

WEST TOWSON ELEMENTARY



Jason Barnett, Principal
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Go West Newsletter
February 2024



West Towson Elementary

#1 Elementary School in the State of Maryland

#3 School in the State of Maryland

(MSDE 2023 Report Card Data)



FEBRUARY

- 12 SGA Meeting - 8:30 AM - 9:00 AM - Room 217
- 14 Valentines for Vets Mixer - Ridge Ruxton - 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM -
Character Crew and SGA
- 15 National School Resource Officer Day
- 19 Presidents Day - Schools & Offices Closed
- 23 School Spirit - Show Your Westy Pride



A LOOK AHEAD TO MARCH

- 1 Read Across America Day - Dress as a character from your favorite book!
- 2 PTA Parents Night Out - Barley's Backyard - 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- 5 Spring Picture Day - Individual, Class, and Grade 5 Panoramic
- 6 Taste Off - Rotunda - 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- 10 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 12 PTA **Zoom** Meeting - 7:30 PM
- 15 FT Grade 3 BMI 10:15 AM - 3:00 PM
- 15-22 Spring Book Fair - WTES Bridge
- 18 SGA 8:30 AM - 9:00 AM - Room 217
- 21 Down Syndrome Awareness Day - Wear Crazy Socks and or
Blue and Gold
- 25 Maryland Day
- 22 Spring Break Begins at the End of the School Day



A LOOK AHEAD TO APRIL

- 2 Schools Reopen

Save the date for the 2024 Westy Walk - Saturday, May 4, 2024

WE NEED YOU!

Additional information will be sent home with students shortly.



FROM THE DESK OF THE PRINCIPAL

JASON BARNETT

Winter has certainly arrived this year. Now that the weather has started to turn a bit colder, snow and ice may impact our mornings. Whenever inclement weather is in the forecast, it is important that you listen to the radio, watch television, check BCPS social media, or look at the BCPS website to learn whether school is opening on time. You can also call 443-809-5555 if you are uncertain.

Report Cards were distributed on Monday, February 5th. As you review this important progress information, please contact your child's teacher with any questions. Now that we are halfway through the school year, this is a great time to talk with your child about what they are learning, celebrate their successes, and discuss what they may need help with. If your child needs to improve in a skill, create a plan to achieve the goal. Post the goal on the refrigerator. Ask the teacher for advice to help reach the goal. Reward your child as he or she meets goals. Start the conversation so your child knows how important education is to you. If your child knows you value education, he or she will work that much harder to make you proud.

February 5-9 is "National School Counseling Week". West Towson is so fortunate to have Mrs. Ruocco as our wonderful counselor. When you see Mrs. Ruocco, please thank her for the amazing support that she provides to our entire school community. Thank you, Mrs. Ruocco!

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. The annual BCPS Climate Survey has been revised with fewer questions and a focus on school climate and engagement. Students in Grades 3-12, parents/caregivers, community members, and all staff are asked to complete the online survey, which is accessible from the BCPS home page. The survey takes three minutes or less to complete, is anonymous, and is available in multiple languages. The survey window will close on Friday, March 8.

IMPORTANT TESTING AND CLIMATE SURVEY DATES

Please review the dates below and add them to your calendar.

Please try to avoid making appointments for your child on their testing dates. Your assistance and cooperation are greatly appreciated.



➤ COG AT

All Grade 2 and 3 students in Baltimore County Public Schools will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). The data provided by the CogAT, along with additional data collected throughout the school year, will be used by schools as part of the universal screening process completed in the spring to identify students as Gifted and Talented (GT) in English Language Arts and/or Mathematics for Grades 3 and 4.

➤ ACCESS for English Language Learners

Each year, students in English learner programs take the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs language proficiency test. The test is aligned with the WIDA English Language Development standards and assesses English in the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. [Access for English Language Learners Link](#)

➤ MAP - Now through February 23, 2024

The MAP Growth Test is an adaptive achievement and growth test. It creates a personalized assessment experience by adapting to each student's learning level—precisely measuring progress and growth for each individual student. [MAP Link](#)

➤ MISA - March 4 - 15, 2024

Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA). MISA is administered to all students in fifth grade every spring. The assessment provides educators, parents, and the public with information on student progress towards science literacy. The assessments will be taken on a computer. The assessments were developed by MSDE with input from Maryland educators. [MISA Link](#)

➤ BCPS Climate Survey - February 5 -March 8, 2024

The annual BCPS Climate Survey has been revised. The new 2024 BCPS Climate Survey has fewer questions for all stakeholders with a focus on school climate and engagement. The survey will be available from Monday, February 5, through Friday, March 8, 2024. The survey is for all stakeholders: students in Grades 3-12, parents/caregivers, community members, and all staff. It takes three minutes or less to complete and is anonymous. Information to promote the survey, including translated flyers, can be found online. [BCPS Climate Survey Link](#)

➤ MCAP - April ELA and May Math, 2024

Every year, our third, fourth, and fifth-grade students of West Towson Elementary participate in the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP). MCAP assesses the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) in English Language Arts and Math. The assessments will be taken on a computer. [MCAP Link](#)

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

kindergarten
registration

West Towson Elementary has scheduled kindergarten registration on Thursday, April 18, 2024. In order to locate students who may be entering kindergarten for the 2024- 2025 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 2024-2025 kindergarten students must be five years old by September 1, (born between 9/2/18 - 9/1/19). 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 443-809-3869 to receive a registration packet, please fill out the

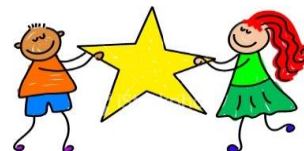
attached kindergarten registration form at the end of the newsletter and return it to West Towson Elementary.

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, matching the address that you provide.
- Your photo ID -

EARLY ADMISSION INTO KINDERGARTEN TESTING

In order to be considered for early admission to kindergarten for school year 2024-2025, the child must turn five between September 2, and October 14, 2024.



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 May 1, communicated via email to the home school, on or before May 1, or postmarked by May 1.

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: [Parent Guidelines for Applying for Early Admission to Kindergarten](#)

PRE-KG SCREENING FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

If you would like to have your child screened, to see if they are eligible to attend West Towson's pre-kindergarten program for the 2024-2025 school year, please complete and return the form included at the end of the newsletter and return to the school office as soon as possible.



To be eligible to be screened for pre-kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year, the child must have a date of birth between 9/2/2019 and 09/01/2020.

The child must also reside within the West Towson Elementary School boundaries. Once your form has been received and processed, a screening packet will be mailed to you in mid-March. Prekindergarten registration will take place on April 16, 2024.

PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR



Are you planning to move your child to a different school for the 2024-2025 school year? If the answer is yes, please contact the main office at 443-809-3869, and email Mrs. Sidou, school secretary, at asidou@bcps.org. This information will assist the administration as they plan next year's grade level

organizations. **This includes 5th grade students who will not be attending Dumbarton or Ridgley Middle School for the 2024-2025 school year. If the office staff is not aware that your child will be attending another middle school, their files will be forwarded to their respective assigned middle school.**

WESTY WALK NEWS

The 2023 Westy Walk was a huge success! Thanks to all the sponsors, donors, parents, students, and staff for making it such a great event! We can't wait to see everyone on May 4, 2024. The event is not possible without the generosity of local businesses.



If you are interested in being involved in this event or have a business that would be interested in being a sponsor, please contact Mr. Rabin at brabin@bcps.org or Ms. Ford at dford3@bcps.org

*The Westy Walk is not a PTA sponsored event. It is organized by a dedicated group of parent volunteers and staff. Funds from the program directly impact the school. This year, we purchased new classroom document cameras and are working on upgrades to the school sound system. Funds go into the West Towson Elementary account at the Education Foundation for Baltimore County.

BCPS INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS - ADJUSTMENT TO THE BCPS SCHOOL CALENDAR

Adjustments to the School Calendar

As shown, this calendar includes three (3) emergency closure make-up days. If no emergency closure days occur, the school year will end for students on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, and the Assessment Days, the last day of classes for Preschool-3 and Pre-K, and the last day for teachers will be re-designated accordingly. Should emergency closures occur, the make-up days will be as follows:

Emergency Closure #1 Make-up Day will be Wednesday, June 12, 2024

Emergency Closure #2 Make-up Day will be Thursday, June 13, 2024

Emergency Closure #3 Make-up Day will be Friday, June 14, 2024

Please note that if more than three (3) emergency closures occur and/or there are a significant number of delayed openings and/or early dismissals used, the school calendar also may be adjusted appropriately to meet the minimum required student days AND the required number of student hours.

These readjustments may include the re-designation of holidays as student days; the adjustment of Spring break; the re-designation of professional development days as student days; the cancellation of planned early releases; and the extension of the school year beyond Tuesday, June 18, 2024.

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS

During the 2023 - 2024 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** be volunteer trained.



Each year parents are asked to complete volunteer training. Please be proactive and complete these forms as soon as possible. Volunteer training can be accessed online at www.bcps.org under the 'Community' tab and is titled 'Volunteers'. All volunteers must complete the volunteer application **AND** participate in an orientation/training session annually. You will be provided with a certificate once you successfully complete the training. **Please submit the volunteer application and the valid training certificate to West Towson's Front Office Secretary, Athena Sidou.** These may be submitted by hard copy or electronically to asidou@bcps.org. Thank you for your willingness to help.

Please note that this process must be updated every year to be volunteer trained.

WEST TOWSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

6914 N. Charles Street 8902 Towson, MD 21204



Kindergarten Registration for the 2024-2025 School Year

If you have a child (or know of a neighborhood child) who should be registering for kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year, please complete and return this form to the school office as soon as possible.

To be eligible to enter kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year, the child must have a date of birth between 9/2/2018 and 09/01/2019. 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 18, 2024.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____ Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Address _____

County/State/Zip Code _____

Please return this form to WTES via US mail, or scan and email to asidou@bcps.org. If you have any questions, please call West Towson Elementary School at 443-809-3869.

West Towson Office Use Only

Registration packet mailed: (date) _____

Appointment date and time _____ Notes: _____

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6914 N. Charles Street 8902 Towson, MD 21204



Pre- Kindergarten Screening for the 2024-2025 School Year

If you would like to have your child screened, to see if they are eligible to attend West Towson's pre-kindergarten program for the 2024-2025 school year, please complete and return this form to the school office as soon as possible.

To be eligible to be screened for pre-kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year, the child must have a date of birth between 9/2/2019 and 09/01/2020. The child must also reside within the West Towson Elementary School boundaries. Once your form has been received and processed, a screening packet will be mailed to you in mid-March. Prekindergarten registration will take place on April 16, 2024.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN SCREENING

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Parent/Guardian Home Phone Cell Phone Work Phone

Parent/Guardian Home Phone Cell Phone Work Phone

Address

County/State/Zip Code

Please return this form to WTES via US mail, or scan and email to asidou@bcps.org. If you have any questions, please call West Towson Elementary School at 443-809-3869.

West Towson Office Use Only

Registration packet mailed: (date) _____

Appointment date and time _____ Notes:

February 2024 Calendar of Events — Adults & Teens

Teen Programs

Teen Time: Dragons at Dusk

Monday, Feb. 12th

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Ages 13 -17

Commemorate the Year of the Dragon. We have movies, crafts and snacks so hot you will breathe fire.

Teen Time

Monday, Feb 26th

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Ages 13 -17

Join us for games, crafts, movies, snacks, and more.



DIY Beauty Products

Saturday, Feb. 3rd

1:00 -3:00 p.m.

Adults

Join us for a relaxing afternoon of crafting. Make a lip balm and body butter as a gift for that special someone or for yourself. Supplies limited; first come, first served.

Historic East Towson: From Jim Crow to Black Lives Matter

Monday, Feb 5th

6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Adult

This presentation focuses on the political events that have affected Historic East Towson for generations. The presenters paint a surprising and little-known picture of racial and environmental justice and its impact on this community.

3D Design For Beginners

Wednesday, Feb. 7th

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

All Ages

Are you familiar with 3D printing and want to learn how to design your own objects? Come take that next step and learn how to use Microsoft 3D Builder. This is a beginner-friendly class where you can learn the basics of designing your own objects for 3D printing. Basic knowledge of 3D printing is strongly recommended.



Crochet and Cookies

Monday, Feb. 12th

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Adults

Do you crochet or want to learn how? Relax with other fans of the fiber arts at this drop-in event for all skill levels, from total beginner to expert. We have hooks and yarn, but feel free to bring your own.

Light snacks provided.

Movie Screening: Summer of Soul

Saturday, Feb. 24th

1:00 -3:00 p.m.

Adults

This music documentary by Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson reclaims the legacy of the 6 week Harlem Cultural Festival. The Harlem Cultural Festival was a joyous expression of Black pride and unity. Light refreshments available.



February 2024 Calendar of Events — Children

Story Times

Infant Story Time: Babies and Books

Infant (birth to 12 months)
with adult
Tuesdays
10:30 a.m.

Designed for newborns
and crawlers; siblings and
all abilities welcome.

Family Story Time:

Birth to 5 years old
with adult
Thursdays
10:30 a.m.

Designed for children who
are newly mobile and
active, to learning and
able to sit and listen for
short periods; siblings and
all abilities welcome.

Library Closed

President's Day
Monday, Feb. 19th

Easter
Sunday, Mar. 31st



Baby Craft Time

Monday
Feb. 12th & 26th
10:30 a.m.

Birth to 4

Join us for open-ended art
projects as your little one
explores different art
materials in a variety of
shapes, colors, and sizes.

Dress for a mess!

Celebrate the Lunar New Year: East Meets West

Saturday, Feb. 10th
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Ages: 3 to 17

A collection of vignettes
guaranteed to delight you.
Presented with puppets,
you are sure to be en-
chanted and amazed. The
stories offer both Eastern
and Western characters
and ideas, blended togeth-
er from puppet artist Hua
Hua Zhang.

Saturday Fun

Saturday, Feb. 3rd
Story Time
10:30 a.m.

Saturday, Feb. 10th
Valentine's Day Craft
10:30 a.m.

&
Celebrate Lunar New
Year: East Meets West
2:00-3:00 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 17th
Shibori
1:00-3:00 p.m.

Saturday, Feb. 24th
Paws to Read
10:30-11:30 a.m.



Pajama Story Time
Wednesday, Feb. 18th
6:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Adults and Teens

Wear your PJs and bring
your bedtime buddy for
stories, songs, rhymes and
movement for the whole
family.

NOW REGISTERING

Christian Youth Athletics

Baseball



2024

**LEARN, COMPETE, &
HAVE A GREAT TIME!**

YOUTH AGES 4-13

**CHRISTIAN
YOUTH
ATHLETICS**

410-665-9328
WWW.CYABALTIMORE.COM