



WYOMISSING AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



insight

March 2014 | Volume 45, No. 3

Julia R. Vicente, Superintendent

PETE & C Student Showcase Features Wyo Area Students

Four Wyomissing Area students, **Gavin Babb, Katie Cush, Paul Gehret,** and **Allen Lau** from the new Robotics Independent Study Course were selected to participate at the Pennsylvania Educational Technology Expo and Conference (PETE & C) Student Showcase in Hershey,

WYOMISSING JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL

PA on February 11, 2014. The students worked on their display booth, some worthy pieces to display, and their sales pitch to convince other administrators and IT Directors to purchase 3-D printers for lucky students elsewhere.

The pictured custom-printed two-color WYO logo is an example of the collaboration between teacher **Andy Siggins** who designed it CAD software, the students who figured out how to print in two colors, and the IT Department's assistance with complicated software installations. Also pictured is a robot with ball and socket joints and fingers. Teacher **Curt Minich** predicts it is only a matter of time before they figure out how to install an Arduino board and motor inside its body so it can move!



Counterclockwise, left to right: **Katie Cush, Allen Lau, Paul Gehret,** and **Gavin Babb.**

MakerBot: Replicator™ 2X
EXPERIMENTAL 3D PRINTER



A look inside...

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If you have any questions regarding any of the information in this publication, please contact:

Julia R. Vicente, Superintendent
610-374-0739, ext. 1106
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School board members, seated left to right: – Michelle Davis, Lesa Butera, Karen McAvoy, and Jennafer Reilly
Standing, left to right – Scott Painter, Anne Seltzer, Gregory Portner, Julia Vicente, Sandra Reese, and Christopher Heinly

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The Wyomissing Area School Board's annual reorganization meeting was held on Tuesday, December 3, 2013. **Lesa Butera** was elected president and **Michelle Davis** was elected as vice president. New Board members **Christopher W. Heinly**, **Sandra A. Reese**, and **Jennafer K. Reilly** along with incumbent **Scott C. Painter, Esq.** were sworn in for a four-year term. Incumbent **Anne P. Seltzer** was sworn in for a two-year term.

Mrs. Butera announced the following board members were Committee chairs:

Curriculum – Michelle Davis
Technology – Gregory Portner
Personnel – Michelle Davis
Policy – Anne Seltzer
Finance – Gregory Portner
Facilities – Karen McAvoy

Development Advisory Ad Hoc co-chairs are **Lesa Butera** and **Karen McAvoy**.

SCHOOL BOARD reorganized

Remaining committee meetings for the year have been tentatively scheduled as follows:

Curriculum – 12:00 p.m. – Mar. 3, Mar. 31, May 5, June 2, Aug. 4, Sept. 2, Oct. 6, Nov. 3.

Technology – 12:00 p.m. – Mar. 26, Apr. 23, May 28, June 25, Aug. 27, Sept. 24, Oct. 22, Nov. 19.

Finance/Facilities – 11:00 a.m. – Mar. 5, Apr. 2, May 7, June 4, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5.

Personnel/Policy – 12:00 p.m. – Mar. 6, Apr. 3, May 8, June 5, Aug. 7, Sept. 4, Oct. 9, Nov. 6.

In the event a committee meeting is cancelled, notice will be posted on our website, www.wyoarea.org under the School Board tab, Committee Assignments as well as on the district building doors.

Each month, there are two public board meetings unless otherwise noted. Business Meetings with Committee Reports will be held the second Monday beginning at 6:00 p.m. Business meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. on the fourth Monday. Meetings are held in the Community Board Room of the Jr./Sr. High School. Residents are invited to attend.



Students in Erika Homan's homeroom show the plarn they made in art class.

Public Art on West Reading Playground Fence Uses Poetry as Inspiration

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This spring, the WREC playground will become the sight of a new and innovative public art project. This school-wide project will involve all WREC students in its creation, and

WEST READING ELEMENTARY CENTER

will be inspired by a poetry unit of the sixth grade Language Arts classes. The students will design and create a work of public art for the west side of the WREC playground fence (the side facing 5th Avenue). Inspiration for this work comes from the term *Yarn Bomb*, a street art that employs colorful displays of knitted or crocheted yarn or fiber rather than paint or chalk. The subject matter for this work of art will feature a design made entirely of text. The design will be made of plastic yarn (plarn) and other weather-proof materials and

will remain on display for about one month. The chain link fence will act as an armature to support the various materials used in the project.

The text for this project will be the result of an artist/poet in residence. Berks County Poet Laureate **Craig Czury**, author of 20 books of poetry, earned his M.F.A. degree in Creative Writing from Wilkes University. A rostered artist with the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts since 1984, Craig has been creating poetry performances and poetry environments in schools, community centers, homeless and women's shelters, prisons and mental hospitals all over the world. Mr. Czury will be in residence at WREC for about three days.

Following Mr. Czury's residency, the various components of this project will be created in Language Arts and Art classes over the winter

months. In addition to the curricular ties with Language Arts and art, math skills are also used as the layout and planning for the design involves scale drawings and plotting the image using the grid of the chain link fence. The project will be installed in the playground in May. A reception will be held to celebrate the completed work with parents and the community at that time. The project will remain in place until after Art on the Avenue in mid-June when it will be dismantled with the help of community volunteers.

Welcome to the WHEC Book Room!

Students at WHEC are reading more than ever thanks to the addition of a new K-2 book room and improvements to the third and fourth grade book room.

WYOMISSING HILLS ELEMENTARY CENTER

The K-2 book room is conveniently located in the Reading Suite and provides a variety of leveled books for teachers to use as a resource in their classrooms. Students read these books during guided reading lessons, as well as during the literacy block. This year in our K-2 classrooms, Daily 5 literacy centers are being implemented during our literacy block time. In one of these centers, "Read to Self," students read books from their individual book boxes in order to improve reading stamina and fluency.



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The third and fourth grade book room is located next to the library and contains many new and interesting novels. These novels are used for author studies, literature circles and Reader's Workshop. During Reader's Workshop, stu-

"Our new book room has been an exciting addition to our literacy program. We are able to put a wide variety of quality literature into the hands of students, including both fiction and non-fiction texts, that are targeted to the students' precise instructional reading level.

Additionally, children are able to build a small personal "library" through the use of individual book boxes.

Re-reading familiar books builds fluency and encourages a love of reading for informational purposes as well as for pure pleasure."

Nancy Schlegel, First Grade Teacher



"The book room is an excellent supplement to our classroom libraries. It's a convenient and organized space for me to find books on all levels that my students enjoy reading."



**Jill Werley,
Second Grade
Teacher**

dents read books at their independent level and discuss what they've read with their teacher in a one-on-one setting. Both the students and teachers benefit from these personalized book discussions and are thoroughly enjoying the new novels!

The latest addition to both of these book rooms will be the supplementation of varied levels of non-fiction books. With the implementation of the Common Core Standards, Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center will be focusing on putting more non-fiction titles in the hands of our students and a love of reading in their hearts!

STEVE MURRAY



The Wyomissing Area School District would like to welcome **Steve Murray**, as Assistant Principal at the Jr./Sr. High School. Steve earned his bachelor's degree in Secondary Social Studies from the

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, his master's degree in Classroom Technology from Wilkes University, and his administrative certificate from Alvernia University. He spent more than 14 years with the Governor Mifflin School District working as a teacher, coach, and an administrator.

As a teacher, Murray taught a variety of Social Studies courses at the high school and helped write the curriculum for the Early American History course. He was named the head varsity baseball coach in 2006 and guided the Mustangs to three Berks County Championships in 2008, 2009, and 2011. In 2011, he was hired as the Associate Principal for the Governor Mifflin High School and focused on classroom instruc-

tion, curriculum, discipline, teacher supervision, state testing, and in-service activities. Steve was inducted into the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Athletic Hall of Fame in 2011. He began his new position at Wyomissing on January 2, 2014.

Murray is a firm believer in balancing overall student growth and wellness by incorporating extra-curricular activities with a strong academic philosophy to provide for a well-rounded education. He looks forward to collaborating with the faculty, staff, and the community at Wyomissing to continue our tradition of excellence in education.

Steve's wife, Kate, is a local author and web designer. They have two children, Carla and Joe.



A REMINDER TO RESIDENTS

YOUR LOCAL EARNED INCOME TAX RETURN FOR 2013 MUST BE FILED BY APRIL 15, 2014.

Anyone, who has earned income, regardless of age, for the year 2013, must file a tax return if they lived in the Wyomissing Area School District. Even if your employer has withheld and paid your tax, this return must be completed. This obligation is incurred by anyone who is a wage earner, farmer, unincorporated business (including partnership and individual proprietorship) and ALL OTHERS who received earned income or profits for services rendered.

Website: www.berkseit.com

Failure to file on time will result in a penalty and interest charge of 12% per annum and additional costs of collection. Regulations also provide for a \$500 fine for refusal to file.

Residents of the Wyomissing Area School District are required to file a tax return, **EVEN IF THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED A FORM THROUGH THE MAIL**. Forms may be obtained by contacting the: Berks Earned Income Tax Collection Bureau, 920 Van Reed Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610; Phone: 610-372-8439; Toll Free Phone: 1-855-372-8439; Fax: 610-372-1102.

congratulations!

to the following students
for their achievements...



BCTC Students of the Quarter

Each quarter, BCTC instructors select a student from their program whose attitude, skills, and knowledge gained during that particular quarter exceeded the standard. The student shows initiative and integrity in performing their tasks and is, overall, the best student for that quarter.

Wyomissing Area students recognized for this honor for the first quarter were **Victor Bones** in Drafting/Design Technology and **Omar Ortiz** in Automotive Technology. Omar Ortiz also received the recognition for the second quarter as well. The students received a certificate of recognition and were honored as a group at a breakfast reception for the morning students, and the afternoon students were honored at a luncheon reception. The students were also photographed and their portrait is displayed prominently throughout the BCTC campus they attend.

Spelling Bee

On January 27, 2014 the 34th Annual Wyomissing Area – Reading Eagle Company Spelling Bee was held. The top six spellers in grades 6, 7 & 8 competed on the Jr./Sr. High stage in front of their peers, family and staff. Eighth grader **Christopher Poon** was the overall champion and sixth grader **Caroline Allen** finished second. The winning word was nucleolus. This marked the second championship finish for Poon; he won as a sixth grader in 2012. Both spellers from the competition will advance to the Berks County Championship Spelling Bee on Monday, March 10, at 7:00 p.m. in the Miller Center for the Arts at Reading Area Community College.

You Be the Chemist

For the first time ever, students from Wyomissing Area Jr/Sr High School participated in the Berks County **You be the Chemist** Challenge. The county competition was held on Saturday, February 8, at Penn State University Berks Campus. Wyomissing began preparation for this competition in November, when representatives from Brenntag North America, the sponsor of the Berks You be the Chemist Challenge, reached out to Wyomissing administration. **Andrea Landrum** and **Mary Kate Bogert** took on the responsibility of organizing this program for our 7th and 8th grade students.

Once word spread throughout the Junior High, 25 students expressed interest and attended several organizational meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to explain the format of the competition. Students were provided with a study packet, issued by the challenge creators themselves, which outlines the content students are to know for the competition. Essentially, students study the packet and are challenged with multiple-choice questions drawn from the information in the packet. While most of the studying was completed independently at home, students were also given the opportunity to stay after school every Thursday with Mrs. Bogert to study with peers, as well as ask her questions and receive her science support.

Due to the large number of interested schools and students, we were limited to 10 seats at the Berks County competition. A qualifying exam was administered to determine the top 10 performers to be taken to the competition. These students were: 8th



Drafting/Design
Technology:
Victor Bones



Automotive
Technology:
Omar Ortiz



Samuel Botterbusch (left) and Andrew Zhou (right) hold their trophies.

graders **Sam Botterbusch, Tobias Walker, Andrew Zhou,** and **Matthew Driben**; and 7th graders **Chase DePue, Ian Rogers, Jaison Dasika, Amy Rogers, Joey Ambarian,** and **Colin Campbell.**

The Berks Challenge then utilized electronic clickers to test the students through a series of rounds to narrow it down to the top four performing students. Our students overall did well with the following

exciting results — At the start of Round 1, there were 78 contestants representing 10 school districts. In Round 2, the 78 contestants were narrowed down to 40: with six of Wyo Area's 10 students making it this far! Wyomissing had three students represented in Rounds 3 and 4 and during the final round, with four students remaining in the competition, **Andrew Zhou** claimed fourth place, and **Sam Botterbusch** took first place! Both Andrew and Sam will compete in the state competition at Penn State at the end of April.

The You be the Chemist Challenge is an extremely positive experience in that it not only fosters interest in science, but also promotes good study habits. Students are learning, and are motivated with a healthy dose of competition. Based on the many smiles throughout the day, it was very clear that all 10 of the Wyo Area competitors had a great experience.

MATHCOUNTS

The Junior High Math Team consisting of **Samuel Botterbusch, Tobias Walker, Matthew Driben,** and **Joseph Cullen** won first place at the 31st annual regional MATHCOUNTS competition held February 1, 2014 at Penn State Berks. This marks the second year in a row the team won the championship. More than 130 students participated and the following students placed in the top 10 individual competition: Sam Botterbusch finished second; Chris Poon, third; Matt Driben fifth; and Tobias Walker, tenth. The team and Chris Poon will compete at the state competition in March 7-8 in Harrisburg.

STEM Design Challenge

This spring two fourth grade teams and a fifth grade team will put their creativity to use and enter the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Design Challenge to be held at Berks County Intermediate Unit. The challenge for 2014 is to create an environmentally friendly people mover. This vehicle must be able to travel at least four feet across the table and must overcome at least one obstacle (hill, curves, landforms, etc.). Obstacles are to be chosen and designed by the team. As a component of the presentation, team members should be able to explain how their vehicle is environmentally friendly, discuss how many people could fit in their people mover, and describe the obstacle and how their vehicle will overcome it.

Each team consists of four students and will have two hours to complete their project using K'Nex kits and motors. The structure must use at least one motor and may contain up to 1,400 K'Nex pieces. Each team will need to supply the narrative form and a blueprint for the competition as well as prepare a presentation on their model explaining how they answered the challenge. Teams will be judged on their creativity, teamwork, challenge success, design, and presentation. Competing on the fourth grade teams, coached by **Patricia Kane,** are **Elizabeth Harenza, Betsy Lucas, Ian Kim, Brandon Vargo, Portia Sockel, Katie Schadler, Madeleine Piersol,** and **Tyler Lentz.** **Aiden Mack** and **Michela Kohl** are alternates. The fifth grade team, coached by **Robin Kline** and **Rose Sneeringer,** is dubbed the UnWREcables, and includes **Zane Pennypacker, Emma Morris, Owen Jakubek,** and **Nina Botvin.**

Dancing with the Stars



First place winners Dr. Corey Jones and Susan Derr with a big finish.



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Wyomissing Area High School teachers took their talent to the dance floor in a fundraising event for the MiniTHON to combat pediatric cancer. In a spoof of the popular *Dancing with the Stars*, eight faculty couples competed for the title on February 6. The partners received three complimentary professional salsa lessons from **Daniel Egusquiza** of the Yocum Institute in preparation for the event. The couples chose their own music for the performance and could opt to add a twist to the dance. Pairs participating included: **Dr. Corey Jones + Susan Derr, Mike Vecchio + Jennifer Ronayne, BJ Dramby + Colleen Vargo, Curt Minich + Bethanne Mitchell, Todd Zechman + Teresa Wood, Tony Alvarez + Meredith Rosa, Jim Delp + Margaret Shomgard** and **Tim Hetrich + Jennifer Mangold**. Science teachers **John Yoder** and **Chris Nugent** emceed the event and **Mary Kate Bogert** recapped each performance with the dancers. Scores from the judging panel of **Julia Vicente**, superintendent; **Matthew Stem**, assistant superintendent; and **Joseph Alcaro**, faculty member, counted for a portion of the performers' scores.

The remaining percentage was decided by the audience. Each spectator received a voting ticket with the price of admission; however, additional voting tickets were available for purchase. Dr. Jones and Mrs. Derr received the coveted first place trophy. Mr. Vecchio and Ms. Ronayne placed second, and Mr. Alvarez and Ms. Rosa, third.

United Artists Salon in West Reading provided hair and make-up services for the female participants and Jack O'Reilly Tuxedo Rentals in Muhlenberg provided discounted tuxedos for the men. Awards & More in West Reading provided free refurbishing services for recycled district trophies. With the help from the generous service providers and an enthusiastic crowd, the event raised \$2,330 for the fight against pediatric cancer.

PARTANS

Third place winners Tony Alvarez and Meredith Rosa drop it to the floor!

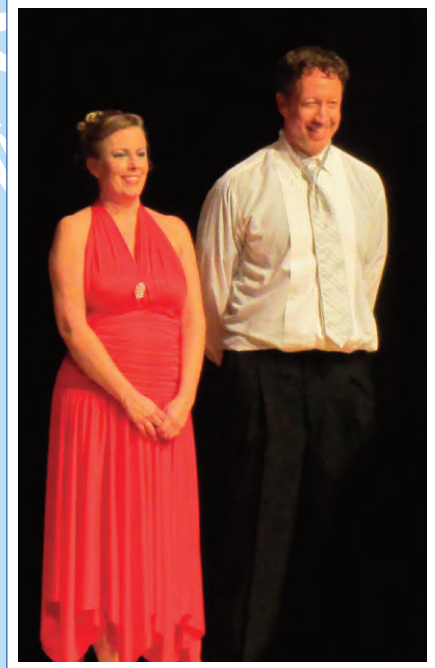


The cast and crew of Dancing with the Spartans.

Emcees John Yoder and Chris Nugent arrive with a special guest.



Jim Delp and Margaret Shomgard travel elegantly across the stage.



Curt Minich and Bethanne Mitchell wait for their scores.

42nd

Annual All-Sports Awards Dinner



**Wednesday, May 28, 2014
6 p.m., Stokesay Castle**

This community-sponsored dinner honors Wyomissing Area student athletes for their dedication to varsity and junior varsity sports. Awards are presented to the outstanding male and female team members of each sport, district and state qualifying teams, and individual athletes as well as county, district, and state championship teams. All senior athletes are specially recognized. Trophies and team plaques are purchased by the All-Sports Booster Club. The Nancy M. Hemmerich-Franklin E. Poore III All-Sports Scholarships and the LeRoy "Pro" Nelson Awards are presented.

Approximately 500 student athletes, family members, friends, coaches, school administrators, and special guests attend the Wyomissing Area All-Sports Awards Dinner. This volunteer effort raises funds to allow each Wyomissing Area athlete in grades 9-12 to attend the dinner free of charge and honors student athletes for their participation in varsity and junior varsity sports.

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all-sports awards dinner ticket order form

DINNER TICKETS: \$30/person _____ Tickets x \$30 = _____

HAPPY AD: \$10/each (15 words or less) The deadline is Friday, May 16.

ALUMNI RECOGNITION: \$10 contribution

Alumni _____ Year _____ Sport(s) _____

Sponsored by _____

TAKE A SPARTAN TO DINNER: \$25/student

_____ Sponsors x \$25 = _____

Your name _____ Address _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

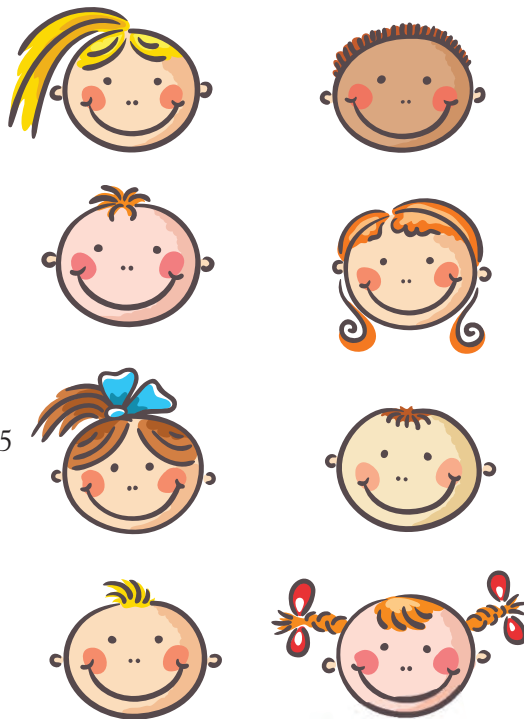
PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: WAHS All-Sports Booster Club.

Return completed form with payment to: Kathryn Magrane, c/o WASD Athletic Dept., 5 Goldfinch Dr. Wyomissing, PA 19610

Kindergarten Registration

The Wyomissing Area School District will conduct its 2014-15 kindergarten orientation on **Wednesday, April 9, Thursday, April 10, and Friday, April 11** at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center. Orientation sessions will be conducted from 9:00 - 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., and 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. A parent and eligible kindergarten child must attend one session. Children who reside in the district and will be five years old on or before September 1, 2014 are eligible for kindergarten.

In addition to attending an orientation session, parents must register their child with the District Office prior to the start of school. Please contact **Linda Bentz** at lbentz@wyoarea.org or at 610-374-0739, extension 1115 between April 9 and May 23 to schedule an appointment. Registration materials are available online at www.wyoarea.org/registration and **MUST** be completed prior to scheduling an appointment.



Sr. High Concert

Tuesday, May 20
7:30 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
Auditorium

Jr. High Drama Presentation

Willy Wonka Junior
Friday, March 7, and
Saturday, March 8
7:00 p.m.

Annual Art Show

Tuesday, May 20 –
Thursday, May 22
5-8 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
“Old Gym”

Sr. High Drama Presentation

The Sound of Music
Friday, May 2, and
Saturday, May 3
7:30 p.m.

Grade 4 Concert

Thursday, May 15
6:30 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
Auditorium

Jr. High Concert

Tuesday, May 13
7:30 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
Auditorium

Grade 3 Concert

Thursday, May 22
6:30 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
Auditorium

WREC Spring Concert

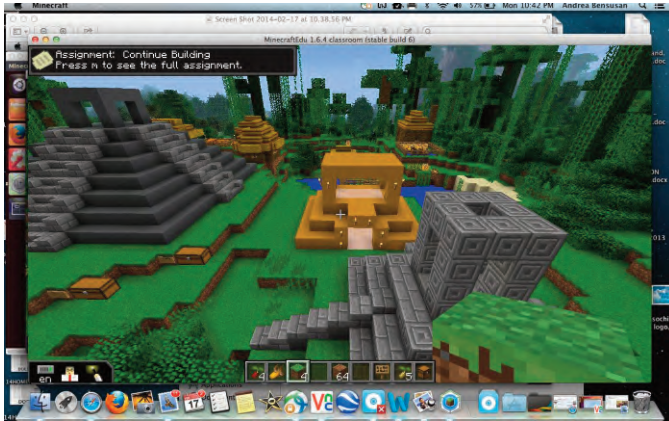
Thursday, May 8
7:00 p.m.

Jr./Sr. High School
Auditorium

2014 Spring

ART, MUSIC & THEATER





Kids Dig MINECRAFT Pilot Program at WREC

The Minecraft craze that is sweeping the country has arrived in the WREC Computer Lab! Minecraft, developed by Swedish video game developer Mojang, is a game where players mine materials, build structures and explore new worlds. Working with a group

WEST READING ELEMENTARY CENTER

of five sixth-grade students who are avid Minecrafters, technology support specialist **Andrew Hoover** and sixth-grade teacher **Andrea Bensusan** are teaming up to conduct a pilot program to explore educational applications of this popular game.

Using MinecraftEDU, an application developed by an international team of educators and programmers, Hoover set up a server and made the technology accessible for a “test run” by the WREC students in a Minecraft world. Bensusan saw an opportunity to extend the sixth grade Social Studies curriculum by having the students learn about the culture of the Maya, a topic covered during a unit on the early civilizations of Latin America. After talking with one of her students, **Matt Seley**, a Minecraft enthusiast, Seley’s mother, **Pam Seley**, put Bensusan in touch with the American Museum of Natural History in New York City to learn more about their “Minecraft at the Museum” program.

The pilot program team of sixth graders **Matt Seley, Jack Garapola, Tony Guiseppe, Weston Schaeffer**, and **Jonathan Kremer** has enjoyed learning about the Aztec, Inca and Maya cultures and developing a Mayan region in their Minecraft world. After exploring Minecraft “biomes” to choose a region that geographically matched the area in Middle America where the Mayan people lived, they quickly jumped in to building Mayan village huts and temples modeled after Chichen Itza, farming foods (corn, beans, squash and avocados) that the Maya harvested, and “spawning” creatures like jaguars and turkeys that were native to the Yucatan peninsula.

Once the pilot program wraps up, Hoover and Bensusan are hoping to create a program of after-school and summer opportunities for students using MinecraftEDU.

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*Minecraft pilot program students **Jonathan Kremer, Jack Garapola, Matt Seley, Weston Schaeffer**, and **Tony Guiseppe** with Coordinators **Andrea Bensusan** and **Andrew Hoover**.*

mark your calendar

March 24 – April 4

PSSA Testing –
Math and Reading
Grades 3-8

April 7-11

PSSA Testing –
Writing
Grades 5 & 8

PSSA
Math and Reading
Make-up

April 9-11

Kindergarten
Registration

April 14-16

School in Session -
Snow Make-up Days

April 14-25

PSSA Writing
Make-up

April 17-18

Spring Break
(School Closed)

April 21

School in Session –
Snow Make-up Day

April 28 – May 9

PSSA Testing –
Science
Grades 4 & 8

May 12-23

Spring Keystone Exams;
Grade 11

May 26

Memorial Day
(School Closed)

June 5

Baccalaureate at
Atonement Lutheran
Church
6:30 p.m.

June 6

Commencement
6:30 p.m. at
Scottish Rite Cathedral

June 13

Last Student Day (subject
to change for additional
snow make-up days)



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Our Mission:

The Wyomissing Area School District, in partnership with parents and community, is committed to:

- educate all students to their fullest potential
- provide all students with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to be successful in the 21st century
- encourage all students to be productive, responsible citizens and lifelong learners.