

May Newsletter

Westwood Elementary



Important Dates

May 5: Westwood Family Block Party 5-6:30

May 11: Field Day

May 13: NO SCHOOL (Teacher Plan Day)

May 16: 5th Grade Graduation

May 17: Last Day of School

Principal's Note

It is hard to believe that May is here and that our 2021-22 school year is coming to an end. We've certainly overcome many obstacles and challenges with COVID-19, but have also had many opportunities to celebrate the success and growth of our students. It is a relief to know that the pandemic is coming to an end and that we are slowly returning to some normalcy in our schools.

I want to thank all our families for your ongoing support over the past two years. Your resilience and perseverance has been instrumental in our efforts to provide a quality education to your child during this difficult and unprecedented time. Although parent involvement had been limited in the building over the past two years, we have truly felt your appreciation and support. Currently, all our schools are open to the public, and parents are encouraged to join us for events and parent engagement activities.

We will host our annual Westwood Family Block party on Thursday, May 5th. You can expect yard games, cotton candy, baby goats and even a dunk tank. The Pineapple Whip truck will also make their debut before they fully open to the public! Field Day will take place on Wednesday, May 11th. Students will be engaged in games and activities from 8:45-10:45 and 1:00-3:00. We hope you can come out and join us for these fun and exciting events.

Teacher Appreciation Day is Tuesday, May 3rd. We have items planned at the building level to show our utmost admiration for the staff. You hope you might consider sending in a note of appreciation with your child to express your love and gratitude for these wonderful individuals. I am confident that Westwood has some of the most dedicated educators serving our students and your words of affirmation would be very inspiring.

The calendar for the 2022-23 has been established and I have included it in this newsletter so you can plan accordingly for the upcoming year. The student's last day is Tuesday, May 17th. Online enrollment will open on May 1st. It is extremely helpful for planning purposes if you can get this completed prior to August if you know your child is returning. If you need assistance with this, please call the office at 785-717-4150.

We've had an extremely successful school year and I'm truly thankful for the ongoing support of our families and community. I wish you a wonderful summer and we look forward to seeing everyone back in August.

Mrs. Dressman, Westwood Principal



2022-2023 Board Approved Calendar.pdf

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149.7 KB

Counselor's Corner

Hello Wildcat Family!

Within the last few months we have continued to discuss the 6 character traits and how important it is for us to remember them in order to be good people in society. We have completed activities and class discussions on how important it is to be respectful, responsible, trustworthy, caring, fair, and a good citizen not only at school, but in every environment that we are in at all times. These traits also help with focus on a positive school climate and promote healthy decision-making strategies, mindfulness, growth mindset, and behavioral change. These strategies produce positive results in academics, while being social, and enhances character development. Please have discussions with your children about how important it is to continue to utilize these traits.

Ms. Christian

Eboniechristion@usd475.org

Music

This year has flown by in the music classroom! I cannot believe it's already the end of the year. We have had so much fun this year learning music and creating music together. I hope that everyone has a great summer and continues to listen and sing along to music. A few things we have been up to in the music class in April and May were:

5th and 4th Grade: We just had our 5th and 4th-grade program! ¡Canta! We sang four traditional Mexican songs in Spanish and a medley of songs from the animated Disney movie "Coco"! I was so impressed and amazed with how well the 5th and 4th graders have done in learning their music and being ready for their performance.

3rd Grade: In 3rd-grade music class we have finished up learning music terms such as Rondo and the staff lines and spaces for treble clef. We are now working on an African Drum unit and getting to spend time learning drum parts and how to handle drums correctly.

2nd Grade: We are finishing up learning about bar lines and time signatures. As we learn these different concepts, we are learning lots of fun songs and playing some fun games as we get ready for 3rd-grade music.

1st Grade: We are finishing up learning "Sol, Mi, and La" and "AB" form. As we learn these different concepts we have got to play lots of xylophones, and drums, and sing some fun songs! We also got to play a few musical games and learned some dances.

Kinder: We have been learning some songs for our Kindergarten graduation as we head into first grade. We have been learning pre-rhythms as we get ready to learn about quarter and eighth notes in 1st grade! We have learned a lot of songs this year as well as fun games.

I hope you all have a great summer!

Mrs. Williams

Pre-K

In our PreK classroom we will begin working on Unit 9: Ready For Kindergarten. In this unit we will be focusing how have we grown and changed, what are good health habits, how do we move our bodies and what do our bodies need to stay healthy.

You can extend learning at home by asking your child to identify his or her body parts and show how those body parts move in different ways. Then have your child clap, bend his or her knees, turn his or her head and wiggle toes. While you are on the move you can talk to your child about exercise and playing sports. Discuss the need for exercise to stay healthy. If possible, visit a park and point out people exercising to help your child visualize and understand the idea of fitness. When you take your child to the park, bring a large ball. Model how to kick and throw the ball back to you.

In math, students will continue to work on writing numerals and counting beyond 30, reviewing shapes, addition, and subtraction. In science we will be learning about motion and energy. In social studies we will be learning about what our bodies need and about different exercises that help keep our body healthy. For alphabet time we will be reviewing all the letters in the alphabet.

Ms. Debi

Kindergarten

Reading: In the last reading unit to wrap up the school year, we will be talking about how people work together to solve problems. We will discuss ways to make decisions, including the concept of voting. We will also be learning about the ways we can protect our environment. Children will learn about endangered animals and the ways we can help protect animals in their habitats. Students should be able to read and write words with long vowel sounds. They will mostly use the “super E” rule, but you may also see them trying to spell words with long vowel sounds using vowel teams! We have finished learning the rest of our high frequency words, so make sure to be practicing all 40 words at home as often as possible! Everyone has become such great readers and writers! We are almost ready for first grade!

Reading Tip: Write a high frequency word that your child knows. Ask them what word is and have them create a complete sentence with that word in it. Make a paper full of high frequency words written all over it and have your child circle or highlight the word as you say it until they find all the words on the paper!

Math: Kindergartens are wrapping up the year with their last math module, focusing on analyzing, comparing, and composing shapes. Continue to work with your student on composing and decomposing teen numbers, using a group of 10 and some extra ones. Over the summer, make sure to have your student make combinations of 10 (1+9, 4+6, 5+5, etc.), count to 100 by 1’s and 10’s, and work through addition and subtraction word problems. This will help them be prepared for next year.

Math Tip: Say a word problem to your student. Ask them if it’s an addition or subtraction word problem. Then, say the word problem again and encourage your student to draw a picture to help solve the problem. Then, they can write a number sentence ($_ + _ = _$ or $_ - _ = _$) to go with the word problem.

Kindergarten Celebrations in May:

May 5th à Westwood Family Night @ 5:00 – 6:30

May 11th à Field Day (Send your student in tennis shoes!!)

May 13th à No School (Teacher Plan Day)

May 16th à Kindergarten and Pre-K Graduation @ 1:30 – 2:30

May 17th à Park and Picnic “Field Trip” (No permission slip needed!)

May 17th à LAST DAY Of School!

Ms. Sowell & Mrs. Harmison

1st Grade

Our First Grade Team is so proud of the progress that the boys and girls have accomplished this year! Many students are taking Reading Counts tests daily. The students have learned how to segment, blend, and read with fluency!

We can add and subtract within 20, utilize part/part/whole (number bonds), do word problems, and write number sentences as well as work on place value!

First graders enjoyed encouraging the third, fourth, and fifth graders during their State Testing requirements. We learned a song to the tune of "Baby Shark." Each verse allowed every first grader to act out or hold up a motivational sign. The song transferred into the classroom when we began taking our reading and math tests, as the children would spontaneously begin singing "Time to test, doo, doo, doo, doo."

We have enjoyed using our greenhouse throughout the year by growing carrots, beets, lettuce, onions, and cucumbers! It was so interesting and fun. In April, we are also growing grass for science and learning all about Mother Earth.

We have been able to tie so many units together with science and reading, by inviting a Mobile Dairy farm to come to Westwood and learn how cows are milked as well as going on a fieldtrip to the Rolling Hills Zoo and learning all about animals, what they eat and their habitats.

First grade has persevered through the rigor of learning that is required, and every student has made progress this year! We encourage your child to read, or to be read to throughout the summer months to maintain their level of learning. Visiting the public Library for free books to read over the summer is a great way to keep fluent. Reading will help develop vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and identifying key details and the main idea.

We have enjoyed teaching you so much this year. What we have learned from you is to be patient, to listen and to care. What we hope that you have learned from us, is to share, to cooperate, and to learn.

Good luck in second grade and always,

Mrs. Bascue and Mrs. Biram

2nd Grade

THANK YOU

Parents,

You have been soooo good to us. Thank you for sharing your child this year. It has been a privilege to work with this great group of 2nd grade Wildcats.

We have worked hard to improve our reading fluency, skills and strategies. Our 2nd grade readers have read over 250,000 words this year for Reading Counts, and that was as of April 15th! This is May. Wow, that's a lot of words.

Together we have tackled many math concepts and worked as a team to improve our math fluency facts. This last quarter of school has been a blur of geometry, measurement/data skills and reviewing skills we need for third grade.

There have also been many special projects in science, social studies, for holidays and so much more. The new greenhouse, Plant Hub, was particularly exciting and we enjoyed watching everything we planted grow and grow.

We learned a lot of cool activities in our Morning Meetings that we can also play at home like Crazy 10, Left/Right, Coconut, and Odd/Even.

We know you will continue to encourage your child and provide opportunities for learning over the summer. We can't thank you enough for that.

So proud of these....future 3rd graders

Ms Witt and Mrs. Ascher

3rd Grade

3rd Grade Wildcat Families,

Another amazing school year is coming to an end. With State Testing now behind us we are finishing up our year with fun area & perimeter activities. To top off this Unit we will be building robots using those skills and the students are excited! During reading we have been reading biographies and learning about how successful people use goal setting to guide their journeys.

In Science, Water and Climate has been our focus. The students have loved experimenting with water and observing the different interactions it has on different surfaces. If you have a second, ask your student what materials absorb, and repel water. Their knowledge of Geography has taken off during Social Studies this past month. Cardinal Directions are no challenge for our 3rd Graders.

Even though it is exciting to celebrate the end of the year, its also sad to see our students move on. We will miss them greatly next year, but we are so proud of how much they have grown.

Mr. McCallister and Ms. Staley

4th Grade

As our year comes to an end we look to finishing strong in 4th grade. This month in math kids will be continuing their learning geometry and decimals. We will continue to bring a focus on story problem with the emphasis of not reading the problem all at once, but instead stopping and illustrating or solving as they read it. Extra practice on review and preview lessons will continue during our WIN time as well. Please help your young people memorize their multiplication facts at home (2-12).

In reading we are working hard in whole groups and small groups with both expository and narrative text in our wonders program. We are using data driven instruction to best hone in our teaching efforts to better serve our young people. We do ask our kids are applying their learnings to 20 minutes of reading each night Monday through Thursday. Plus practice eyeball pushups which is picking out two or three sentences, and at first reading slow annunciating each word, then faster and faster reading without mumbling.

In science we will be finishing up with energy, electrical, potential, and kinetic. We will be experimenting with magnets and also will extend stem lessons and be looking into astronomy lessons. Studying sound and sound waves will be coming up as well.

We are also exited to continue to build our classroom families even stronger as our young people are maturing and further making strong adjustments into their professional setting on a daily basis. To

our parents, thank you for your support and all you do for your kids!!!

Mr. Hall and Ms. Dill

5th Grade

Hello 5th Grade Families!

We are slowly starting to wrap up the end of the year. We have some BIG events coming up! Starting off in the first week of May, we are doing our last round of Fastbridge testing and hoping to increase all of our scores to show how much growth and progress they have made. On Thursday, May 5th, we have our Westwood Family Night which will include Pineapple Whip, goats and even giving some teachers a pie to the face! We hope to see you there! After that, on May 11th, we have our Field Day. The kids will get to play all sorts of fun games and compete against their peers! The following day, May 12th, is our 5th Grade Graduation. We have put a lot of time and planning into the ceremony so it will definitely be something to remember! Mix in a STEP UP and our Quarter 4 assemblies and it brings us to our last day on May 17th.

We are so thankful to have these group of kiddos to be our students in our first years of teaching and especially here at Westwood. They have taught us so much and we have all learned and grown together. We are excited for them to go to middle school and have them show the world what they can do and what they are made of.

Ms. Riley, Mrs. Mackay and Mrs. Ramos

