SEPTEMBER
19  Schools and Office Closed - Yom Kippur
20  Back-To-School Night - 7:00 p.m.
21  Ident-A-Kid Pictures & Identification - Rotunda
21  PTA Back-To-School Social - 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
21-24-28  Hearing & Vision Testing
24-28  PTA Fall Book Fair
24  Bio Blitz Field Trip - Grade 5

A LOOK AHEAD TO OCTOBER
5  Volunteer Training - 9:30 a.m. (Please call the office for an appointment to ensure that we have enough computers for everyone in attendance)
9  PTA Meeting - 7:00 PM - Library
11  Go West Newsletter Distributed
12  Spirit Day - Wear Your Blue and Gold or Westy Spirit Wear
15  Hearing & Vision Retesting
18  Great Shakedown Severe Weather Drill
19  Schools Closed for Students for Systemwide Professional Development Day
26  Fall Picture Day

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year! As West Towson begins its ninth year, there is enthusiasm and excitement in the air. The students arrived back to school last week sporting new backpacks and school supplies, ready to share their summer adventures. The faculty and staff have embraced the new school year ready for teaching and learning. Thank you to all who joined us for Sneak-A-Peek in August.

I encourage parents and family members to be active participants in their child’s education. West Towson is always looking for parent volunteers to help in classrooms, in the lunchrooms, with special projects, and on field trips. If you are interested in volunteering in any way during the school year, you will need to complete the volunteer training and screening
process. The training is available online by visiting www.bcps.org and accessing the ‘Parent’ tab. You will find the training instructions under the ‘Get Involved’ tab on the left side of the screen. Once you have completed the training, please print your certificate and bring a copy to the school with your application. Please remember that parents must be volunteer trained to help with any programs or events at the school, including chaperoning field trips. If you have difficulty accessing the training, please do not hesitate to contact us.

This year’s Back to School Night will be held on September 20th at 7:00 pm. Important information about the school system’s new emergency response procedures will be shared during the meeting. The information that will be shared is not designed for children, so it is recommended parents leave their children home for this meeting.

The 2018 PARCC results were released in late August for students in grades 3-5 who participated in the May 2018 assessment. Once again, West Towson students scored well. Individual student test scores will be sent home to parents by next week.

Thank you for all that you have done to assist us as we start the school year at West Towson. Have a great September!

NEWS FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Hello Westies, my name is Christopher Carter and I am thrilled to join the West Towson family as the new Assistant Principal. I have spent most of my time teaching fifth and third grade, but I have experience working with all grades levels K-6. My favorite subject has always been science.

I grew up in the Poconos, in Pennsylvania and went to school at Bloomsburg University before coming to Baltimore. I love how the city brings together people from all walks of life and from all around the world. It is exciting to learn about the beliefs and personal styles that make us all unique.

In my spare time I enjoy cooking, working out, playing recreation league sports, and most importantly, taking time to appreciate those who support me every chance they get. I love learning and I believe we learn best by observing, asking questions, and taking chances.

I look forward to working alongside the Westie Family in the school community. Let’s make this a great year. GO WEST!

SPECIAL AREA UPDATES

PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS FROM MR. YANNEY
Welcome back to a fun and exciting year in P.E. class. My name is Mr. Yanney, and I am the Physical Education teacher at West Towson Elementary School. Some of the units planned for this year include: soccer, Frisbee, bowling, basketball, ballroom dance, juggling, Magic Club, jump rope and many more. I look forward to working with you and your child throughout the year.

All students have physical education class at least once a week. Students will need to wear tennis shoes and shorts/pants, so they can safely participate in class. Skirts and dresses are acceptable; however, shorts must be worn underneath. Students who cannot participate due to illness or injury need to bring a note indicating the reason and duration of their excuse from activity. A note from a parent will suffice for short-
term (1 or 2 classes) excuses, while longer excuses require a note from a physician. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by email at cyanney@bcps.org

**SHOES FOR SCHOOL**
It is highly recommended that parents send their children to school in tennis shoes each day. They not only need them to participate in Physical Education but also to play safely at recess. Injuries related to the use of sandals and flipflops on the playground are seen in the health suite on a regular basis. In addition, children may not use the playground equipment without safe footwear.

¡**SALUDOS DESDE LA CLASE DE ESPAÑOL!**
Welcome back to school and the fourth year of our Elementary Spanish Passport Program! It is so exciting to be back teaching Spanish to all the fourth and fifth grade students at West Towson. The year has been off to a great start!

In fourth grade, we are in full “Spanish Mode”. Not only are the students learning the routines of Spanish class and getting used to being fully immersed in the language, but they are learning how to communicate in the language too! Currently, we are working on basic communication skills like greetings, introductions, feelings, ages, and birthdays. It is so great to hear the students practicing in class and in the hallways! ¡Buen trabajo!

In fifth grade, we have picked up Spanish class right where we left off at the end of the last school year, and we have added 20 minutes of instruction to each class by making Spanish a special! Currently, we are working on being able to describe ourselves and others in Spanish. It is so impressive to see what the students remember from fourth grade and can apply to what they are learning in fifth grade. ¡Excelente!

As the school year continues, both fourth and fifth grade will have access to the Middlebury Interactive Online program. This year, the program will be pushed out to students in individual units through Schoology, which will allow students to spend more time interacting and making connections with the language. I am so excited to see how the students include what they learn on the program in our future Spanish classes.

Hasta luego, Señorita Reier

What did you do this summer?

![Table of Spanish words](image)
DANCING DAYS WITH MRS. KUEBLER AND MS. PETROZIELLO

Welcome back for another exciting year of Dance Integration! I have the privilege of having a dance student intern from Towson University with me again until the middle of October. Ms. Petroziello comes to us from Delaware where she began dancing at the age of five. She is completing her requirements for the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Dance and Education. Her specialty areas include choreography and dance instruction for private studios and recreational programs. Welcome Ms. Petroziello!

Our 4th grade Westies have already enjoyed constructing a name dance. 2nd and 3rd graders jumped right into Spanish and Dance learning the Mexican Hat Dance...uno, dos, tres, Olé! 3rd graders will continue to dance around the world in conjunction with their Social Studies unit about Asia. 1st grade students created kinesphere inspired dances with core-distal movements. Kindergarten students had an adventure with friendly feet using The Foot Book by Dr. Seuss.

Our school wide focus is Our School Family. This theme will be evidenced in many ways in our dance classroom as we create, connect, perform, and respond. Finally, in The Daily 5 by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser (2014), they discussed that “memory stored in the kinesthetic system evokes the longest lasting memory” (p. 36). Here’s to many long-lasting kinesthetic memories throughout the year!

LIBRARY UPDATES FROM MRS. GLEITSMANN

Welcome to the new school year! My name is Ms. Beth Gleitsmann and I am your librarian at West Towson Elementary School! Routines and procedures are off to a great start in the Library Media Center. Students have become oriented to the different sections of the library and virtual learning commons through tours, scavenger hunts, and other activities. The first unit for kindergarten and first grade classes is “Welcome to Library Land” which helps the students become better oriented to the library by learning about the rules, book care, book selection, and library organization to strive to be responsible and effective library users. In second through fifth grades, the first unit focuses on digital citizenship which helps students to understand how to be a good digital citizen, know how to stay safe online, recognize cyberbullying, and cite sources responsibly.

Learning does not only happen in the library as students have access to many resources and books at home! Students can access ebooks through West Towson’s Destiny account under the Follett Shelf tab. The students will just need to use their username and password to sign into Destiny to access the ebooks. Students can also access Baltimore County Digital Content, such as the Databases by logging in to their BCPSOne accounts and clicking on the Digital Content Section. The Databases are a great tool for research and extending learning through books, videos, and only digital resources.

Parents and guardians of students at our school can now get a library card to check out materials from our library! If interested, please return the Parent School Library Card Application at the end of this newsletter to Ms. Gleitsmann. More information will be sent home about library hours for parents! *Even if you completed a form and had an account during the 2017-2018 school year, a new form will need to be filled out.*
The library is looking for volunteers! If you have time during the day and would like to volunteer in the library, please email me at egleitsmann@bcps.org. You can also sign up by using SignUp Genius and searching for my email address under “Find a Sign Up.”

Don’t forget to follow us on Twitter @WTESLibrary or Instagram @WTESLibrary to see all the wonderful things that are happening in the library!

Ms. Gleitsmann sees over 500 students weekly in the library. Check out the Library’s Amazon Wishlist for Makerspace items (Duct Tape, origami paper, etc.) and other library items (Chlorox wipes, bookmarks, pencils, etc.). New this year is a wishlist for Birthday Books, which parents can donate in honor of their child's birthday. A nameplate will be placed inside the book and your child will be the first to check out the book. (Please notify Ms. Gleitsmann of the purchase.)

Check out the Library’s Amazon Wishlists here:
Makerspace: http://a.co/7emysip
Library Materials/Rewards: http://a.co/6g0YURm
Birthday Books: http://a.co/3Nkzw5g

The PTA Book Fair will occur:
September 24 - September 28th!

NEWS FROM MRS. VAN DER WAL - HEARING AND VISION SCREENING
Baltimore County Department of Hearing and Vision will screen our students in kindergarten and grades 1st and 4th on September 21st, 24th - 28th, with retesting on October 15th. They will also screen any students new to Baltimore County Public Schools. If you have a student in these grades, be sure that they bring their glasses to school for the screening exam. Teachers and parents may refer students from other grades for screening by contacting Ms. van der Wal. If you do not want you child screened, please notify the school prior to the screening dates.

Parents of students who fail the hearing and vision screening will be notified by letter. This letter should be taken to the doctor who provides the follow-up exam and then sent back to school with the results of the exam. If you are notified that your child failed the screening please make every effort to have your doctor or eye doctor examine your child promptly. Please contact Ms. van der Wal at 410-887-8037 or lvanderwal@bcps.org if you need help finding affordable eye or hearing exams for your child.

VISITORS
All parents and other visitors entering the school must report to the office and sign in. Visitors will be asked to identify themselves and the purposes of their visits when entering the building. When parents or other visitors enter the school for the first time, they will be asked to present government-issued photo ID’s, or drivers’ licenses to a staff member in the school office. The ID will be scanned and the following information will be collected: photo, name, and date of birth. This information will be used to check in the visitor, create an ID badge, and compare the visitor’s information against sexual offender databases throughout the country. If the visitor’s name appears on any of the lists or if the visitor refuses to allow the school to scan their ID, the visitor will not be allowed access to the school. Once visitors have their IDs initially scanned, the system will recognize their information and the check in process will be brief.
Once a visitor has been given a badge, he or she may fulfill the purpose of the visit as it was described to the office secretary. If a visitor would like to change the purpose of the visit, he or she must report back to the office to clear the desired change in plans. It is critical for the safety and security of our students that visitors report directly to the location intended for their visits and then report to the office to sign out when they are finished.

Visitors who have not been volunteer trained are not authorized to engage with children who are not their own. Therefore, visitors who are observing in classrooms should not participate in classroom activities, such as Mystery Readers and class celebrations with their child’s classmates. We strongly encourage that all parents, guardians, and grandparents complete volunteer training at the beginning of each school year to allow for full participation in special events in their child’s classroom.

Staff members, volunteers, and substitutes wear ID badges. Anyone in the school building without a badge should expect to be approached and questioned. These guidelines are designed to assist us in providing a safe and orderly school environment. West Towson strongly encourages parent involvement and participation in the school and our program. These measures are intended to ensure the safety and security of the school community, not to limit parent involvement in our school.

Visitors to the school may not visit or eat with students in the cafeteria during lunch. Seating in the cafeteria is limited and students must have the space required to facilitate the lunch period.

PRIVATE SCHOOL REQUEST FOR RECORDS

Occasionally, West Towson Elementary School receives requests from parents to send their child’s records to private educational institutions for consideration of placement. As per Board Rule 5230, Student Records, this request must be received in writing along with a signed copy of the BCPS Consent for Release of Records form to release any information to another school or educational institution. Transcript requests are processed on a first come, first served basis. All requests will be processed within 15 business days after receipt of the completed form and payment in the amount of $5.00. Please do not send these requests to your child’s homeroom teacher. Instead, please send all requests to the main office to be processed.

STUDENT RECORDS

Included with this newsletter is the Board of Education Policy 5230 regarding Student records. Please be assured that we handle all student records in a confidential manner, with consideration of privacy for students and their families.

DO YOU WANT TO TWEET

Hey Westies, are you aware that West Towson has a Twitter page? Check out all the awesome things that are happening around the school by following @WestTowsonES on Twitter.
STUDENTS AND FOOD ALLERGIES
Federal legislation prohibits schools from serving juice more than two times per week. In addition, this legislation requires that students choose either a fruit or vegetable with each meal.

To prevent problems with students who have food allergies, a doctor's note is required to substitute food (e.g., soy milk for cow’s milk, juice for cow’s milk, applesauce for oranges, etc.) The doctor’s note is only required once.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF
Staff members have requested that parents not visit classrooms in the morning after 9:05 a.m. Students begin working on transitional tasks upon arrival in the homerooms each morning, and teachers are needed to assist them in their morning activities. If a parent needs to speak with a teacher, it is important that the parent leave a note with one of the secretaries, and the message will be delivered to the teacher. Our teachers’ top priority must be to their students.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS
Classroom celebrations are held at the teachers’ discretion. Your child’s teacher will send home specific information concerning each classroom event or celebration.

It is highly recommended that non-food ideas be considered. The following are a few suggestions:

➢ Reading a book to the class
➢ Playing a short game
➢ Give out party bags filled with pencils, stickers, novelty erasers, or school supplies rather than candy

Student birthdays will be recognized over the morning announcements. Following announcements, the students who are celebrating their birthdays are invited to the office to collect a token gift (birthday pencil) commemorating this important day. If a student does not wish to be recognized in this manner, he or she should make the teacher aware who will in turn contact an administrator. We strongly encourage that food not be consumed during parties. Alternatives to food are provided to teachers. Extra recess is often provided in place of food.

To control the frequency of birthday celebrations, each homeroom teacher will identify one day each month during which all student/staff birthdays occurring during the month will be celebrated. Teachers will send home notification of monthly birthday celebrations. Personal invitations to celebrations outside of school will not be disseminated at school unless every child in the class is being invited to the celebration. Personal invitations to only selected class members should be sent using the U.S. Postal service, email, or other means outside of the school setting.

BUS TRANSPORTATION REGULATIONS
BCPS provides children living a mile or more away from school the privilege of riding a school bus. Students are expected to ride their assigned buses to and from school and be picked up and discharged at the same bus stop 5 days a week. The Office of Transportation requires that each student only rides his/her assigned bus. Students are expected to follow basic safety rules on the bus: arrive at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the pick-up time, remain seated when the bus is in motion,
keep hands, feet and other objects inside the bus and to themselves, use appropriate language, and listen to the bus driver at all times.

When students get off the bus on their trip home, they are to wait on the side of the road where they disembarked. Students must stand away from the side of the bus until the bus pulls away, leaving better clearance for vision. When traffic is cleared, and it is safe to cross, students may proceed to the other side of the road.

Although parents are not required to wait with children at the bus stop, BCPS strongly recommends that a parent be present at the bus stop to supervise their primary age children.

Parents, guardians, or other unauthorized adults are not allowed to enter buses at the bus stop or at the school for any reason. While parents are encouraged to discuss bus concerns with the bus driver, any issue that is unable to be resolved by the bus driver should be brought to the attention of a school administrator who will work to resolve the issue. All BCPS buses video record the ride to and from school. If a serious infraction occurs, per BCPS guidelines, “To maintain student confidentiality, videotapes and data files are only reviewed by appropriate administrators.”

The BCPS Parent and Students’ Guide to Transportation may be accessed at the following website: http://www.bcps.org/offices/transportation/pdf/Parents-Students-Guide.pdf.

**ARRIVAL**

West Towson Elementary School’s doors open for children at 9:05 a.m. each morning. Supervision of students is not provided before this time. Students arriving to school before 9:05 a.m. must wait outside without WTES staff supervision. To avoid having children wait outside on cold or wet days, arrival plans should insure that the students do not arrive prior to 9:05 a.m.

The bus loop in front of the school is reserved for bus use only during arrival. Due to traffic conditions, bus arrival times may vary. Cars should not enter or park in the bus loop in front of the school between 8:45 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Students transported to by car should be dropped off in the carpool line following the procedures below in the “Carpool Riders” section.

Should parents have the need to come into the school for business during arrival time, they should park their cars and walk their children across the bus loop at the crosswalk. Children of any age should never independently cross the crosswalk during arrival time as this is an area where bus drivers have limited visibility. Please do not park cars in the handicapped spots or in front of “No Parking” signs.

If daycare coverage is needed for children before school, West Towson houses a private daycare program, Play Centers, in the school cafeteria. For further information regarding Play Centers, please call 410-296-4880.

➢ **Bus Riders**

The driveway in the front of the building is reserved for use by buses only during arrival times. Bus arrival times vary according to the weather and traffic congestion. Cars should not enter or park in the bus loop in front of the school between 8:45 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Students transported to school on buses usually begin arriving at approximately 9:05 a.m. If buses arrive prior to 9:05 a.m., the children will remain on the buses until the school doors open. The buses drop off students in front of the school building, near the front door. Staff members carefully monitor the arrival of students transported by buses.
➢ **Walkers**

The only children who will walk to school at West Towson live in communities adjacent to the school campus. Most of those students use the walkway leading to Ridge Ruxton School’s side parking lot. They will cross West Towson’s back driveway using the crosswalks. They will then follow the sidewalk to the front of Ridge Ruxton School and enter West Towson’s front door. Adult supervision will be provided at the crosswalk between 9:05 a.m. and 9:18 a.m. Parents who walk their children to school are asked to say their “goodbyes” and drop off their children in front of the school each morning. Allowing children to walk to class independently, with the help of our safeties and staff, will enhance the children’s confidence and independence.

➢ **Carpool Riders**

All West Towson students are provided with bus service to and from school, except for the children walking from the Ruxton Ridge community. To support WTES’s focus on environmentally responsible living, parents are encouraged to avoid transporting their children to and from school by car. In addition to the environmental issues, the size of the school campus does not support a large carpool line. However, recognizing that there are circumstances which result in the need for parents to transport their children to or from school, a set of carpool procedures has been developed.

After entering the school campus from Charles Street, drivers should stay to the right and remain in their position in the carpool line. To ensure that our cars do not interfere with the bus service provided to the students at Ridge Ruxton, all cars arriving before 9:05 a.m. will need to wait on the curb by the NO Parking sign until it is time to drop-off the students. Drivers will form a line in this area until the carpool teachers arrive, at which time, the cars can turn into the driveway in front of Ridge Ruxton and move under the canopy for unloading. Drivers’ assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. Children should be ready to exit their cars on the curb side when the drivers pull up to the curb, after a brief final good-bye. Drivers will then exit the campus by turning left before entering the West Towson bus loop. **Buses entering the bus loop should be given the right of way.** It is important that drivers follow these guidelines and drive in a slow, safe, and considerate manner. Adult supervision is provided between 9:05 a.m. and 9:18 a.m. at carpool drop-off. Children will walk from the drop-off area to West Towson, entering through the front doors. No students may be dropped off in the parking area in front of West Towson, as children would need to cross the bus loop during bus arrival. This scenario presents a potential for high risk due to the high volume of activity and limited bus driver visibility.

There are times when parents may need to accompany their children into school in the morning to assist with the delivery of projects or to speak with support staff. The parent(s) will need to park their car in the parking lot (not in a handicapped spot) and check in with the office. Caution should be taken when crossing the bus loop.

➢ **Kindergarten**

For the first several weeks of school, the kindergarteners will be escorted from their buses to meet their teachers in the rotunda. Kindergarten teachers will walk their students to the classrooms. Once the kindergarten children become familiar with the school and arrival routines, they will be able to walk from the bus and to their classrooms after 9:05 a.m. without their teachers. All kindergarten classrooms are on the main entrance level of the school.
INSTRUCTIONAL DAY
The instructional day at West Towson Elementary School begins when the children arrive in their classrooms, no later than 9:20 a.m. Children arriving in their classrooms after 9:20 a.m. will be marked tardy. Students arriving late to class on a consistent basis will be unable to fully benefit from this important transitional period as they begin their days at school.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES
At West Towson, we take the responsibility of ensuring that all children arrive home safely very seriously. Children may be dismissed differently on different days of the week but the dismissal plans for the week must remain consistent as noted on the Daily Transportation Information form that you completed for your child at the beginning of the school year. For example, a child may not ride the bus on the first Monday of the month and go to Play Centers the third Monday of the month. A child may however ride the bus EVERY Monday, Wednesday and Friday and attend Play Centers EVERY Tuesday and Thursday. This schedule must be consistent each week.

Despite our attempts to put procedures in place to keep children’s dismissal plans consistent, there will be changes. Any changes in dismissal must be communicated to the school office in writing. Parents are asked to assist with dismissal procedures by making certain that children are clear about dismissal plans before they enter school each morning. Last minute changes in plans are often confusing to children. All changes in transportation plans must be put in written form (a note or letter) and sent to the children’s teachers no later than the morning. Staff absences, teacher schedules, or schedule changes, may prevent changes made by email from being received and acted on in a timely manner. End of the day phone calls to the office to change your children’s dismissal plans create many problems for the school. These calls should be limited to emergencies only. When numerous calls are made to the office near the end of the school day, it is difficult for the office to honor these requests.

➢ **Bus Riders**
Students traveling home on buses will be called for dismissal by their buses beginning at approximately 3:50 p.m. All students will line up according to their bus colors and be escorted outside and onto the buses by staff members. The Department of Transportation will not permit children to ride on buses or to change bus stops to which they are not assigned daily.

➢ **Walkers**
Each afternoon, walkers will be escorted across the Ridge Ruxton driveway to the sidewalk leading to the Ruxton Ridge community. Dismissal of walkers takes place at 3:50 p.m.

➢ **Carpool Riders**
The dismissal of car riders will begin at 3:50 p.m. These students will leave their classrooms and walk to the door near the music rooms. They will exit through these doors to reach the carpool pick-up area. Safeties and staff members will monitor their movement through the halls. At the beginning of the year a staff member will accompany the kindergarten students to the carpool line to ensure their safety. Staff members carefully supervise the car rider pick-up area at all times. Car riders will meet their rides in the front of Ridge Ruxton School, under the canopy. Pick-up procedures are similar to those explained above for morning drop-off. Students will wait on the sidewalk until their cars arrive and will enter the cars only after they come to a complete stop. Drivers are asked to arrange for children to enter
their cars on the passenger sides. This avoids the need for children to walk into traffic. Once again, drivers are reminded to drive in a slow, cautious manner while on school grounds. Parents collecting their children in the carpool line may not leave their cars while waiting in line. Students may not leave the carpool waiting area to meet drivers who have parked cars. As cars exit the bus loop, the right of way is given to the buses entering the loop.

To ensure that our cars do not interfere with the bus service provided to the students at Ridge Ruxton, all cars arriving before 3:50 p.m., will need to wait on the curb by the NO Parking sign until it is time to pick up the students. Drivers will form a line in this area until the carpool teachers arrive, at which time, the cars can turn into the driveway in front of Ridge Ruxton and move under the canopy for collecting the students at the end of the day. Once again, drivers’ assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissal should occur only in unavoidable situations. Doctor/dentist appointments, etc. should be scheduled after regular school hours whenever possible to minimize the loss of instructional time. For the safety of all students, parents/guardians must come directly to the school office to sign out their children for an early dismissal. Children will not be released to anyone other than those listed on the emergency form without permission from the parent/guardian. Office personnel will request identification, and if the adult is authorized to take the child, office staff will call the child to the office. (Children will not be called to the office prior to the arrival of the parent/guardian.) Under no circumstances are parents to remove children from school without following these procedures.

Parents who are volunteering at the school or are at the school for other reasons should not take their children home directly from the classroom. They must come to the office and follow the appropriate procedures to ensure all staff members are aware of the dismissal and that dismissal of the child is recorded.

Dismissal times at West Towson are extremely busy. **In order to avoid confusion during dismissal time, parents are asked to refrain from picking up students from the office between 3:30 p.m. and 3:50 p.m.** End of the day requests for early dismissal interfere with the safe, efficient, and accurate end-of-the-day transition activities and the office staff may not be able to accommodate or honor the requests made between 3:20 p.m. and 3:50 p.m.

Parents arriving before dismissal to have their children dismissed early will need to report to the office, request that their children be pulled from class, and sign their children out as directed by the office staff. Parents are asked to notify the school or teacher in written form no later than the morning of the day their children need to be dismissed before 3:50 p.m.

In the event of an emergency resulting in the need for an early dismissal, please do not email office staff. Instead, please call the school office as soon as possible to ensure the notice is received in a timely manner so the office staff members have ample time to make the change to the dismissal plan.

**CHANGES TO DISMISSAL PLANS**

West Towson Elementary School will be responsible for dismissing children according to the information that parents write on the Daily Transportation Information Form. Any changes in dismissal must be communicated to the school office in writing. Parents are asked to assist with dismissal procedures by making certain that children are clear about dismissal plans before they enter school each morning. Last minute changes in plans are often confusing to children. All changes in transportation plans must be put in writing and sent to the children’s teachers no later than the mornings of the changes. Adjustments in transportation will not be made without written approval from parents. When emailing the
dismissal change, parents must email both the classroom teacher as well as the office secretaries, Mrs. Ford (dford3@bcps.org) and Mrs. Sidou (asidou@bcps.org). Staff members are often engaged in duties which may prevent the timely receipt of your email.

All changes need to be completed before 3:00 p.m. in order for the office staff to reach the children affected by the changes before the end of the school day. End of the day phone calls to the office to change your children’s dismissal plans create many problems for the school. These calls should be limited to emergencies only. When numerous calls are made to the office near the end of the school day, it is difficult for the office to honor these requests. Parents will be asked to fax a signed note or a copy of the Dismissal Change Form if the change is made at the end of the school day.

A Dismissal Change Form is provided in the back to school mailing with Arrival/Dismissal information. It is recommended that parents copy this form and send it to school with their children whenever there is a change in dismissal plans. Additional copies are available in the school office. Again, to ensure that your children arrive home safely, take time to carefully plan dismissal arrangements and communicate them clearly to your children and to the school.

Please review these arrival and dismissal procedures with your children. The procedures have been designed to ensure the safety of all students at our school. Your patience, courtesy, and willingness to work with the school will assist us in well-organized and safe dismissals. Please contact Mrs. Hershfeld or Mr. Carter at 410-887-3869, if you have any questions or concerns regarding these procedures.

Once again, your assistance and cooperation is greatly appreciated as we work together to ensure the safety of the West Towson Elementary School community.

BEFORE/AFTER CARE
Play Centers, Inc., a private and fee-based program, provides before and after school care in the West Towson Cafeteria. Hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. through 9:05 a.m. and 3:50 p.m. through 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in this service, please contact Play Centers, Inc. directly at playcenters@playcenters.org or the administrative office at 410-296-4880. During the school year, Play Centers’ phone number in the West Towson cafeteria is 410-494-7134.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ATTENDANCE RULES
A student is counted present for a full day if the student is in attendance four hours or more of the school day. A student is counted present for 1/2 day if in attendance for at least two hours of the school day, but less than four hours. Students present for less than two hours will be recorded as absent.

GO WEST MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
The West Towson Elementary newsletter will be published once a month on the second Thursday of every month. It will contain a calendar of events for that month and the following month, as well as other important information concerning our school. This publication is the primary source of up-to-date information about the school community and upcoming activities and events. We encourage you to read the newsletter, post the calendars on your refrigerator and refer to them throughout the month.
All parents/guardians will receive a hard copy of the September Go West Newsletter. In our effort to go green, we are planning to send our October - June newsletter electronically to anyone who provides a working email address to their child’s homeroom teacher.

If you prefer to continue to receive a hard copy of the newsletter, please email Ms. Ford at dford3@bcps.org. In addition, all of our parent newsletters can be accessed through our school website http://westtowsones.bcps.org.

**Baltimore County Public Schools Bad Checks Policy**

Issuers of dishonored checks presented to Baltimore County Public Schools will be given 10 days to submit full payment of the check plus actual bank charges incurred by BCPS by means of a money order, cashier’s check, or cash. If this payment is not received by the end of 10 days, the issuer will need to submit full payment of the amount of the check plus $35.00. If payment is not received at the end of the 20-day period, BCPS will turn over the dishonored check, and all other available information related to this check, to the State’s Attorney for criminal prosecution. If the dishonored check is turned over to the State’s Attorney for collection, schools will not accept restitution from the check issuer. The funds will be remitted to the school by the State’s Attorney’s Office.

**Student Planners**

Each West Towson student in grades 1-5 is issued a planner at the beginning of the school year. Parents should review assignments and any notes in this book, with their child, on a daily basis. Parents should also sign their names in the box at the bottom of the page to indicate to the child’s teacher that they have seen the assignments and are aware of all notes written. The staff at West Towson Elementary School would like to thank our very generous PTA for covering the cost of the agenda books for our students.

**Student Handbook**

Mrs. Hershfeld and Mr. Carter, School Administrators, will be reviewing the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook* with every student. Your child should have brought home the Baltimore County Public Schools 2018-2019 Student Handbook. Please be sure to review this document with your child, as they set out students’ rights and responsibilities, prevention intervention strategies, disciplinary actions, the telecommunications policy, and notification of parental rights. **All parents are required to sign and return the form located in the back of the Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook.**

**Code of Conduct**

Our school community recites the West Towson Code of Conduct each morning during opening exercises, reminding the students of the high expectations set for their behavior at school. The code reads:

**As Wise Westies**

- We are respectful, responsible, equipped,
- Safe and trustworthy

**As a Wise Westy**

- I never quit, I am eager to learn and strive to be my best!
ANNUAL STUDENT INFORMATION REVIEW FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019 FORM

It is important that all families return the Annual Student Information Review Form School Year 2018-2019 that was given out at the Sneak-A-Peek Event, if you have not already done so. Without the Annual Student Information Review Form, we will be unable to contact family members in the event of an emergency. The school will release your children to only the people whose names you have listed on the back of the BCPS Student Emergency Contact Form. Please contact the school if there are changes in this information during the year. This form is essential in the event that West Towson or all Baltimore County Public Schools need to close early.

If all Baltimore County Schools close early, parents will not be contacted individually. A wonderful free website, WWW.SCHOOLSOUT.COM will notify you through email that schools are closing early if you visit this website and sign up for this free service. If only West Towson Elementary closes early, we will contact parents by phone to verify emergency dismissal procedures before releasing children.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO GET THE LATEST BCPS NEWS

One of the best ways to get news about Team BCPS is to subscribe the weekly e-newsletter. The publication is sent out by the BCPS Communications Office every Monday morning. TEAM BCPS SPOTLIGHT is filled with information about achievements and initiatives, feature stories about educators and students, and video and photo highlights. To subscribe, go to the BCPS website at www.bcps.org and click on the “Our System” tab at the top of the page. Scroll down to the Team BCPS Newsletter and subscribe.

SCHOOL SAFETY PLAN

All Baltimore County Public Schools are required to have a detailed School Emergency Safety Plan. These plans will help to ensure the safety of all Baltimore County Public School students, staff members, and visitors. The plans are updated each year and copies are sent to the local police and fire departments. During the school year, a variety of drills, including fire, evacuation, lock down, and severe weather will be conducted.

One important aspect of the plan includes detailed procedures necessary for accounting for all members of the school community in the event of an emergency. This is one reason that it is critical that all visitors sign in and out, as they enter and leave the school. If visitors happen to be in the school building during an emergency, we need to be able to account for their presence in the building. The goal of the plan is to keep all members of the community safe and secure. Your assistance with the procedures is greatly appreciated.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEAL APPLICATIONS

Students brought home an application for free and reduced lunch on the first day of school. If you would like your child to be considered for free or reduced priced Lunch, please complete the application and return it to school as soon as possible. As in previous years, students who were eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch are eligible to receive a free or reduced Price lunch through October 5, 2018. Please be aware that even if your child was eligible last year, you must reapply for the 2018-2019 school year.

SMOKING

Baltimore County Public Schools is committed to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for its students and employees. The use of tobacco in any form in the school building, on school property (including the parking lot), and at school-sponsored functions (including field trips) is prohibited at all times.
**LUNCH IN BCPS**
In Baltimore County Public Schools, students and parents can do more than just review menus. Through the BCPS Now app and a platform called Nutrislice, they can see photos, access detailed nutritional information, and share their opinions about the food served. Paying for meals using a credit/debit card is just as easy through [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com).

The office of food and nutrition is excited to bring information to consumers and to make it easier for them to tell us what they like and don’t like about the meals. Feedback from students is invaluable in helping plan and serve meals that are appealing and that support student health and learning.

BCPS Now app is available for Android, iPhone and Windows phones, and menus can be accessed through the app by clicking “Resources” on the bottom menu and then selecting “Lunch Menus.”

In addition to the interactive lunch menus, families may use the BCPS [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com), an online prepayment service for student meals. This service allows parents to set low balance alerts, view account activity, and make recurring/automatic payments. It can be used on the Web or via a mobile app.

The accounts of parents who had been using the online prepayment service, MyLunchMoney.com, were upgraded and transferred to MySchoolBucks over the summer. For more information, parents can email parentsupport@myschoolbucks.com or call 855-832-5226.

**2018-2019 Elementary Meal Prices**
- Breakfast $1.40
- Reduced Price $ .30
- Lunch $2.90
- Reduced Price $ .40

**IDENT-A-KID THE NATION’S LARGEST CHILD ID PROGRAM**
The IDENT-A-KID Child Safety Program will be at West Towson on September 21, to photograph, fingerprint, weigh, and measure children. Participation in the program is at the individual parent’s option. A fee will be charged and the parents choosing to participate will receive a laminated wallet sized ID card (similar to a driver’s license) with information about their child. An application envelope with additional information at the IDENT-A-KID Program was sent home with students.

**DISTRIBUTION OF FLYERS**
BCPS is the 26th largest school system in the United States. To keep our system functioning cohesively, the Board of Education has established many rules and policies. These are available on the BCPS.org website under the “Our System” subtitle. School principals have been given the task of approving all non-school material requests in accordance with Rule 2361. This rule states that only materials that concern school-sponsored established relationships or materials from entities of federal, state, or local government, or PTA may be distributed through the schools. If you are considering asking for the distribution of a flyer, please go to the website and read this rule thoroughly before making your request. Thank you for assisting us as we implement this procedure according to the expectation of BCPS.
ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION
A doctor’s note is required for all medications that need to be given in school (both prescription and nonprescription). Included in the doctor’s note should be:

- the child’s name
- the name of the medication
- dosage, time of administration
- how long the medication should be given
- any possible side effects
- parent’s permission to administer medication

All medicines should be in a properly labeled bottle. No medicine in baggies will be accepted. All medicine is to be kept in the nurses’ office - not with the child. Finally, the medicine should be brought to school by a parent or other responsible adult. The discretionary medication policy is being offered to families. Unlike the above policy, this allows the regular school nurse to administer designated over-the-counter medications provided by the Health Department. This program is for occasional use only and not for a child with a chronic health concern. Each year, consent forms must be renewed. If you have more than one child in the school, a separate form must be completed for each child. If you have any questions regarding either of the medication programs, the school nurse can be reached

FOOD ALLERGY DESIGNATED PEANUT/TREE-NUT ALLERGY CAFETERIA TABLE
In compliance with Maryland law, our school will designate a peanut and tree-nut free table in the cafeteria for use by students with medically documented allergies. If your child has such an allergy and you would like to request this accommodation you will need to notify the school nurse at 410-887-8037.

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS
During the 2018 - 2019 school year, would you like to... chaperone a field trip, attend a class party, be a mystery reader, serve as a room parent, or a classroom/school volunteer? In order to interact with West Towson students during the school day (in any capacity) you MUST do the following...

- Complete the online volunteer training found at www.bcps.org under the “Parents” tab and then http://bcpsvolunteers.md.safeschools.com/login
- Print the volunteer training certificate AND the BCPS application
- Attach BOTH documents (volunteer training certificate and application) together and deliver BOTH documents (volunteer training certificate and application) to the front office (**48 hours prior to in-school volunteering and 30 days prior to chaperoning field trips**)

West Towson Elementary School also offers volunteers the choice of coming to the school to be volunteer trained. If you wish to attend a volunteer training session, the 2018-2019 training dates are listed below. Each session will take approximately 30 to 40 minutes. To ensure that everyone attending has a working computer, please email Mrs. Ruocco, Volunteer Coordinator, at eruocco@bcps.org to reserve your spot. Mrs. Ruocco is also available to answer any questions that you may have concerning the volunteer process.

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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 5, 2018</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 8, 2018</td>
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<td>December 4, 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 8, 2019</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 14, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15, 2019</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 8, 2019</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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Thank you for your support and cooperation in keeping our Westies safe!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sue Hershfeld</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td><a href="mailto:shershfeld@bcps.org">shershfeld@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Carter</td>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ccarter8@bcps.org">ccarter8@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Ford</td>
<td>Administrative Secretary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dford3@bcps.org">dford3@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena Sidou</td>
<td>Ten Month Secretary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:asidou@bcps.org">asidou@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Ruocco</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eruocco@bcps.org">eruocco@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Vanderwal</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lvanderwal@bcps.org">lvanderwal@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn Crooks</td>
<td>Kindergarten Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lcrooks@bcps.org">lcrooks@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Gue</td>
<td>Kindergarten Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anita Rostek</td>
<td>Kindergarten Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Conklin</td>
<td>First Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Pfeffer</td>
<td>First Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Robitaille</td>
<td>First Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachael Sirkis</td>
<td>First Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rtaylor7@bcps.org">rtaylor7@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren DePalma</td>
<td>Second Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lkuessner@bcps.org">lkuessner@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janine Failla</td>
<td>Second Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jfailla@bcps.org">jfailla@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trista Parks</td>
<td>Second Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tparks2@bcps.org">tparks2@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa Rehrey</td>
<td>Second Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Donovan</td>
<td>Third Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terri Mohr</td>
<td>Third Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmohr@bcps.org">tmohr@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Sands</td>
<td>Third Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dsands@bcps.org">dsands@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allie Stein</td>
<td>Third/Fourth Reduction</td>
<td><a href="mailto:astein2@bcps.org">astein2@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Kerrigan</td>
<td>Fourth Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:skerrigan@bcps.org">skerrigan@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Rabin</td>
<td>Fourth Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:brabin@bcps.org">brabin@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Sullivan</td>
<td>Fourth Grade Teacher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:asullivan@bcps.org">asullivan@bcps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah De Felice</td>
<td>Fifth Grade Teacher</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice March</td>
<td>Fifth Grade Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Rossetti</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dawn Jewell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Ruth</td>
<td>Instrumental Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Gleitsmann</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuck Yanney</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Susan Hester</td>
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<td>Maria Rockwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenn Berlinger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lee Bleser</td>
<td>Paraeducator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rachel Henninger</td>
<td>Person in Charge (Cafeteria)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Oliver</td>
<td>Building Operations Supervisor</td>
<td><a href="mailto:toliver2@bcps.org">toliver2@bcps.org</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STUDENTS: Promotion and Retention

Student Records

I. Philosophy

A. The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) recognizes the rights of parents to inspect and review their child's student records and the right to have any information which is determined to be inaccurate or misleading removed from the student records upon request. The Board recognizes its responsibility to maintain student records in accordance with federal and state law and regulations and to protect student records from disclosure except where federal and state legislation provides for, or requires disclosure.

II. Implementation

A. The Board directs the Superintendent to develop rules for the implementation of the policy.

1. Log into BCPS One.

2. Click on Digital Content (the second box).
3. Click on Destiny Library Catalog

4. You will come to this page. Scroll down until you find West Towson Elementary School at the bottom left of the page.
7. The user will click on the eBook he or she wishes to read. On the right side of the screen are three options: open, checkout, and favorite. The user can open the book to read, check it out so it will be kept in his “virtual bookbag”, or favorite it so it will listed under favorite under the Bookbag tab for easier access to it later.

Helpful Tips: Bookbag has many special features. Favorites allow users to bookmark or save their favorite book titles. Checkouts allow users to see what books and eBooks they have checked out. Holds allow users to request books from the library.
Parent School Library Card Application

Visit your child’s school library and borrow library materials to read at home with your child. Search the web-based Destiny Library Catalog for your child’s school at http://destiny.bcps.org.

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION BELOW.

School Name: ____________________________________________

Parent Name: ____________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________________________

Home Phone #: ___________________ Work Phone #: ______________

Cell # (optional): ____________________

Email Address: ____________________________________________

Child’s name: ____________________________________________

Child’s homeroom teacher: ________________________________

I agree to return library materials on or before the due date. If library materials I have borrowed are damaged or lost, I agree to pay the replacement cost for these materials.

__________________________________________________________

Parent Signature Date

Return this completed form to your child’s school library media specialist, who will contact you when your Parent Library Card is ready to be picked up.

You can also access our BCPS Digital Content for student research, learning, and study at home; log onto BCPS One @ http://bcpsone.bcps.org and select the Digital Content tile. These subscriptions include information databases, eBooks, and more. You will need Remote Access logins to access this content at home; these are available on a handout from your school library media specialist.

School Library Media Specialist ONLY: Return this completed form via interoffice mail to Donna Grusz, ODL/Jefferson Bldg Lower Level. You will receive back the parent’s Library Card and two copies of this form; return one copy to the parent with the Library Card, and retain one copy for your records.