



Mr. Jason L. Miller
Principal

Mrs. Shelly M. Hall
Assistant Principal

Westside Intermediate School

Mustang Messenger

August/September 2013

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Welcome to the 2013 – 2014 school year! I'm not sure where the summer went but we hope each of you had a relaxing, rejuvenating, and enjoyable summer to spend with family and friends. Shelly and I are very excited about the new school year and look forward to meeting and working with each of you.

This year, Wicomico County Schools and Westside Intermediate will be embarking upon some exciting learning opportunities. County-wide, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will be taught in all grades for reading and mathematics. Westside will also be reapplying for the EGATE award in December. We have a lot of learning opportunities ahead of us but know we can accomplish the greatest of tasks if we work together and support each other. We are looking forward to each of them!

The summer has also brought change in staffing to Westside. I would like to first welcome **Mr. Nicholas Thompson**, Physical Education Teacher coming from Prince Street Elementary replacing Mrs. Teena Workman who was transferred to Prince Street Elementary. We also welcome **Mrs. Annette Huddleston**, Part-Time Reading Intervention Teacher coming from Bennett Middle; **Mrs. Ingrid Wisner**, Food Service Manager, coming from Pinehurst and replacing Mrs. Charity Steinacker who was promoted to Food Service Manager at Beaver Run; **Mrs. Heather Clark**, Medical Billing Assistance, coming from Prince Street and replacing Mrs. Chris Dorman. We also lost Mrs. April Ferrell to Pemberton Elementary and wish her well in her new assignment. We have the utmost confidence that all are excellent individuals and will truly be an asset to our instructional team.

Please know your child/ren's education is very important to us as we want to make sure we are meeting the needs of **all students** by providing a rigorous and challenging curriculum. We certainly have each child's best interest in mind. The administration's office doors are always open so feel free to meet with us. We hope you will join and support us for our various functions and activities. If you have spare time, we are always looking for classroom volunteers and mentors to work with our students to ensure the best educational experience that Westside has to offer. Please consider donating your time!

Jason & Shelly



Dates to Remember

AUGUST 26

STUDENTS BEGIN

SEPTEMBER 2

SCHOOLS CLOSED

LABOR DAY

SEPTEMBER 4 & 5

MATH FALL ASSESSMENT

GRADE 2

SEPTEMBER 5

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

6:00 PM.

SEPTEMBER 16–OCT. 11

BAS ASSESSMENTS

SEPTEMBER 25

PTA SKATE NIGHT

CROWN SPORTS CENTER

6–8 PM

SEPTEMBER 26

FALL PICTURES

SEPTEMBER 27

PROFESSIONAL DAY

SCHOOLS CLOSED

NEW ATTENDANCE POLICY

There is a new attendance policy in effect for this school year. Stay tuned for more information or go to www.wcboe.org.



E-MAIL CORRESPONDENCE



Again this year, in an effort to save paper, help the environment and reduce costs, we would like to send PTA notifications and the Mustang Messenger by e-mail. Please assist us by filling out the survey in the assignment letter envelope and returning it by Friday, August 30.

NEED TO KNOW

NEW PERSONAL DATA

Your child's safety is our concern and this information is extremely important. Please make sure there are three local emergency contacts filled in on the back. Please complete the forms in their entirety and return these forms as soon as possible so that we may update the information in our computers. Thank you in advance for your help in completing this important information.



COPY COLORS

Again this year, we will be sending home various correspondence that can't be sent through e-mail. The colors will be as follows:

Green– Newsletter

Gray– Field Trip Information

Canary– PTA Information

Blue– School-Wide Information

Pink– 2nd Grade Info

Orchid– 3rd Grade Info

Salmon– 4th Grade Info

Gold– 5th Grade Info

CAR RIDERS

In an effort to increase the safety and security of children at dismissal time, car riders will be housed in the Media Center and dismissed by car number. You should have received information regarding car riders with your child's assignment letter. If you did not, please stop by the office to fill out a form and to receive your car rider tag. The students will still come out the doors by the circular parking lot. It may take a few additional minutes to dismiss the first few days of school; however, please be patient. This is for the safety of all students.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

School attendance is extremely important. The staff at Westside Intermediate is very proud of our 95% overall attendance, but it could be even better. When your child is home not feeling well or sick, when he/she returns to school we ask they return with an absent note **(the day they return)**. This will assist us in keeping accurate records of excused and unexcused absences. If your child is absent for more than three days we need a doctor's note to accompany



them when returning. If you need or wish to pick up your child's homework, **please call school by 9:15am** the morning you would like it and we will have it ready in the school office by the close of school the same day. Mrs. Terry LeCates, our Home School Liaison, will be keeping a close eye on all of our students making sure they are here on time each day. Feel free to contact her in our school office if there is a concern or if your child is going to be absent for an

extended period of time. Please keep in mind that **CLASSES BEGIN AT 9:15am AND INSTRUCTION ENDS AT 3:45pm.** In order for your child to be successful, they need to be in school on time each and every day! **Please try and plan vacations when children are already out for breaks so that instruction is not missed.** Missed instruction means breaks in learning. Help us help your child be successful. The school lobby will be open at **8:15am** if students need to be dropped off early. **Students can not arrive any earlier than 8:15am.**

SCHOOL REMINDERS

1. All visitors, and parents **MUST** sign in the office when entering the building and receive a visitor's pass.
2. When going on vacation, please inform your child's teacher and the school office with a note.
3. **To ensure that students arrive home or to their destination PLEASE do not call the office everyday at dismissal to have your child go home a different way. Students need consistency and not be confused or worried as to how they are going home.**
4. When any information changes throughout the year please notify the school office as soon as possible.
5. The communication device **"Parent Link"** is being used again this year. A call will be made from the central office or the school office when something of importance needs to be sent to our parents. **When you receive the call there will be a wait time, please listen to the message before calling the school.**
6. **Parent Portal** is a way to check your child's grades through the X2 system of Wicomico County. This will be available for parents who have students in grades 3-12. More information will follow.



SCHOOL FUNDRAISER

This year we will be selling School Spirit Wear as a fundraiser, as well as, having a donation drive in the Spring. Many parents asked for a donation drive last year and it was a **HUGE SUCCESS**. We were able to raise over \$17,000 and have purchased 6 SMART Boards. They should be installed by October. We have been waiting for them; however, the company had a few technical difficulties and demand far exceeded the supply.

We look forward to the same success this year. The money from the fundraisers will be used to purchase additional instructional materials, PBIS incentives, artists and materials for Arts Integration and SMART technology. You will also be hearing more about our S.O.S. (Stock Our Shelves) Media Drive. Your fundraising efforts will greatly in this endeavor. Thank you in advance for your support!



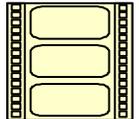
PARENT VOLUNTEERS



We are looking for parent volunteers to assist in classrooms working with small groups or individual students in the areas of reading and math, special events at the school and PTA this year. Mrs. Michelle Hirsch will be the Volunteer Coordinator this year at the Intermediate School. I'm sure she will be calling to look for volunteers to help with our special events. Please contact your child's teacher if you would like to assist in the classroom. If you would like to be a parent volunteer for any events, you can email Mrs. Michelle Hirsch at hebronhirsch@comcast.net or call her at 443-859-8753. She will be waiting to hear from you!

YEARBOOKS

We will be selling Yearbooks again this year in the Spring. The cost will be around \$25. Please save now so your children can have memories later. Look for information coming home in the near future.



FRIDAY FOLDERS

This year, Westside Intermediate has purchased a durable burgundy two-pocket folder for each student. This folder will be used as their Friday Folder. Please check your child's book bag every Friday for graded work, as well as, important information.

Looking Ahead...

COMING IN OCTOBER

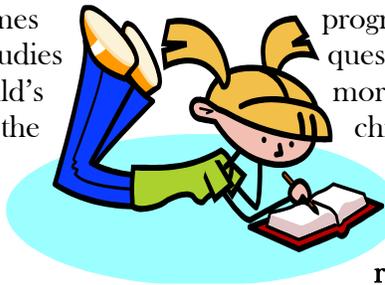
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|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| OCTOBER 1-31 | SRI READING TEST WINDOW |
| OCTOBER 11 | END OF BAS TESTING (2nd Grade) |
| OCTOBER 18 | SCHOOLS CLOSED MSTA CONVENTION |
| OCTOBER 29 | END OF 1st MARKING PERIOD |

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Please feel free to share with us your thoughts on any of these new instructional strategies. The staff and administration will ensure high expectations for all students so they are engaged in curriculum that provides rigor, hands-on fun and good sound instruction.

HOMework

Homework is an important part of your child's daily reinforcement. Each night your child should have spelling, math and sometimes reading, language, social studies or science. Check your child's **agenda nightly** to see what the assigned homework might be and most importantly check over with your child when completed. Discuss with your child what they are studying in math, social studies



or science. Ask them what stories they are reading and check with them about the Accelerated Reader program. The more questions you ask the more information your child will share. Most importantly make sure the **homework is returned** and not left at home. The student agenda is a great way to communicate between

home and school. If your child loses their agenda, please notify the school office. The replacement cost for the agenda is \$5.00. Thanks for helping your child be a winner. Many teachers also post homework or upcoming projects on their web page or wiki space. **A rule of thumb for homework is, grade 2—20 minutes, grade 3 - 30 minutes, grade 4 - 40 minutes and grade 5—50 minutes.**

ARTS INTEGRATION AT WESTSIDE

Meet “PAINT” (Promoting Arts Integration Now Team). Teachers in grades 2-4 will embark on integrating the arts (art, music, drama, and dance) into each grade level curriculum. The vision for each grade level is: **“To create multi-faced learners that are**

actively engaged in the SC (state curriculum) and arts curriculum.” The teachers are looking for parents, family members and neighbors who are creative in the arts to come in and assist during these fun days. We may be requesting certain materials

throughout the year to assist with our program. Your help would be greatly appreciated! Our theme this year is “Maryland: Treasures of the Chesapeake”.



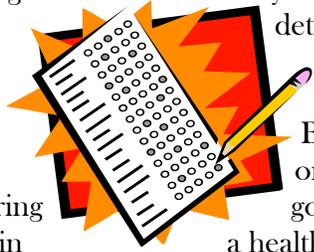
STEM

This year we will again be embarking on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math); however, this year we will focus on all grade levels with the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The teachers will be incorporating these modalities into instruction. Maryland's STEM education prepares and inspires learners of all ages to contribute to the advancement of the global community. Maryland's vision is to be a leader in STEM education, preparing and inspiring generations of learners to meet the challenges of the global society through innovation, collaboration, and creative problem solving. The Wicomico County Public School (WCPS) Vision for STEM education from K-12 includes instruction that is relevant and rigorous, an increased awareness by students of STEM careers and educational opportunities, practical and real-world connections to STEM concepts, and interaction with business and community leaders in STEM-related fields.



TESTING

This year, students in second grade will be taking four Benchmark Assessments in Math. Students in grades 2- 5 will be taking an Interim Performance Assessment, aligned to Common Core, in Reading and Math. These assessments will be given to students during their instructional time in these subject areas to determine their mastery and retention of concepts. During the month of October, students will also be taking the SRI (Scholastic Reading



Inventory) to determine readability for novel use. The SRI will also be given two more times throughout the year as one tool used to determine overall growth in reading. Please remember the best preparation for the Benchmarks, MSA, In-View or SRI assessments is to get a good nights sleep and to have a healthy and nutritious breakfast in the morning.

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

With the new Common Core State Standards being taught in reading in all grades this year, there will be an increased focus on writing in all curricular areas. Students will be participating in daily journaling, response writing and narrative writing daily. Students will also be writing in other curricular areas such as; music, art, media and physical education.



INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES FOR ALL STUDENTS

The administration at Westside Intermediate is excited with the gathering of multiple materials of instruction to be used with our students. For our High Performing Learner (HPL) students we have purchased science and social studies materials from William and Mary College of Gifted and Talented. We have also purchased a multitude of resources in the subject areas of reading, writing, math, science and social studies. Although these resources and materials are from the gifted and talented department, these will be used in a



differentiated fashion to ensure all students are exposed to a rigorous curriculum. Other materials that will be used for students needing additional reinforcement are Foundations, Language Literacy Initiative and Wilson Reading, as well as, resources on main idea, sequencing, comparing and contrasting, summarizing, text features and inferencing. We have purchased new novels and a wide variety of biographies, bibliographies, fictional and non-fictional reading materials to be incorporated into the various subject areas.

BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

In July, a two day workshop/training was held to learn new ideas and strategies to be shared with staff for the upcoming school year. Mr. Scott Taylor, School Counselor, is our PBIS facilitator and Mrs. Julie Brown, 3rd grade teacher, is our PBIS Coach. The team also met with summer to discuss the current PBIS plan in place and ideas/suggestions for the upcoming school year. Monthly meetings will be held throughout the year with the team to discuss new and different strategies, ways to meet the needs of all students, how to share information with staff, bus drivers and parents. Again, your support in this continued endeavor is greatly appreciated. If you have questions, please know that you can bring these to the administration, Mr. Taylor or your child's classroom teacher. **Remember: New this year is Class Dojo!! Check your child's progress from your Smart phone.**

PTA NEWS

2013–2014 Westside PTA Meeting Schedule

September 9th (WIS) and 10th (WPS) Back to School Nights 6–8:00pm

October 7th- (WIS) Common Core Night- 6:00pm

December 9th- (WIS) Business Meeting 6:00pm followed by WIS holiday program

February 3rd- (WPS)- Curriculum Night- 6:00pm

April 7th- (WPS)- Spring Concert- 6:00pm

2013–2014 Officers

President: Christy Glashakow

Vice President: Melissa Marcum

Treasurer: Laura Harrison

Secretary: Kristen White

PTA Membership: Allison Moore

WIS Teacher Representative: Debra Karten

WIS Volunteer Coordinator: Michelle Hirsch

OUR FAITH-BASED PARTNERSHIP

This year St. Paul's United Methodist Church "The Uprising" and Cross Pointe' Church of the Nazarene will be our Faith-Based Partners. Please see the following information to find out what faith-based partners can do and how they work.

Salisbury's Promise seeks to provide Five Promises (Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, an Effective Education, and Opportunities to Serve) to local youth. They do this by reaching out to various agencies and organizations in the communities. The faith community is an integral part of this growing network.

Under this program, local faith organizations (churches, synagogues, etc.) team with an area school (preferably a school in close proximity to the church's site) in an effort to fulfill the five promises in the lives of local youth. Salisbury's Promise serves as the facilitator of that relationship and as a source of ideas

for ways in which the two parties can collaborate. Their target work to date is to find a faith partner for all Wicomico County Public Schools.

Why should faith organizations and schools collaborate through this partnership?

The faith-based partnership initiative provides an opportunity for schools and churches to meet and benefit* from each other's resources. This enables a church to raise its profile in the community and expand their interaction with students, teachers, and families. It enables a school to have additional support for the education of students - academically and socially.

Our school will be helping the church in various ways, one of which will be to help supply the food pantry at church.

PARENT ADVISORY

Parents have a voice in the happenings of the Westside Schools. We have a parent advisory committee that will meet four times this year to discuss and share what is happening at both schools. If you have a praise, comment or concern, please share it with one of the committee members or the administration. We will discuss the items at our meetings. The meetings will be held on the following dates all beginning at 5:30pm.

October 16 Intermediate School

January 8 Primary School

March 12 Intermediate School

May 14 Primary School