

John Wood Elementary Newsletter

November 2025

Greatness Grows Here

Mission Statement: John Wood School

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.



A Message from the Captain's Quarters

Dear John Wood Families,

We are delighted with the wonderful turnout for parent-teacher conferences! Thank you for partnering with our teachers to support your child's positive and enriching learning experience at John Wood. Your involvement truly makes a difference in their success. If you were unable to attend conferences, please contact your child's teacher to schedule a time to review their progress.

As colder weather arrives, please make sure your child comes to school dressed appropriately for outdoor recess. Students will continue to enjoy time outside, so warm coats, hats, and gloves are important each day.

With more after-school activities on our calendar, we also want to remind everyone that maintaining a safe, welcoming school environment remains a top priority. All school rules apply during these events, and we kindly ask that parents stay with their child throughout the activity. Please remember that children should not be dropped off at any all-school, after-hours event, parental supervision is required.

Communication between the school and families is essential for your child's academic success. Please be sure you are signed up for ClassDojo, as it is a great way to receive important updates from the school. In addition, make sure we have your most current email address. Both the school and the corporation send out important information by email, and we don't want you to miss anything.

Thank you for your continued support of John Wood Elementary. We are grateful for our wonderful school community!

Sincerely,
Principal Igras

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



Dean V

Miss Vlassopoulos, Dean of Students

Each month, our school celebrates students who go above and beyond – whether it's through hard work, kindness, or setting a positive example for others. Our One in a Melon winners and Good Citizens of the Month are invited, along with their parents, to a special morning recognition with the principal, dean, and teachers before the beginning of the school day. Congratulations to our October honorees for showing that greatness truly grows here!

October One in a Melon

Gabriella Abel, Ariana Barcenaz, Annalise Brown,
Everrett Cabrera, Dylan Denisiuk, BellaRose Downs,
Indy George, Lucy Lagunas, Brenly Maxwell,
Cordney Morgan, Kela Richardson, Juan Shaw,
Julian Smith, Kai Turich

October Good Citizens of the Month

Anthony Castillo, Jackson Daughtry, Ivy Fiste,
Isaiah Johnson, Saida Lewis, Symiah Lewis,
Caleigh Martin, Aarav Patel, Messiah Perry,
Lyncoln Potkay, Nicolas Smith, Legend Soliman,
Ariyah Torres, Maleah Young



Every Friday
Pirate Pride Day

Show your Pirate Pride! Wear purple!

November 17
Spell Bowl Competition
MIS, 4:00 p.m.

Our Spell Bowl team will have their final competition today. Best of luck, team! You got this!

November 18
Picture Retakes

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

November 18
Title 1 Family Fun Night
4:30-6:00 p.m.

Join us as we explore the transcontinental railroad and participate in wild west themed math, reading, and writing activities.

November 22
Coats for Kids (and families)
Impact church
7071 Broadway
9 a.m. – noon

November 26-28
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, December 1st.

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STAY INFORMED – WEATHER & EMERGENCY UPDATES

We encourage all parents to check electronic communications regularly, including Class Dojo, Skyward, and email, to stay up to date on school news and announcements. Occasionally, we may also use a robocall for important or time-sensitive information. To be sure you receive these calls, please do not block the school's number.

In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, school may be canceled or delayed. You can find the most current information in any of the following ways:

- Local and Chicago TV and radio stations
- The MCSC website (www.mcsc.k12.in.us)
- MCSC social media (Facebook and X)
- An automated call from MCSC to the primary phone number on file (please make sure your number is correct and not marked as "unlisted" or "confidential")
- Optional outside notification services

For a detailed explanation of how decisions are made regarding school closings and delays, visit:

<https://www.mvsc.k12.in.us/parents/emergency-school-closing-information>

Perfect Attendance 1st Trimester 2025-2026

The following students were present at school every day of the first trimester.

Gabriella Abel
Godson Adjei
Juan Avila III
Aylin Barajas
La'Phil Barnett Jr.
S'Niyah Bean
Kamilah Blake
Mia Bounds
Everrett Cabrera
Oliver Calvert
Eleanor Cerda
Savannah Cook
Skylar Dixon
BellaRose Downs
Micah Edwards
Dean Fiste
Ivy Fiste
Jeremiah Gipson
Bella Glenn
Zendaya Hale
Joel Harris
Gus Herrera III
Micah High
Antwaun Hill Jr
Cori Isbell
Alena Jackson
Adaline Jones
Elijah Keaton
Jakhi Kellogg
Lucila Lagunas
Logan Lofton
Arya Marquez
Caleigh Martin
Ammar Mazashokov
Mariam Mazashokova
Sebastian Murphy
Margaret Mustain
Smit Patel
Joshua Perez
Patricio Ramos
Rayna Ramos
Juan Rosas III
Mia Rosas
Amethyst Sexton
Nicolas Smith
Nina Smith
Michael Stancle
Raelynn Thomas
Roan Thompson
Leah Topor
Marshall Vaughn
Legend White
Brydan Whittington
Jenni Wilderness
Jurnee Wilderness
Micah Wiley
Alonzo Williams
Alma Yancey
Maleah Young



1st Trimester 2025-2026

3rd Grade

A Honor Roll
Gus Herrera

A/B Honor Roll

Gabriella Abel
Oliver Calvert
Jackson Daughtry
Skylar Dixon
Saida Lewis
Leah Topor
Valentin Silva



*Learning is a treasure that will
follow its owner everywhere.
~Chinese Proverb*



Flu Season Reminder

Flu season is here! Protect your child and others by:

- **Getting a seasonal flu vaccine** (recommended for children 6 months and older)
- **Staying home when sick** (fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school)
- **Covering coughs and sneezes**
- **Washing hands often**

Simple habits at home and school can help keep everyone healthy this season!

4th Grade

A Honor Roll
Dean Fiste
Jakhi Kellogg

A/B Honor Roll
Scarlett Barajas
Esteban Cedillo
Josiah Correa Garcia
Jase Gray
Cori Isbell
Colby Jacobs
Damian Johnson
Logan Lofton
Van Malocha
Nicolas Smith
Legend White
Maleah Young



Gold Note Reminder

To help ensure that every student gets home safely and according to plan, please remember to send a gold note whenever there's a change in your child's dismissal routine.

You need to send a gold note if:

- you chose "every day" when registering for a car rider number, but your child will NOT be picked up that day.
- you chose "occasional" when registering for a car rider number, and your child WILL be picked up that day.
- your child will be leaving school earlier than the regular dismissal time for any reason.

Please don't rely on your child remembering verbal changes or emails to the teacher. The teachers are often busy during the day and may not see the email. The gold notes are the most reliable way to communicate daily dismissal changes.

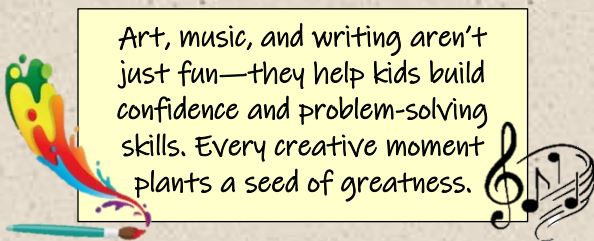
If an emergency arises and a last-minute change must be made, please contact the school office directly. They will make sure both the teacher and the student are informed.



A Note from the PE Teacher

As the weather turns colder and the snow starts to fall, many students come to school wearing snow boots and/or regular shoes. Please remember that on PE days, students need to wear or bring gym shoes to change into.

Wearing the proper footwear helps keep everyone safe and prevents injuries during activities. If a student does not have appropriate shoes for PE, they may need to sit out for that class period.



Art, music, and writing aren't just fun—they help kids build confidence and problem-solving skills. Every creative moment plants a seed of greatness.

"Beary" Good Attendance

Each year, our School Improvement Plan (SIP) committee looks for ways to help students grow and succeed. One ongoing goal is to improve attendance, because every day at school matters.

To encourage students to be here each day, the class with the highest attendance percentage for the month receives "Beary", our attendance trophy.

October Winner

Ms. Robles (3rd grade) 98.45%

Congratulations to Ms. Robles' class for their outstanding attendance and for setting such a strong example for their peers!



Giveaways

**Saturday, November 15th-
9:00-11:00 River Forest
Learning Center Door 2
3300 Indiana Street in Hobart**

**Saturday, November 22nd-
9:00-12:00
Impact Church
7071 Broadway in Merrillville**

**Saturday, December 6th-
9:00-11:00
Merrillville Intermediate School
1400 W. 61st Ave in Merrillville**



Winter Clothing & Recess Reminder

As the temperatures drop, we want to remind families that students go outside for recess each day, as long as conditions are favorable and the temperature or wind chill is at least 15°F. Recess is an important time for students to get fresh air, exercise, and have fun, so we encourage everyone to come prepared.

Please make sure your child wears a warm coat, gloves or mittens, a scarf, and a hat or hood. On chilly mornings, students often remove layers as the day warms up, and items can be left on the playground. To help us return lost items, please write your child's name or initials inside each piece of clothing. Even partial labeling helps our aides track down the owner.

Students who are not dressed appropriately for the weather may need to stay indoors during recess, missing the chance to play with their friends. If you need assistance obtaining warm clothing, please contact Mrs. McGee, our Social Worker, or Mrs. Rizzo, our Family and Community Engagement Specialist, and they will be happy to help.

Our Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria, and with your help, we hope every jacket and coat goes home with its rightful owner!



Once a Pirate, Always a Pirate

To promote pride in our school community, students are encouraged to wear purple on Fridays.

Students can wear John Wood spirit wear, Merrillville athletics, or Pop Warner shirts, or simply plain purple...anything that shows their school spirit.

Students wearing purple on Fridays will have their name entered into a drawing. One winner from each grade level will get the chance to choose a small prize from our treasure chest!

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 full name
- ✓ 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 and for helping us keep communication clear and consistent!

REMINDER **No School**

Wed-Fri, Nov. 26-28th
Thanksgiving Break



STAYING WARM THIS WINTER

As colder weather approaches, we kindly remind parents and caregivers to ensure that children are dressed appropriately for the frigid temperatures.

If your family is in need of winter items such as coats, hats, gloves, or scarves, please let me know—I'll do my best to assist you with these necessities. You can reach me at **extension 6545** or by email at **christine.mcgee@msvc.k12.in.us**. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

As we enter the holiday season, I want to take a moment to extend my warmest wishes to you and your family. May this special time bring you joy, peace, and cherished moments with your loved ones.

Wishing you a joyous holiday and a prosperous New Year!

Warm regards,
Mrs. McGee

Get Ready for PENGUIN PATCH!

December 1st - 5th
11:00-1:30

John Wood Elementary



Did you know???

Pumpkins are technically fruits – and they belong to the same family as cucumbers, melons, and squash!

Besides being delicious in pies, pumpkin seeds are packed with nutrients and make a fun, crunchy snack.

November is National Gratitude Month. Encourage your family to share something they're thankful for each day. Even small expressions of thanks can boost happiness, build stronger connections, and help children understand that kindness and thoughtfulness are seeds that grow into something amazing.



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November 28-29

Five Below Fundraiser

Watch for info about this PTO fundraiser to come home soon.

December 1-5

Penguin Patch

Students will have the opportunity to purchase inexpensive gifts for family members. More information will come home before this date.

December 4

PTO Meeting

Cafeteria, 4:15 p.m.

Parents are invited to attend. We will be planning events for the upcoming months.

December 6

Coats for Kids (and families)

MIS Cafeteria

1400 W 61st Ave.

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

December 9

Monthly PD Day

12:35 dismissal

Students will attend school in the morning and have lessons to complete at home in the afternoon. Teachers and staff will participate in professional development in the afternoon.

December 22-January 2

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 5, 2026.

Greatness Sighted in the Halls of John Wood School

Snapshots of creativity, fun, and learning around our school!



2nd grade science experiment



1st grade writing activity



Kindergarten math and art projects



Our Pop Warner
State Champ,
Kindergartener,
Kobe Jordan!

