DECEMBER
12  Winter Concert Day - 2:00 PM  
    Winter Concert Evening - 7:00 PM - Multipurpose Room (4th & 5th)  
    Grade Vocal and Instrumental Music  
13  Spirit Day  
    Interims Distributed  
20  Winter Break begins at of the School Day  
21-31  School Closed - Winter Break  

A LOOK AHEAD TO JANUARY  
2-28  Winter MAP Testing  
2  School Reopens - Students and Staff Return  
8-31  Access for ELLs Testing Window  
10  Spirit Day  
14  PTA Meeting - 6:30 PM - Library  
16  Volunteer Training Opportunity - 9:30 AM - Please contact the school to ensure that a computer is available.  
    Go West Newsletter Distributed (this replaces the January 9, date)  
17  2nd Grade Field Trip - Walter’s Art Museum  
20  School Closed - DR. MLK Jr. Birthday  
24  Second Marking Period Ends - Schools Dismissed 3 Hours Early.  
    WTES dismisses at 12:40 PM.
Thank you to our parents, guardians, special friends, and grandparents who were able to visit and engage in instruction during American Education Week and during this year’s Generations’ Day event. The children enjoyed seeing and interacting with their family members in school.

The spirit of giving continues at West Towson during the holiday seasons. In November the SGA coordinated a highly successful food drive. Our school community filled thirty-three boxes of food which were donated to the ACTC (Assistance Center of Towson Churches), the primary clearing house for those in need in the greater Towson area. This month, the SGA is collecting new hats, gloves, and scarves to fill a mitten tree on the third level of the school. These items will also be donated to ACTC. Our Character Crew is sponsoring a toy drive to be donated to Kennedy Krieger Institute. Thanks to all who have supported these worthy causes.

Mr. Carter and I wish you all a holiday season filled with peace and joy. Have a wonderful winter break and a Happy New Year!

2019 MARYLAND SCHOOL REPORT CARD
MSDE’s accountability tool, The Maryland School Report Card, was released earlier this week. These report cards reflect school progress toward performance indicators on ESSA (Maryland Every Student Succeeds Act). The Maryland Report Card displays data by measure for each indicator, provide a star rating for each school based on the percent of points earned, and report achievement proficiency by aggregate and subgroup.

West Towson’s report card reflected performance as a five-star school, earning five out of five stars, with a percentile rank of 96%! Congratulations to our dedicated staff members and hardworking students.

For additional information about the report card, access the link below to the 2018 MD Report Card.


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.
WEATHER INFORMATION PHONE LINE
With the arrival of cooler weather and the potential for inclement weather, parents may find the weather information phone line helpful. This important resource is provided through Baltimore County Public Schools. To hear the latest information about weather related closing, call 4443-809-5555. Please do not call the school office with questions related to weather or school closings. Parents are also encouraged to sign up for weather relation closing information.

EMERGENCY/UNEXPECTED CLOSINGS (SYSTEM WIDE OR WEST TOWSON ONLY)
When there is an unplanned system-wide or school-only early dismissal, your child will follow the procedures, you have provided on the Annual Student Information Review Form. If your children attend Play Centers, they will follow the dismissal procedures you shared with the Play Centers staff. Those procedures will be shared with the school staff. Please review emergency closing procedures throughout the year with your children.

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS
During the 2019 - 2020 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 2019-2020 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.

January 16, at 9:30 AM
February 20, at 1:00 PM
March 18, at 9:30 AM
April 17, at 2:30 PM

Thank you for your support and cooperation with this process.
A REQUEST FROM NURSE VANDERWAL
The health suite needs long sleeve shirts, as well as a few warm coats, hats, and gloves in all sizes. Thank you for your assistance.

FLU SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER
Flu season will soon be upon us and it is important that we work together to keep our children healthy. Viruses spread easily among children in schools, and children have more infections than others, with an average of one-third of these family members infected each year. By keeping our children flu-free, we benefit the community.

You can help prevent the spread of flu or help your child get better if he/she does get sick by following a few simple steps:

➢ If possible, you and your child should get a flu shot.
➢ Remind your child to cover his/her nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing or coughing and dispose of the tissue immediately.
➢ Have your child wash his/her hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
➢ Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces and shared items at least once a day.
➢ Ensure that bathrooms are stocked with soap, hand towels, and tissues.
➢ Teach your child not to touch his/her mouth, nose, and eyes.
➢ If your child is sick and has a fever, keep him/her at home to prevent the spread of illness to others.
➢ Before students return to school, they must be fever free for at least 24 hours.

If you are concerned about your child’s flu symptoms, call your doctor early. Call your doctor immediately if your child has a chronic disease. Common symptoms of flu include high fever, severe headache, muscle and body aches, exhaustion, and dry cough.

Additionally, children often exhibit other flu symptoms that are rare in adults, such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Some children might benefit from an antiviral medication, which can be prescribed by a physician and can help lessen duration of the virus and reduce the risk of complications, such as pneumonia. To be effective, antiviral medication should be taken within 12-48 hours after flu symptoms begin.
December 11, 2019

Dear Families and Community Members,

Our school recently received its School Report Card from the Maryland State Department of Education. The Report Card summarizes how the school performed on the Maryland accountability system.

The results reflect school performance in multiple areas, including: academic achievement, academic progress (for elementary and middle schools), school quality and student success measures, as well as graduation rates and college and career readiness (for high schools). Additional data in this year’s School Report Card includes a School Quality and Student Success indicator, based on the results of a survey of students and educators taken last spring, as well as an indicator of whether a school has improved from the previous year. For elementary and middle schools, the Academic Progress indicator now includes student performance on state science tests.

These results are an important snapshot of how a school is performing. They show areas in which we are doing well and illuminate those in which we need to improve. The information provided on the Maryland School Report Card is displayed in a way that makes it easy to understand each school’s performance.

You can find the School Report Card, and much more information, at the Maryland Report Card website:

www.MDReportCard.org

While the final score on the Report Card does not tell the whole story, we hope the Maryland School Report Card will add to our community discussion about how to constantly improve our schools. The data on the Report Card is both informative and empowering, and will help us ask questions, find answers, make decisions, and act.

West Towson’s 2019-2020 School Progress Plan addresses the need for classroom teachers to provide small group targeted instruction in Mathematics and English Language Arts. In addition, all teachers are collaborating to ensure that students learn to write effectively across all subject areas. Supporting these initiatives is the school’s implementation of instruction designed to enhance the students’ social emotional skill development.

We hope you will view the Maryland School Report Card as a tool to become more involved in West Towson Elementary School. Help us raise our schools’ scores by taking a community approach to the mission of educating children. Together we can strive for excellence in all areas of education. Together we can raise (or maintain) our results.

Sincerely,

Sue Hersfeld
Principal

Raising the bar, Closing gaps, Preparing for our future
Teens
Make Sleep Mats from Plastic Bags
Teen, adult
Learn to make yarn from recycling plastic bags and turn it into sleep mats. The mats will be donated to Prologue, Inc. to support people experiencing homelessness. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library.
Dec 3 Tue 2:30 PM

LGBTQ+ Teen Meet-Up
Teen
Middle school- and high school-aged members of the LGBTQ+ community are welcome to join us for discussion, socializing, and engaging DIY activities. Snacks provided. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library.
Dec 10 Tue 7:00 PM

3D Printer Training
All ages
Let’s build things together! During this librarian-guided training, learn the basics of how 3D printing works and become certified to use a branch 3D printer independently. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
Dec 11 Wed 0:00 PM

Adults
Make Sleep Mats from Plastic Bags
Teen, adult
Learn to make yarn from recycling plastic bags and turn it into sleep mats. The mats will be donated to Prologue, Inc. to support people experiencing homelessness. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library.
Dec 3 Tue 2:30 PM

Create Your Own Holiday Cards with Microsoft Publisher
Adult
Learn about Microsoft Publisher and use it to create your own holiday card. Familiarity with keyboard and mouse required; experience with computers strongly encouraged. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
Dec 3 Tue 6:30 PM

Zentangle®
Adult
Learn a new way to relax by creating works of art using the Zentangle® Method. Zentangle® uses structured doodling called ‘tangling.’ This can calm and reduce stress, improve focus and build self-confidence. Becky Boynton, a certified Zentangle® teacher, demonstrates step-by-step how to use simple patterns and shapes like lines and circles to create your own work. No art experience necessary. All supplies provided. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
Dec 4 Wed 7:00 PM

Holiday Wreath Making
Adult
Learn how to create your own wreath for the holiday season using pages from a book. All supplies provided. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
Dec 5 Thu 7:00 PM

3D Printer Training
All ages
Let’s build things together! During this librarian-guided training, learn the basics of how 3D printing works and become certified to use a branch 3D printer independently. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
Dec 11 Wed 6:00 PM

Holiday Music with Camerata Musica
All ages
Camerata Musica sings a little holiday cheer into your December! This a cappella group’s holiday repertoire spans nine centuries and seven languages, with seasonal music from Christian and Jewish traditions. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.
Dec 14 Sat 2:00 PM

LGBTQ+ Book Club
Adult
Join us for a lively discussion of The Devourers by Indra Das.
Dec 17 Tue 7:00 PM

History Book Club
Adult
Join us as we discuss The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Olympics by Daniel Brown.
Dec 18 Wed 7:00 PM

Towson Book Club
Adult
Join us for a lively discussion of Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens.
Dec 19 Thu 7:00 PM

Phil Ravita Jazz Group Presents the Sounds of the Season
Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult
Enjoy the soothing sounds of the season as the Phil Ravita Jazz Group performs all the holiday favorites. Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library.
Dec 21 Sat 2:00 PM

All branches will be closed on Tuesday, December 24 for Christmas Eve and Wednesday, December 25 for Christmas Day

Towson Branch • 320 York Road • 410-887-6166
December 2019 Calendar of Events

Children & Families

**Bilingual Preschool Story Time/Hora del cuento bilingüe para preescolares**
2 to 5 years old with adult
Enjoy stories and songs with your preschooler in Spanish and English. Relacionese con su preescolar al disfrutar juntos historias y canciones en español y inglés.
**Wed**
10:30 AM

**Toddler Story Time**
2 to 3 years old with adult
Engage your toddler through stories, rhymes, songs and movement activities, followed by a playtime. Registration required (online, by phone, or in branch).
**Fri**
9:30 AM

**PAWS to Read**
6 to 11 years old with adult
Shy or reluctant readers can read to a lovable dog from Pets on Wheels. They are friendly, non-judgmental and good listeners. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.
**Dec 7**
Sat
2:00 PM

**Preschool Story Time**
2 to 5 years old with adult
Interact with your preschooler by enjoying fun stories and songs together.
**Fri**
10:30 AM
**Dec 7**
Sat
10:30 AM

**Pajama Story Time**
2 to 5 years old with adult
Put on your PJs and bring your bedtime pal for stories and songs.
**Dec 19**
Wed
8:30 PM

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Eclectic Soul Preschool Yoga
Preschool (2 to 5 years) with adult.
Yoga offers confidence, movement and mind/body awareness for preschoolers and caregivers.
**Dec 3**
**Tue**
10:30 AM

Saturday Craftnoon
All ages
Make a craft in our children’s area. Materials provided. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.
**Dec 7**
Make a paper snowman
**Dec 21**
Make a penguin
**Sat**
11:00 AM

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**Story Time with Mr. Bob**
2 to 5 years old with adult
Mr. Bob tells stories, sings songs and does various activities based on a special theme.
**Dec 10**
**Tue**
10:30 AM

**3D Printer Training**
All ages (details on other side)
**Dec 11**
**Wed**
6:00 PM

**Holiday Music with Camera-Musica**
All ages (details on other side)
Camera-Musica sings a little holiday cheer into your December!
**Dec 14**
**Sat**
2:00 PM

**Towson Winterfest**
Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult
Crafts and DIY, Cultural Arts
**Dec 21**
**Sat**
2:00 PM-4:00 PM

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**Noon Year’s Eve!**
Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.
5-4-3-2-1! We count down to noon at this child-friendly version of New Year’s Eve with music, dancing, crafts, activities and a ball drop! Fun and excitement for the whole family! Sponsored by the Friends of the Towson Library.
**Dec 31**
**Tue**
11:00 AM-12:30 PM

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**All branches will be closed on Tuesday, December 24 for Christmas Eve and Wednesday, December 25 for Christmas Day**
Toy Drive

Sponsored by the

West Towson Character Crew

Benefitting the patients at Kennedy Krieger Institute

Kennedy Krieger Institute’s mission is to transform the lives of children with disorders of the brain through groundbreaking research, innovative treatments, and life-changing education.

Toys donated to Kennedy Krieger are shared with:

- Inpatients in our Rehabilitation hospital and Neurobehavioral Unit (Ages birth – 21)
- Students in our schools
- Outpatients/clients in our mental health, behavioral psychology and medical clinics

Children receive toys for:

- Reaching therapy goals
- Prizes and rewards
- Birthdays/holidays
- For being brave during testing & invasive procedures.

Help us collect new and unwrapped toys to share with the patients at Kennedy Krieger Institute this holiday season.

For more information about Kennedy Krieger visit www.kennedykrieger.org