

High Road Academy News

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Fall 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New Staff, cont.	2
UBD: Social Studies Curriculum	2
Social Skills	3
Jokes/Riddles	3
Red Ribbon Week	4
Quotes	4
HRA Elections	5
Service Animals	5



A New Name and A New Mascot: High Road Academy Hammerheads



There have been some exciting changes on the High Road campus in Wallingford. First, our name has changed. We have been called High Road Student Learning Center since 1998, This year, we have been re-named to High Road Academy. Along with our new name, we decided to create a new mascot. We have historically been the High Road Eagles. This fall, we held a contest to decide on the type of animal that could most accurately depict our school. The shark was chosen by our students. From there, we held an art contest, asking all interested students to draw any type of shark they chose. There were a dozen entries that were entered into a school wide contest. The student body voted on the hammerhead shark pictured above. It was drawn by Zachary P. in classroom #4.

With a new name and a new mascot, we know it will be an exciting new year!

New Staff

We are very lucky to have 2 amazing new Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) that joined our staff this Fall, Mrs. Sara Alberti and Mrs. Jessica Kersting. To help us learn more about them, two of our middle school students, C.R. and K.S, interviewed them.

C.R.: Why did you choose to become SLPs?

Mrs. A: I originally wanted to be an Elementary Special Education teacher.

Continued on page 2

High Road Academy

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NEW STAFF continued

Mrs. A: When I went to observe for my student teaching, though, I saw a woman who was coming into the classroom and taking students out to work with them. She was an SLP. I decided to watch her and became fascinated by what she did. I eventually chose to go to school to become an SLP too.

C.R.: What do you have to do to become a SLP?:

Mrs. K. You have to go to 4 years of college and get a Bachelor's Degree. You then need to go to Graduate School for 2-3 years, do an internship where you practice the skills you learned in a real-life setting,, like a Nursing Home, and then you have to pass a National test.

K.S.: Where did you work before coming to High Road Academy?

Mrs. A.: I had finished going to school to become an SLP, but I actually was working in Sales in New York for a while. I decided I wanted to get back to helping people., though. I work part-time with the elderly and the sick in a Rehabilitation Facility as well as working here.

Mrs. K: I have worked in Buffalo, NY with young children in a hospital and then in South Carolina at a Skilled Nursing Facility with adults. I moved to Connecticut in May and began here at High Road Academy this Fall.

K.S.: Do you like working here?

Mrs. A and Mrs. K: Yes!



Understanding By Design: An innovative Social Studies Curriculum

This past summer, Representatives from all of the Connecticut High Road Schools met to look at the State Standards and Frameworks to develop an exciting new Social Studies curriculum called UBD, Understanding By Design. It is a “top down” approach where a general concept is introduced to the class. Our 8th grade students are being asked: “How do we explore new territories?”. From there, students are introduced to a range of skills, such as reading maps and graphs and exploring multi-media educational tools to assist them in learning about the main topic. To reach all different styles of learners, tactile, kinesthetic, written and verbal instruction is provided. To assess their grasp of the concepts and information, there are Performance Tasks which are much more than tests or quizzes. They are asked to do hands-on, interactive and creative projects. This can range from building a replica of a Native American lodging to writing a journal from the perspective of a Pilgrim child. They receive the opportunity to share their ideas with their fellow students, building their self-esteem and peer relationships.

We are finding that teachers and students are loving the new curriculum.

Learning and fun combined!

SOCIAL SKILLS CURRICULUM

Teaching Social Skills is an important part of the High Road Academy educational curriculum. These are the interpersonal skills needed for successful relationships and communication. Examples include listening to others, non-verbal language, cooperative play and positive self-image. This focus will assist all of our students reach their maximum personal potential. Each month, a new topic area is focused on,

building upon skills and often tying into holiday seasons or events.

In September, the students worked on Self-Awareness, identifying their own unique likes, dislikes, feelings, traditions and physical appearances.

In October, Self-Esteem was highlighted, and the importance of liking ourselves and recognizing strengths and accomplishments, great or

small.

In November, we are targeting Appreciating Others, following on the classic Thanksgiving themes.

Bulletin Board displays rotate monthly to give our students visual reminders of these skill sets. This month, there is a colorful autumn tree covered in leaves where students have written or drawn pictures about things or people in their lives they are thankful for.

Take time to appreciate those around you, especially your children and yourselves!



JOKES AND RIDDLES

Laughter is good for your health. Enjoy!

Q: What did the glue say to the teacher?

A: I'm stuck on you!

Q: What did the math book say to the other math book?

A: I've got problems!



RED RIBBON WEEK

Every October, High Road Academy joins many of the schools in the United States in celebrating Red Ribbon Week. This week is used across the country to provide education to youth on the importance of avoiding peer pressure and saying "NO" to drugs, alcohol and other forms of violence. This event began in 1985, commemorating the loss of a great Drug Enforcement Agent that was working in Mexico.

A number of

events were held during the week of October 17th to support this healthy message. Classroom instruction was provided, a DARE Officer met the student body, and a door decorating contest was held, where the students could display what they had learned and their commitment to healthy lifestyles and choices. One of the creative creations can be seen below.

There was also a poster contest where students individually depicted

their thoughts and feelings on substance use and its effects on bodies, minds and lives. One of the poster contest winners was Daniel W, in classroom #2.

Great work everyone!!!!



QUOTES OF THE MONTH

No one is perfect-that's why pencils have erasers.

Author Unknown

It's not how good you are. It's how good you want to be.

Paul Arden



HIGH ROAD ACADEMY ELECTIONS



Every Fall, there are Student Government Elections at High Road Academy. The students make posters announcing their intention to run and make speeches in front of the student body, sharing what they hope to do to improve the school and highlighting their personal characteristics that they feel would make them positive role-models. The Student Government positions are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Historian and Treasurer. Classroom Rep-

resentatives are also selected to act as liaisons between the Student Government and the classrooms.

The Student Government President is C. R. She shared a few words with us about her plans and experiences so far.

Q: How long have you been at High Road Academy?

A: I have been here for almost 2 years and have not been part of the Student Government before.

Q: Why did you choose to run for Student Government?:

A: I decided to run because I thought it would help me mature. I also like being the

center of attention and speaking in front of others. I have a lot of ideas to help the school. I am a kid, and I know what kids like.

Q: What are some of your ideas?:

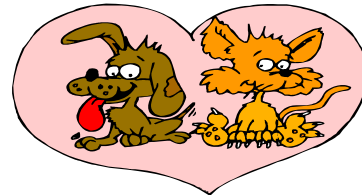
A: I want to help the school be cleaner and neater. I want the older kids to be role-models for the younger kids. I want to make sure we have fun field trips, too.

Q: Is there anything you are finding challenging in your new role?

A: Yes-making sure I am getting my pluses and being a good role-model to the other students.

Good luck !!!

Service Animals



Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people. When we hear the term service animals, we often think of people with physical disabilities such as blindness, deafness or a mobility limitation. In these situations, the animal guides and protects in a number of ways. Registered Service Animals are allowed to accompany their owners anywhere-into stores, to work, doctor's appointments, etc.

One of the High Road Academy students, R. M., wanted to share her views on another very important potential role of Service Animals. She has a wonderful, large, cuddly dog. He helps her with her anxiety. When she is feeling stressed, angry or overwhelmed, she can relax and rest with her dog. She actually inherited her beloved pet from relative who had passed away. Once in her care, the emotional benefits for R.M. became obvious. She hopes to soon get him registered as a Service Animal, allowing her to benefit from his calming effect everywhere she goes.