

November 2022

Inside this Issue

1	From the Desk of Principal Igras John Wood Mission Statement Schedule Reminder
2	Dean's Discussion IgraSPY Good Citizens – October Book Rental
3	PTO News Pop Tab Collection Informative Notes Lost Clothing
4	October Attendance Emergency Communications Email Notices and Robocalls Coats for Kids Update Gold Note Reminder Upcoming Events
5	The Art Loft Coming Next Month The Fitness Forecast Notes from the Music Room Meet the Social Worker Request from the PE Teacher
6	The Book Nook Upcoming Events – Continued Request from the Playground Student Council Food Drive Social Media

REMINDER No School

Monday, Nov. 14th
Teacher Work Day

Thursday, Nov. 17th
Parent-Teacher
Conferences

Wed-Fri, Nov. 23-25th
Thanksgiving Break

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

The John Wood Parent Newsletter



From the Desk of Principal Igras

Dear John Wood Families,

This year seems to be flying by and the children have been doing a great job. It is so important that your child spends a little time each evening reinforcing the concepts that they have been taught through homework, studying, reading, flashcards, or even playing educational games on their Chromebooks. Together, we can make your child's educational experience successful.

We are looking forward to sharing all the wonderful things that your child has learned on November 17th at Parent/Teacher Conferences. If you are unable to attend and did not schedule an appointment, please reach out to your child's teacher to set up an appointment on another day and time.

As the weather is getting colder, please make sure that your child has a warm coat, gloves, and a hat to wear as we will continue to have outdoor recess. The students value this time and it is a great way for them to socialize with their peers.

Boost Your Child's Literacy Skills

Encourage children to read words on TV, street signs, mugs and T-shirts.

Help Your Child Perform Academically

Create flashcards with letters (upper and lower case), numbers, sight words, math facts, etc. and make a game of studying these.

Every Child! Every Day! Whatever It Takes!

John Wood School Mission Statement

Together with parents and community, the John Wood team shall provide a safe learning environment and prepare students to be productive, tolerant, and respectful citizens by fostering individual development and striving for highest academic achievement.

Dean's Discussion

By Mrs. Swift, Dean of Students

As I am nearing two months of being a Pirate and part of the John Wood family, I find that coming to Wood was the best decision I have ever made. In the short time I have been here, there isn't a day that goes by that I am not greeted with smiles, hugs, high fives, and an energy that makes each day better than the last!

Many of the conversations I am having with teachers and students revolve around how students are unable to keep their hands and feet to themselves. As we continue to have discussions and provide lessons on how to appropriately express our feelings and emotions, please talk with your kids about this at home. Please remember that all behavior is a form of communication, and the adults in the building are helping our students to learn how to communicate with their words rather than by using their hands or feet.

I have included a few tips from PBS Kids when teaching children about having self-control.

- 1. Change the situation** - this can be as simple as moving the place where the child sits so they are less tempted to poke at or "bother" a sibling or peer.
- 2. Change their thinking** - this involves addressing what kids pay attention to and how they interpret situations. Remember children perceive situations from a different angle than adults do, as typically children don't have the brain development to think rationally and without emotion. Frontloading your child about a situation before it happens could help your child set up for success. For example, discuss how they should act when they ride the bus to school, what does it look like to "be good", how can you be a friend. When you define what you are expecting, your child

will better understand what it should look like and sound like when they are "being good".

- 3. Change their response** - Help your child to know how to respond in situations when they are upset, angry, scared, or even happy. When a child is overcome with emotions, being able to regulate is very difficult and something that needs to be taught. Helping our kids know how and whom to ask for help when they need it is essential and knowing that when frustrated they cannot resort to using their hands and feet to solve their problems.

As you have these conversations with your children at home, remind them that the adults in the building are here to help them and make sure everyone is safe, so finding an adult and asking for help is better than hitting or kicking someone when they are upset.

I look forward to spending more time getting to know and interacting with all of the wonderful students here at John Wood Elementary!

Thank you all for sharing your precious children with me every day!

Warm Wishes,
Mrs. Swift
Dean of Students

IgraSPY

Mrs. Igras

Every month, one John Wood student who is seen by me going above and beyond in the school setting receives the IgraSPY trophy and certificate. I would like to congratulate the two students who have been recipients so far.

September

Jayne Holloway – Mrs. Pace

October

Karter Josway – Mrs. Cseke

Good Citizens October 2022

ECD

Faith Henderson –
Ms. Headd (Miss Thea)
Ronald Steward –
Miss McCorkle (Miss Kati)

Multi-Grade

Stella Finnearty – Mrs. Nikolov

Kindergarten

Athena Rivera – Mrs. Anderson
Brantley McKown – Mrs. Scott
Asher Mosely – Mrs. Shalla

1st Grade

Ella Shooltz – Mrs. Pace
Naija Nunn – Miss Talian
Dean Fiste – Miss Welsh

2nd Grade

Ayden Chhutani – Mrs. Carney
Journee Williams – Mrs. Foster
Adamari Lopez – Mrs. Marshall

3rd Grade

Sydney Wigley-Sims – Mrs. Cseke
Mason Riley – Miss Hull
Jasmine Petsalis – Mrs. Mahy

4th Grade

Amari Curtis – Miss Jongsma
Aleana Colbert – Miss Vlassopoulos

Book Rental

All book rental was due on the first day of school and is now past due. All balances remaining on your account after the end of the first trimester (Nov. 11th) have been turned over for collection.

ECD Fees - \$75

Kindergarten - \$127.07

1st Grade - \$123.22

2nd Grade - \$120.14

3rd Grade - \$118.95

4th Grade - \$129.51

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

PTO News

Our next PTO meeting will be on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. We will once again be recognizing the previous month's Good Citizens. We welcome all parents/guardians to come to the meeting. This is a good way to meet other parents and also to find out about upcoming events. While we'd love to do more events, we can't without parent volunteers.

Box Tops/Coca-Cola Codes

Finding an actual box top on a product has become like finding a unicorn. Almost all box top participants have gone digital. If you do find a rare, unexpired box top, please send it in! If we receive enough to make it worthwhile (more than the cost of the stamp) we'll send them in. Otherwise, we have to depend on you.

- YOU need to download the free Box Top for Education app.
- YOU need let them know that you want John Wood School to get your credit.
- YOU need to scan your receipts within 14 days of the purchase.

Without YOU, this program will end and we will lose this "free money" for our school.

Please continue to send in Coca-Cola codes. Codes can be found under the cap of most Coca-Cola products (not just Coca-Cola) and inside the tear-off flap on cases. You can also find the code on the shrink wrap on Desani water cases. These codes are a little trickier to find. If you look on the bottom, next to the UPC, you'll see a black square. The code is on the other side of that black square (on the inside of the shrink wrap).

Strack & Van Til's/ Apples for the Students

We are continuing to collect all receipts from any Strack & Van Til store. Receipts must be dated between September 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. Receipts will be turned in and we will receive points that we can use to purchase items for our school. Ask your friends and relatives to collect them too! My kids are always on the lookout for discarded receipts on the ground in the parking lot as we are walking in

and out of Strack's. We've found some pretty good receipts this way!!

Popcorn Fridays

A decision has been made to make a slight change to the "Popcorn Fridays". Instead of every week, Popcorn Fridays will now be once a month. This will make it a little more "special" for the students and will also make it a little easier to get volunteers to help pop and bag the popcorn. Popcorn Fridays will now be the second Friday of each month.

Here are the Popcorn Friday dates that have been scheduled for the remainder of the school year. A purple note will come home the day before.

December 9th
January 12th
February 10th
March 10th
April 14th
May 12th

If you are interested in helping pop popcorn, please contact Mrs. Hehr at: hehr@mvs.k12.in.us

Pop Tab Collection

We are continuing to collect pop tops for the Ronald McDonald House of Indiana. Collected pop tabs are recycled, generating much-needed funds to support the Ronald McDonald House and the nearly 1,500 families we serve each year.

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

Simply remove the pop tab from aluminum cans 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 send them with your child. There's no competition, no goal, no prizes...just the gift of compassion.

Informative Notes

When writing notes to either the teacher or the office, please make sure you include the following information:

- ✓ Date note is written
- ✓ Teacher's name
- ✓ Student's name (first and last)
- ✓ Date/day you are writing about
- ✓ Reason
- ✓ Signature

Remember that "Gold Notes" are needed if a child is going anywhere other than their regular after-school destination.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Lost Clothing

As the temperatures begin to drop we would like to remind you that the students go out for recess each day, as long as conditions are favorable and the temperature and/or wind chill is at least 15°F.

Sometimes it is chilly in the morning as the children come to school, but warms up during the day. On these days it is common for the children to take off items and forget about them while they are on the playground.

We have a lost and found in the cafeteria, however we are asking you to PLEASE write your child's name inside any article of clothing that might be taken off during the day. Even if you only have a first name written on the label or tag inside the item, our aides can many times do "detective work" and find the owner.

We know that jackets and other outerwear can be expensive to replace and with a little assistance from you, we would like to make sure that these items go home with their original owner.

October Attendance

Congratulations to Miss Hull's 3rd grade class for having the best attendance. They had a remarkable attendance percentage for the month of October, 99.08%! Way to go Miss Hull's class! They will have the honor of keeping the "Beary" trophy as a special guest in their classroom for the next month. They also received a small treat and were recognized at a recent Pirate Power meeting.

Emergency Communications

In cases of inclement weather or other emergency situations, there may be times when school may be cancelled or delayed. In those cases, information will be broadcast over various Northwest Indiana and Chicago television and radio stations.

Delays and closings will also be posted on the Merrillville Community School Corporation website at www.mvsc.k12.in.us.

You should also receive an automated call to your primary phone number. **Please do not go into Skyward and change your number to "unlisted" or you will not receive these important calls.**

Many factors go into the decision to have a 2-hour delay or school closing. To read an explanation about how the decision is made, go to the Merrillville Schools website listed above. Click on the "Parents" tab on the right, then "Emergency School Closing Information".

You may also choose to receive an email notification from an outside service. This site offers the opportunity to sign up for web alerts. The alerts can be provided to any email you provide.

<http://www.cancellations.com/>

Email Notices and Robocalls

In an effort to reduce paper usage, many reminders and notifications are emailed rather than sending home a paper copy. These may include reminders for PTO meetings, upcoming No School days, and this monthly newsletter. Please make sure that a current and correct email address is listed in Skyward so you will receive these notifications.

Occasionally we will send robocalls to the parents. We try not to overuse this tool and reserve the robocall for vital information that we feel you need to know. Please don't block the school's number or you may miss out on important information.

Coats for Kids Update

Thanks to all who were able to donate a coat during our recent coat drive. There have already been two coat distributions, but there are still plenty of coats for those in need. Final coat distribution is listed below.

Saturday, November 19th
Impact Church, 7071 Broadway
(across from Pierce School)
9 a.m. - noon

Gold Note Reminder

You need to send a gold note if:

- When registering for a car rider number, you chose "every day", and your child will NOT be picked up.
- When registering for a car rider number, you chose "occasional" and you WILL be picking up your child.

Please don't depend on your child remembering verbal changes or sending an email to the teacher. The teachers are busy during the day and may not see the email. The Gold Notes are the very best way to communicate your daily changes.

Upcoming Events

Every Thursday

Buddy Blue Day

Wear blue to remind you to be a buddy!

Every Friday

Pirate Pride Day

Wear John Wood spirit wear, Merrillville spirit wear, or even just purple to show support for our school community! Everyone who wears purple will have their name in a weekly drawing. One winner will be pulled from each grade level to win a small prize.

November 7-18

Student Council Food Drive

Student Council members have organized a food drive during these dates. See the article on page 6.

November 14

No School – Teacher Work Day

No school for all students. Teachers will use this day to prepare for conferences.

November 17

No School – Parent-Teacher Conferences 12:30-7:30 p.m.

No school for all students. Teachers have contacted you with a scheduled time. If you cannot come at the scheduled time, please make sure to contact the teacher ASAP. Conferences are on a tight schedule in order to get them all in on only one day. If you are late, it will not be the teacher's responsibility to fit you in. You may need to reschedule.

November 19

Coats for Kids (and families)

Impact Church

7071 Broadway

9 a.m. - noon

Today is the last of three coat giveaways by this organization. If you are in need of a winter coat for any age, stop by for a donated gently used coat.

November 21

Picture Retakes

Photographers will be at the school to take photos of students who were absent or enrolled after Picture Day. If you need retakes, you must return the entire original package at the time of the retakes.

November 23-25

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 28th.

December 1

PTO Meeting

Cafeteria, 6:00 p.m.

Parents are invited to attend. We will be recognizing the November Citizens of the Month.

Continued on page 5

Updates from the Staff

You already get regular updates in the form of notes and newsletters from your child's classroom teacher, but what about other staff members your child may see? In this section, you will get updates each trimester from various staff members in an effort to keep you informed about what is happening throughout the school.

The Art Loft

Mrs. Lattimer

Hi from the Art dept. at John Wood! This is Mrs. Lattimer saying a friendly hello! I have now had your 1st-4th graders for a third of the school year. These students at Wood are something to rave about! So many of them seem to be excited when they have art for Specials on that day. So, thank you for the enthusiasm from your kiddos!

Sometime in October I initiated the "Positive Space Nook". It's called positive space for two reasons. First, I select students who are working hard and having a positive attitude to enter and work during class in that nookie type space. Second, in art, there is a thing called positive and negative space. We will learn about it this trimester. It seems that each class looks forward to getting the opportunity to be in the Positive Space during class.

As for more about this trimester, I am hoping to implement more use of new art materials this trimester. The kids have used markers, crayons, colored pencils, and their favorite is their love painting. They just soar when they paint! I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart, for the excitement that the students have for art! Let's make this trimester a great one again!

Coming in next month's newsletter!

- *November Good Citizens*
- *3rd and 4th Grade Honor Roll for the first trimester*
- *Perfect Attendance for the first trimester*

The Fitness Forecast

Mrs. Davidson

In PE class for the second trimester kindergarten and first grade will work on the following:

- Personal and social behavior
- Cooperation, sharing, and courtesy
- Challenge of new activities
- How to maintain health and fitness levels through rhythmic activities

In PE class for the second trimester second through fourth grade will work on the following:

- Cardio – jump rope, sprints, jogging, walking, etc.
- Respect for differences
- Responsible behavior
- Personal and social behavior
- Sports – basketball, volleyball

Notes from the Music Room

Miss Godfrey

Here's a brief update of what the kiddos can expect to learn in the second trimester. For my upper grade levels (2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades), we will be trying to focus more on different levels of volume and its vocabulary in music. We will also learn about time signatures and different tempos and their vocabulary. Towards the end of the trimester, we will be moving toward learning some new songs as we prepare for a spring concert.

For my kindergarten and 1st grade students, we will be focusing on matching pitch and rhythm. We will also focus on learning songs at the end of the trimester to prepare for the same spring concert.

Meet the Social Worker

Ms. Albertson, LCSE LSSW

Hi! It is a pleasure to introduce myself as the Social Worker for John Wood Elementary School. I have been a School Social Worker for 4 years now and love it!

A little bit about me: I graduated with my bachelor's degree in Sociology with a minor in Psychology from Purdue University Northwest. I then obtained my Master of Social Work degree from Indiana University Northwest.

I love the outdoors, hiking, reading, and trying new things. I have 2 daughters and 1 (spoiled) cat. I am passionate about working with students and families and look forward to this new adventure and a wonderful school year!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out!

Mary Albertson, LCSW, LSSW
malbertson@mvsc.k12.in.us
(219) 650-5305 ext. 6545

Request from the PE Teacher

As the days get colder, and snow begins to fall, many times students will wear snow boots to school or the girls may wear fashion boots. Just remember that on PE days they need to bring their gym shoes to change into. Wearing improper footwear during gym can lead to serious injuries. For that reason, if students are not wearing gym shoes, it becomes necessary for them to sit out.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

The Book Nook

Mrs. Echols

A big thank you to everyone who help make the Scholastic Book Fair a success!

November's Itinerary per grade level:

Kindergarten

- ❖ Books that pertain to the fall season
- ❖ Understanding the parts of a book
- ❖ Hopscotch coding
- ❖ Holiday movie (Turkey Trouble)

First

- ❖ Read aloud books about what it takes to be a leader
- ❖ Common Sense Media (Social media responsibility and behavior)
- ❖ Learning to build relationships (using Legos and structure building materials)

Second

- ❖ Read aloud books on how and why we vote
- ❖ Fun with Tynker (learning to code/program)
- ❖ Common Sense Media (online conduct)

Third

- ❖ Digital Citizenship (the importance of words while online)
- ❖ Coding and building with Legos
- ❖ Holiday movies for kids

Fourth

- ❖ Common Sense Media (Be a Super Digital Citizen)
- ❖ Understanding the process of voting
- ❖ Coding and building with Legos
- ❖ Holiday fun videos (Free Turkey)

Happy Thanksgiving and stay safe!

Upcoming Events

Continued from page 3

December 9

Popcorn Friday

A note will come home the day before to remind you.

December 13

Monthly PD Day

12:35 dismissal

Students will attend school in the morning and will have e-learning in the afternoon so teachers and staff can participate in Professional Development in the afternoon.

December 23-January 6

Winter Holiday Break

No School. We hope everyone has a joyous holiday. We'll see you after the new year begins. School resumes on Monday, January 9, 2023.

January 9, 2023

School Resumes

Request from Playground Aides

We feel that it is important for students to have time to be able to go outside and get fresh air and have some fun each day.

However, when students are not dressed appropriately for the weather, many times they end up sitting in study hall while their friends are outside playing.

Remember that students go outside for recess whenever the actual temperature and the Real Feel is at least 15°F or higher and the playground is in suitable condition.

Students need to have a warm coat, gloves/mittens, scarf, and hat/hood. If you have difficulty obtaining any of these items, feel free to contact Ms. Albertson, our Social Worker, or Mrs. Hehr, our Family and Community Engagement Specialist, and one of them can assist you.

Student Council Food Drive

The student council members are currently hosting a food drive! Suggested items include: canned vegetables and fruit, pasta, cereal, crackers, and other non-perishable items; shampoo, soap, toothpaste, deodorant, and other personal hygiene items; socks, hats, mittens, and other cold-weather items (new only, please).

Food items collected will be donated to the newly opened "Pirate Pantry". The Pirate Pantry is currently by invitation only for MCSC families. School social workers and FACES will identify the families in need and refer them to the pantry. The head of our Food Service Department will then make arrangements for families to pick up what they need for meals.

If you are in need of services, please contact our new social worker, Ms. Albertson. She has information about several services that may be available to assist you.

Food Drive Deadline **Friday, November 18th**

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

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

Follow Mr. Brown at
@MerrillvilleSu3

Follow Mrs. Igras at
@Wood Prin