

John Wood Elementary Newsletter

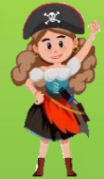
March 2026

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 Wood Families,

I can hardly believe we are already in the third trimester of the 2025-2026 school year! Time is flying by, and as we move into the final stretch, I'd like to share a few important reminders.

First, you can always check your child's academic progress through **Skyward Family Access**. This is a great way to stay up to date on grades and overall performance. Please also remember that emails from Central Office and John Wood Elementary are sent to the email address listed in Skyward. We encourage you to make sure the email on file is one you check regularly so you don't miss important updates.

If you ever have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's teacher. Communication between school and home is essential, and we want to ensure you feel informed and supported.

This trimester, we have also launched a **schoolwide attendance incentive program**. The program includes **weekly incentives, monthly rewards, and entry into a grand prize drawing for a tablet and other prizes** for those students who meet the attendance goals. Our goal is to encourage strong attendance habits so students can make the most of their learning opportunities. Please be sure to check your email for more detailed information about how the program works.

As we head into spring, we are also entering state assessment season. Second and third grade students have just completed the IREAD assessment. The **I-LEARN assessment window** for all 3rd and 4th grade students will open on **April 13**. These assessments provide valuable information about student learning and help guide instruction moving forward. As testing approaches, we will share the specific dates your child will be testing.

We also have a couple of upcoming events we hope you can attend:

- **VIP Night & Scholastic Book Fair** – Tuesday, March 24 from **4:30–6:00 PM**
- **Fine Arts Fest** – Tuesday, April 14. This year's event will be bigger and better than ever, and we are excited to showcase the incredible talents of our students! More information will be coming your way.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. We look forward to a strong and exciting finish to the school year.

Sincerely,
Principal Igras



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 February honorees for showing that greatness truly grows here!

**One in a “Melon”
February Winners**

Joseph Aponte, Kevin Bonner, Anthony Castillo, Karter Dixon, Micah Edwards, Aiden Jackson-Velasquez, Kamariyah Jackson, Adaline Jones, Maggie Mustain, Evelynn Myers, Mia Rosas, Ronald Steward

**Good Citizens
February Winners**

Monroe Black-Dean, Leia Cedillo, Savannah Cook, Skylar Dixon, Indy George, Aubrey Gilbert, Damian Johnson, Brantley McKown, Emmett Myers, Rayna Ramos, Adassa Rugano, Raelynn Thomas, Taylor Williams



Once a Pirate,
Always a Pirate

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

Students can wear ANYTHING “John Wood” (Spirit Wear, etc) or “Merrillville” (Athletic Department Spirit Wear, Pop Warner shirts, etc) or just plain purple.



**Every Friday
Pirate Pride Day**

Show your Pirate Pride! Wear purple!

**March 16-24
Scholastic Book Fair**

Students will have the opportunity to visit the book fair during lunch, recess, and library time.

**March 19
All Pro Dad Night
6:00-7:00 p.m.**

Join us for this opportunity to meet other dads while spending quality time with your child.

**March 24
VIP Night
4:30-6:00 p.m.**

Our PTO invite all VIPs to join us for crafts, snacks, and fun. The book fair will be open during this event.

**March 30 – April 6
Spring Break – No School**

Classes will resume on Tuesday, April 7th.

**April 7
Deadline for Strack & Van Til Receipts**

Today is the last day to turn in any Strack & Van Til receipts dated September 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026. Thank you to all who have sent in receipts throughout the school year.

**April 13 – May 8
I-LEARN Testing Window**

Students in grades 3-4 will take state mandated testing during these dates.

**April 14
Monthly PD Day**

Students will be dismissed at 12:35 on this day so teachers can participate in Professional Development. Students will be expected to complete their worksheet packets.

**April 14
Fine Arts Festival**

For one night only, John Wood School will be transformed into an art museum and performance venue! Come see the masterpieces that have been created and listen to the musical performances! More information will be sent home as we approach this date.

**April 17
End of the 5th Grading Period**

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 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.

"Beary" Good Attendance

Each year, our School Improvement Plan (SIP) committee identifies 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 present each day, the class with the highest attendance percentage for the month receives "Beary", our attendance trophy.

February Winner

Miss Jongsma (4th grade) 98.58%

Congratulations to Miss Jongsma's class for their consistent attendance and for setting a strong example for their peers.



2nd Trimester Honor Roll

Our honor roll students are proof that "Greatness Grows Here!"
Congratulations on a fantastic 2nd trimester!

3rd Grade

A/B Honor Roll

Gabriella Abel
Savanna Brown
Oliver Calvert
Jackson Daughtry
Skylar Dixon
Gus Herrera
A'Layah Jones
Saida Lewis
Elias Navarro
Valentin Silva
Lea Topor
Micah Wiley

4th Grade

A Honor Roll

Dean Fiste
Jakhi Kellogg

A/B Honor Roll

Esteban Cedillo
Leia Cedillo
Colby Jacobs
Damian Johnson
Logan Lofton
Maggie Mustain
Naija Nunn
Bhavya Patel
Victoria Sanchez
Nicholas Smith
Maleah Young

2nd Trimester Perfect Attendance

These students were here every day! Showing up matters, and with every day they came to school, these students let their greatness grow! Congratulations on perfect attendance for this trimester.

*Godson Adjei
Gracie Allman Daniel
J'airen Carson
Journee Carson
*Eleanor Cerda
Karter Dixon
Aubrey Gilbert
*Jeremiah Gipson
*Joel Harris
*Cori Isbell
Aiden Jackson Velazquez
Colby Jacobs
*Jakhi Kellogg
Saida Lewis
Ryan Mustain
*Smit Patel
Kela Richardson
*Leah Topor
*Maleah Young

* - denotes Perfect Attendance for both trimesters.

Girls on the Run

We are excited to announce that we have 18 third and fourth grade girls who have registered to join the spring session of Girls on the Run. The girls are meeting with their coaches twice a week. They are learning positive life-skills and preparing for a 5K run in May.

Good luck, girls!

Coaches

Ms. Wiley
Mrs. Langer

Participants

Gabriella Abel
Gracie Allman Daniel
Scarlett Barajas
Mia Flores
Logan Lofton
Arya Marquez
D'shnay Mauvais
Stephanie Misner
Riley Montgomery
Laiyla Perez
Mia Rosas
Victoria Sanchez
Jayla Steward
Royce Taylor
Jenni Wilderness
Micah Wiley
Tray'cia Williams
Maleah Young

Dress Code Reminder

As we begin to have warm days, we are all excited to shed our coats and start wearing warm-weather clothing after the long and cold winter. However, please remember that we have a dress code at John Wood.

The dress code includes no shorts or skirts shorter than fingertip length, no sheer or see-through clothing, no "spaghetti strap" or strapless tops, and no bare midriffs. In addition, for safety reasons, students should not wear flip-flops, sandals, or open-toe shoes. Students wearing open shoes will be allowed outside for fresh air, but will not be permitted to use playground equipment.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in helping us maintain a safe and appropriate learning environment.

John Wood's PTO is excited to invite talented artisans to participate in our upcoming Fine Arts Night!

We are seeking donations of themed gift baskets which can include handcrafted items, professional services, or other unique offerings. These special baskets will be raffled during our annual John Wood Fine Arts Night on April 14th.

All proceeds will directly benefit our students, teachers, and educational programs. We appreciate any support that helps our school community grow through the power of ART.

Please fill out the google form if you plan on submitting a basket by March 20th. All Donations are needed by April 10th

<https://forms.gle/uox2dFPVFa5zLNx5>

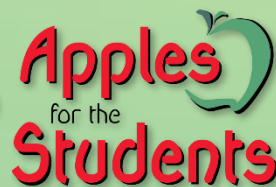
**for more info, please email:
smalocha@mvsc.k12.in.us**



TATTOO
a teacher!
**PTO WILL BE SELLING
TEMPORARY TATTOOS DURING
LUNCHES MARCH 16-20TH**

STUDENTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUY TEMPORARY TATTOOS AND PLACE THEM IN THE TEACHER'S BUCKET THAT THEY WISH TO WEAR THAT TATTOO!
TEACHERS WILL PROUDLY WEAR THEIR TEMPORARY TATTOOS ON FRIDAY, MARCH 27TH.

\$1 EACH



This is the LAST MONTH to collect Strack receipts!

- Receipts may be from ANY Strack & Van Til store.
- Receipts must be dated between September 1, 2025 and March 31, 2026.
- No receipt is too small. Even purchases under \$1 add up quickly.
- Last day we will accept receipts is Tuesday, April 7, 2026.

We have a deadline to mail in all receipts, and it is important that we receive all receipts by April 7th so they can be included in our final total. Once submitted, we will receive a confirmation with the total number of points earned and will be able to "purchase" items for our building using those points.

For your convenience, there is a collection box in the front foyer. Receipts may also be sent to school with your child and they can be turned in to the office.

Thank you for helping support our school!

SCHOLASTIC

WE'RE HAVING A
BOOK FAIR!



3/16 - 3/24

JOHN WOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
6100 E 73RD AVE
MERRILLVILLE, IN 46410

Get ready—the Scholastic Book Fair is coming to our school! Find bestselling series and characters that students love from more than 100 publishers. Plus every purchase benefits our school. We hope you can join us for the Best. Week. Ever!



The Scholastic Book Fair is coming, a perfect opportunity for our students to explore new worlds, spark curiosity, and let their love of reading grow!

SCHOLASTIC
BOOK FAIR



**BOOK FAIR
eWALLET**

The easy way for kids to pay!



<https://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bf/johnwoodelementaryschool1>

JOIN US AS OUR STUDENTS CELEBRATE THE VERY IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THEIR LIVES!



**VIP
NIGHT**



IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

**TUESDAY
24 MARCH | 4:30-6**

CHECK OUT THE BOOK FAIR!
CRAFTS! SNACKS! AND OTHER
FREE FUN!



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

Ahoy! A new pirate has joined the crew at John Wood! Please help us welcome Mr. Wilson, our new computer tech. He is taking over for Ms. Bailey, who left us earlier this year.

We're glad to have him aboard and look forward to working together to keep our technology shipshape!



John Wood School BEST Pledge


John Wood is the BEST of schools,
Spell out BEST you'll know the rules,
First is B, that's the way.
Be responsible every day.
Next is E, that's correct.
Everyone deserves respect.
Third is S. This is cool.
Safety counts when you're at school.
Finally, it's letter T.
We will Talk appropriately.

A Word from the Social Worker

Hello! My name is Jody Kristoff, and I am the School Social Worker at John Wood Elementary School. School Social Workers serve as an important link between home, school, and the community. We provide both direct and indirect support services to students, families, and school staff to help address social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Our goal is to support students so they can succeed academically and socially while ensuring families have access to helpful resources and support.

If you have any questions or would like to connect, please feel free to contact me!

Jody Kristoff
School Social Worker

 219-650-5305



jody.kristoff@mvsc.k12.in.us

Did you know....?

Spring thunderstorms begin to appear more often in March because warm and cold air masses start colliding more frequently.



As the seasons begin to change, we're reminded that growth takes time, patience, and a little sunshine along the way.



2026-2027 Kindergarten Preregistration

Merrillville Community School Corporation will hold kindergarten registration soon. Although the dates have not yet been announced, we wanted to share this information with you so that you can be prepared. Children who will be age 5 either on or before Aug. 1st will be eligible for the 2026-2027 school year.

The following is the information that will be needed when registering your child.

Parents will need to bring the following documents to their appointments:

- ✓ Certified birth certificate (exceptions will be made for foster children-see below)
- ✓ Up to date Immunization records
- ✓ Parent/guardian current license or state ID
- ✓ Proofs of residency (see below)

If applicable, you will also need the following:

- ✓ DCS foster information
- ✓ Any and all documents that affect your child's educational placement (Example: IEP, 504, or Psychological Evaluation)
- ✓ Special Needs Transportation (SNT)
- ✓ Any legal or custodial papers

Required Proofs of Residency

Homeowners

Two (2) of the following:

- Utility bill (either NIPSCO, water, or sewer)
- Deed, Contract, or Mortgage Statement
- Lake County Tax Bill

Pending Homeowners

Pending is defined as 30 days prior to occupancy

- Letter, on realtor letterhead, of pending purchase and projected date of move-in. Must include the name and address of purchasing family.
- Letter, on contractor letterhead, validating pending construction of home and projected move-in date. Must include the name and address of purchasing family.
- Offer to Purchase/Purchase Agreement/Contract

Renters/Leases

One (1) of the following is required:

- Lease Agreement – Must include:
 - Parent/Guardian name on the agreement
 - School-age children on the agreement as tenants
 - Name and phone number of the manager/landlord
 - Beginning and ending date of the agreement
- Rent Agreement – Must include:
 - Parent/Guardian name on the agreement
 - School-age children on the agreement as tenants
 - Name and phone number of the manager/landlord
 - Beginning and ending date of the agreement
 -

In addition, one (1) of the following items is required

- Utility Bill (either NIPSCO, water, or sewer)
- Vehicle Registration
- TRANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) letter from the State of Indiana

The school maintains the right to contact the landlord to confirm residency.

ADDENDUM (living in the home of another family or individual)

- Ross Township resident/owner completes addendum form in person in presence of school resource officer (SRO)
- Ross Township resident provides proof of residency (refer to proof of residency for homeowners, renters/leasers listed above)
- A photocopy of the resident's driver's license is to be taken and placed in the student's file along with the parent/guardian's driver's license.

In order to attend Merrillville schools, families must live within the boundaries of Ross Township, which includes Merrillville and portions of Hobart and Crown Point.

Feel free to share
this information
with anyone you
know who may
need it.

Greatness Sighted in the Halls of John Wood School

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

Black History Month program



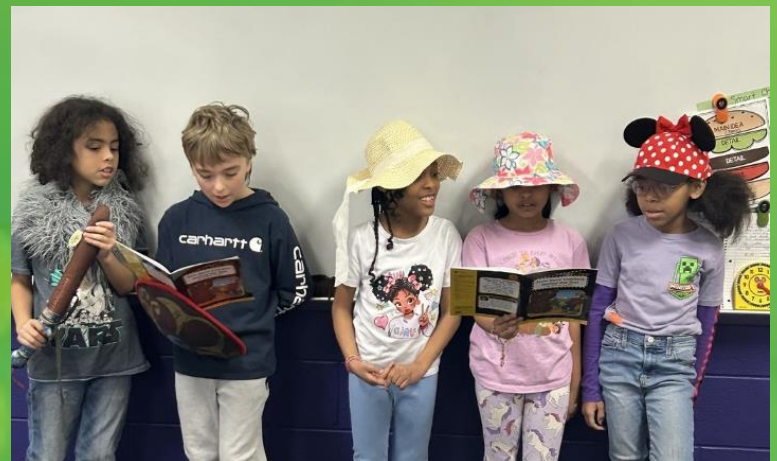
Black History Month display



Mrs. Hull's 3rd Grade Black History Month project on display at the Dean and Barbara White Center.



2nd grade Readers' Theater

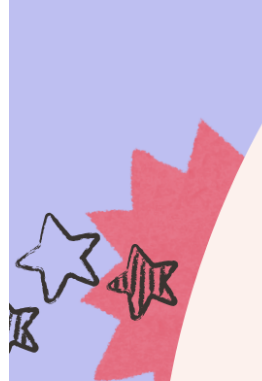




John Wood

ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES

CELEBRATE BEING AT SCHOOL

- 0 absences for the week: small reward from classroom teacher
 - 0–1 absence for the month: special celebration
 - Trimester incentives– drawing for a tablet
 - 0 absences – 4 entries
 - 0.5 – 1 absence – 3 entries
 - 1.5 – 2 absences – 2 entries
 - 2.5 – 3 absences – 1 entry
- 

When students are present each day, they build strong routines, stay connected to their teachers and classmates, and make steady academic progress.

Thank you for your continued partnership in your student's success.



ALL PRO DAD
CHAPTERS

*special guest & author Ronell Brown will be leading this month's All Pro Dad's Meeting!



All Pro Dad Chapters provide an opportunity for dads to spend quality time with their children that will strengthen their relationship. For one hour each month you'll get to join other dads and kids at school for a fun, memory-making event.

Join Us

for our next meeting!

Location **John Wood Cafeteria**

Date **Thursday March 19th**

Time **6:00 – 7:00 PM**

Notes: Please RSVP to ensure enough food and supplies are provided.



Let us know if you will be attending.
RSVP using our QR code!

danielle.rizzo@mvschools.org

FOLLOW US:  @AllProDad  @AllProDad  @allprodad



Ross Township Trustee & the Town of Merrillville



Presents:

Easter Bunny Blast 4.0

Bike Give-Away - Pictures with the Easter
Bunny - Horse Rides - Face Painting -
Candy Dash

Saturday, March 28, 2026

Be sure to
follow us on:



11:00am to 1:00pm

Hidden Lake Park
6355 Broadway

Merrillville, IN 46410



Vendors:

Bling City Hot Dogs & Kona Ice



JOHN WOOD PRESENTS GREATNESS GROWS HERE

Music Performances
(in the multipurpose room)

Kindergarten and 1st Grade: 5:00-5:15
2nd grade and 3rd Grade: 5:45-6:00
4th grade: 6:30-6:45

Tour the building
to see all of
your child's
FANTASTIC art
work on display!

Fine Arts
Student Showcase
John Wood Elementary
April 14, 2026
4:00 pm-7:00 Pm

Photo
opportunity
available!

Create art with
your family in the
art room, science
lab, and cafeteria!

E.P.I.C.

**EMPOWERING
PARENTS IN OUR
COMMUNITY**

PARENT RESOURCE FAIR

Thursday
May 14, 2026
4:00pm-6:00pm



**Dean and Barbara White
Community Center 6600
Broadway, Merrillville**



<https://www.mvsc.k12.in.us/>



Sponsored by Merrillville
Community School Corporation &
Dean and Barbra White
Community Center

