Hello Moms & Dads,

After a long cold winter, springtime finally arrived! I hope your break was long and restful, but most importantly, I hope you spent some time together with your family and friends. You know each year this change in season brings about an emotional change inside of me, and I’m guessing that it does the same for many of you as well. The sunshine, warmth, and outdoor activities collectively serve as a catalyst for feelings of new hope, optimism, and the belief that all things are possible. As I thought about this, I was reminded that this positive emotional feel is an essential ingredient to the success of our kids and our school. In the past several Banner messages I highlighted elements of our school vision that include real strategies for developing the critical and creative thinking of our students. These important qualities, however, cannot be learned unless there’s a foundation laid first. That foundation is the creation of a school environment that is safe, secure, and warm for our kids. A positive emotional feel is very much like a fantastic teacher. When you see him/her at first it looks easy and effortless. When you get to look behind the curtain, however, you see that there is a great deal of thought, energy, collaboration, and hard work that goes into it. For my part, I feel blessed to know that so many at our school care deeply about our kids and the emotional feel that exists every day when they walk through our doors. As a community, our PTA holds meetings at Sacramento Center and events here at school that build bonds among our families. Parents, students, and staff work together in the spring on projects that beautify our school and make it a gorgeous place to be. Most recently in fact, two of our parents representing our PTA beautification committee, Mrs. Portaluppi and Mrs. Sloan, have been dedicating a great deal of their time to fixing up our school courtyard so that it becomes a place for staff and students to study and build community once again. Although they cannot be measured with a test score, efforts such as this combined with lessons on character traits like trust, fairness, resiliency, citizenship, and kindness are making a significant lifelong impact on the really important outcomes we all desire for our kids. I say all of this so folks will know that the positive feel that exists here for our kids is no accident, and it’s every bit as important as the curriculum and critical thinking that our teachers are imbedding in our students every day. Hope you enjoy the spring and the positive feel that comes with its arrival!

I also would like to thank all of our volunteers for their invaluable time and care of our WMES Kids.

Thank you for making our school such a special place for our kids to learn and grow.—Until next time, this is Mr. B.

---

Administration
• Mr. Bennink
Principal
blbennink@fcps.edu
• Mr. Wilson
Assistant Principal
mjwilson@fcps.edu
• Ms. Pensiero
Assistant Principal
TNPensiero@fcps.edu

Please call the main office to report an absence
703-619-2525

Washington Mill ES Contact Information
9100 Cherry Tree Drive
Alexandria VA 22309
Office Phone #: 703-619-2500
See us on the web at:
www.fcps.edu/
WashingtonMillES/
Mensaje del Director en Washington Mill

Saludos, papás, mamás. Esta estación trae un cambio emocional en mí, y pienso que a muchos de Uds. les pasa lo mismo. El sol brillante, calorcito y actividades al aire libre en forma colectiva, es como un catalizador de nuestros sentimientos y nuevas esperanzas, optimismo; Y el creer que todo es posible. Mientras pensaba en esto, me hizo recuerdo de esas emociones positivas; que son el ingrediente esencial para nuestros niños en el éxito de sus estudios. En el pasado en muchos de mis mensajes en el Banner, recordaba elementos para la visión de nuestra escuela que incluye estrategias para desarrollar una mente de alto pensar y creativa en nuestros estudiantes. Estas cualidades son importantes y no se pueden aprender, a no ser que haya un cimiento, una fundación creada en el ambiente de la escuela que les provee seguridad y acogimiento, a nuestros estudiantes. Un sentimiento positivo es muy importante, como es un fantástico profesor(a). A primera vista parecería fácil y sin necesidad de algún esfuerzo. Pero, cuando Ud. va más allá, detrás de todo esto, se dará cuenta de que representa bastante esfuerzo, energía y colaboración para lograr este objetivo. Por mi parte yo me siento bendecido de saber que muchos en nuestra escuela sienten una profunda responsabilidad con nuestros niños y esos sentimientos y emociones, son diarias. Cada día, cuando nuestros niños llegan a nuestra escuela, se encuentran con ese calor y seguridad que necesitan. Como comunidad nuestro PTA (asociación de padres de familia) ofrece reuniones en Sacramento Center, y promueve eventos en nuestra escuela, que promueve la unidad entre nuestras familias. Padres, estudiantes, el personal de la escuela, trabajan juntos en esta primavera en los proyectos de embellecer nuestra escuela, para lograr un lugar espléndido, donde gocemos de estar en ella. De hecho, recientemente dos de nuestros padres de familia, representando al PTA, fundaron el “Comité de Embellecimiento.” La Sra. Portaluppi y la Sra. Sloan, han estado dedicando un buen tiempo en arreglar el jardín interior, y lograr tener un lugar donde nuevamente sirva tanto al personal de la escuela como también a los alumnos. Aunque no podemos calificar este trabajo con números, el esfuerzo como este y combinado con lecciones en carácter, confianza, igualdad, resistencia, buena ciudadanía y generosidad, están logrando significativo impacto para el resto de la vida, en lo que deseamos como resultados en nuestros niños. Digo todo esto para que así; Todos vamos a saber que ese sentir positivo que existe aquí para nuestros niños, no es un accidente y es cada cosa que hacemos por muy pequeña que sea, como también es el plan de estudios; Pensar en Forma Alta y Crítica que nuestros maestros están instilando en nuestros estudiantes en forma diaria. Gracias por hacer de nuestra escuela, un lugar tan especial para nuestros niños, donde crecen y aprenden.

—Una vez más, hasta la próxima. Este es Mr. B. Espero que disfruten de la primavera y de esta sensación positiva que viene con ella!
### April 2016

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- **3rd grade LA Ecart**
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- **Spring Pictures**
- **5th grade Math**
- **6th grade Math**
- **PTA Meeting**
- **4th grade math**
- **21st End of Quarter, early release**
- **22nd Teacher Workday**
- **3rd grade math**
- **4th & 5th grade science**
- **5th grade Math**
- **6th grade Math**
- **PTA Meeting**

**Notes:**
- **5 Spring Fling**
- **30 Memorial Day No School**
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**SOL Testing Calendar 2016**
WASHINGTON MILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Kindergarten Orientation
2016-2017

TUESDAY, MAY 3rd

2:00-3:30pm
Visit classrooms
Registration for next year
Program Description
Information about Spanish Immersion Program

*****

2:00-3:30pm meet in the school gym!
ESCUELA WASHINGTON MILL

Orientación Para Kindergarten

2016-2017

MARTES 3 DE MAYO

2:00-3:30pm

Visita a las Aulas ó clases

Registración para el próximo año escolar

Descripción del Programa

Información acerca del programa: Inmersión al Español

*****

2:00-3:30pm. Nos reuniremos en el gimnasio de la escuela!
Advanced Academics

By Alicia Bede Advanced Academics Resource Teacher

It's so hard to believe that the school year is winding down and we are fast approaching the fourth quarter.

Despite the crazy weather we seem to be having, spring really has started. Students can make observations about all of these things (and often do). Encourage them to notice things. More importantly, encourage them to ask questions. Questions help us think critically and grow. The why's and how's that spring inspires are always interesting and help students to wonder and make connections! Enjoy their curiosity!

Math Matters

Bobbie Cunningham, Math Resource Teacher

Math and Art
Math and art have a lot in common with each other. Math topics such as patterns, shapes, geometry, symmetry, spatial reasoning, proportional reasoning, etc. are imbedded in the visual arts, music and dance. Some of what you see your child doing in art, music, and band, involves mathematical ideas at the same time! By blending math and the arts, students learn in many different ways, and research tells us that participating in the arts is one way that is very engaging for all of us.

A child stringing beads creating a bracelet or necklace is developing an understanding of patterning, although to them it may look simply like a pleasing design. When a child learns to play the piano, they are developing mathematical understanding of the relationships between scales, notes and chords. Symmetry can be seen in the symmetrical features of a butterfly or in a design when building. Children may notice patterns in wallpaper, tile tessellations on the floor or on a phone cover, rhythmic beats or repeated choreography in music videos or chords in a popular song.

Search on the internet for "golden ratio" to see an example of mathematics in nature and art. There is math everywhere!
ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (AAP)
SCREENING FOR SCHOOL-BASED (LEVEL II-III) SERVICES

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a continuum of advanced academic services for all students in grades K-8. Learning experiences are designed to develop higher-level thinking through enrichment, acceleration, and extensions of the Program of Studies (POS). Teachers, administrators, and advanced academic resource teachers (AARTs) work together to provide the following levels of school-based services in each elementary school:

Critical and Creative Thinking Lessons, Grades K-6 (Level I)
All students in kindergarten through grade six receive level I services which consist of model lessons that are designed to teach critical and creative thinking skills. The lessons are modeled in all classrooms by AARTs and the thinking strategies are then used throughout the year by classroom teachers and other teachers who work with students. Student responses to these model lessons are used as part of the identification process for AAP services. Parents may also practice the thinking strategies during family conversations and activities. A description of the nine critical and creative thinking strategies can be found at http://www.fcps.edu/is/aap/level1.shtml.

Differentiated Lessons in Areas of Academic Strength, Grades K-6 (Level II)
The AART collaborates with classroom teachers to provide additional challenge through lessons and resources that extend and enrich the POS. Level II services are part of a talent development pool. Students are re-screened annually to make decisions about the need for this level of service.

Part-Time Advanced Academic Programs, Grades 3-6 (Level III)
Students identified by a local school screening committee for part-time advanced academic services are challenged through models and strategies designed to extend and enrich the POS in the four core subject areas. Students receive direct instruction from the AART at the local school using curriculum from the AAP Curriculum and Resources to Support the Differentiated Framework. Students identified for Level III services continue to receive level III services through grade 6.

Screening for school-based services can happen at any time during the school year but is done schoolwide in spring to determine services for the next school year. Parents or guardians may initiate the screening for school-based (level II and III) services by submitting the AAP School-Based Services (Level II-III) Referral Form (available at www.fcps.edu/is/aap under "Forms") to the AART at Washington Mill Elementary School prior to spring screening by Friday, May 6th, 2016. Multiple criteria are used to screen students for all levels of AAP services. Parents or guardians who submit a referral will be notified by Washington Mill Elementary School of their student's eligibility status by May 26th, 2016.

If a parent or guardian wishes to appeal an ineligible decision, they may submit an appeal with new data for consideration by the local school screening committee by June 3, 2016. This new information should be submitted to Alicia Bede.

If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Bede at ambede@fcps.edu.
News from the PTA...

Hello WMES Parents!

We hope you had an enjoyable Spring Break with your families. It is hard to believe we are nearing the final quarter of our school year! It is sure to be a busy few months and we really need YOUR help to make it amazing! Our Spring Fling Art Show will need many hands to make it a success. Can you help us hang artwork at the school in the coming weeks? Can you help us set up or spare a half hour to help run a game or activity that night? Please let us know! We would love your assistance!

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

- April 19th, PTA Meeting - Sacramento Neighborhood Center - 6:45pm
- May 2nd-6th - Teacher Appreciation Week
- Thursday, May 5th - Annual

Spring Fling Celebration - WMES - 6-8pm
Games, activities, prizes and food! A fun Cinco de Mayo event!

Tuesday, May 17th, PTA Meeting - WMES - 7 pm

If you are not a member, we are not able to contact you with information and volunteer sign up opportunities. Please let us know if you are able to help with any of our wonderful programs or activities by emailing us at washingtonmillpta@yahoo.com. We would also love to encourage you to learn more about the PTA and getting involved for the upcoming school year. We are still seeking board members and committee chairs for next school year! If you have wanted to find a way to give back to our amazing WMES community, this may be the perfect opportunity for you!

We hope to see you at our next meeting!

WMES PTA Board

Counselor’s Corner

Every year as school counselors we try to give students exposure to planning their future careers. During the month of April, we will be focusing on this in every classroom. It is important for students to understand that you are never too young to think about your future! In our classroom lessons we use websites like http://yacareerview.org/ as well as different books and activities. One thing that we want students to understand is the connection of what they are good at and enjoy doing now could be their career in the future. Along with career lessons, as a school we are also putting a focus on college awareness.

Each classroom teacher will share what college they attended and some interesting facts about it. Every morning on the news, different teachers are being interviewed about their college experience and their career path to becoming a teacher. Please take time to talk to your kids about what they might want to do when they grow up, help them to explore the options around them!

As always please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns about your children.

Emily Rubin and Ann Yip
Food Drive

“April Assistance”

SCA and the WMES PTA are teaming up to collect donations for our Food For Thought Program to benefit families in need in the WMES community through the month of April

Most wanted foods

Canned vegetables, soup and fruit
Canned meat such as tuna and chicken
Shelf stable milk
Macaroni & cheese
Cereal
Pasta and rice

Donation boxes are located in the lobby and will be placed in each classroom. The classroom that collects the most donations will be treated to an ice cream party!

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support.
Hello Parents,

As the year has progressed the students have become more and more comfortable with experiments and engineering challenges they are presented with each week. The number of times I hear "I can't" and "I don't know how" has decreased greatly and they have been replaced with "I have an idea" and "I think we could". This is the goal of our STEM lab to challenge the students and inspire them to become better thinkers and to be willing to try new ideas. In keeping with the theme of last month's Science Lab article, I want to share more ideas of how you can encourage this behavior at home.

These are some tips from Anne Jolly’s article: 10 STEM Tips for Parents http://www.middleweb.com/3569/10-stem-tips-for-parents/

1. Be alert for opportunities to talk with your child about STEM-related topics. For example, talk about gravity when your child tosses a ball in the air. Discuss fractions or percent when you slice a pie. (Warning! Depending on the topic, you may need to do some brush-up research.)
2. Encourage curiosity and questioning. Rather than giving an answer or a solution to a problem, encourage your child to research information and/or to come up with several possible solutions for a problem.
3. View science and technology TV and videos with your child. Talk together about the program you viewed afterward.
4. Make your home a STEM-friendly place. Be enthusiastic about ideas that your child wants to test (within reason). Set up a place for experimenting and building prototypes. Provide materials for experiments. These don’t have to be expensive. Materials might include things like paper cups, craft sticks, glue, etc.

Our students are showing a great interest in science and engineering and technology, it is our job to continue to foster this interest and provide opportunities. As mentioned in tip #4, this doesn’t have to be an expensive activity. Here is a website that tells you how to build a STEM kit by shopping at the Dollar Store! http://www.moretanaworksheet.com/2014/09/07/build-your-stem-kits-at-dollar-tree/

As always don’t forget to visit our Science Lab website! www.wmssciencelab.weenly.com

Happy Spring, Washington Mill Families! As we approach the month of May, I want to make you aware of the upcoming SOL Testing dates for grades 3-6 students. Each spring, students are assessed using the Standards of Learning Tests. Teachers at Washington Mill Elementary School have been working very diligently all school year to ensure students are well prepared for these tests. It will be very helpful if you can avoid appointments which may take your child out of school during this time period. Also, it will help your child to perform at his or her best if he or she has had a good night’s rest and a healthy breakfast.

Our shared desired outcome is that each students arrives to school with a positive attitude. If you have any questions, regarding testing please feel free to reach out to me at mjwilson@fcps.edu or 703-619-2511.
Happy Spring!!! Kindergarten preparedness is crucial for school success. For those of you who have young students starting Kindergarten at the beginning of next year, we would appreciate your help this spring and over the summer in making sure that your child is ready for Kindergarten reading and writing. Some of the things children need to know are:

- Letter recognition (upper and lower case preferred)
- As many letter sounds as possible
- Rhyming words
- How to write their name
- Colors
- Reading left to right directionality
- How to retell a simple story

You are your child’s first teacher. We appreciate all the work you do to help your child academically.

~ Dawn Page

"The most effective weapon against intolerance and ignorance." - Lyndon Baines Johnson

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SCA News

*“April Assistance” — during the month of April the student council is teaming up with the PTA to collect donations for our Food For Thought Program to assist families in need in the WMES community. Most wanted food items include:

- Canned vegetable, soup and fruit
- Canned meats such as tuna and chicken
- Shelf stable milk
- Macaroni and cheese
- Cereal
- Pasta and rice

Donation boxes are located in the lobby and will be placed in each classroom. The classroom that collects the most food donations will be treated to an ice cream party! GO WMES!!!
!!FAMILY FUN FIELD TRIP!!

FREE FREE FREE

for Washington Mill Elementary families and staff...

National Air and Space Museum
and
Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History

Washington, DC

Spend a day together with your family at our National Museums. Families will be able to visit a variety of galleries and watch an IMAX movie!

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 2016
Ride the school bus from the school parking lot:
Bus leaves school promptly at: 9:30am
Bus returns to school at: 3:30pm

This trip is for families to enjoy and learn together.

***All children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian***

Tickets for this trip are open to the first 225 attendees. To get your FREE tickets for this trip complete the form below and return it to the front office by Monday, April 11, 2016.

Cut and return to your child's teacher. Complete only ONE form per family. Tickets will be sent home with your child.

Yes, our family would like to go on the trip to National Air and Space Museum and Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History on Sunday, April 24, 2016. "Journey to Space 3D" at Air and Space Museum recommended for 4 grade. "Jean-Michel Cousteau's Secret Ocean 3D" at Museum of Natural History recommended for 5 grade.

Please send us FREE tickets. We will accompany our children on this trip.

****** Children must be 5 years or older to ride the bus ******

parent's name / child's name and age / child's teacher/grade

home phone number

Lunch (number of tickets) ________
Journey to the Space 3D movie (number of tickets) ________
Jean-Michel Cousteau's Secret Ocean 3D (number of tickets) ________
Museo Nacional, Aéreo y del Espacio
and
Smithsonian Museo Nacional de Historia Natural

Washington, DC

Pasen un día juntos como familia, visitando Nuestros Museos Nacionales.... Las familias que participen tendrán la oportunidad de ver una variedad de galerías y ver IMAX movie!

Domingo , 24 de abril, 2016

Transporte en buses de la escuela:
Los buses partirán en hora exacta: 9:30am
Retornan en la tarde: 3:30pm

Esta excursión es para que nuestras familias puedan gozar de un tiempo juntos

***TODO niño debe estar acompañado de un adulto***

Los tickets están abiertos a los 1ros. 225 aplicantes

Si quiere aplicar para un ticket gratuito, llene el formulario y, envíelo máximo el día Lunes 11 de abril„ 2016.

---

Sí, mi familia quiere participar en esta visita a los Museos Nacionales, el Aéreo y del Espacio y Todos los otros museos, el día domingo 24 de abril, 2016. Lugares: "Journey to Space 3D" at Air and Space recomendado para 4 grado. "Jean-Michel Cousteau's Secret Ocean 3D" at Museum of Natural History recomendado para 5to. Grado.

Por favor envíenos tickets gratuitos. Acompañaremos a nuestros niños

***** Los niños que participan tienen que ser mayores de 5 años *****

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Lunch (numero de tickets)________

Journey to the Space 3D movie (number of tickets) ________

Jean-Michel Cousteau’s Secret Ocean 3D (number of tickets) ________
Thank You to our Business Partners for Supporting WMES

CITY FINANCE CORP.
The key to your house

Roy Rogers

DOBSON
BUILDING & REMODELING

Patch

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks