



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

Building the Future—One Child at a Time

We Survived...Remote Learning! #13WeeksSafeAtHome

WE ARE PROUD of our students, teachers and "at home teachers" for surviving the first ever "Remote Learning" experience. Here are some **THOUGHTS FROM STUDENTS:** I was worried...I asked my parents questions about the coronavirus...I did a lot of artwork for relatives...I was lazier than usual. School was pretty much the same for me because I already knew how to work in a Google classroom...I wished that I could have finished my AEP Project...It was boring just being with my sister. I missed having teachers explain things to me... I wanted to come back because staying home all the time was boring...I missed being in school...I missed seeing my friends and teachers...After a while I could not find anything fun to do. I didn't get to go many places or see many people...I now want a pool in my backyard because I will still be staying close to home ...I did some AR testing at home. I could have joined the 100 Point Club if I had been in school...I practiced my keyboarding with Typing.com and got to a new level. My parents told me to sing the ABC song so that I'd wash my hands real good...I watched a lot of TV...I had fun in Google Meets!



Here are some **THOUGHTS FROM TEACHERS:** I have realized how important a daily routine is for everyone's sanity...I realized that I truly missed going to work every day and seeing my students' smiling faces...I realized that my simple life could be even more simplified and I enjoyed every extra second I unexpectedly received to spend time with my teenager...I realized that I was right when I always told students that soap and water is always better than hand sanitizer...I learned that having forgetful students using pencils out of my jar will never be a good idea again!...I learned that finding a good method to "work from home" was really important...I learned a lot of new tech skills...I appreciated having wonderful and supportive colleagues and parents, and I got to know some of them better...I realized that I do not have to do my hair and makeup every day! Now that everyone has seen me without either, it feels great to let go of that requirement!...I learned that our lives really can change in the blink of an eye and that we should appreciate what we have, tell our loved ones how much we love them every day, and always pause to enjoy a hug...I appreciated more than ever how blessed I have been to work at WES. I will miss my students and our music-making, and my friends and colleagues, very, very much...I have learned to appreciate the small things, like spending more time with my family and to not take life for granted...I learned that I actually can cook, but I still do not like to cook! I love and appreciate my family, but I do miss my school family! (cont. on p.2)



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From the Principal...Mrs. Fazenbaker



As we finish the 2019-2020 school year, I would like to thank the parents and teachers who worked so hard this year to help the students at Westernport Elementary School to succeed. It was definitely a tumultuous year at WES. In October, our school went into a lock-in mode due to law enforcement activity in the area. In February, we experienced the death of a beloved staff member, Emogene Bosley. This year, we welcomed Sheriff's Deputy Michael Cessare and School Security Employee, Michael Muir, whose job is to make our school safer. Several students had serious

health issues that needed community support. Finally all of us experienced remote learning during the MP4 marking period.

What did I do at school while spending 13 weeks in a building without students? As a solo principal, I have plenty to do. Remote learning was actually more difficult. In addition to my usual duties, I answered emails and phone calls from parents, teachers and other colleagues for about two hours, every day. I helped with packet distribution (and sometimes with the pick up of lunches.)

I attended or conducted many, many, many online meetings using Google Meet. Although I could have chosen to work at home, I like doing work at my desk rather than at my dining room table.

I am extremely proud of everyone, students, parents, grandparents and staff, for their hard work, patience, and resilience during these unprecedented times. We could have not done it without working together. As one parent said, "It was about teamwork." Yes, it was; it

truly was.

Thanks to the teachers and support personnel that make up our wonderful Westernport staff. Any staff member that I called upon during the past 13 weeks answered immediately and then went above and beyond to help with whatever the need was at the time. I just cannot express my gratitude enough. I could not honor our school staff during Teacher Appreciation week, but I told them then...(continued on page 3)



We Survived (part 2)



I learned that I never spent enough time with my family having engaging, fun conversations and working together on things I thought would be boring (like putting together puzzles)!...I realize I enjoy cooking more than I ever thought I did. I still don't like cleaning up the mess, though...I appreciate that most people in our country are truly looking out for each other and are helping each other more than they ever had...I will never again take for granted the ability to go to a store and shop from fully stocked shelves...I learned that my family can get through anything, as long as we are together!...I kept thinking that I should pause Class Dojo after the official school day ended, but staying in contact with kids and parents was important...It was a struggle to teach my students and keep up with the work given to my kids, who go to a different school system, but we made it...I participated in Google Meet online video chats and compared to meeting face-to-face, it was very tiring, but it was nice to see the faces of colleagues and students...I was glad that Mrs. Amtower organized the Fifth Grade Drive-Thru Procession...The fifth grade students sure looked so much older after three months...I realized early on that there should have been more training for online instruction, yes, for staff, parents and students...It was fun making the "We Miss You" video and Bitmojis. Thanks, Mrs. Harris!...It was great to receive pictures of students creating with legos and items found at home...Students did an amazing amount of artwork at home. Great job!...Other than no shopping, no eating out and staying home when I got home, my life stayed the same since I went to work every day at WES. But it was extremely different at school because only nine other people were in the building on most days. Maybe once a day someone would come into the office for a minute or two or I would walk down to the cafeteria just to talk to people...I have learned that I like myself and don't mind being alone; I learned to accept me and take care of me...I think that I washed my hands 10 times a day...I have kept trying to find a perfect mask, just in case we need them in the fall!...I planted a garden! Here are some **THOUGHTS FROM PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** I think that more parents/grandparents now better know what our teachers do in their classrooms everyday...I learned that I made the right decision changing my major in college to medical. I could NEVER do all the wonderful teachers (and staff) at WES do everyday of the week...I learned that I'm not sure how teachers do what they do. It was an overwhelming experience, but we got through it. Many kudos to all teachers for everything that you do. You all are awesome!...I learned that trying to keep attention of a child is a difficult task and I only had one child to work with! I've always had appreciation for teachers and it certainly isn't a job everyone could do!

Farewell, Grade 5



The fifth grade was honored with a Drive-Thru Procession which was held on June 11th. All students received a gift bag, which included treats and a t-shirt, then had a photo opportunity with their teachers. Kyiah Green, Emily Gurtler, Max Kalbaugh, Savannah Kimble, and Kealana Puauli were presented with the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence. Leighton Johnson was awarded the Top Typist Trophy for keyboarding skills. Kyiah Green, the top Accelerated Reader for 2019-2020, received a Walmart Gift Card. Earlier that morning, the annual fifth grade video, created by teachers Mrs. Sarah Llewellyn and Ms. Brittany McMahon, premiered on the WES PTA Facebook site. (Nadiyah Placka is shown above in a farewell picture with her teachers.)

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.

Jigsaw puzzles became an addiction for me when I wasn't busy with the grandkids! ...I tutored my granddaughter in math, though Facetime and email... This time has given us more bonding time with the girls and as a family. We didn't realize how much running we were doing with sports activities until they actually stopped. We actually had sit down dinners instead of quick drive thru or kids being up late to get homework done. Yes, a lot of things changed on how we shopped or places we could go, but for me, slowing down actually calmed me. I am a stay-at-home mom so I have to give a shout out to all those working parents that had to make changes to help others...I've learned that it really is "all about the little things". As a non-essential worker, I've had the time to actually see, feel and experience life in a much simpler way. I've watched my oldest daughter and her husband, both non-essentials, spend much needed quality time with their three children. The constant rushing, running and take out food has been replaced with sharing and listening, home cooked meals and sit down dinners. When it came to home schooling, I was reminded that you are never too old to learn. My daughter became the teacher, I, the part-time assistant. It made us remember what we had been taught by our devoted teachers many years ago. Out of seemingly nowhere, we remembered fractions, geometry, how to read, listen and comprehend. The kids taught us, as well. We learned newer ways to do things. Most importantly, we all learned patience. The pandemic has taught me that we all need to slow down and take time to smell the roses...My grandson agreed to be the subject of my research paper for my master's class. During the pandemic, both of us had to make adjustments by completing his part online. With his help, I received an A and he learned a new reading strategy. Win - Win!...I've learned that when people can't get out to shop everyday, the post office looks like cyber Monday!...I am a 911 dispatcher for Allegany County and this situation has changed a lot of responses and how we handle calls for service and how our partners EMS, FIRE, and LAW respond as well...It would have been hard to get through this without computers and cell phones...It was hard in the beginning when the whole family had to share one computer...It was exciting to be able to borrow a Chromebook from the school so my kids could work online.

I've learned that every staff member at WES is truly amazing and I appreciate each and every one of you. God bless you all! Mrs. Raines, thank you for your patience with me and my lack of tech knowledge! Mostly I learned I apparently am not smarter than a 4th grader! ...I stand in awe of teachers! Who said you can't learn new things in your -s. I am learning first grade math...I've learned that the teachers really have a tough job on their hands. I think you all are heroes and I don't want to ever have to do this again. I have two grandchildren and this was a lot tougher than most things I ever did when I was in the army. Teaching is a really tough job and I truly do appreciate the teachers at WES, the other staff and Mrs. Fazenbaker for all the hard work you put in for our children each and every day. THANK YOU...I've learned that teachers aren't paid nowhere near enough. They have 10 to 30 kids in a class for 6-7 hours a day. Sitting and helping only three kids for a couple hours here and there drives me insane. I also learned that I need a mom vacation ASAP and I don't know if I can make it 'til August or not!...Again, **WE ARE PROUD** of our students, staff, and "at home teachers" for surviving the first ever "Remote Learning" experience. We could not do it alone. We are thankful for our cooks and custodians who served as the essential workers to cook the school meals and to clean our building so that it would be safe to re-enter. We are thankful to Mrs. Alexa Fazenbaker for always being there to provide answers to our questions.. We have all learned so much in the past three months. We hope to see everyone in person as soon as it is safe to do so.

Happy Summer from Your Faculty and Staff at Westernport Elementary!

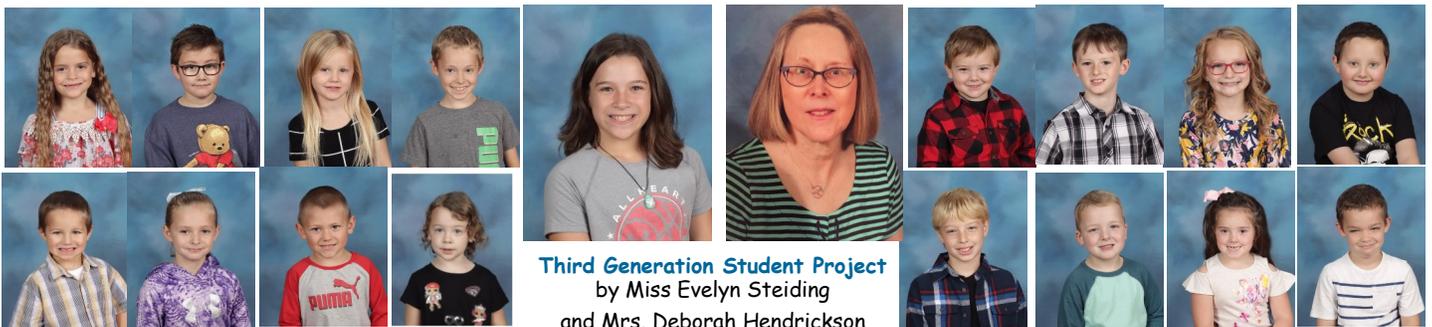


From the Principal...Mrs. Fazenbaker (continued)

...and I want to remind them now, that they are truly appreciated every single day of the year. This was not a normal year and my appreciation was quadrupled in a pandemic!

Finally, I wish to say a fond FAREWELL to our fifth grade students and wish them success as they move on to Westmar Middle School. Although I regret that the annual Awards Assembly and Fifth Grade Program could not be held, I hope that the Drive-Thru procession on June 11th was enjoyed. I would also like to remind parents that the ACPS Food and Nutrition Services department will be providing meals during the summer at school sites which were determined based on meal counts, location, FARMS, and staffing. Summer meals will be served beginning Monday, June 15, 2020, from 11 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday at Our local sites will include Westmar Middle and Westernport Elementary. As always, ACPS encourages and highly recommends that parents/students wear masks/cloth face coverings during meal pickups to help fight the spread of COVID-19.

Summer hours for Westernport Elementary School are Monday-Thursday, 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. If I do not happen to be at school when you stop in, please call the school at 301-359-0511 and leave message. I will return your call as soon as possible. More information will be provided regarding the direction that the ACPS will be taking for learning in 2020-2021. In the meantime, have a safe summer and enjoy your families! We hope for and look forward to better times ahead.



Third Generation Student Project
by Miss Evelyn Steiding
and Mrs. Deborah Hendrickson

What do all of these students have in common? Well, they are all my third generation students! The years go by quickly when one is a library media teacher who teaches students from grades PreK-5. Many staff members at Westernport Elementary School can claim having a second generation student. But not many can say that they are teaching the child of a former student and that this child is also the grandchild of a former student, too! In 2018-2019, student Evelyn Steiding, fifth grade student, and I started to collect names of third generation students. Evelyn was very interested in this project because she is a third generation student. I had taught her mother, Christina, and grandfather, Dennis. I promised Evelyn that a group picture would be taken before the end of the school year. But due to the close of school on March 13th, it was impossible to take the picture, but Evelyn and I still needed to finish the project.

I have had several other third generation students who have moved on to middle and high school, such as Tyler Whetzel, grandson of former head custodian, Kim Martin, who is both a former student and a McCoolle School alumni. But most can be found here at Westernport Elementary. So if your child is a third generation student of mine and should be in this picture gallery and is not, please let me know (Deborah.Hendrickson@acpsmd.org) and your child can be added. It's been a memorable project!

