

Thursday  
October 15, 2009

# Westminster Elementary & Meetinghouse School News

*Patty Marquis-Principal*

*Kathy Kelley-Assistant Principal*

## Upcoming Dates

- **Oct 31** – “Trick or Treat in Westminster 5:00-7:00PM
- **Nov 3** – No School – Staff Development
  - **Nov 10** – Picture Retakes for WES & MHS
- **Nov 11** – No School – Veteran’s Day
- **Nov 18** – PTO Meeting WES Library 6:30-8:00PM
  - **Nov 23-24** – Noon Dismissal – Parent Conferences
  - **Nov 25** – Noon Dismissal – Thanksgiving Break
- **Nov 26-27** – No School – Thanksgiving Break

Our school offices will be accepting candy donations from now until the end of the month to assist the Bacon Street residents on Halloween night. If your child takes part in the festivities downtown, please consider sending in some treats.

Parent Volunteer Training will take place on the morning of Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. More information will be coming home soon. Save the date!

### Reminder to WES 3rd grade parents:

The nurse needs copies of physical exams done between 6/09-6/10. They can let the nurse know if appointments are pending or if there are questions by calling 978-874-2043, EXT 403 or e-mailing me at [sqbelliveau@awrd.org](mailto:sqbelliveau@awrd.org). Thanks. Sue Quigley-Belliveau, RN WES nurse

## News from the Principal's Office

Last Friday afternoon the teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, secretaries, and nurses all took part in a professional development afternoon. A few of the areas of focus on this particular day were; Guided Reading Strategies, Six Traits of Writing, H1N1 Virus, Bomb Squad Training, Teaching Social Skills to Elementary Students, and Articulation Benchmarks for pre-schoolers....just to name a few! As you can see, all of our employees must be life-long learners! The demands placed on today’s educators are quite different than those of years gone by. It is imperative that our teachers receive up to date training in order to remain on top of their profession. We recognize that early release days can be problematic for some families. However, we are thankful that the Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District provides valuable time during the school year for on-going training. Our next FULL DAY of professional development will be on Tuesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Nature’s Classroom

The Nature’s Classroom Informational Evening was very well attended last week. If for some reason you were unable to attend and have questions about this wonderful fifth grade event...do not hesitate to call Mrs. Marquis or Mr. Myette.

Westminster Elementary School is once again organizing a Student Council to represent all children in that building. Two students in every fourth and fifth grade classroom will be elected and they will represent their classmates as well as an assigned group of second or third graders. The advisors will be Mrs. Marquis and Mrs. Goodwin. The first meeting will take place on Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 am.

### DAILY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE WILL ENSURE SUCCESS!

Your son wakes up late and there is no way that he is going to make it to the bus stop on time. Would it really matter if he went to school late – or maybe not at all? In a word...YES! A study from the Journal of Educational Research found that attendance makes a big difference. Kids who are in school every day do better than those who aren’t. So what can a parent do to make those mornings easier? How can you get your child up and out the door, on time, every day? Here are a few tips taken from “The Parent Institute”.

- Start the night before. Pack up the homework, permission slips, lunch money, notes to teacher so that all is ready to go in the morning.
- Place the backpack near the door your child will use to go out.
- Lay out clothes – right down to the socks. This one step will avoid more morning fights than anything else you do.
- Make a to-do list of jobs that have to be done in the morning.

The Student Handbooks have arrived. They will be going home with all students at Meetinghouse School. Parents at WES may request a book through the school office or access it at our school website – [www.awrsd.org](http://www.awrsd.org).

**From the Nurses:**

Students in both of our schools are screened yearly by the nurses for vision, hearing, postural, height/weight & BMI calculations. The Department of Public Health has changed their requirements: Hearing screening will be done on all students in grades K-3.....Vision screening will be done on all students in grades K-5.....Postural screening will be done on students in Grade 5. Referrals for students who failed any of these screenings will be sent home and we ask that you please remember to follow through with our recommendations and send the referral form back to the school after your child's evaluation. We want to be sure the physician's recommendations are being followed.

Students are also screened for height and weight in grades 1 and 4 with Body Mass Index (BMI) calculations and these are reported to parents/guardians. BMI is a number calculated from a child's weight and height using the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) calculations for BMI-for-Age charts. Please know that many factors other than height and weight (such as participation in sports or family history) influence your child's growth. The BMI is simply a screening tool, not a diagnosis of the presence or absence of health risk. And the purpose of the Growth Screening Program is to provide you with information about your child's growth pattern and to increase awareness of the importance of healthy eating and active living.

We ask that you please share the results of all the screenings with your child's health care provider. If you do not have health insurance or your child does not have a regular health care provider, please contact your school nurse for information about obtaining health insurance coverage or finding a provider.

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**Full Day Kindergarten Committee**

This year was the first year for our school district to offer free, full-time, full-day kindergarten to all our students. Funding for this program comes in part from a grant administered by the Mass. Dept. of Elem. & Sec. Education.

The district must maintain a Full Day Kindergarten Committee to offer consultation and host activities which relate to kindergarten and the transition of students from preschool through grade 3. We are seeking parent/guardian and community participation for School year 2009-2010. We've already planned activities for early in the year. If you'd be interested please contact AWRSD Grant Coordinator, Jana Harrison, at 978-874-7312 with your interest or email her at [jharrison@awrsd.org](mailto:jharrison@awrsd.org).

Nothing warms you up like a hot bowl of Campbell's soup. Just remember to cut off the labels and send them to school! Remember too, that goldfish are worth 5pts. If we collect 1000 points before December Campbell's will match the points. The children should soon be enjoying new playground toys thanks to you and Campbell's. Any questions contact Denise Smith and Missy King.

Dear Families,  
The Westminster Food Pantry needs your **HELP!** There will be a "featured" food item each month for one week. If you are able to donate, we would certainly appreciate it! Each month the featured food and week it will be collected will appear in the school's newsletter. Our student council at WES will help to organize the food drive each month.  
**October 19-22 will be canned fruit**  
Thank you for your generosity,  
Mandie Sullivan

Help your school earn money with Box Tops for Education! Send your Box Tops in your child's backpack for the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. You can also go to [btfе.com](http://btfе.com) to find other ways to earn money for your school. Contact Michelle Valentino with any questions at [michelleb1998@yahoo.com](mailto:michelleb1998@yahoo.com).





