

October 2019

# Southwest School

340 Litchfield Street, Torrington, CT 06790

<http://torringtonsouthwest.s16.sharpschool.com/>

T: 860-489-2311 Fax: (860) 489-2324



Safety of all is our highest priority. As you know each month we practice different safety drills. On October 11 we will practice our annual bus evacuation drill working with the safety monitors, drivers, and staff of All-Star Transportation. Students on the first wave arrival at both Southwest and our sister school Vogel-Wetmore will be practicing the bus evacuation drill at their respective schools. By practicing the drill with the first wave students at each school, this allows the opportunity for all students who ride our buses to participate in this safety drill. Safety is everyone's shared responsibility. Please continue to encourage your children to follow the safety protocols put in place at our schools. Thank you.



## Upcoming Events

**October 11: Bus Evacuation Drill; first wave only upon arrival to school**

**October 11: All School Assembly**

**October 14: Columbus Day, No School**

**October 17: PTO Meeting; 6:00 PM (meeting moved to Vogel-Wetmore)**

**October 17: PLC Day; Early Dismissal; 1:35 PM**

**October 18: PTO Harvest Fest @ Vogel-Wetmore; 5:30 – 7:30 PM**

**October 21: Progress Report Information Night; 5:00 PM @ Vogel-Wetmore & 6:30 at Torrington School**

**October 23: BOE Meeting at THS; 6:00 PM**

*Care for Self, Care for Others*



# Principal's Message

Hello Southwest Dragon Families,

As we enter the month of October it has been nice to see your children adjust to their new schedules, teachers, and classroom routines. October is such a beautiful time of the year and we look forward to the beautiful colors Mother Nature brings us during the autumn season. Our PTO will be sponsoring a wonderful Harvest Fest on October 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM at Vogel-Wetmore School. Please mark your calendars now and enjoy a few hours with other families as we celebrate the change in season with some delicious goodies and games.

On October 21<sup>st</sup> there will be an informational session for all elementary school families to explain our new progress reports. There are two sessions and you may attend whichever one works best with your schedule. One session will be at Vogel-Wetmore School at 5:00 PM and another session is at 6:30 PM at Tarringford School.

We will be having our first monthly assembly on October 11 to recognize student accomplishments for the month of September. Each team will select one student as their Dragon of the Month. The Dragon of the Month will be a student who demonstrates our school theme of *"Care for Self; Care for Others"* and demonstrates our district expectations of:

- We are respectful - Take care of self, people, places and things
- We are responsible - Control your words and actions
- We are safe - Make healthy choices for self and others

Students with perfect attendance will also be recognized. Attendance is vital to a successful, enriched learning experience. One hundred percent attendance is defined as being present 100% of the time, no tardies, no dismissals, no absences. An excused absence, tardy or dismissal will not count towards 100% attendance. Families are encouraged to schedule appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.

Mary Ann C. Buchanan, Ed. D., Principal

# Teacher Messages



Mrs. Hammer; Mrs. Martin  
Jade Team – Grade 4

The 4th grade Jade Team students of Mrs. Hammer and Mrs. Martin have had an awesome month getting to know each other. In math, we've started the school year by reviewing and extending what we know about multiplication and division. We've been learning to use different models and strategies to solve problems and are working to increase our fluency in using multiplication facts. Our fourth-grade scientists have begun learning about how our Earth changes over time. We are studying the life cycle of a mountains, beginning with research and investigations to understand how mountains are formed. We've explored collisions using ramps and toy cars and plate tectonics with an activity involving graham crackers and shaving cream.



To begin the school year, Jade Team played plenty of icebreaker games as a way to get to know one another. In Mrs. Martin's class, we have been launching Reader's and Writer's Workshop. In reading workshop, we learned how to choose "just-right" books and to build our stamina during independent

reading time. Students are really loving the read-aloud novel called *The Tiger Rising* by Kate DiCamillo. We have been pushing our thinking as we “stop and jot” to grow our ideas about the text. One of students’ favorite lessons so far was reading aloud to practice our “character voice” and our “narrator voice.” Students were excited to practice this with their independent reading books.

During writing workshop, we created “mantras” to motivate ourselves as writers. Students made signs that said mantras such as, “Take a deep breath and keep going!” This was a reminder to keep that pencil in hand and continue writing our ideas down in our notebooks. Students are trying to focus their writing on a small moment from their lives and really elaborate with lots of great details.

Most importantly, Mrs. Martin’s classes are building a classroom community and routine to make each day at Southwest a success!

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Mrs. Yagid; Mrs. Lebel  
Shamrock Team – Grade 4

This year is getting off to a great start. We are enjoying getting to know the students and working with them. In math, students are finishing up Unit 1 which has a heavy focus on multiplication and division. Students enjoyed sharing the strategies they learned as third graders. In science, students are working on the NGSS Unit called, “Changing Earth”. Students are exploring the changes of a mountain over time. In reading the focus has been on fiction. We’ve recently finished a book titled, *On My Honor* which is a heart-wrenching story where the characters make bad choices. Our students have learned a real-life lesson and have thoroughly enjoyed the novel. In writing, we are also

focusing on fiction. We are using our real-life experiences to create good characters and story lines. Finally, in geography we are learning map skills which will help us throughout the year as we learn about our country. It's no Sham, we Rock!

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Mrs. Melaragno; Mrs. Bruno; Mrs. Mooney  
Emerald Team – Grade 4

In Mrs. Mooney's classroom we are off to a great start to our year!!! We have been busy getting to know one another and are on our way to creating a close-knit classroom family. We have been inspired by the words of Mahatma Ghandi "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Each student chose a character trait that truly defines him/her. They then gave examples to prove that he/she possesses that trait. The students also wrapped up the assignment by providing their meaning of that word. These projects, along with the student's pictures, are displayed throughout our classroom. They are beautiful and pose as a great reminder to all that one person can truly make a difference in someone else's world. I am looking forward to seeing all of these wonderful traits being put into action throughout the year.

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I have truly enjoyed getting to know both of my classes this month. It's been an honor to be able to teach both Humanities and STEM.

Mrs. Bruno's AM class:

We are started our second units for both Reading and Writing. In Reading Workshop we are focusing on interpreting characters. We are reading *The Tiger*

*Rising* as a mentor text to help us really understand a character’s internal and external characteristics. We have also started to track our thoughts using sticky notes! In Writing we have begun our focus on narrative writing. We are beginning to develop strong story ideas, settings, and characters.

Mrs. Bruno’s PM class:

We have jumped into our first science unit. We are studying our changing Earth. One of our main focuses in this unit is determining if a mountain has a lifecycle. We have completed a few science experiments to help us understand plate boundaries and energy. We can’t wait to participate in more hands-on learning!

In Math we are moving into Unit 2. We will be working on multi-digit multiplication and early division. We are continuing to use open number lines, arrays, and ratio tables to how our thinking. We are also going to continue our understanding of multiples and prime and composite numbers.

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Mrs. Melaragno/Grade 4

Math - Unit 1 began with a study of multiplication and division, focusing in particular on models, strategies and multiplicative comparisons. Students have used open number lines, arrays, and ratio tables. They have also solved multiplication and division story problems and participated in completing the daily math Egyptian calendar expected for the month, as well as the number of “6’s” it took to make an inch, foot, or yard.

*Routines, procedures, and classroom work/behavior expectations have been established both for Math and Science.*

Science - Students have been learning about the Changing Earth. The “Life Cycle of a Mountain” is being used to help show how Earth is always changing.

Students have investigated the role that energy plays in collisions and have completed a toy car collision experiment to understand the impact seen and the result of the impact. The understanding from this experiment has then been investigated, discussed and applied to the role that energy plays in the formation of mountains. Plate tectonics and the moving earth are currently being studied to deepen the understanding.

### THE TOY COLLISION ACTIVITY...



Mrs. Wollschlager; Mrs. Palladino  
Violet Team – Grade 5

In Mrs. Wollschlager's class the year is off to a great start! Students are settling into the routines of our school day and our classroom communities are becoming more productive.

Our first unit in math focuses on understanding volume. Students built different sized rectangular prisms and discovered that the number of cubes it takes to build that prism is the volume. Students progressed to using the dimensions of length, width, and height to determine volume. We are finishing up with some work with division and remainders.

In science, we have researched the characteristics of stars in order to figure out if shooting stars are really stars. We are working on exploring the patterns of day and night, the seasons, and the moon. Ask your child to tell you about some of the activities we've done in class.

Homework is given as a packet on Monday and is due on Friday. I ask students to work on their math homework for 10-15 minutes each night. They are welcome to bring in their homework on any day and I would be happy to review any part of the homework that might be giving them trouble.

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In Mrs. Palladino's class, we have spent time establishing routines and familiarizing ourselves with expectations for Grade 5. We spent time getting to know each other by creating maps of our hearts, sharing our "greatness," and identifying goals for the 181 days, 1,267 hours and 76,020 minutes of this school year. We even got to know each other through writing, by sharing likes and dislikes. We started writing personal narratives, in which we are sharing experiences of our young lives. So far, there have been lots of smiles, laughter and only some tears!

In Reading, we have started Interpretation Book Clubs. We took out our magnifying glasses to closely examine books we are reading. We are practicing our detective skills by stopping to notice and note where characters do something unexpected and inferring why they did so.

In Social Studies, we compared early settlements of Roanoke Island and Jamestown, Virginia in North America. We considered successes and failures of each colony. Next, we boarded the Mayflower and made the dangerous trip to North America in search of religious freedom. Conditions were treacherous and many of us did not survive. We examined the Mayflower Compact and decided whether we would sign it. On to the New England Colonies!





Mr. McCotter; Mrs. Lage  
Royal Purple Team – Grade 5

### Royal Purple Dragons

The Royal Purple Dragons have been working on building our team together. On the first day of school we created a paper chain, where each strip included something one of our team members was great at. It was amazing to see all of the different traits and skills that we have between our two classes.

On another occasion we took the students outside to try to solve the Human Knot. Students were in groups of 6-8 and had to link hands in a complicated knots activity. The children had to use their communication and problem-solving skills to untangle the knot they were in. There were a lot of laughs and even the teams that remained tangled had a great time.



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Miss Gorman; Mr. Parkhouse; Mrs. Alamo – long term substitute teacher for Mrs. Giampaolo  
Amethyst Team – Grade 5

The students who see Mr. Parkhouse have been studying why and how the Pilgrims left England to come to the New America. They recently took on the role of a young pilgrim crossing the Atlantic and wrote about the struggles of their journey. In addition to this, students have been completing narrative writing in their writing notebooks.

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The students who see Miss Gorman for Humanities are working on personal narratives. We are writing stories about small moments in our life. We are taking those small moments and really expanding upon them. In reading, we are starting a new read aloud, Home of the Brave. We will also be starting book clubs within class very soon.

The students who see Miss Gorman for STEM are just finishing up our unit on volume and division. We will be starting to talk about adding and subtracting fractions. In science we are beginning to study stars and characteristics of stars.

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In Mrs. Alamo’s classes we began to work on multiplication factors, prime number and composite number, multiplication strategies doubling and halving strategy. Also using the problem string using multiplication problems, arrays, doubling and halving by comparing the dimensions and the areas of the rectangles. Writing expressions and equations that include parentheses of which part of the problem to solve first. We have completed working on Volume: height, length, and width which entails dimensions of the base, area

of the base, layers, and dimensions of the prism. Students used Omnifix cubes to help determine the different arrangements to identify the dimensions.

For science we learning: What is a star? What are shooting stars? We learned the difference between a star and a planet. That planets don't stay put in one constellation that they wander. The class learned to determine if a planet is habitable by how much light-the distance from the sun and water a planet needs for humans to survive. We learned that the earth rotates around its axis when orbiting the sun. When the sun is high in the sky, we have longer days and when it's lower, we have shorter days. We are also learning the phases of the moon, the four seasons, spring, summer, autumn and winter. The differences between spring and fall and the changes that occur in terms of plants, animals and the weather. Our most current learning is about the constellations and at what time of the year we can see a constellation.

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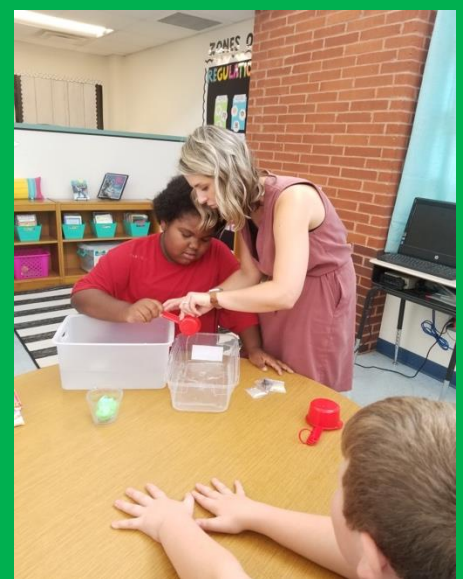
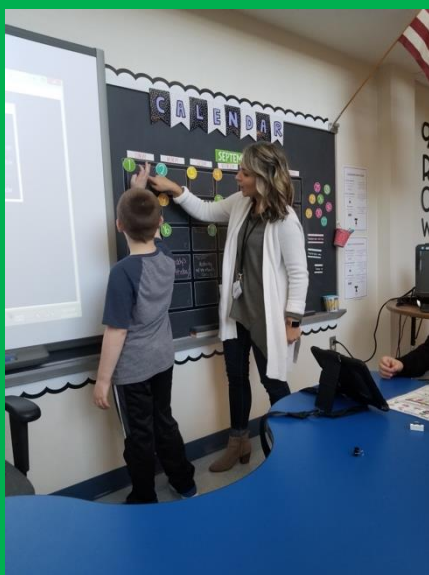
Updates from Mr. Mann's Class:

The students in Mr. Mann's class have been off to a great start this school year! We have jumped right back in where we left off at the end of last year. Our class has had the opportunity to work with Ms. Cerruto during our OT time and create some wonderful projects. (Scarecrow and a fall wreath) We also teamed up with Ms. Warchol's class to make calming bottles. We did an awesome job following the directions during all of our projects and they came out great! Each day we are working on our math, reading, and writing skills. I hope everyone has had a great start to the school year.



### Updates from Miss Warchol's Class:

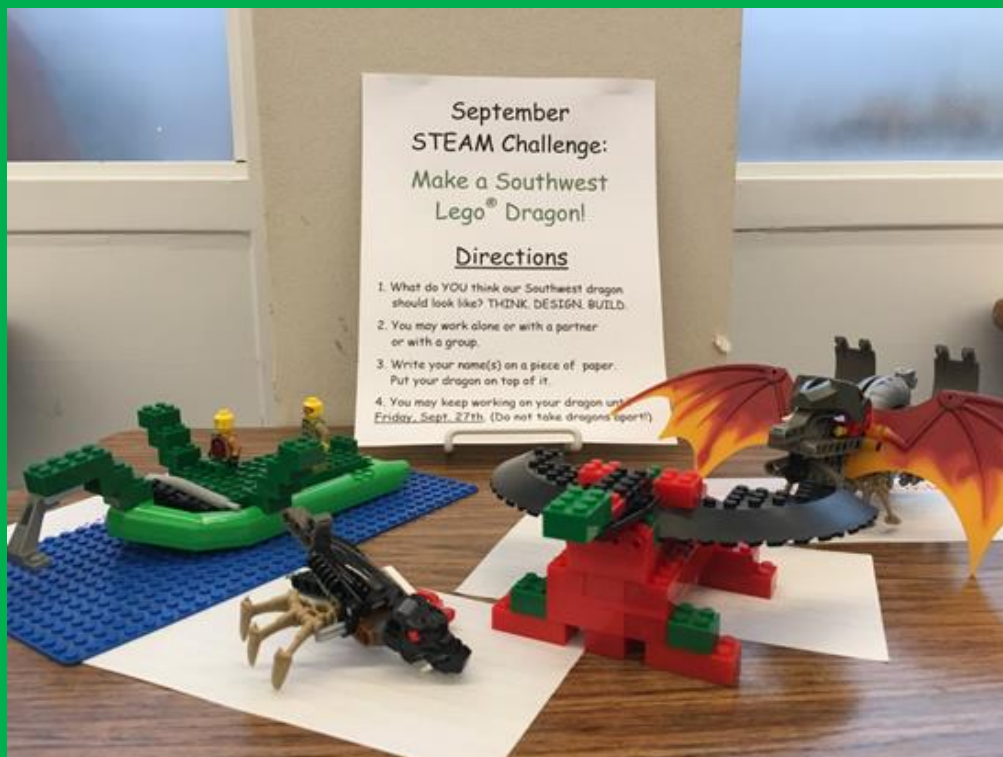
Our new Voices program at Southwest School is off to a great start! Everyone has been so welcoming to our students and staff and has quickly made us feel right at home. The students have been encouraged and supported by their peers as they participate in classes and learn to navigate their new school surroundings. The students follow their individual visual schedules as they move on to their learning activities. Examples of these include learning Touch Math to support counting tasks, making projects to enhance learning of sight words, and reading of Social Stories to help develop social skills. Some of our favorite activities so far in Voices are cooking with visual recipes, making scarecrows, and working together with Mr. Mann's class to make calming bottles. We look forward to joining Mr. Mann's class for more group activities!





Mrs. Merritt  
Library Media  
Specialist

The library is off to a dragon-friendly start! Each month, Mrs. Merritt (library media specialist here and at Forbes) reveals a new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, math) challenge in our makerspace room. September's challenge was to create a Southwest dragon out of Legos. Here are a few of the many fine dragons students planned, designed, and built. This year, Mrs. Merritt will see all fourth-grade students each week to work on research skills, digital citizenship, and more. Fifth graders are on a flexible schedule so they may utilize the library more independently in preparation for middle school. And get ready for our Southwest Book Fair November 12 to 18! We'll be open during the school day and also during Parent-Teacher Conferences.





Mrs. Castellano; Mrs. Hyatt  
Music

In September, Mrs. Hyatt and Mrs. Castellano met with all of the fourth graders to introduce them to the instruments that they are able to play this year. Students had the opportunity to “interview” the instruments to see which would be the best fit for them. Some students chose instruments in the band and some in the orchestra. Some students have elected to sing in the chorus. No matter what they chose, Mrs. Castellano and Mrs. Hyatt are excited to see so many of our Southwest Dragons involved in music both in and out of our school setting. In the first week of October, the students in 5th grade will resume their lessons and ensembles from last year and our fourth graders will get started. We will continue to learn about pitch, rhythm, improve our fine motor skills, and observe our steady progress over the course of the school year. Please feel free to contact Mrs. Hyatt - Orchestra Director ([ahyatt@torrington.org](mailto:ahyatt@torrington.org)) and Mrs. Castellano - General Music/Band & Chorus Director ([mcastellano@torrington.org](mailto:mcastellano@torrington.org)) if you have any questions.



Please consider registering your Stop & Shop card to assist Southwest School. We were very fortunate to benefit from your generosity. Thank you.



## ATTENTION FANS!

**WANT TO HELP OUR SCHOOL EARN CASH? YOU CAN EACH TIME YOU SHOP AT OUR LOCAL**



**with card**



**REGISTER YOUR  
STOP & SHOP  
CARD**

**\$\$ FOR OUR KIDS!**

Designate our school today using ID Code **06562** and each time you shop at STOP & SHOP using your STOP & SHOP CARD, you will earn points for our school! Those points become CASH for our school to use for any of our educational needs.

Visit [www.StopandShop.com/aplus](http://www.StopandShop.com/aplus) or call 1-877-ASK-APLUS (1-877-275-2758)

This simple effort will make a huge difference for our school!



On Fridays your children may purchase ice cream and cookies on a cash only basis for 50 cents or a dollar, depending on choice of item. If you wish to have your child use funds on your pre-paid account to purchase ice cream and cookies, please send a written note to school stating you give permission. Thank you.

New to this year is the link to our lunch menus found at <https://torrington.nutrislice.com/>  
Also, checks submitted to pay a child's lunch account are made out to Torrington Lunch Program.

Cookies .50

Ice cream \$1.00

Premium Ice cream \$1.50

This hasn't changed, yet a friendly reminder:

- Payments to your child's lunch account may be submitted online using MySchoolBucks.com by credit or debit card.
- Payments may also be made here at Southwest by submitting cash or check made out to Torrington Lunch Program. Please include on the outside envelope, your child's first and last name, and the five-digit student ID.



**Please join us at our PTO  
sponsored Harvest Fest  
Friday, October 18 at Vogel-  
Wetmore School  
5:30 to 7:30 PM**



**Looking for ways to volunteer with our PTO? Please  
log onto to [www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto](http://www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto)**

**A list of events for the school year are posted along  
with the times and areas in need of volunteers.**

The best thing  
you can spend on your kids  
is time.





Welcome to Vogel Wetmore and Southwest for the 2019/2020 Academic Year!

From all of us at the Vogel and Southwest PTOs we want to wish our students and families a bright and successful school year! As most of you know Vogel educates our K-3 students and then they "graduate" to Southwest for grades 4 & 5. In Torrington we call this the "sister school" model and we are proud of the relationship we have between our sister schools. As a result of this close relationship you will see most of our major events are events for students and families at both schools. We are always looking for families to share their time and talents to make our events special. We have provided a link to our volunteer site below where you can submit your contact info and signup to help at one of our events.

Thank you all for your past and future support. We look forward to meeting each and every one of you at our events!

### For Volunteer Opportunities [www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto](http://www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto)

#### PTO Meeting Schedule

9/16	Vogel Wetmore 5:30pm
10/17	Southwest 6:00pm
11/18	Vogel Wetmore 5:30pm
1/14	Southwest 6:00pm
2/10	Vogel Wetmore 6:00pm
3/4	Southwest 6:00pm
4/23	Vogel Wetmore 6:00pm
5/27	Southwest 6:00pm

#### PTO Event Schedule

9/10	Ice Cream Social
9/26	99 Restaurant Night
10/18	Harvest Fest
9/30	Southwest Picture Day
10/25	Vogel Picture Day
12/3 & 12/4	Holiday Store
2/28	Vogel Wetmore Dance
3/27	Southwest Spring Dance
4/27 & 4/28	Mc Teacher Night
5/4-5/8	Staff Appreciation
5/15	Sister School Movie Night

#### PTO Fundraiser Schedule

Sept: Meadowview Farms  
(shipped to your house!)

December: Yankee Candle

April: Munson Chocolates

Email Us:

[vogel@torringtonpto.org](mailto:vogel@torringtonpto.org)

[ptosouthwest@gmail.com](mailto:ptosouthwest@gmail.com)

For News and  
Events  
Like us on



@vogelwetmore



¡Bienvenidos a Vogel Wetmore y Southwest para el año académico 2019/2020!

¡De parte de todos en los PTOs de Vogel y Southwest queremos desearle a nuestros estudiantes y familias un año escolar brillante y exitoso! Como muchos de ustedes saben, Vogel educa a nuestros(as) estudiantes de K-3 y luego se "graduan" a Southwest para los grados 4 y 5. En Torrington lo llamamos el modelo de "escuelas hermanas" y estamos orgullosos de la relación que tenemos entre nuestras escuelas hermanas. Como resultado de esta relación cercana usted verá la mayoría de nuestros grandes eventos para estudiantes y familias en ambas escuelas. Siempre estamos buscando que las familias compartan su tiempo y sus talentos para hacer a nuestros eventos especiales. Hemos proporcionado más abajo un enlace al sitio de voluntarios donde puede dar su información de contacto y se puede apuntar para ayudar en uno de nuestros eventos.

Gracias por todo su apoyo en el pasado y en el futuro. ¡Esperamos conocer a cada uno de ustedes en nuestros eventos!

Para Oportunidades de Voluntariado  
[www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto](http://www.tinyurl.com/torringtonpto)

**PTO Itinerario de Reuniones**

9/16	Vogel Wetmore 5:30pm
10/17	Southwest 6:00pm
11/18	Vogel Wetmore 5:30pm
1/14	Southwest 6:00pm
2/10	Vogel Wetmore 6:00pm
3/4	Southwest 6:00pm
4/23	Vogel Wetmore 6:00pm
5/27	Southwest 6:00pm

**PTO Itinerario de Eventos**

9/10	Social de Helados
9/26	Noche de 99 Restaurant
9/30	Día de Fotos Southwest
10/18	Harvest Fest
10/25	Día de Fotos Vogel Picture
12/3 & 12/4	Tienda Navideña
2/28	Baile Vogel Wetmore
3/27	Baile de Primavera Southwest
4/27 & 4/28	Noche Mc Teacher
5/4-5/8	Apreciación de Empleados
5/15	Noche de Películas de Escuelas Hermanas

**PTO Itinerario de Recaudación de Fondos**

sept: Meadowview Farms  
 (¡enviado a su casa!)

diciembre: Yankee Candle

Email:

[vogel@torringtonpto.org](mailto:vogel@torringtonpto.org)  
[ptosouthwest@gmail.com](mailto:ptosouthwest@gmail.com)

Para Noticias y Eventos  
 De "Like" en Facebook



@VogelWetmore  
 @southwestschool

Never believe that a few caring  
people can't change the world. For,  
indeed, that's all who ever have.

- Margaret Mead



Greeting Card Poet



9-21

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Bill  
and  
JEFF  
KEANE

**"Pretty soon the ice cream man is  
gonna have to go into  
hibernation."**