At Last! We’re Coming Back to WES!

As we begin the 3rd marking period and plan for students to enter back into school buildings, the following plans will be implemented. Please read all of the information carefully.

**Grades 2 - 5**

Beginning Tuesday, February 2nd, all students in grades 2 through 5 will participate with their regular classroom teacher at their school for virtual instruction.

The return to schools timeline was approved by the elected Board of Education during the January 25 BOE meeting. Grade 2-5 students will participate in the previously implemented Hybrid/Concurrent A/B A/B V schedule for in-person learning beginning Monday, March 8. (Please note that the word concurrent means simultaneously/at the same time.)

Students who are currently in a virtual classroom and whose families have chosen for them to opt out of any in-person learning will still participate with their classroom teacher remotely each day.

Students who will be returning to the Hybrid/Concurrent A/B schedule for in-person instruction will also participate with their classroom teacher remotely on the days when they do not attend school in-person.

Fridays will continue to be a virtual learning day for all students.

**PreK, Kindergarten, Grade 1**

Students who were new to opting out in the second marking period and whose families have chosen for them to continue not participating in any form of in-person instruction for the third marking period will be placed with a virtual teacher soon after February 1st, when student / class size changes have been evaluated.

Students will begin attending in-person classroom instruction on Monday through Thursday, as was previously implemented, on Monday, March 1, 2021.

Students currently placed with a virtual teacher and whose families have chosen for them to continue to not participate in any in-person instruction will remain with the virtual classroom teacher.

Fridays will continue to be a virtual learning day for all students.

**ARRIVAL TIMES 8:25-8:45**

**IF STUDENTS ARRIVE AFTER 8:45,**

**THEY WILL NEED TO BE SIGNED IN AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**

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**From the Interim Principal...Mr. Derek Horne**

Happy New Year, WES Families!

We look forward to a new beginning after a year of struggles, challenges, and hardships. But before we look forward, let’s remember one thing we should not forget about 2020. Children demonstrated flexibility, perseverance, and resilience with the changes schools had to make. Our children have been amazing through this pandemic. We can learn from them on how to be flexible and take things day by day. They are incredible little human beings!

As we begin this new year, the winter season allows us the opportunity to take a breath and enjoy our surroundings. The picturesque snow-capped mountains on my drive to school are breathtaking. Let’s take this time to play in the snow, whether building a snowman, skiing, or making snow angels; this can be fun for all. Snuggle up with a warm blanket and read a good book. Play a board game, look at old photos, or whatever amazing things bring joy and laughter with your families. While we battle this pandemic, it is vital that we focus on our children and our own mindfulness. Together we can do this!

In the upcoming weeks, we are looking forward to the return of students! Please make sure that your child arrives between 8:25 AM and 8:45 AM. Otherwise, please sign your child in at the school office.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the school office at 301-359-0511 for information. You may also contact me using my email address, which is Derek.Horne@acpsmd.org. Thank you for your support of your children, our school and this community!
Parents have the right to know the certification status of the teachers and instructional assistants who work with their children. You may get this information by making a written request to:

Mr. Steven Wilson
Supervisor of Human Resources
108 Washington Street
P. O. Box 1724
Cumberland, MD 21501-1724

A NOTE about SAFETY at WES
(Please keep in mind as students return to school...)

Parents, when you are in the lobby, please do not open the door to others who are coming into the school. Every person coming into the school needs to "buzz" the office for admittance. If you are at the door and have been "buzzed" in, please do not hold the door open for others who are behind you. They also need to push the button when they get to the door, and then they will be let into the lobby. Thank you for your cooperation with this important safety issue.
A Coke and a Smile

Donate the codes found on your Coca-Cola products. View the video to find out more about this easy way to donate to local schools and other causes in your community.
https://us.coca-cola.com/give/

Books Before Bedtime

A virtual "Books Before Bedtime" event was held from 6:00-6:45 PM on February 4, 2021. Families participated by using a google meet link provided by the school. Students in grade PreK-2 were invited to dress in their pajamas, wrap themselves in their favorite blankets and snuggle up with their favorite stuffed animals to get ready to participate in a night of bedtime stories, snacks, and prizes. WES teachers Kim Aikman, Lisa Harris, Melissa Kealy and Beth Weber read bedtime stories and shared reading strategies with students and parents while those in our school community enjoyed their snacks in a cozy spot at home. (Students who preregistered were able to pick up a snack and a surprise the week of the event!)

Participating adults were eligible to win a $25.00 Wal-Mart Gift Card. The adult winners of the gift card was the family of Chaney Butler, grade one.

This event was so popular that a few siblings in grades 3-5 joined in (no snack and treat, just to watch that is) because this event was just for younger students. There were about 40 students (plus their adults) in attendance. A great time was had by one and all.

'Twas a Surprise Snow Day (thanks PBIS!)

On, February 1st, Westernport faculty, staff and students were treated to a surprise "snowy" event sponsored by PBIS. It was a virtual snow day! From 11:00 AM-1:00 PM, all of us went out to enjoy the snow. (See more pictures on the WES PTA Facebook page!)
Westernport Elementary School was recently awarded a $2,000 grant from the J. Norman and Margaret J. Reeves Private Foundation, which is administered by First United Trust & Investments.

The mission of the Reeves Private Foundation is to benefit non-profit organizations in the vicinity of Westernport, Maryland; Keyser, West Virginia; Luke, Maryland and Piedmont, West Virginia. A committee of local representatives from those areas evaluates each grant request based on its merits and how the grant meets the desires of the foundation.

This is the seventh year that the Reeves Foundation has awarded a grant to the school. Mrs. Deborah Hendrickson, media specialist, applied for the grant in August and the check arrived at the school in early November.

About 20% of this year’s Reeves Grant was used to purchase 36 eBooks to add to the Follett Destiny Discover “side” of the new Follett Online Library System, which is available to all students at WES. Students may access these eBooks by going to the Westernport Home Page (https://www.acpsmsd.org/wt), then choosing Bookmarks, Students should click on the Follett Destiny Library Catalog (look for the “tree” on the top left corner) and log in through google using their usual ACPS credentials. Students may read the eBooks online or check out one at a time.

Approximately 80% of the grant money will be used to allow students choose a “free” book from a virtual book fair, if possible, or to purchase more eBooks to add to Follett Destiny Discover.

We are extremely grateful to the Reeves Private Foundation for this support for the One Student/One Book program that we have had in the past and for the possibility of continuing it in spring 2021 (or for the possibility of more eBooks for students to enjoy...)

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Meet the (New) Staff

Mrs. Debbie Dayton is a new member of the cafeteria staff at WES. She is a transplant from Michigan. She moved to McCooe “for love”, because her husband, Dave, retired from the Air Force after 20 years of service and wanted to go home. So here she is! Mrs. Dayton retired from Western Maryland Health System (now UPMC) after 19 years and decided that “retirement was not all it was cracked up to be.” So she was happy to become a cafeteria lady. Mrs. Dayton and her husband have two grown children and one granddaughter, Molly. She absolutely loves living in the mountains of Western Maryland. She is also happy that there is a lot less snow in here than in Michigan!

Ms. Megan Bray is the new instructional assistant in Miss Kim’s PreK. “Miss Megan” is a native of Keyser and a graduate of Keyser High School. She also has an associate’s degree in Elementary/Early Childhood Education from Potomac State College of WVU. Ms. Bray then attended FSU for a year before coming to WES, where she truly feels like she is making a difference. Her hobby is baking and she runs a small baking business. Ms. Bray lives in Keyser with her fiancé, Tyler, and their three “fur” babies.

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Resolutions for a Happy New Year

No one will ever get out of this world alive. Resolve therefore to maintain a reasonable sense of values.

Take care of yourself. Good health is everyone’s major source of wealth. Without it, happiness is almost impossible.

Resolve to be cheerful & helpful. People will repay you in kind.

Avoid angry, abrasive persons. They are generally vengeful.

Avoid zealots. They are generally humorless.

Resolve to listen more & to talk less.

No one ever learns anything by talking. Be chary of giving advice. Wise men don’t need it, & fools won’t heed it.

Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, & tolerant of the weak & the wrong. Sometime in life you will have been all of these.

Do not equate money with success. There are many successful money-makers who are miserable failures as human beings. What counts most about success is how a person achieves it.

---Lloyd Shearer (1985)

WES Faculty and Staff wishes all of you a belated, but a VERY Happy New Year!

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Thank you, Reeves Private Foundation!

Citizens of the Month (November, December and January)

Students selected as “Citizens of the Month” exemplify the character trait for the month, as determined by the Allegany County Public Schools. Student “Citizens of the Month” were recently chosen. The character trait for November 2020 was citizenship. Those students selected for November included PreK-Ryder Morgan, & Grayson Cuppert; Kindergarten- Kierra Bateson & Kyree Boal; Grade 1-Lennon Metz & Katalina McGeady; Grade 2-Jayden LaRue, Mariah Wade & Adrianna Stuart; Grade 3-Eden Brashear; Grade 4-Adrienne Taylor & Annabelle Taylor; and Grade 5-Nathan Miller & Kristen Faitse.

The character trait for December was caring. Those students selected for December 2020 included PreK-Jaxon Reed & Hudson Placka; Kindergarten-Bennet Twigg & Aliyah Shingler; Grade 1-Harleigh Mason, & Jacob Mayhew; Grade 2-Makenna Sgaggero, Koltin Spalding & Liam Muir; Grade 3-Landon Iliff; Grade 4-Gracie Shingler & Emily Ellifritz; and Grade 5-Aiden Weimer & Rachel Wolford.

The character trait for January was fairness. Those students selected for January 2021 included PreK-Addysyn Davis & Logan Shapiro; Kindergarten-Ethan Brashear & Luke Jackson; Grade 1-Porter Beard & Maci Iliff; Grade 2-Addison Wolfe, Lily Dennis & Jaxon Elliott; Grade 3-Lacy Custer; Grade 4-Bailey Brashear & Hayleigh Sanford; and Grade 5-Bentley Twigg & Megan Carpenter. Congratulations, students!

OUR MISSION: Westernport Elementary will partner with family and community to build a better world—one child at a time.

OUR VISION: Westernport Elementary will strive to prepare and empower students to successfully meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, by nurturing the whole child: intellectually, physically and emotionally.
To a Groundhog on February 2

Wake up, sleepyhead!
Put your dreams away.
Everyone is waiting
for what you have to say.
Will your shadow make a blot
on the snow today or not?
Will the sun start turning hot?
Will the month be cold, or what?
Hurry, sir, and tell us
on this Groundhog Day.
Wake up, sleepyhead!
What's a little snow?
If your shadow follows you,
back inside you'll go.
Will the coming six weeks be
 wintry, cold, and shivery?
Balmy, warm, and summery?
Groundhog, what's your prophecy?
Better get your glasses on,
So you'll really know!
(Anonymous)

Update on February 2, 2021: Both Punxsutawney Phil and Western Maryland Murray saw their shadows, so get ready for six more weeks of winter!