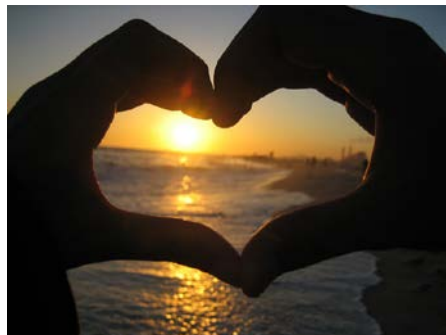


TPS SUPERINTENDENT BULLETIN

Tolland Public Schools

Response to the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy



In an effort to respect students, and the lives of those lost in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School tragedy, the Tolland Public Schools are planning developmentally appropriate activities for students at each of our school levels. On March 14th the students and staff of Birch Grove Elementary and Tolland Intermediate School will engage in school-wide discussions of student health and safety. At Tolland Middle School students will participate in a moment of silence at 10:00 AM, and will engage in at least 17 minutes of service activities such as letter and card writing to students at MSDHS, banner creation for MSDHS, and/or letters to representatives expressing their feelings. At the High School there will be an assembly where students will have the opportunity to share their feelings.

School staff will keep an eye out for students who are suffering, and school counselors, psychologists, as well as teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff will make sure that student needs are addressed. Please reach out to school counselors if you feel your son or daughter is experiencing any anxious feelings. The Superintendent's Breakfast for March 5th, 10:00 AM at the Central Office Building (51 Tolland Green) will be dedicated to a discussion of the safety and security protocols for the Tolland Public Schools, as well as the TPS response to the tragedy. Please come with your questions, comments, and conversation! If you are unable to attend, please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Here for you 860-335-2455

UPDATE FOR 2/26/2018

JUMP TO SCHOOL UPDATES:

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

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

Superintendent Soap-Box

I think we all share the sentiment that the last few weeks have been difficult. As adults we are asked to process more than sometimes it feels possible to do. I do not intend to make that process any harder - my intentions will always be to provide support, and above all, do no harm. For the bulletin this week I feel compelled, as Superintendents sometimes do, to get on my “soapbox.”

In my opinion one of the things almost as egregious as violence in this world, is trying to find some profit off of that violence. As I write, I am not referring to makers of security products that enhance safety, so long as they do not through their actions or advertising make school systems or children vulnerable. I am not necessarily referring to news outlets who simply report the news and reflect authentically what is happening in the world. My focus for this newsletter is on a advertising-profit making survey company that contends to provide useful information to communities about “school security” readiness based on low sample response surveys, and in my opinion, a questionable aggregation of data they have available to them. The site sells advertising, and benefits from the number of “hits” the site receives as a result of sharing this shoddy information.

Even if one were to pretend that the information was somehow valuable and accurate in ranking school security, I question the judgment of putting out a list of the schools that purportedly have wanting levels of security. These are our *children* we are talking about – does this company really want to identify for any unhealthy individual or group that is giving some thought to hurting children, a list of which places would be easiest to breach? No matter how I roll this around in my mind, doing what this company did in creating these results, and what WFSB did through their news attention to it essentially promoting the results, is irresponsible. While writing about this is done at the risk of bringing more attention to the company, and sometimes whether they receive good or bad attention it is valuable to them because it expands people’s knowledge of the brand, when the organization puts student safety in jeopardy I am willing to take that risk and call them out.

If you feel the same way, I encourage you to contact WFSB and let them know:

<http://www.wfsb.com/story/14535270/contact-us>

Here is the article: <http://www.wfsb.com/story/37576616/website-ranks-connecticuts-safest-school-districts>

Tell them putting children in harm’s way to get more web-site hits and sell some advertising is unconscionable.

Finally, here are some of the problems with the survey company referenced in the WFSB article:

Some basic issues with survey company information

1. Coercive marketing practices – without any real verification that the individual providing information is a student, parent, or guardian from the district they are reporting on, people can submit a rating. A school district can “claim their page” and in doing so, add some legitimacy to it – but this does little for the district and instead provides more traffic for the company to sell advertising. Therefore, districts feel compelled to participate, and it becomes one more thing that draws time away from educating children as districts attempt to illicit people to submit to the site to be more realistically represented in the ratings. Once other sites see this business model is successful, they too replicate it creating an even greater burden.

2. Small sample sizes – Some important numbers are how many *people* have responded, and how many *responses* they have provided. If only thirty or forty people out of thousands of students, parents, and guardians (considering say only the current year's populations) are submitting the rating the accuracy is greatly limited because it is a small sample of *individuals*. This feeds into the first item as poor ratings based on small samples put pressure on a district to “play the game” and send more people to the site.
3. Self-reports (i.e. standardized test self-reports) – much of the data is based on *self*-reports from unverified users. I use the term unverified here to mean there is no solid confirmation the people submitting the data are actually going to the Tolland Schools or are part of the Tolland community. Therefore, the data is being self-reported by unverified contributors.
4. Big claims about data that are misleading: The company will make claims such as “[we have] the most comprehensive data on U.S. Schools... we rigorously analyze dozens of public data sets and over 100 million reviews and survey responses” but don't say that for your particular district, it could be determined in part by the self-responses of a very small group of people, making it greatly inaccurate.

***New England Electric Auto Association Hybrid/Electric
Ride and Drive at the Tolland Public Library Parking Lot***

On Saturday, March 10th, the New England Electric Auto Association (NEEAA) in conjunction with National Drive Electric Week, will be hosting a hybrid/plugin-hybrid/electric car show and ride-and-drive event at the Tolland Public Library, [21 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT](#), from 2:00 – 5:00pm. Several dealers will be present with the latest hybrid, plug-in hybrid and pure electric vehicles and will be offering test drives. Actual owners will also be present to share ownership experiences. Light refreshments will be served.

NEEAA is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to promoting hybrid, plug-in hybrid and pure electric vehicles, debunking the common myths about EVs as well as increasing the electric car charging infrastructure. NEEAA is one of over thirty electric car clubs across the country and is a chapter of the National Electric Auto Association. This event is free and open to the public and anyone who is interested in the technology is encouraged to attend. This is a great opportunity to test drive a hybrid, plugin hybrid, or pure electric vehicle without the typical "dealership setting" of possibly being pressured to buy. For more information about the event, please contact Jesse Rudavsky, 617-890-9605 or check out Www.facebook.com/newenglandelectricautoassociation.



Where Excellence is Achieved Through Each Individual's Success

2018- 2019 Incoming Kindergarten

Birch Grove Primary School at 247 Rhodes Road in Tolland, CT, will host the 2018-2019 Kindergarten Parent Meeting on March 8, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Birch Grove Primary School gymnasium. This informational meeting is for parents of students entering Kindergarten in the fall of 2018. Any questions regarding the meeting you may call 860-870-6750. If you are unable to attend due to childcare constraints, please contact the superintendent's office at 860-870-6850 extension 1 and we will attempt to assist.

We are excited to announce a new online format for Kindergarten registration. At the parent meeting, you will be provided with step by step instructions to complete the online registration. If you find that you need assistance or have questions with the online process, we will be available at the Board of Education Office, located at 51 Tolland Green, between the hours of 10:00 am - 7:00 pm Wednesday March 21, 2018.

Please.... 

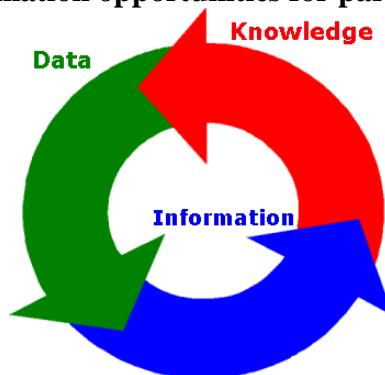
The Capitol Region Education Council (or "CREC") one of our area RESC's (Regional Educational Service Center) is working with Tolland on a District Scheduling Committee. The committee includes parents, teachers, and administrators and has organized conversations with students. The main objectives are to maximize student opportunity, maintain beneficial educational structures and programs, leverage new state credit and course requirements and grants, and prepare for new potential fiscal considerations. Please note, this committee is not tasked to replace or eliminate block scheduling. Working with CREC gives us an opportunity to have an outside organization, familiar with many other school district schedules and operations, interact with our parents, students, teachers, and administrators to make recommendations to us (my plan is at a BOE meeting in public session). I am actually not a regular part of the committee. This is by design, I'd rather have the input of the staff, parent/guardians, and students guide the process with the direction of CREC, who has a breadth and depth of experience in this area.

As part of the process - CREC has asked that the **Tolland High School parents/guardians** are given this survey. Please complete the survey by March 5th, 2018. It is important that they have your input.

Thank you!

Tolland High School Parent: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TOLLANDPARENT>

POWERSCHOOL UNIFIED CLASSROOM
Expanding information opportunities for parents and students!



Dear Parents and Students,

On February 9th, we upgraded the parent and student portal access to the new Unified Classroom. If you access your student's information with the mobile app, there are NO changes. If you use a desktop/laptop, then you will need to create your new Unified Classroom account. (If you have never created an account, please contact us, and we will be happy to help you. (860-870-6818 x10804)

Parents

If you already have an account follow the steps below.

<https://tollandschools.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

1. Click on Parent Sign In
2. Create PowerSchool ID
3. Enter your current login information
4. Next
5. Continue
6. Enter your email (which will now be your username)
7. Create a password
8. Click create

Below is a quick video that demonstrates how to set up your account/move to the new Unified Classroom dashboard. Watch Part 2 of the video if you already have a PowerSchool account.

<https://vimeo.com/227826452/6c02bab055>

Students

<https://tollandschools.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

1. Click student sign in

2. Click 'Forgot password' option, enter in your school email (ex. JohnDoe54321@tolland.k12.ct.us) and send request. Go to your school email – there will be a link to click in the email that will send you to a reset password page.

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

Thank you!

6th grade dodgeball tourney fundraiser last week!!



GRADE 6 DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT





Reading Therapy Dogs for Kids in March

R.E.A.D. dogs from Healers With Halos

Reading therapy dogs from Healers with Halos will be at the library on **Saturday, March 3rd, from 10:15 to 11:45 a.m.** Children may sign up to read aloud to a dog in 15-minute blocks of time; to reserve your time, call 860-871-3620 or contact the children's librarian at vbrousseau@tolland.org

BUDGET INFO ON THE WEB:



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

The Board of Education has adopted a .78% budget increase for the 2018-2019 year. This budget will now be passed on to the Town Manager for consideration.

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/contactme/



2017- 2018 SCHOOL YEAR ATHLETIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

4:00 pm at Tolland High School

March 6, 2018

June 5, 2018



For parents and community members interested in the Tolland Public School K-5 assessment standards, please see the: [Standards-Based Assessment Information Guide](#)

COMMUNITY LEARNING WORKSHOPS

Community Workshops	Information
<p>May 2, 2018 7:30 PM Tolland Public Library</p>	<div data-bbox="779 1386 1136 1585" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Mastery Learning Model</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Mastery Learning Workshop Come find out what it is about, and how ML is being planned for Tolland.</p>

2017 – 2018

BREAKFAST WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT

10:00 AM AT THE TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

51 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT



March 5, 2018

April 2, 2018

May 7, 2018

June 4, 2018

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.

YOUR TOLLAND SCHOOL SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTION:

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK:



www.facebook.com/tollandpublicschools

FOLLOW SUPERINTENDENT WILLETT ON TWITTER:



Search for:

[TPS Sup Willett](#)

Or

[Superint. Willett](#)

LINKS AND OTHER ARTICLES OF INTEREST

[7 things black people want their well-meaning white friends to know](#)

[One Teacher's Brilliant Strategy to Stop Future School Shootings-and It's Not About Guns](#)

[Teaching Youth and Teens How to Recognize the Signs & Signals of At-Risk Behavior and Potential Threats in Social Media](#)

[Storrs Aquatics](#)

[C.E.R.T. Training Class Series](#)

[When did it become a teacher's job to stop a bullet for your child?](#)

[Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)

[Resources for addressing trauma, violence, and grief in the aftermath of a mass shooting](#)

[Restoring a sense of well-being in children after a disaster](#) (Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress)