



# W.E.S...It's Elementary2

Building the Future—One Child at a Time

## The Book Fair is Coming! (April 7-11, 2025)



The book fair is coming! In fact, it was delivered today. The book fair will be held in the Gym of Westernport Elementary from April 7-11, 2025.

- April 7 & 9 (Monday & Wednesday) The book fair will be open for all students to browse during library classes. Students will write wish lists. Students will be given book fair flyers to take home.

- April 10 & 11 (Thursday & Friday) Students in grades K-5 will shop for books, with the help of teachers and parent and community volunteers recruited by Mrs. Laura Biser.

Parents who wish to shop online with their children or to purchase gifts may do so. (The link to the Scholastic online site will be posted on Class Dojo,

Schoology and the PTA Facebook site). Books make great holiday gifts! Parents may also sign in at the office to shop on Thursday (8:30 AM-noon and 1:00-3:00 PM) or on Friday (8:30 AM-noon). The book fair will close for students on Friday at 1:30 PM.

Thanks to the Reeves Foundation for their support by providing grant funds to Westernport Elementary School so that students may once again choose a "free" book at the time of the book fair. Students will be able pick one "free" book when they preview the book fair and these books will be delivered to classrooms after the books have been paid for by grant funds (once the fair ends.) Thanks also to Martin's in LaVale for providing paper and plastic bags to help students with their shopping experience.

Profit from all sales will be used by Westernport Elementary School to provide extra funds for books and library-related programs in 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. Encouraging a love for reading is critical to student success. Please support the Westernport Elementary Book Fair and help your children find their next favorite book.

Westernport Elementary  
172 Church Street  
Westernport, MD  
21562  
A Title I School  
Mrs. Deb Hendrickson, Editor

Volume 17, Issue 7-8

March-April 2025

### Inside this issue:

Title I Tips/Calendar	2
Find Us on Facebook	2
Citizens of the Month	2
Hooley Plunge 2025	2
Alumni Trip to Antarctica	3
U MD Home Horticulture	3
Honor Band/Orchestra	4
ACM TEACH Program	4
Waving Off Lady Tornado Basketball Team	5
Looking Back...March 13, 2020	
Preparing for MCAP	6



## From the Principal...Mr. Horne



.It is hard to believe that the month of March is already over. We hope that the weather will cooperate and spring weather will begin to appear.

With the arrival of spring means that we will have more hours of sunshine and the temperatures are on the rise, which allows students the opportunity to get outside and burn off that built up winter energy.

While getting outside is exciting, please take a moment to discuss with your child about using kindness, respect, and being safe while playing outside and crossing our parking lot.

Parents, we also need your help to improve student attendance. Please remember that it is imperative that our students are here, on time, and stay throughout the day every day to ensure that

they are getting the best education possible. Even being a few minutes late or leaving early has a huge impact on a student's progress. Please talk to your students about the importance of school and make their attendance a priority. We have an amazing staff that are dedicated to your child's success. Please allow them the opportunity to provide that

education for your students by having them here to learn every day.

We appreciate your continued support and effort in a partnership for our children.

If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to call the school office at 301-359-0511 for information. You may also contact me at derek.horne@acpsmd.org.



## Title I Tips #1

Westernport Elementary School has a Schoolwide Title I Program. This means that the federally funded instructional staff may work with all of the students in our school, and our school develops a Schoolwide Title I program designed to increase academic achievement for all students. A Schoolwide Program helps us to use federal funds to meet the needs of all students more effectively. Title I provides additional resources for our school, including Instructional materials for our students.

Professional development for teachers.

Information about how to help children succeed in school for parents.

Parent/Family Engagement Programs (Mrs. Laura Biser, coordinator)

Additional staffing to provide support for reading & math instruction. Our Title I staff members are Mrs. Brittany Morgan, Mrs. Staci Wilson and Mrs. Kara Zufall.



## Find Us on Facebook



The Westernport Elementary Facebook page was created to give members of our Westernport Elementary community important information, announcements, and updates about school happenings and events. Parents and grandparents may use the link on the Westernport Home Page (under For Parents) or search Facebook to find this group and request to join it. This is a closed group. Please be respectful when posting on this page. Administrators had the right, and responsibility, to remove anything that is offensive, inappropriate, or not pertaining to school initiatives and efforts.



## Citizens of the Month



The character trait for **February** was **Kindness**. Being kind means saying something positive to someone or doing something positive for someone. Students selected receive a trip to our local McDonald's.

**February** "citizens" of the month included Kindergarten-Donnie Trexler & Bella Glascoe; Grade 1-Canaan Dennison, Jaxon Wilburn & Zaiden Hickey; Grade 2-Gabe Morris & Jayla Case; Grade 3-Caroline Hughes & Logan Rice; Grade 4-Ava Morgan & Cella Clites; and Grade 5-Aaliyah Spiker & Connor Coffman.

Kindness can become its own motive.  
We are made kind by being kind. ---Eric Hoffer

## Hooley Plunge 2025

In its 21st year, the Hooley Plunge has become the largest single-day fund-raising event in Allegany County. On Saturday, March 1st, hundreds of brave souls ran into the cold waters of Lake Habeeb at Rocky Gap State Park to raise money for local programs supporting the developmentally disabled, including the Special Olympics of Allegany County and many more local organizations. The Hooley Plunge is coordinated by the Alhambra Wamba Caravan #89. Since its inception, almost two million dollars has been raised.

This year, \$1,200.00 was raised by staff and students to support this worthwhile event. Classrooms that raised the most money to support the Hooley Plunge were Mrs. Raines's class, Mr. Jones's class and Mr. Benson's class. All WES students received a treat of extra play. The winning classrooms received a pizza party for first place, cafeteria ice cream for second place and a cafeteria cookie for the third place team. The adult team that represented WES included (from left) Shelly Fitzgerald, Karalee Martz, Tessa Fitzgerald, Laura Wilson and Kaelin Collage.



## WES Calendar

### UPCOMING MARCH-APRIL EVENTS

- ☺ April 4 (Fri.) Report Cards Released
- ☺ April 7-11 (Mon.-Fri.) Book Fair
- ☺ April 16 (Wed.) Easter Vacation Begins (Offices Closed April 18 & April 21)
- ☺ April 22 (Tues.) SCHOOLS RE-OPEN
- ☺ April 23 (Wed.) Author, Drew Daywalt, visits WES
- ☺ April 23-26 (Wed.-Sat.) ACPs Art Show @ City Place in Frostburg
- ☺ April 29-May 2 (Tues-Fri./ELA) & May 5-8 (Mon.-Thurs./Math) MCAP Testing (Grades 3, 4 & 5)



## Mission & Vision

\*\*\*\*\*

**OUR MOTTO:** Building the Future-One Child at a Time

**OUR MISSION:** Westernport Elementary School will empower our students to successfully meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, by nurturing the whole child: intellectually, physically and emotionally.

**OUR VISION:** We will partner with family and community to build a better world - one child at a time.





## Trip to Antarctica: WES Alumni, Dr. Robby May Visits Grade 2



Dr. Robby May visited WES on March 27th to tell second grade students about his January 2023 trip to Antarctica. Dr. May won a Grosvenor Teaching Fellowship which allowed him to go for free instead of paying \$30,000 (or more) to make this trip. It took him three days by airplane and two days by ship, plus the use of a motorized Zodiac boat to travel to this continent from his home in Maryland. This National Geographic Expedition took participants to both the eastern dry side of the side of Antarctica which has a more pebble-like surface and less snow and ice as well as to the western wet and cold side of the continent. Dr. May told students that January is "summer" in Antarctica so the temperature during the day was 33-36 degrees Fahrenheit, but he still had to dress in four layers to prevent from getting hypothermia. He brought his parka to show to students and told them that it is too warm to wear here in Western Maryland!

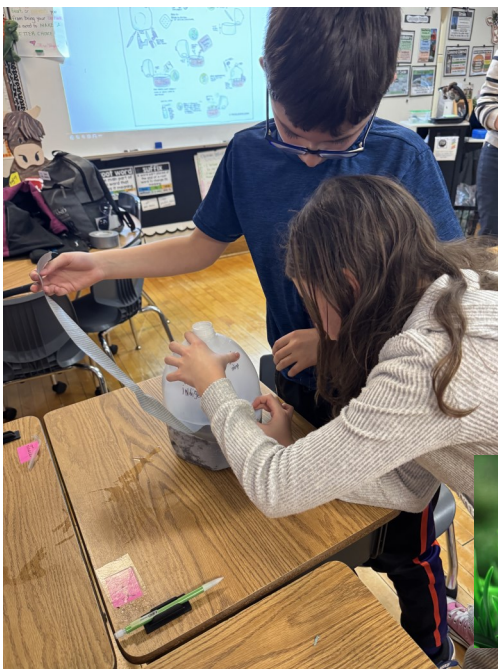
Students were especially interested in penguins and asked many questions. Dr. May showed students pictures of the different kinds of penguins he encountered, but told them that people had to stay 10 feet away so as not to give the penguins any germs. He also said that they were "stinky" and demonstrated how penguins behave in water.

Students in second grade recently completed a mini-unit in the library media classes of Mrs. Deborah Hendrickson in which they learned about Antarctica and penguins. Our fourth grade students (when in second grade) completed the same mini-unit and received an email and pictures from Dr. May, but current second students were glad that he was able visit in person!

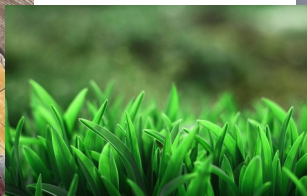


We are proud to say that Dr. May is a native of Westernport and a WES alumni. He was a teacher for 13 years, with experience in private schools in NC, locally at Fort Hill High School and in the EMS world. He earned his doctorate in education in 2022. Dr. May is currently the Director of Clinical Services for Monongalia County Emergency Medical Services.

## University of Maryland Gardener Sprouts Home Horticulture



Over a period of five weeks this winter, Mrs. Hughes' class participated in the University of Maryland Master Gardener Sprouts Home Horticulture Program led by Master Gardener, Mrs. Sarah Llewellyn. Students learned about geology, native plants, soil, pollinators, food webs and more. Students received a certificate for participating in this very interesting program. Mrs. Llewellyn also worked with fifth grade classes recently, teaching hydroponics, which is the technique of growing plants using a water-based nutrient solution instead of soil. She hopes to have a lettuce tasting event soon!





## Fifth Grade Honor Band and Honor Orchestra 2025



WES fifth grade students were selected to perform in the county-wide Fifth Grade Honor Band and Honor Orchestra concerts which were part of the Music in Our Schools Month celebrations. Both concerts were held in the auditorium of Fort Hill High school.

The fifth grade honor band was directed by Sarah Jackson, Janet Jones, BJ Lewis and Harold McClay. The band concert was held on Wednesday, March 6th. The band performed challenging music that they rehearsed on after school each Tuesday since January. Students from WES who participated in the fifth grade honor band were (from left) Nathan Wade, Taylor Windle, Connor Coffman, Eligah Keaton, Aveona Durst and Lennon Metz. Porter Beard (missing from photo) was also a member of the group.

The fifth grade honor orchestra concert was conducted by Pat Aaron, Jacob Blank and Eric Foremen. The orchestra concert was held on Thursday, March 7th. The orchestra also performed challenging songs that they rehearsed each Wednesday after school since January. Students from WES who participated in the fifth grade honor orchestra were (row 1) Aubrie Zimmerman, Katalina McGeedy, and Kasadie Durst; (row 2) Jace Lytle, Brantlee Lavelle and Serenity Clark-Kuhn; and (row 3) Landon Alkire, Addalye Bennett, Ella Aronhalt, and Kiya Chojar.



## ACM TEACH Club "Zooms" with Mr. Benson's Third Grade



Students in Mr. Ben Benson's third grade class participated in a virtual visit with the TEACH Club at Allegany College of Maryland. The ACM students and WES student had a Zoom question and answer session. ACM students were able to interact with real students and the third grade students were able to ask questions of the future teachers. Ms. Robin Seddon, one of the club advisors, coordinated the event, which was held on March 21, 2025..





## Keyser Lady Tornado Basketball Team "Send Off" Celebration

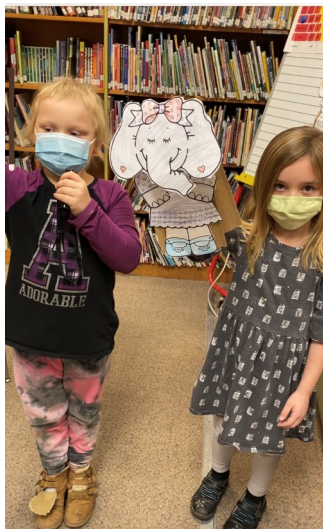


On March 5, 2025, the Keyser Girls Lady Tornado varsity basketball team punched their ticket to Charleston, WV with 67-39 win over the Lincoln Cougars. This was the third time in four years that the team went to the West Virginia state quarterfinals. Westernport Elementary students turned out on the sidewalk of the school on Tuesday, March 11th, to wish the Lady Tornado team and WES physical education teacher, Mr. Josh Blowe, good luck in the state tournament. Sadly, the team lost to the Wayne Pioneers on March 12th by only four points. The final score was 54-50.

Students supported the Keyser team with signs and cheered when the bus stopped for 10 minutes on their way to Charleston. Shown (at left) with Mrs. Amy Smith, her first grade teacher, is player Autumn Kerchner, who attended Westernport Elementary as a child.



## Looking Back...March 13, 2020

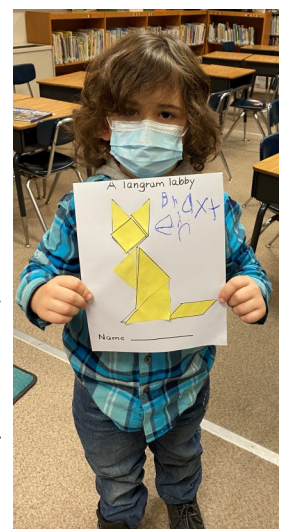


- The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic on **Wednesday, March 11, 2020**. All schools in Maryland, including Westernport Elementary, closed on **Friday, March 13, 2020** by order of Governor Larry Hogan. This closure was to be for two weeks but lasted until the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Students then received assignments from platforms such as Google Classroom and Class Dojo.

- Although students began to return in person in August 2020, school was again closed in November. Students were then taught virtually using a platform called Schoology until about March 1, 2021, then taught concurrently (with some students in classrooms and some online at the same time) until the end of the school year. (Some students returned to WES for face-to-face instruction, but not all. Some students also spent or finished the year in virtual classrooms with a mixture of classmates from across Allegany County.)

- Students and teachers returned in fall 2021 with masks, which were worn until March 1, 2022, when wearing masks became optional.

- The 2022-2023 school year began on **August 26, 2022**. Westernport Elementary School students and staff began to enjoy their first "normal" school year since the pandemic began.



Masked Kindergarten students are shown in library classes in early 2022. These students are now in third grade. Pictured (left to right) are Johanna Hartman, Jayme Greenwald and Braxton Lafferty.

# PREPARING

*for MCAP*

Encourage your child to do their best.

Testing can be intimidating to some, think about encouraging words you can express to your child. Discuss test taking strategies, such as:



- reading the question several times to make sense of the problem
- highlighting important information
- bookmarking a question if stuck
- taking a deep breath and resetting if feeling overwhelmed

Get a good night sleep.



Research shows that getting a good night sleep boosts memory and learning and increases attention span.

Non-stressful morning routine



Keep your child's morning routine as normal as possible. Set an alarm a few minutes early to provide a relaxed and calm morning atmosphere.

Avoid appointments and arrive on time



When scheduling appointments, please consider avoiding the morning of the identified testing dates. Research shows that if a child is assessed in their typical learning environment, the likelihood of success increases.

	ELA	MATH
Grades 3 - 5 (AM)	Tues., April 29 - Fri., May 2	Mon., May 5 - Thurs., May 8

