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BERNE KNOX WESTERLO

CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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# RAILBlazer

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## A GUST OF ENERGY



Members of Carol Willsey's 2008-09 4th grade class shown with a model wind turbine they worked on this past spring.

## GREEN ENERGIES PROVIDE POWERFUL LESSONS FOR BKW STUDENTS

With the windy, wide-open spaces of the Hilltowns just outside her classroom window, fourth grade teacher Carol Willsey sets the stage for a class debate about wind energy.

This is one of many activities Willsey plans throughout the school year to introduce her students to many different forms of alternative or "green" energy, such as wind, solar, hydro, geothermal and nuclear power.

"The kids really get into talking about the pros and cons of it," Willsey says. "We know people have mixed views on wind turbines, and some kids talk about what they hear their relatives discuss regarding what's good and bad about wind turbines."

Although Willsey has included alternative energy discussions in her class curriculum plans for the last four years, she feels the topic has taken on a special relevance within the last year, as green energy became a hot topic nationally

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## KELLER NAMED NEW DEAN OF STUDENTS

NEW DEAN AIMS TO "HELP STUDENTS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL" BY TEACHING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

The district has hired Brian Keller to serve as the new dean of students at BKW Secondary School. He began work September 21.

Keller received a bachelor's degree in history and teaching certification from Siena College in 2002, and then a master's degree in educational administration from the College of Saint Rose in 2007.

The United States Army first brought Keller to New York State, moving him from his hometown of Springfield, Missouri and stationing him at Fort Drum.

"When I'd tell my students I was from Missouri, they were always jealous because I never had to take a New York State Regents exam," Keller says with a laugh.



"I want to teach positive behavior by relating that concept to the everyday lives of students."

- Brian Keller,  
Dean of Students,  
BKW Secondary School

See "KELLER," Page 2

## News & Notes

### Capital Project possibly postponed until spring

Capital project construction originally scheduled to begin in September will likely not begin until the spring of 2010 due to a delay in the project's approval by the state.

The State Education Department, which must give final approval on the construction plans, requires documentation of the local water capacity to fight fires on the BKW campus. On September 14, Project Architect Karl Griffith told the Board of Education the project cannot proceed until the state receives written assurance from local fire departments of its full capability to fight fires at BKW. Griffith said the district might also have to install a fire hydrant supplied from existing water storage tanks or possibly a water storage tower on district property to satisfy the state's inquiry. Though the matter will likely be resolved before fall's end, the time needed to complete the construction bidding process will probably not allow for fall construction work. Griffith hopes to resolve the matter in time to receive bids on the project before winter. Check [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org) regularly for further updates on the resolution of this matter and possible changes to the capital project construction schedule.

### Support BKW athletics by donating sports equipment

BKW Sports Boosters is sponsoring a sport equipment sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, December 5 in the Secondary School cafeteria. To donate your sports equipment to the sale, drop off items at the Elementary School cafeteria between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. December 5.

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### GREEN, continued from Page 1

during the presidential election.

Locally, green energy – particularly wind energy – inspires spirited debate among Hilltown residents who favor or oppose wind turbine construction in their neighborhoods.

Further, the BKW district is now considering an energy performance contract that would use alternative energy and conservation measures to help the district save money and operate more efficiently. The district's review of a possible energy performance contract and the local green energy discussions provide a perfect backdrop for her green energy lessons, Willsey says.

"We talk about the vocabulary of renewable energy, the different types," she says, "then students pick one and write a report on the pros and cons of that particular type of alternative energy."

In the spring, the class visits an "off-the-

grid" home in Knox that makes use of wind and solar energy where Willsey makes sure to point out the "solar clothes dryer" – otherwise known as a clothesline.

Thanks to a \$300 grant from Colonial Plumbing of Albany, the students have the materials necessary to build their own model wind turbines, which they will connect to generators and then test for efficiency by altering blade angles and turbine positions.

"The kids are very interested in alternative energy, and I think it's because they hear about it so much in the news and from the adults in their lives," Willsey says. "The students understand the controversy. But I don't want to tell them what to think about alternative energy. I tell them, 'This is for your generation to figure out.' They will be the ones working in this industry, and I always tell them I can't wait to see what they come up with!"

### KELLER, continued from Page 1

He began teaching in 2003, first at the Granville Central School District for three years and then Maple Hill Central School District, where he taught for four years.

"While I'm sad to leave the Maple Hill family, I'm so excited to be joining such a great group of professionals and students at BKW," Keller says. "This is going to be a great new challenge and a wonderful way to grow."

The Board of Education created the dean of students position this past summer to replace the Associate Principal post formerly held by Fred Marcil, who has returned to the teaching staff this school year.

The dean of students is charged with helping to bolster student morale and conduct, in addition to handling student disciplinary actions.

Keller says he plans to take a positive approach to the newly created position.

"I'm a very positive person, and I want that to be reflected in my work," Keller says. "My goal is to help students reach their potential and learn from their mistakes. I don't want to be known as the disciplinarian no one wants to see. Rather, I want to teach positive behavior by relating that concept to the everyday lives of students. I think if the students and I

work together, it'll be great."

*"I'm so excited to be joining such a great group of professionals and students at BKW. This is going to be a great new challenge and a wonderful way to grow."*

**— BRIAN KELLER ON BEING DEAN OF STUDENTS**



## 6TH GRADE WORK STACKS UP



Sixth grade students holding piles of binders and supplies head to class on the second day of school. Teachers say the 6th grade students are adjusting well to attending classes in both the Elementary and Secondary schools, and understand they must arrive at classes on time and fully prepared to learn. For more information on the 6th grade, log on to [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org), go to the Middle School page and click on "6th Grade."

## BOARD OF EDUCATION BEGINS YEAR-LONG SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

*BOARD AIMS TO HAVE SUPERINTENDENT IN PLACE BY JULY 1, 2010*

When former Superintendent Steven Schrade retired in August, the BKW Board of Education immediately began work on finding a permanent replacement.

The Board expects their work to continue through most of the school year, with the goal of appointing a superintendent effective July 1, 2010. In the meantime, Kimberly LaBelle is at the helm as interim superintendent for the entire 2009-10 school year.

"We are very pleased and supportive of the job Kim is doing," says Board of Education President Maureen Sikule. "We are grateful to have her as our interim superintendent while we conduct our search."

The Board is currently seeking input from members of the BKW community on the characteristics they would most like to see in a superintendent. Once those characteristics are determined, they will be included in the official advertisement for the post.

*"The board plans to involve different groups of district stakeholders in the superintendent search process."*

— MAUREEN SIKULE,  
PRESIDENT, BKW BOARD  
OF EDUCATION

"The Board plans to involve different groups of district stakeholders – from parents and community members to teachers, support staff and administrators – in the superintendent search process," Sikule stated.

If you are interested in helping the Board with the superintendent search process, please e-mail them at [berneknoxwesterloboardofed@gmail.com](mailto:berneknoxwesterloboardofed@gmail.com).



## News&amp;Notes

*Continued from previous page*

## Pancake breakfast planned to support Varsity baseball spring trip

The Varsity Baseball Team is planning a trip to South Carolina during April vacation week. To defray the cost, the team is sponsoring a pancake breakfast from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Saturday, October 17 at Applebee's Restaurant in Glenmont. Pre-sale tickets are \$5 and can be purchased through any varsity player. Call Coach Teats at 872-5150 with any questions.

## Fall sports schedules online

Download and print fall sports schedules by sport. Log on to the athletics page at [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org) and click on "Fall 2009 Sports Schedules" in the page's right column. A full list of fall sports coaches and contact information is also available. If you have further questions, contact Athletic Director Fred Marcil at 872-0950 or e-mail him at [fremarcil@bkwcsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:fremarcil@bkwcsd.k12.ny.us).

## Show your BKW pride with items from Sports Boosters

You can now buy BKW sports apparel and spirit items from the Sports Boosters Club directly from their Web site. Log on to [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org) and click on "BKW Sports Boosters" to view items and download an order form.

## BKW welcomes new staff

BKW is very pleased to welcome five new staff members to the team as well as two new staff members who are filling in for maternity leaves. To learn more about our new staff, log on to <http://www.bkwschools.org/news/0910/newstaff.htm>.

KIMBERLY A. LABELLE  
Interim Superintendent

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## HELP US PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE FLU VIRUS

In the BKW Central School District, we have taken several steps to prepare for the H1N1 influenza, also known as "swine flu," during this year's flu season. While we continue to teach our students recommended methods for preventing the spread of flu during the school day, we ask that you help reinforce these methods with your children at home. Procedures include:

- Washing hands often with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds (about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- Keeping hands away from the face and avoid touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of an elbow.
- Staying home if you have a fever of 100° F or more accompanied by other flu-like symptoms (cough, runny nose, stuffy nose) and not returning until the fever is gone for at least 24 hours.

For more resources on H1N1 flu, including frequently asked questions and information from the Centers for Disease Control, please log on to [www.bkwschools.org](http://www.bkwschools.org).

## BKW TECHNOLOGY ROOMS REVAMPED



**B**KW students now have access to better technology equipment thanks to upgrades made in the Elementary and Secondary schools this past summer.

The upgrades were made possible by funding through federal and state grants.

The distance learning room (above) received a total makeover with new equipment and a re-designed layout. In the picture above, teacher Mr. Lemire conducts a class with BKW students as well as students from



the Cobleskill-Richmondville and St. Regis Falls school districts.

In the Elementary School (inset), students are now using a remodeled computer lab equipped with new computers and more supportive chairs. In this picture, students are learning how to properly take care of the new computer workstations.

