

February 2019

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Snow

Make-up Days

School will be in session for
ALL Merrillville students

Friday,

Feb. 15th

Monday,

Feb. 18th

John Wood Elementary School
6100 E. 73rd Ave.
Merrillville, Indiana 46410
(219) 650-5305

<http://merrillville.schoolwires.net/wood>

The John Wood Parent Newsletter



Principal Petralia's Page

by Mrs. Petralia

We are embarking upon a very important time of year for students and teachers- ILEARN and IREAD time. Third and fourth grade students will begin the ILEARN at the end of April through the middle of May. IREAD also takes place in March for third grade students.

It is imperative that students are in the right mindset, especially when they have such an important task in front of them. To best prepare our students, they need at least 8-10 hours of sleep nightly, a healthy breakfast, and no distractions. Toys, shoes that light up, and other novelty items will distract children at school at any point during the school year.

Being at school daily and on time is also very important. If your child must miss school due to an illness, please communicate with our secretaries immediately so we can begin planning when he/she can make up missed tests.

Thank you for helping us and your child do his/her best at school!

Schedule Change

With the inclement weather and school cancellations we've had this school year, the placement of when some of the days need to be made up has created an imbalance in our trimester grading periods. In order to correct this, our Board of School Trustees has approved a change to our school calendar. The end of the second trimester is being moved to one week later. This change will more evenly distribute the number of days for the second and third trimesters.

**Friday – February 22, 2019 – Full day of school for all
Merrillville students**

**Thursday, February 28, 2019 – End of 4th grading period,
End of 2nd trimester**

**Friday – March 1, 2019 – Teacher Work Day – No school for
all Merrillville students.**

Good Citizens December 2018

ECD

Emily Ault – Mrs. Cade (Miss Dawn)
Quinn Strug –
Miss McCorkle (Miss Kati)

Multi-Grade

Graham Jackson – Miss Cieslak
Ivan Windsor – Miss Matthews

Kindergarten

Elijah Washington – Mrs. Anderson
Sebastian Ortiz – Mrs. Scott
Darasimi Jimoh – Mrs. Shalla

1st Grade

Idris Kerney – Mrs. Matthews
Ka'Mari Oliver – Mrs. Pace
Bret Whittinghill – Miss Welsh

2nd Grade

Alina Magana – Mrs. Carney
Ezekiel Washington – Ms Foster
Alaina Conn – Mrs. Marshall

3rd Grade

Erica Byers – Miss Farver
Victoria Manning – Mrs. Mahy

4th Grade

Joseph Rodriguez – Miss Jongsma
Tony Woods – Miss Vlassopoulos

Winter Recesses

During the winter months our students go outside whenever the actual temperature or wind chill temperature is 15° or above (as long as the playground is in an acceptable condition). Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately with a winter coat, boots, hat, gloves or mittens, and scarf. If you need assistance providing these items for your child, please feel free to contact our social worker.

The winter months also bring more requests for students to stay indoors for recess. The handbook states that if a student needs to stay inside for more than three days, a doctor's note is necessary.

Good Citizens January 2019

ECD

Noah Lee – Mrs. Cade (Miss Dawn)
Ahmir Finnell –
Miss McCorkle (Miss Kati)

Multi-Grade

James Holmes – Ms. Hannigan
Layla Maclin – Miss Cieslak
Julian Padilla – Miss Matthews

Kindergarten

Nevaeh Mills – Mrs. Anderson
McKayla Edwards – Mrs. Scott
Sarah McCumber – Mrs. Shalla

1st Grade

Karsen Martin – Mrs. Matthews
Marwa Abdulhasan – Mrs. Pace
Saiyah Scott – Miss Welsh

2nd Grade

Jian Peng Zheng – Mrs. Carney
Elizabeth Baeza – Ms. Foster
Anthony Salinas – Mrs. Marshall

3rd Grade

Kaiden Harden-Holloway –
Miss Farver
Katie Hurst – Mrs. Mahy

4th Grade

Reese Luedtke – Miss Jongsma
Yalitzza Briggs – Miss Vlassopoulos

Girls on the Run

Sign-ups are now being held for the spring session of Girls on the Run. All 3rd and 4th grade girls are welcome to join! Practices will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:30-3:45 p.m. and will end with a 5k race in May. For more information or to sign up, go to www.gotrofnwi.org.

Emergency Communications

In cases of inclement weather or other emergency situations, there are times when school may be cancelled or delayed. In those cases, information will be broadcast over the following television and radio stations.

Television

WYIN-TV

CBS-TV

NBC-TV

ABC-TV

WGN

FOX

CLTV News

Radio

WJOB – 1230 AM

WZVN – 107 FM

WAKE – 1500 AM

WGN – 720 AM

WBBM – 780 AM

You will also receive an automated call to the phone number you list as your primary number. For this reason, please do not change your number in the Skyward system to "unlisted" or you will not receive these calls. In addition, delays and closings will be posted on the Merrillville Community School Corporation website at <http://merrillville.schoolwires.net>.

You may also choose to receive an email notification by registering with an outside service. Information about this service is available at the MCSC website listed above.

Bus Drivers Needed

The Merrillville Community School Corporation is looking for bus drivers! Will pay to train. Interested? Contact the Transportation Department at 219-650-5311

Reminder

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to call and let the school office know why a child is not in school. Make sure you call 650-5305 then press 2 before 9 AM if your child will not be in school.

PTO News

Our next PTO meeting will be Wednesday, March 6th at 5:00 p.m. As always, everyone is invited, including children. We are looking for at least 8 adults to help plan and execute the fun fair or this year's event may be cancelled. See the section of this article titled [Fun Fair](#).

Box Tops/Coke Codes

Snowballs have landed all over John Wood! About 500 snowballs were thrown during our popular Snowball Challenge 2019. Students and staff received a paper snowball for every 10 box tops or Coke codes turned in. Everything turned in since the beginning of the school year has counted towards the snowballs. Mrs. Carney's class threw the most snowballs. Her class threw 107 snowballs! Ms. Foster's class was hit with the most. Her class was hit by 21 snowballs. The non-classroom staff member who was hit by the most snowballs was Mr. Battista. He was hit by 105 snowballs! All the winners be rewarded with an ice cream party after Mr. Battista returns from his leave.

A new contest has started, so keep sending in those box tops and Coke codes! This month's winning class will get to have a Pajama Day! Don't forget to write your name and your teacher on the bag before turning it in so we know who to give credit.

We have received a check from Coke for \$61.84. That brings our total so far this year from Coke to \$287.89! Way to go!

SimpleQpons

We recently concluded our SimpleQpon coupon book fundraiser. We sold 292 coupon books. That's a total of \$2920 for our PTO! We had 24 students who sold at least 6 books and will be able to participate in a GameTruck event. Thanks to all who purchased or sold coupon books during this fundraiser.

Valentine Dance

Last week we held our second ever Valentine Dance! It was again a huge success! We had a real DJ and a photo booth, and pizza in our concession stand. Everyone had a great time dancing and visiting our book fair. Thanks to all who helped to make this fun evening a success.

Fun Fair

The past few years our Fun Fair, which is a HUGE event, has had to be planned and prepared for by only one or two people because of a lack of volunteers. Each year, we also struggle to have enough volunteers for all the stations and have had to fall back on volunteer high school students in need of community service hours. It is not fair for only one or two people to have so much work and responsibility for planning everything.

Our next PTO meeting will be a special evening meeting. We are asking for anyone who is interested in helping to plan the Fun Fair event to please come. Some of the things that will need planning are:

- Concessions
- Games/prizes
- Photo Booth
- Inflatables
- Cake Walk
- Raffle
- Volunteers

This may not be a complete list and is subject to change based on what the Fun Fair team decides.

Unfortunately, if we do NOT have enough interest at our next PTO meeting, we will be forced to cancel the Fun Fair.

Facebook

Did you know that our John Wood PTO has a Facebook page? You can find us by going to:

www.facebook.com/johnwood.pto

The PTO tries to keep it updated with reminders of things happening at John Wood School.

Upcoming Events

February 18

Snow Make-up Day

This will be a full day of school for all Merrillville schools.

February 19

Yearbook Pictures

A photographer will be in the building today to take candid and group photos for the yearbook.

February 21

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

February 22

Regular Day of School

This will be a full day of school for all Merrillville schools. The Teacher Work Day has been postponed until March 1st.

February 25

Lake County Read-a-Thon Ends

Today is the last day of the Lake County Public Library Read-a-Thon. Please collect your money and turn it in to Mrs. Echols promptly.

February 26

Visiting Dentist

The visiting dentist and his/her team will be here for any students who registered.

February 28

Last Day for Required Reading

Today is the last day to test on required reading for this grading period.

February 28

End of Second Trimester

Today is the end of the second trimester. Report cards will come home within the next 10 days.

February 28

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

March 1

Teacher Work Day

There is no school on this day so that teachers may have time to work on grades for report cards.

March 6

PTO Meeting

5:00 p.m., Cafeteria

We encourage parents to attend and take an active role in planning the fun fair. If there is not enough interest at the meeting, the fun fair will be cancelled for this year. See the PTO article on this page.

March 7

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

March 10

Daylight Savings Time Begins

Remember to set your clocks FORWARD one hour.

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Curt Hoffman Scholarship

A \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a graduating senior from MHS who also attended John Wood Elementary School for a minimum of three years. Students who were in the Honors Program are eligible provided they lived in the John Wood School district during those years.

Interested seniors need to ask for an application in the MHS guidance office or can be pick up an application in the John Wood office. The deadline to turn in applications is March 29, 2019.

This scholarship was created in memory of Mr. Curt Hoffman. Mr. Hoffman was principal of John Wood School from 1989-1998, when he lost his battle with cancer.

Gold Note Dismissal Forms

A signed and dated "Gold Note" is needed from the parent if:

- your child is going anywhere other than their regular after-school destination.
- your child is going home with another student. (We will also need a note from that parent.)
- your child will be picked up instead of riding the bus.

Please refrain from calling at the end of the day with verbal pick-up orders.

Things get hectic, and messages are not always received on short notice. Changes should be made no later than 1:00 p.m. (12:00 p.m. on Thursdays).

If there is no note, students will go home on the bus as usual.

Extra Gold Notes are available in the school office and on the school's website.

Disability Awareness Month

March is Indiana Disability Awareness Month. Our Special Education staff will be doing educational projects and announcements throughout the month. Watch for a special "Spirit Week" at the end of March.

Drop-off Reminder

We have had several instances lately of parents parking at the curb and getting out of their car either to assist their child or to drop something off. Please remember that even a brief delay can easily cause traffic to be backed up onto 73rd Avenue and create a dangerous situation.

If you must get out of your vehicle FOR ANY REASON, please pull into a parking spot and walk your child in.

In addition, please stay in the single file line while waiting to drop off. Do not create a second line in the middle. We do not want children stepping out of their vehicle and walking between cars.

Remember that the safety of our students is our primary concern as they are arriving at school. We appreciate your cooperation.

Important Information

It is vital that we have your current home phone number on file in our office. As recently experienced when we had two hour delays and school cancellations due to weather conditions, we have an automated system that is used when we need to notify you quickly with important information. If we have an incorrect or disconnected number, you may not get the notice.

Please do NOT go into the Skyward system and change your phone number to "unlisted". If you do, you will not receive crucial automated calls.

Birthday Reminder

When requesting birthday treats from the food service program, please do not call the John Wood kitchen. You need to call our Food Service Department at 650-5300, ext. 6008. Orders must be placed at least one week in advance and they will be delivered to the school.

Clothing Requests

Do you have clothes that your children have outgrown? We are always looking for backup clothing for the office. Occasionally children have "accidents" or slip and fall into mud or water. We try to provide clean, dry clothing for the child so that they can get back to class quickly. As you are beginning to go through the closets looking for items to put into your garage sale, try to keep us in mind. Sweatpants are always welcome, along with t-shirts, sweatshirts, and new, unused underwear. We are currently in urgent need of pants in sizes 5-10.

When selecting clothing for young children to wear to school, please be mindful of buttons or buckles that are sometimes difficult to undo. Many of the "accidents" result from the child not being able to undo their clothing quickly enough.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

December/January Attendance

As we continue to encourage good attendance, we would like to recognize the class with the highest percentage of attendance during the months of December and January.

December

Mrs. Marshall – 2nd Grade – 98.7%

January

Mrs. Marshall – 2nd Grade – 98.37%

This make four consecutive months that Mrs. Marshall's class has won the "Beary" attendance award and they will retain the trophy in their room for another month! Mrs. Marshall's class must really love her and are really striving to be here every day! Will anyone else be able to top them?

The C.A.P.S. Program

In January 2015 the Merrillville Town Court with the support of Merrillville Schools launched the C.A.P.S. (Consistent Attendance Promotes Success) Program. After Merrillville Town Court Ordinance #14-32 was passed, it opened the door to establish a truancy court system to support schools, students and their families in addressing attendance, such as being excessively absent and tardy to school.

Research has shown that students who attend school consistently have a greater likelihood of academic success. The truancy court focuses on addressing attendance problems head on by having students and parent(s) share with the Merrillville town court judge their attendance issues and they are given the opportunity to explain their circumstance. The judge then gives the student and his/her family options, which consist of community services and supports, rather than immediate fines traditionally associated with this type of noncompliance. Those options come in the form of community support provided by the Geminus Corporation, while working in tandem with the Merrillville Town Court Judge to provide supportive alternatives.

Here in Merrillville Schools we want all of our students to have the opportunity to experience success on multiple levels, and we believe that the C.A.P.S. program supports Merrillville School students and their families in that endeavor.

Coming in next month's issue:

3rd and 4th Grade Honor Roll

Perfect Attendance for the Second Trimester

Small Card, BIG Results

Merrillville Education Foundation Major Saver Campaign

The MEF is excited to be offering Major Saver cards for sale through the Merrillville schools. Students will receive the sales packets after the kick-off assembly on Thursday, March 15th. The sale will last approximately ten days. Proceeds from the sale of Major Saver cards directly support the participating schools and the activities of the MEF. All of the money generated from this fundraiser goes back to the children. In this way, John Wood School can fund innovative and creative projects in the classroom and school and allow students to have broad educational experiences.

From 2002, when the Merrillville Education Foundation was started, through 2018, John Wood School has been awarded \$38,414.26 in teacher grants and Major Saver fundraising.

Major Saver cards will once again be only \$10 each. They can be purchased via cash, check or online at www.majorsaver.com. The online sale can be credited back to a particular student and school. All cards purchased online will be **mailed** directly to the customer. Administrators, teachers, and MCSC employees can also purchase cards to support this initiative.

Major Saver cards can also be purchased, and credited to a student, through the Major Saver App. Once the free app is downloaded to an Android or iOS device, buyers can choose a Major Saver card through the "buy cards" tab on the app. Once the buyer completes the transaction the offers will be stored in the Major Saver App. Patrons can then redeem offers directly from the app and do not need a physical card.

Major Saver is making online sales easier for friends and family! On our homepage you are able to enter your student's information to create a CUSTOM LINK for your child that can be shared via social media or

email. This link will automatically credit the online sale to your student when friends and family use the link to make their purchase!

Major Saver stresses safe selling and discourages door to door campaigning. The company encourages students to sell to family members, church patrons, neighbors, or other adults the family may know; and to always make sure their parents are involved.

Please consider purchasing one or more Major Saver cards this year to help benefit the Merrillville Education Foundation and the students within the district.

Thank you for your continued support! Be ready for the Major Saver 2019 card coming soon!

Yearbook Pictures and Spring Pictures

A photographer will be in our building on Tuesday, February 19th to take candid and group photos for our yearbook.

On Tuesday, March 26th, students will have the opportunity to have their picture taken in fun and casual poses. These will be full-length and 2/3 body poses. Only students who have returned their envelopes with payment will have their pictures taken.

Information about the Spring Pictures will come home the first part of March.

Updates from the Staff

You already get regular updates in the form of notes and newsletters from your child's classroom teacher, but what about other staff members your child may see? In this section, you will get updates each trimester from various staff members in an effort to keep you informed about what is happening throughout the school.

The Art Loft

Mr. Boyer

I hope everyone has been staying warm and had an awesome winter break!

For the third trimester all students will continue to learn about, review, and demonstrate safe and proper use, care, and storage of media, materials, and equipment. Students will review and use what they have learned. They will work on learning about using personal preference when creating a work of art and will focus on sculptural and three-dimensional elements of art making. Students will experience the integrative nature of visual arts, other arts disciplines, and disciplines outside the arts, and understand the arts as a critical component of learning and comprehension in all subject areas.

1st grade artists will be learning more about the seven elements of design through painting and sculpture. They will use imaginative play and develop personal art making techniques.

2nd grade artists will learn about and use the seven principles of design to communicate emotion through their artwork. They will learn about representational and non-objective art through history and famous artwork.

3rd grade artists will be challenged to create artwork that uses multiple elements and principles of design. They will reflect on why cultures create art and why it is important today.

4th grade artists will be learning to draw and paint from life, create 3-dimensional and sculptural artworks, and be able to self-critique.

At home, encourage your child(ren) to think how art-making and creativity can solve problems. Have them write a short story and illustrate the characters or setting.

Notes from the Music Room

Mrs. Timmerman

John Wood musicians are keeping busy as we enter the third trimester. We continue to build upon skills learned earlier this year and in previous years as we reach toward the goal of being musical people who are tuneful, "beat-ful," and artful. "Music in Our Schools Month" is in March, a time when we celebrate the role of music in the education of every child. March also brings the Second Grade Program. April is Jazz Appreciation Month. All grades will have activities to expose them to this made-in-America musical art form, including grade appropriate improvisation and listening. Other third trimester activities include singing, rhythm notation, instrument identification and folk dancing. Look for information about the first annual John Wood Family Folk Dance Night coming this spring!

During each music class K and 1st grade students complete a musical workout consisting of a variety of skills to develop in-tune singing, the ability to feel the beat, and the appropriate responses to the artistic qualities of music. Kindergartners are learning about high and low sounds. Students listen to identify if pitches are high or low and whether the notes are going up or going down. We will be exploring the expressive qualities in music, such as fast or slow (the tempo) and loud or soft (the dynamics).

First graders will be reading and creating rhythm and pitch patterns from pictures and objects like one- and two-eyed "rhythm monsters." Reading picture, or iconic, rhythms and melodies leads to reading actual rhythm notation.

Second graders have begun learning songs for their spring music program, "The Great Outdoors." The second-grade music program will be Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. here at John Wood School.

Third graders will be practicing ostinatos and canons. An ostinato is a

rhythm, melody, or spoken pattern that repeats throughout a song or rhyme. This skill improves thinking and concentration because the ostinato part is different from the song or rhyme. Canons or rounds are pieces in which the musicians perform the same things, but they begin at different times. Canons help develop musical independence. Students must maintain their own part while different parts are going on at the same time.

Fourth graders started learning to play the recorder at the beginning of January. Recorder study will continue through the rest of the year. They are using their note reading skills to decode songs. Students are encouraged to continue practicing note names to improve their pitch reading skill. Free online practice can be done at www.musictheory.net, or you can download the PC game "Staff Wars."

The Fitness Forecast

Mr. Battista

Greetings from the Gym! We are busy in Physical Education class. This month we are participating in our jump rope unit and basketball skills unit. As usual, we are working on increasing our fitness levels, cooperating with others, and being a good sport.

Here are some questions you can ask your child:

- What is one type of jump you learned?
- Why are we learning about jump ropes in PE class?
- How do you demonstrate sportsmanship during an activity?
- Why is it called Phys. Ed., PE or Physical Education and not gym class?

*Please remind your students to bring their PE shoes to the gym for their own safety. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's fitness or skill level, don't hesitate to contact me via: tbattista@mvs.k12.in.us.

Social Worker Corner

Mrs. Robbins, LCSW

Winter time Ideas

Cabin fever...? Most parents and teachers agree that this in-between time of the year plays havoc on a household and classroom. Children are antsy to be anywhere but indoors and parents are wishing it wasn't too cold for their children to get out. Unfortunately, here in the Midwest, the weather changes about every five minutes. The following ideas are just some suggestions to help improve the atmosphere with your child(ren).

"Studies have shown that daily physical exercise, exposure to fresh air, and sunlight (when it's available) can all really help. It's also a good idea to eat healthily. Fresh fruits and veggies are a little more expensive and harder to come by this time of year, but even frozen versions are chocked with vitamins... Getting a good night's sleep each night can also help recharge the batteries" (Ann Jones, MD).

Encourage your child(ren) to get outside when the weather does permit and the temperature is above freezing. Sledding, skating, building a snowman, or just taking a walk on a fairly nice day, helps to burn off excess energy. It is a bonus if the sun is shining as the natural Vitamin D from the sun will help to boost and improve mood and overall temperament.

Keep in mind only 33 days more until spring.

The Book Nook

Mrs. Echols

Out with the old and in with the new!

We are creating new and exciting things for our students to do inside our school's library. We are implementing new ways for them to learn, explore and grow that will help build upon their creativity. The old way was about being extremely quiet, researching projects, and checking out materials. However, we would like to make it enjoyable for our students to learn, grow and be creative. In addition to our students being able to check out materials, research projects and take tests for required reading, there will be Makerspace areas for them to build upon their creativity.

Our Makerspace area will include board games like chess, checkers, Scrabble and Uno; STEM materials like Legos, wood and magnetic building materials, and assorted materials for science projects, puzzles, art supplies and more.

The students will continue to learn about the Dewey Decimal Classification System and the difference between fiction & nonfiction materials during this trimester. However, we are implementing additional ways to learn, grow and be creative.

Coach's Corner

Mrs. Laird, Instructional Coach

Asking Questions While We Read

"Asking Questions" is a skill that readers do while reading. We are trying to get the students to "ask questions." One way to do this is to have them give "I wonder _____." statements. As students read and wonder, they should then read on to answer their own questions. Good readers have this constant thought process of questioning and answering. This process will help students improve comprehension. For younger students, you can stop them and encourage them to ask their questions out loud. Beware: questions should help us think about the book. Reading about a basement and wondering if grandma's basement still has spiders will not help us understand. ☺

Upcoming Events

continued from page 3

March 11

Lake County Read-a-Thon Money Due

Today is the last day to turn in your money to Mrs. Echols.

March 14

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

March 15

Major Saver Fundraiser Begins

K-8th grade students in the Merrillville Community School Corporation will have the opportunity to sell these cards that can be used at area businesses. See the article page 5 for more information.

March 18-29

IREAD Testing Window

All third grade students will take the IREAD test. Attendance is important on these days. See Mrs. Petralia's article on the first page of this newsletter.

March 21

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

March 25-29

Disability Awareness Spirit Week

Watch the calendar for special spirit days as we conclude Disability Awareness Month.

March 26

Spring Pictures

Photographers will be at John Wood this morning to take fun and casual portraits. Only students who return their envelope with payment will have their photo taken. More information will come home as we near this date.

March 26

Second Grade Music Program

6:00 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room

Our second graders have been busy practicing and tonight is the night that they will be performing for family and friends. The theme of the program is "The Great Outdoors". The students have been working hard to learn the songs and are excited to share these songs with everyone.

March 27

Major Saver Fundraiser Ends

Turn in all money and orders no later than today to make sure you receive your cards and prizes.

March 28

Early Dismissal – 1:25 p.m.

Please plan for your child to be home approximately one hour earlier on this day.

April 1-April 5

Spring Break

No school for all students. School will resume on Monday, April 8th.