

October 2020

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The John Wood Parent Newsletter



Principal Petralia's Page

by Mrs. Petralia

Dear Families,

During October and November, we honor Red Ribbon week as well as Anti-Bullying Awareness Week. These are two very real issues that students will face if they haven't already. Mrs. Robbins, our social worker at John Wood, and our student council leaders, Miss Jongsma and Miss Vlassopoulos, have worked to plan some very meaningful activities for both of these events.

For Red Ribbon Week, we empower students to be strong enough to resist temptation and be swayed to make bad decisions. We have our students pledge to remain drug-free, participate in fun activities and spirit days all week.

With the technology available to our children, it is important for them to know that once something is put on the Internet, it is impossible for it to be removed. We have special spirit days planned for each day of Anti-bullying Awareness Week, which is themed "**Be There from Anywhere: Physically Distant but Socially Close**".

Thank you for reinforcing these important topics with your children at home. By hearing several adults using the same language and discussing the same topics, children retain that information much better.

Also coming up on November 13th is the end of the first trimester. Please make sure you are able to log into Skyward to access your child's information. The entire Merrillville Community School Corporation is working to be more paperless, meaning progress reports and report cards will no longer be sent home. Please make sure to check your child's grade regularly.

Thank you for your teamwork!

No School- Fall Break

October 16-19

John Wood Elementary School
6100 E. 73rd Ave.
Merrillville, Indiana 46410
(219) 650-5305
<https://www.mvsc.k12.in.us/8/home>

A Message from the Nurse

The cold and flu season is with us. Here are a few reminders to help all of us stay healthy.

Hand washing is one of the most important things you can do to keep you and your family healthy. Spend some time with your child and go over this important skill. Remind them to wash frequently, especially after using the restroom and before eating.

Remind them to keep their hands, fingers and other objects out of their nose, eyes, and mouth. These areas are entry points for germs. Finally, remind them to cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve or arm and not into their hands.

When we return to in-person learning, do not send your child to school with a temperature greater than 100°. This will help eliminate the spread of disease. Students should be free from fever, diarrhea, and vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school after being ill. Being without a fever for 24 hours means that your child has not required fever-reducing medication in those 24 hours. We need your help to keep our students and teachers healthy!

Attendance “Beary” Award

Each month we have a fun reward for the class with the best attendance. The class with the highest percentage of attendance for the month receives the “Beary” Attendance Trophy at our monthly Pirate Power meeting.

September “Beary” Winner
Miss V’s 4th Grade Class
99.13%

Remember, attendance is critical to learning, now more than ever. Make sure to be logged in and ready to work at the scheduled time for ALL classes!

Book Rental

All book rental was due on the first day of school. Credit/Debit card payments can be made online through Skyward. Check/Money order payments can be made in our school office. Checks/Money orders must be made out to “John Wood School” and must include your driver’s license number on the check. We do not have a formal payment plan, but partial payments are acceptable until the obligation is met.

Any balance remaining after the end of the first trimester (November 13th) will be turned over for collection.

ECD Fees - \$75
Kindergarten - \$80.78
1st Grade - \$73.63
2nd Grade - \$73.94
3rd Grade - \$75.24
4th Grade - \$83.02

Thank you to all of the parents who have already paid their child’s book rental.

Coats for Kids (and families) Collection

We still have a few days left to drop off those outgrown winter coats! Each year Coats for Kids (and families) collects new and gently used winter coats for less fortunate families. As you dig out last year’s coats and discover they no longer fit, consider donating them.

There is a collection barrel outside our front door during school hours and another collection box outside Entrance C during meal distribution on Mondays and Thursdays. You don’t even need to wash them! Coats for Kids has a team of volunteers who will wash all the coats before distribution.

See page 6 for info about distribution.

Good Citizens September 2020

ECD

Maggie Mustain –
Miss McCorkle (Miss Kati)
Isaac Fandrei –
Mrs. Straley (Miss Kim)

Kindergarten

Myla Smoot – Mrs. Anderson
Isaac Langstraat – Mrs. Scott
Koralynn Gerstner – Mrs. Shalla

1st Grade

Sydney Wigley-Sims – Mrs. Matthews
Drake Ameling – Mrs. Pace
Alondra Gonzalez – Miss Welsh

2nd Grade

Dushica Janakievaska – Mrs. Carney
Mason Russell – Ms. Foster
Taniyah Penman – Mrs. Marshall

3rd Grade

Amy Avila – Mrs. Busch
Avery Renk – Mrs. Cseke
Isabella Lagunas – Mrs. Mahy

4th Grade

Jamare Smith – Miss Jongsma
Caleb Pickett – Miss Vlassopoulos

Purple Pirate Pride

In an effort to promote pride in our school community, we encourage students to wear purple on Fridays.

Students can wear ANYTHING “John Wood” (old Spirit Wear, Math Fact Shirts, etc) or “Merrillville” (Athletic Department Spirit Wear, Pop Warner shirts, etc).

Let’s show our Pirate Pride!

Thank You

A huge thanks goes out to all our parents/guardians for your cooperation and patience while we worked through computer issues and learning new ways of teaching and learning during our virtual learning. You’re doing an awesome job keeping our children on task!

Red Ribbon Week

Red Ribbon Week is a week when millions of our American population wear a red ribbon to show that our young people and our adults are united for a drug-free society. The National Family Partnership organized the first Red Ribbon Campaign in 1988. Since that time, the campaign has reached millions of U.S. children. The Red Ribbon Campaign is now the oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation.

John Wood School will support this program by having a variety of activities planned for the week of October 26-30. Our students and staff will be showing their support in a number of ways:

- ✓ Student council will be making video announcements with an anti-drug or healthy alternative theme.
- ✓ Student council members will decorate the front of our building with red ribbons.
- ✓ Some teachers may do anti-drug or healthy living worksheets.
- ✓ Students will make Red Ribbon posters during art class.
- ✓ There will be special "Spirit Days" throughout the week.

PLEASE NOTE:
THESE ARE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT
THAN WHAT WAS ON THE
MONTHLY CALENDAR

Monday

"Put a Cap on Drugs"
Wear a **hat**

Tuesday

"Too Bright for Drugs"
Wear **neon**

Wednesday

"Voting for my Future to be Drug-Free"
Wear **red, white, and/or blue**

Thursday

"Your Choices are Key to your Dreams"
Wear **pajamas**

Friday

"Our School is Drug Free"
Wear **purple or spirit wear**

Student of the Week

New this year, every Monday we will be recognizing one of our students. Each week, the teachers choose a student who has been a shining star that week. It can be for a variety of reasons, effort, behavior, participation, mental attitude, being kind, etc. Maybe they did something special this week or overcame a specific difficulty. Whatever the reason, we are proud of these students and want everyone to know how great these children are.

Each "Student of the Week" will be highlighted on Mrs. Petralia's Twitter and the MCSC and PTO Facebook pages.

September 14, 2020

Caleb Pickett
4th grade, Miss Vlassopoulos

September 21, 2020

Atlas Theodorakos
3rd grade, Mrs. Mahy

September 28, 2020

Kaelyn Kitchens
2nd grade, Ms. Foster

October 5, 2020

Jackson Turner
1st grade, Mrs. Pace

October 12, 2020

Isaac Langstraat
Kindergarten, Mrs. Scott

Follow our MCSC
superintendent and our
John Wood principal on
Twitter!

Mr. Brown, our MCSC
superintendent, and Mrs. Petralia,
our John Wood principal are on
Twitter!

Follow Mr. Brown at
@MerrillvilleSu3.

Follow Mrs. Petralia at
@PrinPetralia.

Upcoming Events

Every Monday and Thursday
Virtual Learning Meal Distribution
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

See the article on page 6 and the flyer on the last page for more information.

Every Wednesday
Curbside Library
2:15-3:20 p.m.

See the article on page 6 for more information.

Every Thursday
Buddy Blue Day

Wear blue to remind you to be a buddy!

Every Thursday
Early Dismissal
1:15 p.m.

Students will be dismissed early
on this day so teachers can attend
Professional Development.

Every Friday
Pirate Pride Day

Wear purple or spirit wear to show your support.

October 16-19

Fall Break

No classes for all students

October 23

Coats for Kids (and families)

Today is the last day to donate **winter** coats.

October 26-30

Red Ribbon Week

See the article on this page for more info. Red Ribbon Spirit Days are slightly different than what was on the monthly calendar that was emailed to parents.

November 1

Daylight Savings Time ends

Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour!

November 1 – December 5

Toys for Tots Collection

See the article on page 6 for more information.

November 3

Election Day

Make sure your voice is heard! Every vote counts!

November 7

Coats for Kids (and families) Distribution

See the article on page 6 for details.

November 9-13

Anti-Bullying Awareness Week

Our social worker is working on activities to help our student learn more about what to do if they are being bullied or see someone who is.

November 11

Veteran's Day

Make sure you remember to thank a vet today!

November 13

End of the first trimester

Today is the end of the first trimester. Log onto Skyward to see your child's grades.

REMINDER: ALL BOOK RENTAL
BALANCES AFTER THIS DATE WILL BE
TURNED OVER FOR COLLECTION.

November 25-27

No School, Thanksgiving Break

Enjoy time with family and friends and remember all the things you have to be thankful for this year. School will resume on Monday, November 30th.

PTO News

We have temporarily suspended all social activities and meetings during this unusual start for the school year. However, there are still things you can do to help our PTO. We have paid out for several things as the school year started (even though we are virtual) and our account is dwindling.

Strack & Van Til – Apples for the Students

We are once again participating in the Strack & Van Til fundraiser. This fundraiser will enable us to earn a variety of items for our school, from Apple computers and iPads to playground equipment!

All you need to do is save ALL your receipts from ANY Strack & Van Til store. Drop boxes are available in front of Entrance A during the school day and at Entrance C during meal distribution on Mondays and Thursdays.

Receipts must be dated September 1, 2020 or later. We will not get credit for any purchases of money orders, gift cards, lottery tickets, or alcohol and tobacco products.

This fundraiser will continue all year until March 1, 2021, so tell family, friends and neighbors to save their receipts for us too!

Box Tops

We are not doing any contests at this time, but are still encouraging you to participate in this program. In the past, our school has earned between \$800 and \$1000 a year from this program. Unfortunately, last year we only receive a little over \$400, and so far this year we have only earned about \$27!

Part of the problem is NOT the fact that we are not in school, but that BTFE is in the process of converting to all digital. We need to change the way we think about box tops! In the past, you didn't think about the box tops until you used the product and started to throw away the box or wrapper. Maybe you would double check to make sure there wasn't a box top to clip and you'd save them in an envelope on the fridge or throw

them in the junk drawer in the kitchen.

However, now you need to start thinking about it while unloading your groceries. You need to get in the habit of scanning EVERY receipt. After all, you may have purchased something that has a digital box top and not even realized it! Once you have scanned your receipt, it will automatically find the box top products and give our school the credit immediately!

Once you have downloaded the app and set up the school you want to have the credit go to, it just takes seconds to scan your receipt. The receipts need to be scanned within 14 days of the purchase, but why wait and then forget? Why not assign this as a "job" for your child(ren) to do. Make it their responsibility to remind you when you get home, or even let them scan the receipt while you are putting the groceries away!

Remember to still check the products for physical "clips" as not every product has changed over to the digital clips. If you have physical "clips" sitting around the house, now is the time to find them and check the expiration dates. The next expiration date is approaching. Many box tops will expire on November 1, 2020 and will then be worthless! If you find you have some, make sure to drop them off at the school ASAP so we can send them in for credit! Feel free to drop them into one of the Strack's receipt drop boxes in front of the school during school hours or at the meal distribution door on Mondays and Thursdays.

Coca-Cola

We are still collecting Coca-Cola codes! Did you know that since September 2017 when we started collecting Coke codes that we have received over \$1000 from Coca-Cola? Each year this program has been gaining in popularity and more and more parents are sending in these codes.

The codes can be found inside Coke product caps and inside the tear-off flap on cardboard cases. We

receive 5¢ for every cap, and more for 12-, 24-, and 36-count cases. You can also find codes on the plastic wrapper of Dasani Water cases. Look on the bottom of the shrink wrap for the black box next to the UPC. The code can be found on the reverse side of the black box.

Pop Tab Collection

To many, a pop tab is just a piece of aluminum with one purpose – to open a can. But to the Ronald McDonald House of Indiana, the pop tab is a valuable resource. Why? Collected pop tabs are recycled, generating much-needed funds to support the Ronald McDonald House and the nearly 1,500 families they serve each year.

In the years since the program began over one billion pop tabs have been donated generating about \$500,000 in pop tab revenue for the House.

Funds received from the recycling of tabs usually adds up to between \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually. All this money goes to the operating expenses of the Ronald McDonald House of Indiana and can cover the cost of operating three rooms in the House for an entire year.

How can you help? John Wood School is now collecting pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House. Simply remove the pop tab from the aluminum can and put them in your favorite collection container. When you are ready to send them to school, just put them in a Ziploc-type bag and drop them off at the school office. There's no competition, no goal, no prizes...just the reward of doing a good deed. Each year we are able to donate about 8-10 pounds of pop tabs to Ronald McDonald House of Indiana!

Our PTO has a Facebook page! Friend us at:

www.facebook.com/johnwood.pto

We try to use this page to pass along important reminders from the school.

The Coaches' Corner

Ms. Copeland, Miss Fish,
Mrs. Rassbach, Miss Zorich

Reading at home can make a HUGE difference!

Choose books that are at an appropriate reading level for your child.

- Use the five finger rule. Open the book to any page and ask your child to read. Put up a finger every time your child does not know a word. If you have put up more than five fingers before the end of the page, this book is too hard for your child.
- Choose books that match your child's likes and interests.

Make reading a part of your family time!

Family time is so important...why not make reading part of this valuable time with your kids?

Here are some tips for integrating reading into our daily family activities.

- Read bedtime stories.
- Play a board game.
- Visit your local library. (Yes, even though our local public library is continuing the curbside service, the building is now open for walk-ins!)
- Read a recipe and cook something yummy together!
- Create a comfy reading space in your home.
- Put your child in charge of reading the grocery list at the store.

Keep plenty of reading materials in your home: books, magazines, newspapers, comic books. Children enjoy having a variety of reading materials!

How to read with a beginning reader

Fifteen to twenty minutes is plenty for a beginner reader!

- Encourage your child to use his/her finger to point to each word.

- Read a sentence and have your child repeat it.
- Take turns reading a sentence each or a page each.
- Talk about the story as you read it. What do you think will happen next? What does this story remind you of? How do you think this character feels?
- Don't be afraid to read the same book again! Repeated reading helps build reading fluency!

Check for Understanding

- Start a book by making predictions. What do you think will happen in this story?
- Ask questions and make comments during the reading process.
- After reading a book, have your child tell you the events from the story in the correct order,
- What was the problem in this story?
- How did the character feel when...?
- Encourage your child to make connections. Does this story remind you of another book you read, an event in your life, a movie?

Read books online!

There are many fun and interactive websites for literacy. Here are a few FREE online resources:

www.starfall.com
www.speakaboos.com
www.spellingcity.com
www.wegivebooks.org
<http://interactivesites.weebly.com>

Building Math Skills at Home

With a little creativity, you can make math lots of fun! Here are a few ideas that you can do at home to help your child with math.

- There are many games you probably already have at home that encourage development in math: Yahtzee (basic addition) Connect Four (problem solving and developing strategies), puzzles (spatial awareness), card games (have players flip cards and

greatest or least number wins), Candy Land (make your own game cards and use math facts instead of colors), Monopoly (money), and Battleship (coordinate graphs).

- Talk about the calendar with your child. Make it exciting by looking forward to special events. It is fun for them to count the weeks and days until birthdays or to see what day of the week a specific holiday will be on this year.
- You can help your child learn to count money by playing store with them. Use real coins and let them be the "cashier".
- Use an empty egg carton as a counting tool to practice addition and subtraction skills up to 10. Simply place an object in slots and use the empty slots to count up to/from 10.
- Notice the clock. Tell them that they can play a game at a certain time. Begin with easy times (7:00) and get progressively more difficult (7:30 and 7:45)
- Bake with your child. Read the instructions on the back of the box and allow them to measure ingredients.
- You can develop a better understanding of fractions by discussing equal parts with your child. Any time you bake a frozen pizza, it is an opportunity to let them understand what 1/6 means.
- Making flash cards of basic addition or subtraction facts can be an easy way to practice. You can make it a game by seeing how many they can answer in a minute. If they improve their score over time, reward them.
- You can make pot holders on a small loom. This is a good way to practice making and extending patterns.
- Any time there is a project at home that involves measuring inches or feet, let your child help! This allows them to understand that the concepts they are learning in school have real world applications.
- Point out shapes and discuss them. If you see a "YIELD" sign, discuss that it is a triangle and ask your child how many sides would be on three "YIELD" signs.

Coats for Kids (and Families) Distribution

**Announcing the
18th annual coat giveaway**

NOTE: CHANGE IN LOCATION

Due to COVID restrictions, this year's distribution will be in a new location. They are still working on a possible second distribution. Watch the Coats for Kids Facebook page and/or the John Wood PTO Facebook page. Both will post if/when a second distribution occurs.

Lines form early, so don't wait until the last minute! Limit one coat per person. Please bring children so they can try on the coats and ensure proper fit. There will be coats in all sizes from infant through plus size.

Coats will be distributed:

Saturday, November 7th
9:00 a.m. – Noon
Impact Church
7071 Broadway
Merrillville

Meal Distribution Change

Until further notice, there is a change in the meal distribution. The USDA has granted a waiver to the Merrillville Community School Corp. The meal distribution is now the same as it was during the summer. Meals will be free for all children ages 18 and younger.

Meal distributions at John Wood are on Mondays and Thursdays at Entrance C from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Evening pickup is also available at select locations. See the flyer at the end of this newsletter.

Curbside Library Available

We are excited that we are once again able to get library books into the hands of our students! The Curbside Library allows students to request books through our online library catalog and pick them up through our curbside service.

Students just need to go into their "Classwork" tab. Then go to "Destiny Discover Library". There you will find the online catalog of available books and the form that needs to be filled out. Requests need to be submitted no later than 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday for the Wednesday afternoon pickup.

**Curbside Library pickup is every
Wednesday from 2:15 p.m. to 3:20
p.m. at Entrance C.**

Remember, books cannot be picked up without first filling out the online request form.

Visitor Guidelines

During our Virtual Academy, visitors to the school will find the front doors to the school locked. There is a sign on the door with the office hours and phone number. Please call the office and they will come out to assist you. Please understand that if you and/or your child need to enter the building for any reason, you will be asked COVID questions and temperatures will be taken. Thank you for your cooperation during this time.

Anti-Bullying Awareness Week

This year's theme is "**Be There from Anywhere: Physically Distant but Socially Close**". In light of COVID and virtual learning, our social worker, Mrs. Robbins, and our staff are working on adapting this week to focus more on appropriate uses of devices and technology.

When we return to face-to-face learning, we will also go over the protocol for dealing with bullying situations while in school or in other settings.

Anti-Bullying Spirit Week

Monday, November 9

"Unite Against Bullies"
Wear **blue**

Tuesday, November 10

"Team up Against Bullies"
Wear your favorite **team jersey/shirt**

Wednesday, November 11

"Be a H.E.R.O. (**H**elp, **E**ncourage, and **R**espect **O**thers)
Wear **camouflage**

Thursday, November 12

"We are All Tied Together"
Wear a **tie or bow**

Friday, November 13

"Power in Unity"
Wear **purple**

Toys for Tots Collection

**We will begin collecting new, unused toys for
Toys for Tots on November 2nd.**

Toys for Tots is a program founded in 1947 and run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve. This group distributes toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas.

The mission of the program is to "collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year, and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community in which the campaign is conducted." Their goal is to "deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, and patriotic citizens."

*The collection barrel will be outside the front entrance beginning Monday, November 2nd. Drop off all **new, unused, and unwrapped toys through December 5th**. Attach your child's name to the toy and we will post a paper "train" in the window for each toy donated.*

Merrillville Community School Corporation

Virtual Learning Meal Distributions

Parents, drive through and pick up meals for your children. We offer both day and evening times on Mondays and Thursdays for your convenience. Go to any school listed; you do not have to go to the schools your children attend.

The USDA has granted a waiver allowing free meals for all children ages 18 and under. Free meals will continue until further notice.

Pickup days, times and locations will remain the same as they were at the beginning of the 2020-21 school year (listed below).

**FREE
UNTIL
FURTHER
NOTICE**



DISTRIBUTIONS ON MONDAYS & THURSDAYS

► DAY PICKUPS, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.:

Available at all schools except Merrillville High School; MHS students can pick up at any other schools.

LOCATIONS:

- **Fieler Elementary School**, 407 W. 61st Ave., Door C
- **Iddings Elementary School**, 7249 Van Buren St., Door L
- **Merrillville Intermediate School**, 1400 W. 61st Ave., drive around to the back of the school between loading dock and Door F
- **Miller Elementary School**, 5901 Waite St., Door A
- **Pierce Middle School**, 199 E. 70th St., west of Door 3
- **Salk Elementary School**, 300 W. 77th Ave., Door B
- **Wood Elementary School**, 6100 E. 73rd. Ave., Door C

► EVENING PICKUPS, 5-6 p.m. :

ONLY available at these schools:

LOCATIONS (see addresses above):

- **Merrillville Intermediate School**
- **Pierce Middle School**
- **Salk Elementary School**

For more information, call 219-650-5300
or visit the MCSC website www.mvsc.k12.in.us.

