

TPS SUPERINTENDENT BULLETIN



Where Excellence Is Achieved Through Each Individual's Success

UPDATE FOR December 17, 2018

JUMP TO SCHOOL UPDATES:

Please CLICK BELOW to get the DIGITAL BACKPACK information for the listed school:

[BG](#)
[TIS](#)
[TMS](#)
[THS](#)

Here for you 860-335-2455

Special note to our Tolland Family on the BGP Foundation

Good afternoon,

I am writing this afternoon to provide information about the foundation at Birch Grove Elementary school, and efforts to address the situation as it evolves.

Brief History and summary of the foundation situation with respect to Birch Grove School

The BGP foundation was poured by JJ Mottes in 1998, and 2002 (original school and addition respectively). Fifteen years later the Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency (insurance and risk management partner) was notified that the BGP foundation was poured by JJ Mottes, as their mix for concrete was found to have varying levels of pyrrhotite, an iron sulfide mineral causing erosion in foundations. As the situation evolved in the state more information became available and a vetted vendor list was generated ([available here through the Capitol Region Council of Governments](#)) for engineering, remediation, analysis, and testing. The Tolland Public School system contracted with an engineering firm to inspect the foundation. The engineering firm selected is based in Windham and understands regional concerns and characteristics. In addition, the Army Corp. of Engineers and various municipal professionals (facilities, public safety, engineering, leadership) inspected the foundation and reviewed information. As evaluation continued and core samples were done, pyrrhotite related erosion was confirmed, however, the building was determined to be safe to continue to occupy for years to come.

The timeline of the five year Capital Plan, and related requests, required that information be considered in October-December of 2018. As a result action was taken to put on hold or remove certain bonded capital projects that were to be done at Birch Grove over the next few years until more information becomes available. In other words, conversations about allocations of funds needed to occur before comprehensive information was available on long term impact. Thus the "five year" time frame discussed was a conservative estimation that coincided with the budget discussion and duration of the "Five Year" Capital Plan. The useful life of Birch Grove School is still yet to be determined by the engineer and other professionals and could exceed this period. Certain considerations will play into this that are different than the ones faced in residential examples. For instance, commercial concrete is

designed to be stronger, with different compression capacity (e.g. 3500 PSI vs. 2000 PSI) – it may not deteriorate in the same way, or as quickly. Another example would be that residential units are often built with wood frame “box” methods with a support beam and can therefore be “lifted” but commercial buildings are built more with metal columns and concrete flooring with “pinned” floors and are much heavier and cannot typically be lifted like a residential unit.

Trying to forecast how quickly things will progress with a foundation under these circumstances is not an easy endeavor. Primary importance is placed on safety, security, air quality, and human health. The facility will be maintained for occupancy and learning. The goal in the coming months will be to develop a timeframe on the longevity of the foundation, and put into place plans to do periodic inspections (quarterly or more) to monitor the situation and guarantee the ongoing safety of the building.

The district has for many years considered future configurations for our school buildings, including the possibility of using three sites rather than four, and building an extension, wing, or additional structure off of one of the existing sites. No matter what the situation, the professionals that work for the Town of Tolland, school and municipal, will work alongside residents to find the best outcomes for the community and students. A committee will be formed to work on the situation as it evolves, and I am confident the outcomes for Tolland will be manageable, prudent, and effective. Tolland has a great school system, great municipal and school staff, and a community full of dedicated and caring people. The BGP situation is definitely one that requires attention, but it is not insurmountable.

Finally, with respect to Tolland High School. This building was completed in 2005. The concrete for the building was poured by a different vendor, and during the summer of 2017 some concrete work was done at THS. During the time this work was done, no evidence of pyrrhotite stone was found.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at the Board of Education office 860-870-6850 extension 1.

Respectfully,

Walter Willett

Superintendent of the Tolland Public Schools

[Background of the State’s Investigation on Deteriorating Concrete Foundations](#) (from state of CT site).

In August of 2015, Governor Malloy called on the Department of Consumer Protection (“DCP”) and the Office of the Attorney General (“OAG”) to conduct an investigation into deteriorating foundations. The scope of the investigation was to determine whether or not there was a claim under the Connecticut Unfair Trade Practices Act (“CUTPA”). In July of 2016, the Office of the Attorney General [issued this letter](#) to Governor Malloy and DCP stating the low likelihood that a CUTPA claim would be possible.

Pursuant to Public Act 16-45, DCP submitted a final investigative report to the Connecticut General Assembly. [A copy of that report can be found here](#).*

DCP’s investigation included, but was not limited to:

- A scientific study where concrete expert from the University of Connecticut was retained to study core samples from affected homes;
- Approximately 70 site visits to potentially affected homes;
- Roughly 90 interviews with builders identified by consumer complaint forms;
- 85 interviews with experts involved in residential construction and foundation installation;

- Issuing 31 subpoenas to insurance companies under CUTPA;
- Processing over 450 complaints from potentially affected homeowners.

Some highlights of the investigation's findings are:

- The mineral pyrrhotite must be present to result in the foundation to deteriorate in the way observed.
- The minimum amount of pyrrhotite needed to trigger deterioration is not yet known.
- Becker's Quarry, the main source of concrete aggregate for JJ Mottes, includes more than trace amounts of pyrrhotite, and is located on a vein of rock that contains significant amounts of pyrrhotite.

As DCP and OAG worked on the CUTPA investigation, Lieutenant Governor Wyman led a group of elected officials, and government officials from the Insurance Department, Department of Banking, Housing Department, and Department of Administrative Services who discussed potential remedies for homeowners. This group will continue to work to find public and private sector remedies based on the results of the investigation.

Press Releases

November, 2015: [Update on Concrete Foundations Investigation](#)

May, 2016: [Department of Consumer Protection Applauds Legislature](#)

May, 2016: [Two Eastern Conn. Companies Reach Agreement with State](#)

**This agreement has been updated. Becker's Quarry has extended their agreement with the state to July 1st, 2019.*

July, 2016: [State Officials Respond to Attorney General's Decision on Concrete Foundations](#)

January, 2017: [DCP Issues Concrete Foundations Report to General Assembly](#)

[Department of Consumer Protection – Deteriorating Concrete Foundations](#)

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Feature Link (click a link to jump to a section)	Description
<u>Superintendent's Weekly Message/Feature</u>	This is the weekly message from the Superintendent. It is usually around some topic related to education and/or the school system.
<u>TPSTV! Tolland Public Schools TV!</u>	This section has videos about the great things happening in the Tolland Public Schools!
<u>Breakfast with the Superintendent Dates/Times/Information</u>	This section provides information about the upcoming Superintendent's Breakfast. These are open meetings with no agenda in which the public is invited to come ask questions, and engage in conversation, about educationally relevant topics.
<u>Budget Blurb & Budget Information</u>	This section provides links and information with regard to the budget of the Tolland Public Schools.
<u>Community Learning Workshops</u>	This section provides information about upcoming workshops for the community.
<u>How to Contact the Superintendent</u>	This section provides information on the ways to communicate with the Superintendent based on urgency/level of importance.
<u>Job Postings</u>	This is a listing of jobs available at this time for the district.
<u>Links</u>	These are links provided from community members as well as links that may provide meaningful information.
<u>Mastery Learning</u>	This section has a brief synopsis of the Mastery Learning philosophy and plan for the district.
<u>Power School and Unified Classroom</u>	This section provides information to guardians and parents about how to access important resources for reviewing their child's grading, scheduling, attendance, and other information.
<u>Social Media Connections and Links</u>	This section provides information on the district social media sites.
<u>Volunteering Information</u>	This section provides information on how to Volunteer in the Tolland Public Schools.
<u>Snow Delays and Cancellations</u>	This section provides information on snow delays, cancellations.
<u>Other Information</u>	Other information submitted by school or community members.

Superintendent Weekly Message

COME TO THE BUDGET WORKSHOP DECEMBER 19, 2018



Come hear the latest as I formulate the Superintendent's Proposed Budget request to the Board of Education. The Board will use this request to adopt its own budget by the end of January. Come and be a part of establishing the school budget for the Tolland community.

December 19, 2018 7:00PM Tolland Public Library Program Room

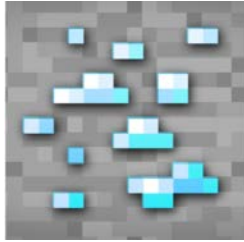
CHECK OUT THE DAVID E. GOLDEN DISCOVERY LAB!

A bus will take you there! Check with your school for the afternoon library bus!



<https://youtu.be/HSU-6tNfSWg>





There is something *incredibly cool* happening at the **Tolland Public Library**. *The David E. Golden Discovery Center*. The Golden GC has been made possible by the Tolland Education Foundation, and is to be dedicated in the memory of David E. Golden, a leader in the community and former President of the Tolland Education Foundation. The lab is open to the public and contains technology not available to the average person. The midi and music resources, video editing and production software, game construction software, and Oculus Virtual Reality stations (with software) make this lab one of the most cutting edge in the State of Connecticut. Call the library in advance or stop by to sign up for using this lab!

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Tolland Public Schools TV!



http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/t_p_s_television

Check out some of our new TPS Television Videos!

Video link	Description
https://youtu.be/76P45CnN9Cg	Introducing the Tolland Public Schools <i>Foundations</i> Program! Getting a head start in Phonics!
https://youtu.be/c1UmCIHGHKE	BGP "adventure" backpacks for families!
https://youtu.be/ctTuHyDIb1I	BGP introduced to the DEWEY system!
https://youtu.be/iNM6coWkFzk	Stock Market Project - TPS Business Program
https://youtu.be/augmD6uciTI	TIS Honors Veterans

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BREAKFAST WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT



2018- 2019
Tolland Board of Education
51 Tolland Green
10:00 AM

January 7, 2019
February 4, 2019
March 4, 2019
April 1, 2019
May 6, 2019
June 3, 2019

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BUDGET BLURB

BUDGET INFO ON THE WEB:



http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/board_of_education/budget

2018-2019 Workshops for 2019-2020 Budget

7:00PM Tolland Public Library Program Room

December 19, 2018

January 7, 2019

January 16, 2019

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HOW TO CONTACT THE SUPERINTENDENT:



Please take a look at the link below for some of the best ways to get an answer, meeting, or something else:

[http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/DistrictOffices/superintendent_s_corner/superintendent_wille_tts_page/c o n t a c t m e/](http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/DistrictOffices/superintendent_s_corner/superintendent_wille_tts_page/contactme/)

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Job Postings

Job Opening

Family Resource Center

- **Preschool Group Leader - 20-25 hours per week.**
Position requires an Associate's Degree in Early Child Education or related field.
- **Senior Group Leader – Monday thru Friday 3pm to 6pm at BGP**

For more information and to apply visit our website at
www.tolland.k12.ct.us
District/Human Resources/Employment Opportunities

HELP WANTED

Food & Nutrition Services has immediate openings for substitutes, with the potential to move into a permanent part-time position. Join our team in serving nutritious healthy meals to our students and work only while your children are in school!

If interested, please contact Kim at kmecteau@tolland.k12.ct.us or 860-870-6853, Ext

SUBSTITUTES ARE NEEDED DISTRICT WIDE

We need teacher, paraprofessional, custodial and food service substitutes.

You can choose what, where and how often you want to work.

Paper applications are available at the BOE office or can be printed from our website

www.tolland.k12.ct.us

Under District/Human Resources/Substitute Forms

Food service applications are under District/Human Resources/Employment Opportunities or feel free to call Kim Mecteau at 860-870-6850.

If you are not interested, do you know someone that might be such as a college student or retired family member. Please send them our way.

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Links

[Star Hill-Winter Ball](#)

[Winter Break-Advanced Ball Skill](#)

[Windham Tolland 4-H Camp](#)

[Tolland Public Library-After School Ornaments](#)

[Tolland High School Baseball-Register Now for the 2019 Baseball Winter Clinics](#)

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Mastery Learning Information

Check out the ML Plan for the Tolland Public Schools below:

http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/DistrictOffices/superintendent_s_corner/superintendent_willett_s_page/mastery_based_learning/

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Power School and Unified Classroom Resources



Since February 2018, Tolland Public Schools began to use PowerSchool's Unified Classroom. Unified Classroom provides a comprehensive look at student growth and achievement, while providing a single sign-on opportunity for parents with multiple students in the district.

While the mobile app has not changed (Unified Classroom access does not change your mobile app access) and can still be used, the computer-based version of Unified Classroom provides a more detailed view, and we recommend that parents use both tools to gain knowledge about their student.

For directions on how to set up your Unified Classroom account, if you haven't already, you may always visit the Tolland Public School's website or any of the school websites and click PowerSchool in the upper right-hand corner.

If you have already created your Unified Classroom account and can successfully log in at classroom.powerschool.com, you do not need to do anything further. If at any time you need to reset your password, you may do this yourself using the Forgot Password option on the sign in page.

New to Unified Classroom or PowerSchool

If you have created a PowerSchool account but have not created your Unified Classroom account OR are new to PowerSchool:

1. Instructions to [Create Parent PowerSchool and Unified Classroom ID](#)
2. Link to the begin creating your account: [Tolland Student and Parent Portal](#)

Please feel free to contact the Educational Technology office with any login issues or questions at (860) 870-6818 x10804.

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Social Media Connections and Links

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK:



www.facebook.com/tollandpublicschools

FOLLOW SUPERINTENDENT WILLETT ON TWITTER:



Search for:

[TPS_Sup_Willett](#)

Or

[Superint. Willett](#)

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Volunteer Information

VOLUNTEERING



We would love to have you come and volunteer at the Tolland Public Schools!

Thank you for all you do for the Tolland Public Schools. Please contact the Central Office with any questions. For those already volunteering, and those new to the game, the BOE will now do background checks every three school years. If you will be volunteering for the first time in the upcoming school year, please complete the [online form under Quick Links](#). After you have submitted your application, please call 860-870-6850 extension 1 to provide your social security number. You can check with the school secretaries to verify your status.

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Snow Delays and Cancellations

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I want to take this opportunity to inform you of the District's procedures regarding school closings, delays, and early dismissals.

The decision to change school schedules is made after careful review of information collected from the local police, highway and school maintenance departments as well as a local weather service. Road conditions, sidewalk status, precipitation, temperatures and forecasts are considered when making a determination to delay or close schools. In some circumstances, a delay may be upgraded to a school closing. Information related to delayed openings and school closures is broadcasted on television and radio stations typically by 5:45 a.m. The safety of our children is the priority factor in all decision making.

BLACKBOARD CONNECT 5

The *Blackboard Connect 5* communication system is a telephone messaging service that the district uses which enables us to personally communicate with parents and staff regarding emergency situations, school closings and delays, school events and other important issues impacting you and your children. It is imperative that you keep a current emergency telephone number listed at your child's school building. In the event of an early dismissal or delay, a Blackboard message will be broadcast to all families by 5:45 a.m. During an emergency or weather related incident, calls will be made through the emergency mode to all student numbers in the Blackboard system.

DELAYED OPENINGS

- This year we will utilize a two (2) hour delay.
- There is no morning (am) Birch Grove preschool classes on delayed openings.
- Buses will arrive at stops approximately two (2) hours later than the usual time.

EARLY DISMISSAL

- An announcement will be made on the radio and television stations, generally prior to 11:00 a.m.
- The high school is released at approximately 10:45 a.m. Tolland Middle School is released at 11:45 am and Tolland Intermediate and Birch Grove Primary School are released at 12:45 pm. (Please note that unusual circumstances may dictate an earlier dismissal.)
- There are no p.m. Birch Grove pre-school classes on early dismissal days.

In the event of school closings or early dismissals, all sporting events and student activities will be cancelled.

TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS

Students in grades PreK-5 will be returned to school in the event an adult is not present at the bus stop to meet them unless you have signed the bus stop release form.

ALL STORM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements will be made on the following TV Stations:

WTNH
WFSB
WVIT
WTIC

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to monitor weather related delays, closings, and early dismissals and to cooperate with school personnel as we work to ensure student safety.

TOLLAND FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER'S INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

If the Tolland Public School is closed due to inclement weather then the Tolland Family Resource Center is closed.

Weather delays and early closings

FRC School Age Care

The Before School Program will follow the School System for delays:

* 2 hour delay the FRC opens at 9:00 a.m. for children registered in the before school program for that day. (This is to allow enough time for the parking lot and sidewalks to be treated)

Early Dismissal

When there is an early dismissal due to inclement weather the FRC will close at 3:45 p.m. However, if Birch Grove and Tolland Intermediate School closes before 1:20 p.m. then FRC will close 2 hours after the end of school; example if Birch Grove/TIS close at 11:00 a.m. then FRC will close at 1:00 p.m.

Late fee pick up fees apply on early dismissals. Please call if you are delayed for any reason.

FRC Preschool

If Tolland Public Schools has a **delayed opening** due to weather, FRC morning preschool will open at 11:00 a.m. and will run until 12: 00 p.m. Four Year Old FRC afternoon Preschool will start at 12:00 p.m.

If Tolland Schools has an **early dismissal**, the afternoon Four-Year-Old FRC Preschool will be cancelled.

FRC Preschool Enrichment

If Tolland Public Schools has a **delayed opening** due to weather, FRC Preschool Enrichment will open at 11:00 a.m. and will run until 1: 30 p.m. If school **closes early** Preschool Enrichment will close at 12:00 P.M.

FRC Play groups are cancelled on delays or early closings.

Finally, I want to assure you, once again, that our primary concern in calling a school delay, early dismissal or closure is always the safety of our children. If parents feel conditions are unsafe, they should use their discretion and keep their children at home. Here's hoping for a warm and uneventful winter!
Sincerely,



Walter Willett, PhD
Superintendent of Schools

Other Information

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