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# *Western “Specials Edition” Newsletter*

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*This is your inside look at all of the great learning your children are doing in their special area classes: Music, Physical Education, Computer Literacy, Library Media and Art!*

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## *Music News:*



Happy New Year! I hope you all enjoyed the holidays! I am so excited to be the new music teacher at Western and Hop Brook elementary schools! Prior to joining the Naugatuck school system, I taught General Music and Chorus for 18 years in Hamden Public Schools. While it was a little sad to say goodbye to Hamden, I am so grateful to be coming home, teaching in the town where I grew up! As a lifelong Naugatuck resident, I attended elementary school at Western.

After graduating Naugatuck High School, I went on to get my master's degree in music education at Western CT State University. I live in the Maple Hill area, with my wife, two children, Natalia and Joseph V, and dog, Mimsy.

K-2: We have been using The Music Show from the Music Express magazine with Kindergarten, First, and Second grades. Some concepts that we are learning are scales (notes that go up and down), major/minor tonality, pentatonic (5-note scales), piano forte (loud/soft), lines and spaces to help with note reading, presto largo (fast/slow), steady beat, and rhythms. We are always learning through movement, singing, and playing instruments.

Grades 3-4: Ask your children about Recorder Karate! Each time a student plays a song correctly and can identify the notes on the treble clef, they advance a belt degree. This method is highly motivational to encourage students to practice their recorders and their music note reading skills. Please remember to put your recorders in your backpacks for your next music class! Recorder students should be practicing 5-10 minutes a day, 4-6 times a week in order to keep progressing.

Students are also leveraging Musication on YouTube. Songs on Musication contain color-coordinated notes for the Boomwackers. We practice playing bass lines and melodies. I have also upgraded the speakers in both music rooms, resulting in a much bigger sound!

Concerts are being planned. Stay tuned for more info! (See what I did there?)

It is my goal to make music class, energetic, engaging, and FUN! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments:

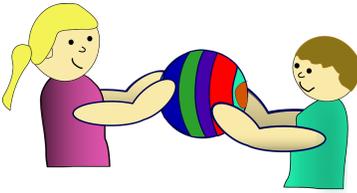
Joseph.Chesnas@naugatuck.k12.ct.us.

Musically yours,

Mr. Joe Chesnas

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## Physical Education News



Happy 2019 Western School Families!

I am so happy to be reunited with the students and to meet our new friends who joined us this school year. Last May my husband and I welcomed our second child, our son, Nathan. Since then, I have been on maternity leave. Mr. Lappan did a wonderful job covering for me and I know the students enjoyed having him!

As we begin the new year, I am going to use this opportunity to discuss with the 3rd and 4th grade students the importance of having an active lifestyle. Students will establish a new fitness goal for themselves. They will have time during each class to work on their goal through different planned activities. Students will be responsible for keeping track of their progress and will be expected to encourage their classmates to keep working on their goal even when it gets tough. During this time, students will also be participating in the Connecticut state fitness testing. Students will focus on their cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength, muscular endurance as well as their flexibility. I encourage all families to find activities or exercises that they can all do together! This will help keep students motivated to stay active. As the colder months continue, students will also have the opportunity to learn about a popular wintertime sport, hockey! Learning about the history of the sport, rules, and strategies helps to make this a favorite unit among our Western students!

Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd graders will participate in cooperative activities. During these lessons, students will have to work together in order to complete the given tasks. Listening to others ideas, effective communication and demonstrating positive sportsmanship will all be areas focus. Looking ahead, students will also be practicing different locomotor movements, balancing, and pathways. All of these activities are the foundation to being safe and successful in P.E class.

I am looking forward to a healthy and happy 2019 and wishing you and your family the same! If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to email me at **Lauren.warren@naugatuck.k12.ct.us.**

**Mrs. Warren**

## Computer Literacy News:



Happy New Year Western families!

We have some very exciting projects happening in Computer class!

In **Kindergarten** students are identifying letters on the keyboard and practicing math skills with learning games and activities that reinforce math skills learned in the classroom. We are currently working on using the shift key, space bar and period key so we can begin typing our name and sentences on the computer.

**First grade** has been working on their computer literacy skills to begin projects. We will begin our animal observation project! We will be observing animals on the San Diego Zoo live web cams. We will keep an observation journal and read ebooks to learn more about the animal we observed. Here is the website if your child is interested in viewing it at home <http://animals.sandiegozoo.org/live-cams>

**Second grade** has learned about how a computer uses its parts to function and learned how a computer understands commands with computer codes. Students have learned how to give the computer directions with computer programming task. Now students are going to use their computer literacy skills to begin a community worker project. They will choose a community worker and read ebooks to gather informations. They will create a web based project based about their community worker from the information they have gathered.

**Third grade** has learned how to design a Google slideshow. They have used their knowledge of internet safety rules and have completed their Google Slide Internet Safety project. They are presenting their fantastic work to their classmates. Next, we will be moving into computer science. We will be learning about small robots called Ozobots. Students will learn how they functions and how to program Ozobots to move. They will be creating and drawing a map of their ideal community and programming their Ozobot to move through their community.

**Fourth grade** is focused on computer science this year. Students have learned about algorithms, loops, debugging and conditional statements. They have applied this knowledge to various programming tasks. Now we are moving forward to Lego robotics. Students have completed their Lego build and are moving into exploring the Lego Mindstorm app and how each programming block effects the Lego Robot. We will use this information to complete challenges with our robots in the coming weeks.

If there are any parents or family members in the computer field and you are interested in coming in to talk or collaborate on a technology lesson I would love to have you! There is nothing more valuable than connecting what students are learning inside the classroom to their world outside the classroom!

You can check out my website

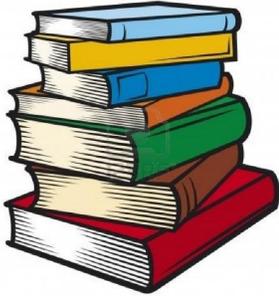
<https://sites.google.com/a/naugatuck.k12.ct.us/mrs-swiatek/>

to find what's happening each week in your child's computer class!

Always feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns:  
[lindsay.swiatek@naugatuck.k12.ct.us](mailto:lindsay.swiatek@naugatuck.k12.ct.us)

Mrs. Swiatek

## *Library News*



I hope everyone is staying warm this winter. Winter is such a great time to curl up with a good book and read, read, read!!!

In **Grades 2-4** we have been getting familiar with the Nutmeg Book Awards. The Nutmeg Book Award encourages children in grades 2-12 to read quality literature and to choose their favorite from a list of 15 nominated titles. It is sponsored by the Connecticut Library Association (CLA) and the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL). We are reading some of these titles together in class. I strongly encourage students to read all the Nutmeg Nominees. We will be voting on these

book in May. If any parents would like a list of the nominated books here is the web address,

<https://www.nutmegaward.org/elementary-2-4>

**Kindergartners** have completed their Eric Carle author study and gave their opinion about which Eric Carle they thought was the best and why. Students are starting to look at the differences between fiction and nonfiction and which make the best sources of information.

**1st Graders** are starting an Australian Animal Research Project. They will be learning and practicing the stages of the research process. Ask your child which Australian animal they choose to learn more about.

**2nd Graders** have been learning about nonfiction text features and have gathered information about animal bodies to create a diagram on Google Drawings.

**3rd Graders** are working on their dragon like animal research projects. They are practicing the steps in the research process which include taking notes, putting them into their own words and organizing their information.

**4th Graders** will be starting a career research project. They will be gathering information from a variety of sources about a career they may be interested in pursuing. Students will be presenting their projects to other grade levels in the spring.

Mrs. Federico

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## *Art News: Coming Soon!*



*Our new art teacher has been hired and we are excited to welcome her soon!*