Principal Update

As February begins, I know many of us are focused on the reopening of the building. Here is the board presentation that I gave on 1/26/21. It outlines the basic parts of the reopening plan for Baltimore County Public Schools. Each school will have specific parts of the plan to implement with a focus on the needs of students. We will be holding meetings and information sessions towards the end of February to help everyone understand what the reopening of school will look like at Watershed. We know you have questions and we are working to find answers to all of them. We will continue to communicate through ClassTag, School Messenger and the Facebook WPCS News and Information page. Continue to reach out to me or Ms. Jenn if you have any questions. We will reopen with safety as our primary goal.

This month, Watershed is celebrating Black History Month through literature. Teachers will be highlighting and implementing literature throughout their lessons that highlight Black History. As educators, we are committed to teaching Black History throughout the school year as American History. This month is important for us to focus on authors of color as well as learning more about our history. I will be having another bedtime story event on Monday February 8 at 7:30 (google join code: WPCSWidney) to highlight how literature helps us understand our past. I hope you can join us!

Your Principal, Lori Widney

Important Dates:

- Feb 1: Parent Volunteer and Wellness committee 7pm
- Feb 1: Lottery application deadline for new students
- Feb 2: Groundhog Day
- Feb 2: Parent Communications Committee meeting 6:30pm
- Feb 5: Completed Declaration of Intent for 21/22 SY
- Feb 5: First Friday Parent’s Event
- Feb 8: Principal Bedtime Story (7:30 pm - WPCSWidney)
- Feb 11: Report Cards Distributed
- Feb 12: Lincoln's Birthday
- Feb 15: Presidents Day - Schools and offices closed
- Feb 23: 6 pm WPCS Board meeting [meet.google.com/ptw-gycp-jmg]
Update from the Health Suite

COVID-19 Vaccination

If you are offered the vaccine, GET IT! None of the vaccines released right now are 'live-virus' vaccines. Which means that you can NOT get COVID-19 from getting the vaccine. The vaccine should help prepare your body to strongly fight COVID-19, if you would be exposed.

Benefits of COVID-19 Vaccination

Is it safe to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Getting the vaccine is such an important way not only for each individual to protect themselves but for us to fight the virus as a whole society.

It is important to stay updated about how Baltimore County is releasing the vaccine. [Baltimore County COVID updates and Guidance](#). If it is easier, you are able to stay updated from Maryland’s 211 text alert system by texting “MdReady” to 898-211.

Click this [link](#) for information about Baltimore County's vaccine distribution program. The Baltimore County Health Department is requesting that you complete this [form](#) to be notified when you are eligible for the vaccine.

If you have questions or concerns about vaccinating yourself or a family member, please reach out to me at amaunz@bcps.org or your primary care provider.

Remember to continue to wear your mask, provide social distance and scrub those hands – even after the vaccine! ~Nurse Alice
Grade level updates

Kindergarten

As quarter two ends, the kindergarten teachers are excited to see the market stands our students will submit for our End of Unit project. We have enjoyed learning about people around the world and we are looking forward to seeing what our students have learned about other cultures.

Looking forward to quarter three, our math focus will be first on money concepts and then two-dimensional shapes. Students will be exploring fives and ones using different coins as well as learning about coin values. We will then turn to geometry to explore two-dimensional shapes. Students will identify, construct, sort, compare, compose, and decompose basic shapes.

In phonics we will be continuing manipulating letter sounds to read and write words. We’re also focusing on changing one sound in a word to make a new word. Make sure your child pauses the phonics videos as needed so that they can get plenty of practice with this valuable skill!

In Number Corner, we will begin counting pennies and nickels during Calendar Collector. We will continue to use number trees to show parts and totals of amounts with equations. Also, we will explore our double ten frames into the teens as showing ten and some more.

First Grade

I can’t believe we are already in February! This month we are going to do some exciting things! For our End-of-Unit project time students will be finishing up their Atlas for their planet before we start our Unit 3 lessons. In Unit 3 we will be learning about Bees and how we can attract them to our Pollinator Garden! In math we are beginning Unit 4 where we will use number lines to add, subtract and compare numbers. During phonics we are continuing to learn about larger phonemes such as dge, ed, ck, , eas, h, ch, so that students will begin reading and writing longer words.

As new readers our first graders need to be reading as much as possible. It is suggested that a new reader should spend at least 20 minutes a day reading. Kids a-z can provide students with a variety of texts that they can read. Rereading books that children may have around the house builds fluency and finding text that a hesitant reader might enjoy like comics is a great way to build interest in reading.

For more tips for helping new readers you can view this article from reading rockets:

Second Grade

ELA/Integration: The end of the unit project was a great way to finish our study of invasive species. The Public Service Announcements the students created were creative and showed off their knowledge. They even had some great solutions to the invasive species problem. We are excited to begin our third unit – “Water, Water, Everywhere”. For this unit, we will be looking closely at how water moves throughout the land and how we can slow it down, so it does not just rush away down a storm drain. We will have an opportunity to work with Blue Water Baltimore and ultimately plan out a rain garden. But before we begin that project, we will first use literature as a way to learn about changes on the Earth’s surfaces, goods and services, and capital, natural, and human resources.

Phonics: We are finishing up our study of vowel digraphs and are moving on to the spellings with silent letters such as /f/ spelled ph, /m/ spelled _mb, as well as different spellings for /s/ and /j/. While these spellings may at first seem tricky, the more students are reading and writing words that include these different spellings, the more fluent they will become. We will begin doing more guided reading during our phonics block and students will be given an opportunity to apply these new sounds to their reading.

Math: Unit 4 began our discovery of measurement. We started off by learning about the importance of standard units of measurement and have moved on to measuring in inches, feet, and yards. The second objective of the unit is to provide informal experiences with ratios and proportional reasoning. These activities reinforce measurement concepts and skills, but also lay the important groundwork for the multiplicative comparison and proportional reasoning skills expected in later grades. Around the middle of the month, we will be moving into unit 5 – Place Value to One Thousand. We will practice adding and subtracting in multiples 10s and 100s. During this unit we will also begin dealing with place value with money.

Third Grade

Third grade is busy finishing up our study of Reading and Learning, Near and Far. We have read fiction and nonfiction that has brought us to Colombia, Chad, Afghanistan and Australia. We learned how the children in the rural areas of these countries get their books to read. Ask your student what they know! In the next few weeks, we will be discussing our learning experiences here in the United States and the reading challenges we have as individuals. To summarize what we learned, we will be making bookmarks with symbols and patterns. We will be developing writing pieces that will explain what we learned about another country as well as stating our own personal learning goals. The writing process, along with editing skills, will be a focus in this final writing assignment. In mathematics, we have been working with the concept of rounding and are now moving on to two and three-digit addition strategies. All students are working on math facts by playing First in Math. Students are also working on reading fluency by reading on Raz-Plus every day.
Fourth Grade

Students are reading texts and examining images to learn that rain gardens are a way to minimize the pollution caused by stormwater runoff. They have learned about the geography of Maryland, and will learn how rain water flows through our local environment and how stormwater runoff causes pollution of the bay and ocean. Students will learn that they can be part of a solution in this matter by creating a model of a rain garden.

In math, we are about to start Unit 3, which will focus on decimals and fractions. We will be working on adding, subtracting, and comparing fractions, as well as comparing fractions and decimals. This will include ordering fractions and decimals on a number line. Looking ahead, Unit 4

In word work, we will be studying Latin roots and prefixes. As students work with the Latin roots and prefixes, they will learn the definitions of various roots and prefixes and practice applying those meanings to unfamiliar words. Students will also be exposed to vocabulary words that utilize target Latin roots and prefixes and will practice using those vocabulary words in writing.

Special Area Updates

Physical Education

Kindergarten will be exploring striking with both hands.

1st & 2nd Grade will be exploring ball skills, namely overhand throw and dribbling with hands and feet.

3rd & 4th Grade will be exploring skill related components of fitness. Topics that will be covered include agility, balance, power, speed and reaction time.

Don't forget to do the "Show what you know" in each week's Schoology folder. It is the primary way students are being assessed virtually.
Counselor’s Corner

The theme for this month is Celebrating Differences. Students in K-2 will have lessons that focus on understanding what makes people the same and different, both in ways that can be seen and unseen, as well as learning to appreciate and accept the differences in others. K-2 students will also be prompted to reflect on what makes them different/unique. Students in the 3rd and 4th grade will focus on how differences make communities stronger and will reflect on how they can personally draw on their differences to better their communities. Topics of segregation, equity, and equality, will also be explored.


Parent Committee Updates

Parent Wellness and Volunteers

The Parent Volunteer and Wellness Committee Liaison, Shanae Walker, has recently decided to step down as committee liaison. We thank her for all of her hard work and time spent at student dropoff and pick-up, and running the Volunteer and Wellness Committee. She will be missed. Her departure does leave an opening as the parent liaison for the Parent Volunteer and Wellness Committee. If you are interested in being the parent liaison or a co-liaisons, please contact info@watershedpcs.org if you are interested.

Parent Communications

The Communications Committee also would like to hear from you about this newsletter! There were some significant changes starting in December’s newsletter regarding the layout and the content. Did you find it readable? Engaging? Did we have the right content? Was it too long? Was it missing information that you want to see? We want to continue to improve and the only way we can is if you email us the good AND the bad. communications@watershedpcs.org.
Watershed Board Updates

We want to hear from you!

The board of Watershed Public Charter School values and encourages input and feedback from the public during board meetings. Near the beginning of each board meeting, there will be an established 30-minute time slot dedicated to stakeholder comment and feedback that will be listed as such on the meeting agenda. Prospective speakers are encouraged to sign in on the Stakeholder Comment and Feedback Sign Up sheet prior to the start of the meeting, which will be available near the entrance of the room. When meetings are held virtually, those who wish to speak should email the board prior to the day of the meeting at board@watershedpcs.org. A maximum of ten speakers will be drawn at random and will speak in the order they are selected; speaker time is limited to three (3) minutes each and will be monitored by the Board President. Board members will not respond to public comments within the same board meeting except to ask clarifying questions.

When speaking, speakers are asked to give their full name and be respectful of the board and members of the public when speaking. Speakers should address members of the board and be ready to respond to questions for clarification from the board if asked. The board does not discuss personnel matters in open board meetings. Inappropriate comments or behavior are discouraged. Inappropriate behavior is defined as insults, obscenities or profanity, attacks against any person in their personal capacity, and/or physical violence or threat thereof.

We want you to tell BCPS about how much you love Watershed!

Similarly, we'd love for you to register for public comment at the BCPS Board of Education and tell them what you love about Watershed. No particular focus- just spreading some positive vibes! Now is a great time to do this because you just send an email, you don't have to drive to Greenwood on a school night! (You won't actually read your comment at the meeting, it will just be logged as part of the records and sent to BoE members)

Comments from stakeholder groups and other members of the public may be e-mailed to boe@bcps.org; all comments will be distributed to the Board of Education members. Comments received before 11:59 p.m. on the Monday before each board meeting will be published in BoardDocs if requested.

BCPS Board of Education meetings are live-streamed and can be viewed on the BCPS website, or on BCPS-TV (Comcast Xfinity channel 73, Verizon FiOS channel 34).