

Westport Community Schools District Newsletter

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE - DR. REESE

I can't believe that we are already entering into the month of May. There are so many events and activities that happen during May and June that the end of the school year will be upon us before we even realize. As you know, we were very fortunate this winter season and only had to cancel school one day. The last day of school for students is Tuesday, June 18, 2019 - it will be a half day and schools will follow their normal half day dismissal schedule.

A lot has been going on this past month - students in grades 3-8 and grade 10 completed their English Language Arts MCAS testing. This was the first year that the grade 10 test was taken on computers. Given the type of training and support that students have received over the years with the use of computers, I am confident that students' performance will be enhanced by the access to the technology. In speaking with the building principals, I am impressed by the hard work of the students while taking the assessment. Students really seemed to take the test seriously and put forth their best effort. In May, students will take the math portion of the testing and some grade-levels will also participate in the science/technology testing.

The annual town meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 7:00 pm in the Westport Junior Senior High School auditorium. We appreciate your support for the school budget and for article 13, which will authorize the town to acquire the Westport Camping Grounds property. This land can help support our school athletics programs; additionally, there is potential to use the property to enhance cost savings measures for the schools and to raise funds through potential field rentals and the sponsorship of athletic tournaments.



SCHOOL SAFETY

Our next safety drill will focus on evacuation strategies. Evacuation, when deemed safe, is probably the most important and effective strategy for minimizing harm during an incident. We have been meeting with police and fire staff to establish our procedures for evacuation and will be working with staff and students to help them learn and practice these strategies.

As has been mentioned in the past, we recognize that discussion about these drills can be scary and might seem to be overwhelming for some students (and staff members), but it is important that we equip everyone with the appropriate tools and techniques in the very unlikely event that an incident occurs. The skills that our students are learning can help them in the school setting, but also in the community. We appreciate the continued support of families to encourage school safety.

Over the next few months, we will be doing some small renovations to the main entryways to increase the safety for when someone is trying to enter the building. In addition, we have applied for a state grant that will assist us in moving some additional safety initiatives along. We hope to know within the next few weeks if we received that grant.

WESTPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOLS - OUR PROGRAMS MAKE US UNIQUE!

Did you know that Westport offers a boat-building course for our high school students. Thanks to the support of the Westport Education Foundation, Dharma Voyage and Titcomb Brothers Manufacturing, we are able to offer this incredible opportunity to our students to learn about boat design, integrating a number of content areas, including English language arts, history, math, science/technology and engineering. Check out a video produced by the Westport Community TV to learn more at: <https://vimeo.com/329922372>

SPECIAL EDUCATION - MRS. SANTOS

Child Find

Through the “Child Find” process it is the responsibility of our district to identify any child between the ages of 3 - 21 who is a resident of Westport, who may have a disability. Once a student is identified it is the district’s responsibility to evaluate the student to determine if eligible for special education or related services. We as a district, through this process, hope to identify students requiring services as early as possible. The Westport Schools collaborates with local private schools, daycares and agencies to identify any student that may be in need.



TECHNOLOGY - MR. NEKRASZ



With Spring break behind us, the IT Department will be working with our security company, RedHawk to install new badge readers on the doors of the Module building at the Macomber School. Additionally we will be updating the security appliance to a new server and adding camera recording to the system.

While we are in the Macomber School, we will continue to roll out new PC’s in classrooms and perform updates to systems in place.

MCAS is in full swing! There have been minimal issues with our Chromebook devices and connectivity to the TestNav servers in the Cloud. That is great news!

There is a nice empty field where the old Middle School was. The IT Department met with representatives from the power company, the telephone company and the internet providers to map out the footprint of the new Jr/Sr high school. Exciting and busy times ahead for that project...

TRANSPORTATION - MS. RAPOZA

Spring is in the air! As the spring approaches we will be planning our second bus evacuation drill. Evacuation drills help to prepare students in the event there is a bus emergency. We encourage students to discuss the drills with family members.

Failing to stop or illegally passing a stopped school bus with flashing lights can result in a \$250 fine in Massachusetts, at minimum. A second offense by a fine of not less than \$500. That fine can go up to \$2,000 and a suspended license of up to a year for subsequent offenses (MGL 90-14).

It is illegal to do u-turns on Main Road in the front of the Jr. Sr. High School. Students are not allowed to be dropped off in the front of the schools, please drop off children in the designated drop off areas.



PARENT PICK UP PROCEDURE - MS. RAPOZA

The new parent pick up procedure at the Westport Elementary School has been a success. We would like to thank the parents and guardians for your patience during this process. This was an effort to help with the parking issue and safety of students and families walking through buses in the designated parking areas. Parents are to line up along the driveway until 3:00 pm at which time staff will begin calling students. Students will enter vehicles in the bus area with the support of staff. This is a safety and efficient process! We appreciate your patience during our procedure!

Picture of the Month



April is World Autism month. Thanks to WJSHS teacher Ms. Pereira, the district celebrated with activities throughout the month. During the last week of April, students in Ms. Pereira's classes at WJSHS worked together to sell items for WCS Ambassadors for Autism and All Abilities Acceptance. Students helped spread our #beKind theme and worked on generalizing communication skills and sign language when selling items to members of their school community.

**DRIVER'S EDUCATION -
 Ms. RAPOZA**



Moo-ve over to our very first class at the Westport Jr. Sr. High School!

Learn to drive with Mr. J!

We're proud to announce the collaboration with Mr. J's Driving School to bring driver's education right to your classroom.

**For more information and to sign up, go to:
 WestportDrivingSchool.com**

| DATES | TIMES |
|------------------|--------------------|
| JUNE 3 - JUNE 12 | 2:30 PM TO 5:45 PM |
| JUNE 17 - 24 | 5:30 PM TO 8:45 PM |

**FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION...**

*MEMBERS SOUGHT FOR PARENT AND COMMUNITY
 EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL*

The Parent and Community Education and Involvement Advisory Council has a limited number of seats open for people interested in advising DESE and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on topics related to family engagement. The advisory council meets 3-4 times a year to discuss topics including the development of information for families. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to Kathy Rodriguez at krodriguez@doe.mass.edu by May 10th.



SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM - Ms. RAPOZA



We continue to collect school lunch debts. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing when 3 charges have accumulated. It is expected that all incurred charges will be paid within 5 days of written notice; by sending cash, check or money order payable to the Town of Westport. Payment must be sent with the child to the cafeteria, by mailing a check or money order to the appropriate school, and through the online payment systems MySchoolBucks.com.

Students will be served a differentiated meal if the accumulated balance is not paid in full by the expected date. The differentiated meal shall consist of a sandwich (not peanut butter and jelly), fruit, vegetable and eight-ounce low fat milk. **The district has been very lenient with this policy, but with the increases of lunch balances, we will begin implementing the policy effective, February 1, 2019. Free and reduced lunch applications are available at each school and on the website.**

<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browser2.html?showset=westportset>

IMPORTANT DATES - APRIL - JUNE

(CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS ON EACH OF THESE EVENTS)

| <u>MAY</u> | | <u>JUNE</u> | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| 1 | School Building Committee - Design Subcommittee Mtg. | 4 | WES School Council Meeting |
| 2 | School Committee Meeting | 4 | Athletic Awards |
| 7 | WES School Council Meeting | 6 | Scholarship Night |
| 9 | School Building Committee Mtg. | 8 | WJSHS Senior Graduation |
| 10 | 7th/8th grade Dance | 11 | Mac School Council Meeting |
| 13-17 | Kindergarten Screening (Mac) | 11 | WES/MAC PTO Meeting |
| 14 | Mac School Council Meeting | 12 | Early Release for Students / Staff Professional Development |
| 14 | WES/MAC PTO Meeting | 13 | WJSHS School Council Meeting |
| 16 | School Committee Meeting | 13 | School Committee Meeting |
| 17 | WJSHS Progress Reports | 14 | 8th Grade Semi--Formal Dance |
| 17 | Early Release for Students / Staff Professional Development | 18 | Last Day of School - Early Release |
| 17 | Westport Education Foundation Derby Fundraiser | | |
| 17 | WJSHS Prom | | |
| 20-24 | Kindergarten Screening (Mac) | | |
| 20 | 7th & 8th Grade Spring Concert | | |
| 22 | WJSHS Spring Band Concert | | |
| 23 | WJSHS School Council | | |
| 23 | WES Spring Concert | | |
| 23 | Mac Art Show | | |
| 27 | Memorial Day - No School | | |
| 29-June 1 | 8th Grade Trip to DC | | |