FEBRUARY
3-28 Winter MAP Testing
17 All BCPS Schools Will Be Open
(Please note that this is a change to the 2019-2020 BCPS Calendar)
19 Parent Workshop - Fostering Harmony at Home - “Learn to Parent Without
Power Struggles!” presented by Cindy Shuster - 6:30 - 8:00 - Multi Purpose
Room
20 Volunteer Training Opportunity - 9:30 AM -
Please contact the school to ensure that a computer is available.

A LOOK AHEAD TO MARCH
1 - 28 Patriot & Defender Recitations
3-27 MISA Testing Window
6 Reading Race Kick Off - Multi-Purpose Room - 3:00 PM
Spirit Day
10 PTA Meeting - 7:00 PM - Library
School Wide Assembly - 9:40 AM
12 Go West Newsletter Distributed
13 WAGS Conclusion Assembly - 2:30 AM
18 Volunteer Training - 9:30 AM Please contact the school to ensure that a
computer is available.
25 Maryland Day
The second marking period of the school year ended on January 24, and we are off and running in the third quarter of the school year! Classroom teachers are continuing to work hard planning engaging and meaningful lessons. Students are continuing to work hard mastering skills and content as well as taking ownership for their learning.

The mid-point of the school year is a good time to review your child’s progress in school and to set goals for the second semester. Second quarter report cards were sent home on February 6. You are encouraged to carefully review your children’s progress and use their grades as a guide for developing specific goals. Select one area, either content-related or self-development related, for improvement. Help your children identify the growth that they would like to make and determine one or two key actions needed to achieve the goal. Write the goal and actions on paper and display them at home. Revisit the goal and actions on a regular basis (at least once a week) to monitor your children’s progress toward reaching their goals. Celebrate each improvement! Gently discuss any declines, focusing on what they could do better next time. Your children’s confidence will increase as they progress toward the goal.

This year’s state assessments are scheduled in the spring for elementary school students in grades three, four, and five. Our goal is for the students to feel confident and comfortable as they complete the MCAP assessment. The most effective way to reach this goal is to ensure that the students are well prepared to show all that they have learned.

The Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) provides information to educators, parents and the public on student progress towards proficiency on the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Through this assessment system, stakeholders gain an understanding of how schools are performing and where assistance can be directed to support student growth and achievement. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that states administer annual statewide assessments to all students in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school.

It is time to complete this year’s Stakeholders’ Survey! Please take a few minutes to complete the survey, sharing your feedback about Baltimore County Public Schools and West Towson Elementary. The survey can be accessed online at www.bcps.org. Completing the survey is quick and easy. It only takes about five minutes and can be accessed on your phone, tablet, or computer. Your feedback is important to us. The survey is available through March 1.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

West Towson Elementary has scheduled kindergarten registration on Thursday, April 30, 2020. In order to locate students who may be entering kindergarten for the 2019-2020 school year, please share this information with friends and neighbors in your community who may have a child entering our school in the fall. In accordance with Baltimore County Public School Policy, incoming 2020-2020 kindergarten students must be five years old by September 1, (born between 9/2/14 - 9/1/15). If you are interested or know of someone who has a child ready for kindergarten who may not receive our newsletter and lives within the West Towson boundaries, please call the school office at 410-887-3869 to receive a registration packet, please fill out the attached kindergarten registration form at the end of the newsletter and return it to West Towson Elementary.
You will need the following documentation to register your child.

- Child’s birth certificate
- Immunization records
- Proof of residency - this includes a copy of your lease, tax bill, or mortgage coupon book and 3 additional proofs of residency, dated within the past 60 days
- Your photo ID - If there is an address on the photo ID, the address must match the address that the parent/guardian is providing to the school

**EARLY ADMISSION INTO KINDERGARTEN TESTING**

In order to be considered for early admission to kindergarten for school year 2020-2021, the child must turn five between September 2, and October 14, 2020.

**Early Admission Request Deadlines:**

1. Early admission requests for the succeeding school year must be submitted to the home school principal between January 15 and May 1 of the current school year.

2. For students applying for a magnet program, early admission requests must be submitted to the home school principal by no later than the published magnet application deadline. Assessments for students applying for enrollment in a magnet program will take place in January so that the recommendation decision for early admission may be forwarded to the Office of Magnet Programs by the last business day of January.

3. The deadlines outlined in this section are mandatory. Early admission requests will be deemed timely if hand-delivered to the home school, on or before the request is due, or if deposited in the United States mail before the date the request is due.

The procedures for requesting early admission to kindergarten may be obtained at the child’s home school, from the Office of Early Childhood Programs, or on the Baltimore County Public Schools’ (BCPS) Web site at the following link: http://www.bcps.org/offices/early childhood/kindergarten.html.

**PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR**

Are you planning to move your child to a different school for the 2020-2021 school year? If the answer is yes, please contact the office at 410-887-3869 as soon as possible. This information will assist us as we plan next year’s grade level organizations. This includes 5th grade students who be not be attending Dumbarton or Ridgley Middle School for the 2020-2021 school year.

**WESTY’S WALK**

The Westy Walk is a parent-sponsored event, a fun-filled day of activities for our students and their families. This year’s event will be held on Saturday, May 9, at Loyola-Blakefield’s track and gym. The event includes a student walk-a-thon, silent auction, raffles, music, and food. All money raised goes to benefit West Towson Elementary Schools Education Foundation fund, which applies funds directly to the needs of our students and the school.

The Westy Walk committee is in desperate need of items for the silent action. If you own a business, know someone who owns a business, or have a hobby, please consider donating. The donations can be monetary, or for services provided.

For more information, please contact the Westy Walk Co-Chair, Todd Unger, at 410-925-1591.
WHAT IS THE PATRIOTS AND DEFENDERS PROGRAM?
The Patriots and Defenders Program is a special West Towson tradition that began in 2011, the year that the school opened its doors. The program is voluntary and is open to all students. In March, all students are introduced to the program, and interested students are provided with materials to study that focus on our country, our state, and their roles as citizens. Materials are differentiated by grade level, increasing in rigor as the grade levels increase. Parent volunteers listen to students share their knowledge during scheduled sessions before school and during lunches. Volunteers are needed for the success of this program. Students are given many opportunities share their knowledge and earn recognition for their successes. Students who meet their grade level expectations will earn recognition. All students who complete the program and their families are invited to a ceremony and reception at WTES in May. All fourth and fifth graders will attend a special field trip at the end of the year.

WATER BOTTLES
Students are encouraged to bring refillable water bottles to school each day. Water is available throughout the school, so students may easily refill their bottles. Water has many health benefits and staying hydrated is good for the brain and learning. Cone cups are available at the water coolers, but students lose instructional time when they leave the classroom for drinks. Our school is a Maryland Green School and using refillable water bottles produces less waste than using paper cups.

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION MONTH... BE HEART SMART
We’ll see lots of hearts this Valentine’s Day - what better time to make sure we are taking care of our children’s hearts! Studies show that signs of heart disease begin developing in childhood. Children with high cholesterol levels are likely to become adults with high levels.

In recent years, there has been an increase in pediatric obesity and hypertension (high blood pressure). These factors are known to be linked to heart disease. It is important to establish healthy lifestyles early to keep the risk of heart disease low. Following a low saturated fat and low cholesterol diet and staying physically active are great habits to keep your heart healthy and in peak working order. Exercise can be fun and educational. This February, as you celebrate love with your families, remember to be heart smart!

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 RELATED INFORMATION
With the winter weather moving full steam ahead, we continue to face the possibility of early closings or delayed school openings due to inclement weather or other emergencies. Families may not realize that West Towson’s administration does not have the authority to delay the school’s opening or to close the school early. These decisions are made by Baltimore County Public School officials. In fact, the school may not hear the official decision to close schools early until after the message has been announced through the media.

To ensure that you and your children are well prepared for the possibility of early closings, it is important that you plan carefully and keep the school informed of any changes in contact information. Discuss your emergency plans with your children so they clearly understand where they will go and how they will get there when schools closes early. This year, we hope to use email to communicate early closing information with parents. As a result, it is important that you ensure that the school office has a current email address.

West Towson has only two phone lines to use during emergency closings which limit the number of families we are able to reach by school phones. Please avoid calling the school while we are preparing for an early dismissal, unless you are facing an emergency. Information regarding early closures and delayed openings can be found on the Baltimore County Public Schools website, www.bcps.org, or by calling 410-887-5555. In addition, parents may register at www.wbal.com or www.schoolsout.com to receive an email or a text message when schools close early. Just a reminder that when school closes early, all after school activities are cancelled. This includes special activities and Parks and Recreation programs. In addition, Play Centers does not accept students when school closes early. Please be sure that your emergency plans do not include having your children report to Play Centers. Below are West Towson adjusted opening and closing times.

1 Hour Late - WTES Opens at 10:05 A.M.
2 Hours Late - WTES Opens at 11:05 A.M.
1 Hour Early - WTES Closes at 2:50 P.M.
2 Hour Early - WTES Closes at 1:50 P.M.
3 Hour Early - WTES Closes at 12:50 P.M.

WINTER WEATHER & RECESS
At West Towson, the administration and teachers believe that it is important that children have time to play outside whenever possible, even when the weather turns cold. Please dress your children for the weather, sending them to school with coats, hats, gloves, and scarves during the cold, winter months.
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](http://www.bcps.org) under the “Parents” tab and then [http://bcpsvolunteers.md.safeschools.com/login](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, School Counselor, 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.

- **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 in keeping Westies safe!

Please note that this process must be updated every year in order to be volunteer trained.
If you have a child (or know of a neighborhood child) who should be registering for kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year, please complete and return this form to the school office as soon as possible.

In order to be eligible to enter kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year, the child must have a date of birth between 9/2/2014 and 09/01/2015. The child must also reside within the West Towson Elementary School boundaries. Once your form has been received and processed, a registration packet will be mailed to you. Kindergarten registration will take place on Thursday, April 30, 2020.

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**KINDERGARTEN**

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<th>Child's Name</th>
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<th>Parent's Name</th>
<th>Home Phone Number</th>
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<th>Work Number</th>
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<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>County/State/Zip Code</th>
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West Towson Office Use Only
Registration packet mailed: (date) ______________
Appointment date and time ________________

Notes:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
For students in Grades 3-12, and all parents, staff, and community members

Your feedback guides our budget, staffing, and programs

Take the survey at www.bcps.org

- Only takes 5 minutes
- Use any computer, device, or phone
- 16 languages available for students, parents, and community
NEWS FROM THE PTA

About AmazonSmile

**What is AmazonSmile?**
AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you’ll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization. You can choose from nearly one million organizations to support.

**How do I shop at AmazonSmile?**
To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

**Which products on AmazonSmile are eligible for charitable donations?**
Tens of millions of products on AmazonSmile are eligible for donations. You will see eligible products marked “Eligible for AmazonSmile donation” on their product detail pages. Recurring Subscribe-and-Save purchases and subscription renewals are not currently eligible.

**Can I use my existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile?**
Yes, you use the same account on Amazon.com and AmazonSmile. Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

**How do I select a charitable organization to support when shopping on AmazonSmile?**
On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. We will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

**Can I change my charity?**
Yes, you can change your charity any time. Your AmazonSmile purchases after the change count towards your newly selected charity. To change your charity, sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile device.
phone browser and simply select “Change your Charity” in “Your Account.”

**What charities can I choose from?**
You can choose from almost one million eligible 501(c)(3) public charitable organizations.

**What if my selected charity does not register to participate in the AmazonSmile program or becomes ineligible?**
If your selected charity does not register to participate, becomes ineligible, or requests to be removed from the program, you will have a chance to select a different charity to receive the accrued donations that have not yet been disbursed to your charity. If you do not select a different charity, the accrued donations will be distributed to other organizations receiving donations.

If I represent a charitable organization, how can I learn more about registering my organization for AmazonSmile?
Go to [org.amazon.com](http://org.amazon.com) to learn how to register your organization to receive donations.

**How much of my purchase does Amazon donate?**
The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. The purchase price is the amount paid for the item minus any rebates and excluding shipping & handling, gift-wrapping fees, taxes, or service charges. From time to time, we may offer special, limited time promotions that increase the donation amount on one or more products or services or provide for additional donations to charitable organizations. Special terms and restrictions may apply. Please see the relevant promotion for complete details.

**Can I receive a tax deduction for amounts donated from my purchases on AmazonSmile?**
Donations are made by the AmazonSmile Foundation and are not tax deductible by you.

**How can I learn more about AmazonSmile?**
Please see complete AmazonSmile program details.
HOW DOES MY CHILD LEARN TO READ?

PHONICS STRATEGIES

KINDERGARTEN - GRADE 3

PRESENTED BY:
BCPS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS OFFICE

How does my child learn to read and what can I do to help at home? Phonics rules don’t have to be intimidating. This workshop will provide you with knowledge and strategies to use at home to support your child in becoming a confident and accurate reader.

Offered at these Baltimore County Public Library Locations

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 3, 2020</td>
<td>6:30-8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Essex Branch 1110 Easter Blvd Essex, MD 21221</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12, 2020</td>
<td>6:30-8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Towson Library 320 York Rd Towson, MD 21204</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 18, 2020</td>
<td>6:30-8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Woodlawn Library 1811 Woodlawn Library Woodlawn, MD 21207</td>
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Register at  [https://phonicsk3.eventbrite.com](https://phonicsk3.eventbrite.com) or email parentu@bcps.org

Baltimore County Public Schools
Department of Communications and Community Outreach
Office of Family and Community Engagement
ParentU@bcps.org
443-809-0365