight foods account for 90% of allergic reactions:

- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Soy
- Wheat
- Tree nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts, pecans)
- Fish
- Shellfish (e.g., crab, lobster, shrimp)

Allergic reactions vary from mild to severe and can appear within minutes to hours after exposure to a food allergen. Reactions can affect one or more

systems in the body, such as the skin, gastrointestinal (GI) tract, and respiratory or cardiovascular system. Symptoms may include: itchy mouth, itchy ears, odd taste in the mouth, dry cough, sneezing, runny nose, hives, eczema, red skin, nausea, vomiting and/or stomach pain. A severe allergic reaction is anaphylaxis, and this can be life threatening. Symptoms of anaphylaxis may include: swelling of the lips, tongue, throat, trouble swallowing, shortness of breath, turning blue, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, chest pain, weak pulse, and/or increased heart rate. Benadryl, epinephrine and/or cortisone may be used to treat a reaction. If you see someone with these symptoms, call 911.

Preventing allergic reactions requires strict avoidance of the allergen(s) and involves reading ingredient labels to avoid ingestion of the allergen, preventing cross-contamination, cleaning and sanitizing surfaces and proper hand washing.

Medical conditions are not the same as food allergies, but they are just as serious as food allergies. Celiac Disease requires the avoidance of gluten, which is found in wheat, rye, and barley. And diabetes is another medical condition which involves the diet.

If you suspect your child has a food allergy, check with your pediatrician.

Jill Patterson, RD
Resident Dietitian
Source: www.foodallergy.org

January 2014

Food Focus of the Month:

Citrus

- Unlike many other fruits, citrus fruits do not continue to ripen after they have been picked.
- Citrus is a family of fruits that are brightly colored, juicy, and covered in a peel. Citrus fruits range from sweet to very sour, and include types of oranges, lemons, limes and grapefruits.
- Navel oranges are the most popular oranges in the world for eating in their whole, fresh form. They got their name because the bottom looks like a bellybutton or navel.

AROUND TOWN

ATTENTION 2nd GRADE PARENTS

Here's your chance to be involved at WIS next year - the WIS PTO Nominating Committee wants you! Please consider nominating yourself, or someone else, for a

position on the WIS PTO Board for the 2014-15 school year. [Click here](#) for our online form.

WESTON YOUTH SERVICES

REMINDERS regarding WOW programs:

- Please be sure to send in an alternate dismissal note, in duplicate, **each** day that your child is attending one of our WOW! programs. Included in your dismissal note, please include alternate dismissal plans in the event of a cancellation of afternoon activities due to inclement weather. This will help your child's teacher know their afternoon release plans and alleviate any last minute confusion.
- Please be prompt in picking up your child at the end of their program. All classes end promptly at 4:15 p.m. Parents are asked to wait outside by the South House Cafeteria double doors, where they will be met to receive their child(ren). Students are not released through the main entrance of the building.

Any questions, please feel free to contact Charlene Monn, Program Coordinator, at [203-222-2586](tel:203-222-2586) or email cmonn@westonct.gov.

WESTON PARKS & RECREATION

NEW WINTER FLYERS with information on winter Sports & Fitness for K-2, basketball, dancercise, and other great programs are available on Weston's Park and Recreation [website](#).

WESTON SOCCER

Spring registration for the Recreation programs (Tots through Grade 1) and Junior Academy (Grade 2) is now open!

The spring season will begin the first week of April and end on June 7.

Please see the program descriptions for each age group under the top tabs. More specific information including costs, late fees and program dates may be found on the Register Online page.

In general, regular registration runs through midnight, February 23, and late registration

will continue on a space-available basis with a late fee included through March 23. However, only registrations completed during regular registration are guaranteed placement.

Click on Register Online at www.westonsoccer.com and scroll down to find the program that you need for your child.

WESTON LACROSSE REGISTRATION

Registration for Weston's 2014 Girls and Boys Spring Youth Lacrosse programs are now open. Entering our 16th season the WLC has provided hundreds of girls & boys the opportunity to learn and play this great sport. This season we are offering programs for new and experienced girls in grades 2-8 and for boys in grades 1-8.

The youth programs are designed to teach and support the game of lacrosse in an environment of safety, respect & fun!!

The youth programs also serve as the foundation for the Weston High School Lacrosse programs which based on last year's results alone - State Class S Championships for both the Girls & Boys has proven very successful in developing players with solid skills and a sustained love of the game. Additionally, many former WLC youth players have gone on to play at the college level.

Registration details for each program are available at www.westonlax.com under the "Register Online" section of the website.

Please note that detailed times, dates and locations of games & practices for the various programs are still TBD but the sooner we get participants registered the sooner we can provide that information.

Don't delay sign up today!!!!

Thank you for your continued support,
WLC

WESTON HS BOOSTERS

The Weston High School Boosters are collecting cans and bottles for recycling at the Onion Barn again. 100% of the money raised from the collections help WHS Boosters purchase athletic equipment that the current school budget doesn't cover, such as swimming blocks, cheerleading and wrestling mats, and new soccer goals. The money is also used to contribute to the club's two turf fund accounts.

Members of the public may drop off recyclable cans and bottles at the rear side of the Onion Barn on Saturday mornings from 9 to noon. Each week, WHS athletes separate and bag them for the redemption company to collect once a month. They will even help unload them from a car. For more information, contact Ira Saferstein at ira@titancapital.com.

WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Here are the programs at the Weston Public Library in January. All programs are free and open to the public.

Movie Night Feature Film – *The Butler* (PG-13)

Wednesday, January 22nd at 7 PM

As Cecil Gaines serves eight presidents during his tenure as a butler at the White House, the civil rights movement, Vietnam, and other major events affect this man's life, family and American society. Starring Forest Whitaker and Oprah Winfrey.

Minecraft Meet Up

Sunday, January 26 12 Noon – 2 PM

The Darien Library created a Fairfield County Minecraft Server and the Weston Public Library has its own world! This project is designed to bring Fairfield Country Minecrafters together. The server is designed to be a safe environment for kids and teens (aged 8-16) to build, collaborate, and be creative. Come to the Weston library with your library card, your Minecraft player name and a parent or guardian and we can add you to the server. Bring your computer and stay awhile to play.

For more information on this event and additional programs and services, visit www.westonpubliclibrary.org or call 203-222-2665.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should be relevant to Hurlbutt and the Town of Weston (i.e., town sports programs, Town of Weston sponsored community events or after-school sports programs for students taking place in the Town of Weston). If there is any question regarding the relevance of a submission, final approval will be determined by The Hurlbutt Buzz Editor and/or the Hurlbutt PTO President. Submission deadline is Tuesday – The Hurlbutt Buzz is emailed to all registered PTO Members on Thursday!

- 1. All write-ups should be in WORD format and the content should be print-ready,*
- 2. If you have a flyer, please submit a brief write-up and we will attach the flyer to the newsletter,*
- 3. If you want to re-run something from the previous week, let us know; review the write-up - does it need updating, i.e., change the wording from “coming home this week” to “you should have received last week”? If so, revise and resubmit,*
- 4. The email address for the Buzz is hesptonewsletter@westonpspto.org*

Thank you for your support and cooperation.