



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

Building the Future—One Child at a Time

## 2025 CLC Storybook Holiday Heroes



The staff of Westernport Elementary was honored as 2025 CLC Storybook Holiday heroes due to their heroic efforts following the May 13th flash flood in Westernport. Many of the staff members were able to come to Frostburg and ride on the float which was decorated by the members of the FSU Children's Literature Centre.

All of our staff members have been heroes of one kind or the other. Some supported grade K-4 students when they were evacuated from the school by boat. Others stayed for hours with fifth grade students at Mountain Ridge High School until parents were able to pick them up. All have persevered as they continue to educate their students during the 2025-2026 school year, despite having to navigate through crowded conditions and new routines while waiting for the first floor of WES to be completed.

Thanks, CLC, for this great honor and for your continued support of Westernport Elementary School!



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

Volume 18, Issue 3-4

November-December 2025

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## From the Principal...Mr. Horne



I'd like to take a moment to wish each of you Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year! This year has been a new challenge for our Westernport family, but I am amazed how we overcome and persevere. I am truly blessed to be part of this school family. **THANK YOU TO EACH OF YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR OUR KIDS!**

'Tis the season....to depart

from regular schedules. As the holidays approach it is easy to get caught in the additional hustle and bustle and neglect our health. Thank you also for being mindful of this and sending healthy, rested children to school. Please make your best attempt to keep your children eating healthy foods, sleeping adequate hours, and coming to school dressed to battle the cold weather. We do send children outside if it is

32 degrees or above, so be sure your children are prepared with coats and gloves.

Please take a few moments this holiday break to enjoy some quality time such as taking a ride to look at the lights, reading a good book, looking at old pictures, celebrating a family tradition, or playing a game together. Many years from now, you and your child will remember these wonderful times spent

together. Again, on behalf of the WES staff, have a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New Year! If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to call the school office at 301-359-0511 for information or email me at [Derek.Horne@acpsmd.org](mailto:Derek.Horne@acpsmd.org)



## Citizens of the Month

Student "Citizens of the Month" were recently selected. **The character trait for September was safety**, i.e., that the student chosen has a calm body, follows directions quickly and follows the school rules.

Grade K-Jamison Lafferty & Carmella Cessare

Grade 1-Josie Dye, Piper Glascoe & Donnie Trexler

Grade 2-Brooklyn DeHaven & Adalynn Fisher

Grade 3-Cecelia Delilo & Isla Delilo

Grade 4-Brittan Thierry & Willow Ward

Grade 5-Karaliah Griffin & Leah Kolberg



**The character trait for October was confidence**, i.e., that the student chosen has belief in himself or herself and his/her powers and abilities.

Grade K-Hadleigh Simmons & Ivy Dolly

Grade 1-Bella Glascoe, Adrian Casteel & Layla Van Pelt

## September-November

Grade 2-Brienne Figueroa & Lilah Haines

Grade 3-Bennett Dobbs & Avery Todd

Grade 4-Mack Brashear & Stella Metz

Grade 5- Jacob Hull & Addalyn Howell



**The character trait for November was responsibility**, i.e., that the student chosen is dependable, makes good choices and is accountable for his/her actions.

Grade K-Emmett Householder & Jett Guinn

Grade 1-Decklyn Elliott, Mona Durst & Ryley Spiker

Grade 2-Michael Hans & Myles Eversole

Grade 3-Ava Bruce & Rylin Ruff

Grade 4-Braxten Lafferty & October Jones

Grade 5-Ava Morgan & William Wade



## WES School Calendar

- ♦ Dec. 23 (Tues.) **Three-Hour Early Dismissal**- Christmas Vacation Begins (Offices are closed Dec. 24, 25, 31 & Jan. 1.)
- ♦ Jan. 5 (Mon.) **SCHOOLS REOPEN**
- ♦ Jan. 16 (Fri.) **Three-Hour Early Dismissal**; PM Teacher Work Time; End of Second Marking Period; and End of First Semester
- ♦ Jan. 19 (Mon.) **SCHOOLS AND OFFICES CLOSED**-Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday
- ♦ Jan. 30 (Fri.) Report Cards released
- ♦ Feb. 13 (Fri.) **Three-Hour Early Dismissal**-PM Staff Development; Teacher Work Time
- ♦ Feb. 16 (Mon.) **SCHOOLS AND OFFICES CLOSED**-Presidents' Day
- ♦ Mar. 2 (Mon.) **SCHOOLS CLOSED** Parent Conference Day (Elementary 8:00-10:00 AM Teacher Plan and 10:00-2:00 PM and 1:00-3:30 PM Parent Conferences)

**HAPPY★NEW★YEAR**



## Reading Gives Us a Place to Go...

**"Gotta keep reading, cause this book's gonna be a good book."**

---**Black-Eyed Peas** (parody)

There are many ways to provide reading opportunities for your child.

\*\*\*Encourage your child to borrow print books as well as eBooks from the **Westernport Elementary School Library**. Go to the WES Home Page (Bookmarks). <https://www.acpsmd.org/domain/515> Click on Follett Destiny (tree icon). Have your child log in with google. That will allow your child to check out an ebook (or two or three...) or read an interactive ebook, in addition to the book (s) that he/she borrows from the library. (The interactive ebooks may be read online and do not need to be checked out.)

\*\*\*Explore with your child more than 8,000 interactive ebooks available in **myON (My Online Library)**!

Go to the WES Home Page (Bookmarks).

<https://www.acpsmd.org/domain/515>

Have your child click on **Clever**, log in with google, then click on the "R" Renaissance icon which will lead to the myON app on the left of the screen. Click on the

"Library, Recommended and/or Search" buttons to find ebooks of interest.

\*\*\*Explore the books and online materials available at any of the six branches of the **Allegany County Public System** by going to [www.alleganycountylibrary.info](http://www.alleganycountylibrary.info) or have your child click on the Allegany County Library System logo on the WES Home Page (Bookmarks) Your child may use his/her regular library card number or **virtual STAR card number** to log into BookFlix, library databases or to check out ebooks or audiobooks. The staff at the Westernport Branch, currently at 121 Main Street, will be glad to help you in person or you may call the library at 301-359-0455. The Westernport Branch is open on Mondays from 1:00-8:00 PM and

Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 AM-5:00 PM. The nearby George's Creek Regional Library is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.



## Safety is #1

Please have your children in the appropriate child restraint when bringing your children to school in your vehicle for any reason. Maryland's Child Passenger Safety Law requires that children under eight years old or 80 pounds in weight are to be in a child restraint unless the child is 4'9" or taller. Every child from 8 to 16 years old who is not secured in a child restraint must be secured in the vehicle's seat belt, in every sitting position in the vehicle. The fine for not having a child secured is \$83.00, which includes court costs.





## Marvelous Math Day, Hooray!

## Title I Tip #2



Math Day was held at Westernport Elementary on Tuesday, November 18, 2025. Parents visited K-5 classrooms to participate in math related games and activities with their children, with the exception of kindergarten and first grade activities which were held in the gymnasium. A variety of math related games were purchased by the school and were prepared for each classroom by Mrs. Laura Biser, parent engagement coordinator. Some of the games were Race

to 20, Addition War card game, Multiplication War card game, Pathways and several other Box Cars and One Eyed Jacks games. The games were given to parents to keep and to play again at home. Many classroom teachers also added these games to their small group math centers.

The Math Day events, planned by members of the school Math/Tech team, were held in conjunction with the Thanksgiving meal distribution, organized by Mr. Ethan Adams, community coordinator. A total of 97 parents attended the day's events.



### PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

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. Chris Cassell  
Supervisor of Human Resources  
108 Washington Street  
P. O. Box 1724  
Cumberland, MD 21501-1724



## Meet the (New) Faculty and Staff



**Mr. Ethan Adams** is the long-term substitute for the Community Schools Coordinator position. Mr. Adams is a native of Westernport, MD, and he attended WES from third through fifth grade. He then graduated from Calvary Christian Academy in Cresaptown and received a bachelor's degree from Liberty University. Currently, he lives in LaVale. In his free time, Mr. Adams enjoys coaching and playing basketball, watching football, and spending time with his family. He is excited to be a part of the WES community!

**Ms. Sophia Shively** is the new fifth

grade teacher at WES and also coordinates the After School Program. She formerly worked in reading intervention at Cresaptown School and was a long term sub at South Penn. Ms. Shively comes from a family of teachers. Her great-grandmother taught fifth grade, her dad was a teacher for over 30 years, and her brother is currently a teacher at Allegany High School. Ms. Shively is from Cumberland and graduated from Frostburg State University. She cheered at FSU and coached cheerleading for three years in Cumberland. In her spare time, Ms. Shively

enjoys her three cats, whom she considers her children. She enjoys playing with makeup and does makeup for events such as dances and weddings.

**Ms. Aura Trejo-Cisneros** (Mrs. Bean) is an IA at WES. She is so happy working in second grade. She comes from a city called Puebla, Mexico, where the weather is mild and nice all year long. She used to be a French Teacher but likes English as well and is always trying to improve her skills. She loves to spend time with her wonderful husband, (they are taking dance classes...) Mrs. Bean loves to walk her dog, Zumba and to practice Tai Chi Chuan and Chi Kung.

## Denim Day

Westernport Elementary Staff raised approximately \$150.00 in cash plus few toys were also donated in support of the Toys for Happiness Denim Day, which was held on Wednesday, December 3. Staff members had the choice of donating \$5.00 or a small toy or game and could wear jeans to school in return.



## More (New) Faculty

**Mrs. Michelle Paitsel** is a new instructional assistant at WES. Mrs. Paitsel grew up in Lonaconing and is a graduate of Westmar High. She lives in Rawlings on a small farm (complete with pigs, cows and goats) with her husband, Chris, and three kids. In her spare time, she cheers on her kids when they participate in extra-curricular activities. Mrs. Paitsel is excited to be at WES.

**Ms. Ashley Cole** is a new IA at WES. She grew up (and still lives) in Lonaconing and graduated from Westmar High and CTE. She was a Certified Nursing Assistant until her dad passed away and then decided she could no longer work in health care. Ms. Cole has a seven old daughter named Cambria. She also has two nephews and a niece. She enjoys going on adventures with her daughter (and watching her cheer for the Frostburg Cougars) and taking her mom to bingo. She has dogs named Paisley and Sweetpea. Ms. Cole is so excited to be at WES!

## Thanks!

Thanks to those who participated in the **Krispy Kreme fundraiser**. The school made over \$4,000 in profit. The students who made the top sales were:  
\$100 winner-Dominic Racco (first place)  
\$75.00 winner-Aryanna and Rhyanna Sperling (second place)  
\$50.00 winner-Kyleigh Baker (third place)

Thanks also to those who participated in the **Reading for Education campaign**. The school made over \$1,800 in cash profit, which is used for computer chargers, Chromebook sleeves and other audiovisual items. Gift cards donated directly to teachers, which totaled \$2,300, are used to provide supplies and magazines to individual classrooms.



## Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Comes to Westernport



The fourth grade class of Mrs. Jennifer Hughes participated in their own Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on Tuesday, November 25, 2025. Students made templates of their designs and then created the silver balloons which were featured in a parade through the halls of WES.

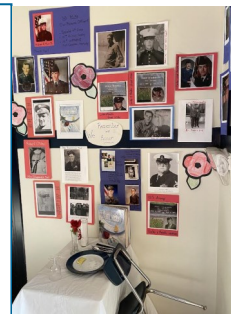
Shown are Aria Nash (left) and Lillian Robinson (right) in front of the "parade" floats.



## Let's Thank Our Veterans Everyday!



On November 12, 2025, American Legion Post 189 of Barton, MD, participated in a Veterans Day program in the gym of WES. American Legion members John Barr (Army), James Marchinke (Marines and Army), Gary McKenzie (Navy), Marty Kyle (Navy) and Marshall Winters (Air Force) told students about the jobs done by those branches of the military and shared the service flags for each branch, including the Coast Guard. They also told students of their own experiences while serving our country. Students sang songs, directed by music teacher, Ms. Katie Hendrix, which included "The Star Spangled Banner", "Home on the Range", "This Land is Our Land" and "You're a Grand Old Flag" as well as a medley of service songs. 19 family members of WES students who were veterans were honored with certificates and posed for family photos.



This is a photo wall of grandparents, parents, and other relatives of WES students and staff who have served the USA.

The Missing Man Table in the picture commemorates fallen, missing or imprisoned U.S. Military Service members.

**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.

## Title I Tip #3



Parent/family engagement is an important factor in the academic success of students. The Title I Parent/Family Engagement Plan describes how the Allegany County Public Schools will plan and support programs, activities and procedures for involving parents/families in all schools with a Title I program. The policy is also posted in our school and is on the website of the Allegany County Public Schools' at [www.acpsmd.org](http://www.acpsmd.org)

## Children's Author, Kristen Kladstrup, Visits WES



On December 5, 2025, author Kristin Kladstrup visited WES as part of the school's partnership with the FSU Children's Literature Centre. Ms. Kladstrup told students that "as a writer, she makes things up" and it is really fun to do so. She also told them that their young brains have even more imagination than she does and encouraged them to write stories. Ms. Kladstrup read her picture book, *The Gingerbread Pirates* to students. After the story, she told students that she gets her ideas from simple things that she notices and shared her four rules of writing. They are 1) Stories need to have a beginning, middle and end and the story needs to connect all the way through; 2) Stories involve change; 3) You (as a reader) have to care about the characters and their point of view; and 4) You (as an author) need to care about the reader. She also commented that reading (a lot) has made her a better writer.

Ms. Kladstrup's day job is to edit math curriculum. But about 20 years ago she decided to try to write a book and now is the author of five books! She grew up in Sioux City, Iowa but now lives in Boston, Massachusetts with her husband and two sons. She said on her website that "I like reading and writing (obviously!). I also like to play the piano, ride my bicycle, and go on hikes with family and friends." Students in grades K-2 received a copy of *The Gingerbread Pirate*. Students in grades 3-5 received a copy of her chapter book called *Nutcracker Mice*.

Shown at left is the author, with fourth grade student, Bryson Preston.



# Counselor's Corner



October and November guidance and social skills lessons focused on bullying prevention and recognizing the signs of bullying. To further help our school be a safe and respectful place, we utilize the Second Step Bullying Prevention Unit. In this unit, your child learns specific skills to help stop bullying. Students learned how to:

- Recognize when bullying is happening, report bullying to a caring adult, and how to refuse to let bullying happen;
- Be a bystander who helps stop bullying (another term is "upstander...");
- Support someone being bullied by standing up for that person and being kind and inclusive; and
- Recognize, report, and refuse cyber bullying when they see or know about it happening.

Parents, please get involved in making our school a safe and respectful place by letting us know if you hear about bullying at our school. Make sure your child knows to tell you or someone at school if he or she is being bullied, or if he or she knows about someone else being bullied. For more information on our school's anti-bullying policy and specific procedures, check our school website or contact the school office. Thank you for helping us make our school a safe, respectful place where everyone can learn!

Mrs. Laura Wilson and Mrs. Tessa Fitzgerald also started supporting students through small group instruction during the past month. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to work collaboratively with others on subjects such as social skills, self control, and anxiety. Small group instruction takes place during students' lunch times. During the month of December, students will learn about the character trait of the month, "Integrity", and continue to practice and review their TOOLBOX tools. (Parents, please ask your student to teach you about the breathing tool!)

Happy, Healthy Kids TIP: Children thrive on consistency, structure, and predictability. Develop a morning routine that looks the same each day to help get you and your kids out the door with a smile!

## Band/Orchestra Holiday Concert 2025



Fourth and fifth grade band and orchestra members performed for students, parents and community members during their annual holiday concert. The concert was held in the school gym on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 10:00 AM for students and at 2:00 PM for parents.

The band, directed by Mr. Harold McClay, played a variety of instrumental music and featured songs including "Rolling Along", "Hot Cross Buns", "Go Tell Aunt Rhodie", "Sweetly Sings the Donkey", "Down By the Station", "Ode to Joy", "Jolly Old St. Nick", "Up on the Housetop" and "Jingle Bells".

**FOURTH GRADE BAND** members include Peyton Davis, Paisley Edwards, Braxten Laferty and Olivia Toft, Clarinet; Mack Brashear, Stella Metz, Bentley Paitzel and Willow Ward, trumpet; Ryder Morgan and Bentley Shillingburg; trombone; Aria Nash, baritone; and Hudson Placka, Ember Redman, Luke Richards and Reid Richards, drums.

**FIFTH GRADE BAND** members include Karaliah Griffin and Addalyn Howell, flute; Kierra Bateson, clarinet; William Wade; trumpet; Andrew Perez; trombone; Jacob Hull; baritone; and Easton Guinn, Ryder Hanlin, Ava Morgan, Kenzie Weiss, Ryler Wilson and Kaiden Wilt, drums.

The orchestra, directed by Mr. Robert Wallace, played a variety of music arranged for strings, including "Hot Cross Buns", "Jingle Bells", "Dreidel" (grade four) and "Deck the Halls", "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star", "Snowshoe Dance" and "Auld Lang Syne" (grade 5).

**FOURTH GRADE ORCHESTRA** members include Ezra Clark-Kuhn, violin; Zoey Erskine, Lillian Faith Robinson and Olivia Van Pelt, viola; and Logan Rice, cello.

**FIFTH GRADE ORCHESTRA** members include Madison Clark, Khaleesia Green, Trinitee Hummer, Danica Miller, Shaylee Rash, Noah Sanford and Aliyah Shingler, violin; Cella Clites and Amiyah Martin, viola; and Aurora CiFuentes, cello.

