

From Mrs. Smith's Desk

Season's Greetings!

Here we go...into one of the busiest seasons of the year. The next two weeks leading up to the winter holidays will fly by, with many fun social events and special activities along the way. It is crucial that we utilize every day of the school year to help our students meet their academic goals. We can not afford to put our learning on hold as we approach this exciting time of year, however we will be sure to plan engaging activities to keep our learners focused. By working together we can help all of our students enjoy the holiday season, and maintain their ability to attend to learning at school. Here are some holiday suggestions:

*Keep bedtimes consistent. Sleep increases students' attention span and also benefits their hearts and minds.

*Maintain healthy diets. Lots of extra treats come our way during this time of year. Please help your child learn the importance of a healthy, balanced diet. We can certainly enjoy treats over the holidays, the key is moderation.

*Encourage your child to set a goal over the next two weeks - completing all of the assigned homework, reading 5-10 extra minutes each night, or perfect attendance until break. Work together to keep track of progress toward the goal. Using positive reinforcements (stickers/stars/verbal praise) along the way encourages on-going success. Possibly a small prize or fun activity on the last day of school would be a great way to celebrate your child's success when the goal is met.

*Be mindful of attendance and tardiness. Regularly attending school is critical to your child's success.

We offer the very best wishes to you during this wonderful season of family, friends and traditions. Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!

Warm Regards,

Melanie Smith, Principal

FOOD PANTRY COMING TO WES!

By: Chad Parisi, LCPC

As we enjoy our holiday gatherings, I would like to remind everyone of one major unspoken problem that many in our community experience, food insecurity. Food insecurity is the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. According to the Good Shepard Food Bank, 13.6 percent of Maine households are food insecure – a rate far higher than the national average of 11.7 percent. If that average

Here is a list of items we are collecting for our WES Food Pantry Supply Drive:

- Instant Noodle Soups
- Ramen Packages
- Canned Foods (*i.e.* *spaghettios, ravioli, beefaroni, soups, vegetables*)
- Fruit cups (all varieties)
- Granola Bars / Breakfast Bars
- Small boxes of cereal
- Easy Mac Macaroni and Cheese
- Boxes of Macaroni and Cheese
- Microwave Popcorn
- Jars of Peanut Butter and Jelly
- Loaves of Bread
- Pop Tarts
- Canned Tuna Fish or Chicken
- Mayonnaise



were consistent for the Oakland community, that works out to be at least one kid out of 10, which means about 2 kids per classroom.

We've heard the stories about kids who are anxious to go home on the weekends because they will not have enough food at home. These kids will go 2 and a half days without food. That's about 67 and a half hours from Noon Friday to 7:30 AM Monday when they can get breakfast.

No one can learn effectively when they are worried about where or when their next meal will come. No one can feel good with a belly that hurts from hunger. The kind of hurt that causes physical pain, but also that is driving an overwhelming sense of anxiety and fear that we may have a snow day on Monday, making the wait even longer.

As we prepare our holiday meals, let us take pause and think about the students who may not share in a Thanksgiving meal or holiday dinner.

Help us start our own WES food pantry! This month, our kindness project is to start a food pantry at WES. The goal is to be able to have food ready to go and packed every Friday for youth and families who are struggling with food insecurity. To kick this off, we are hosting a food drive to start our Food Pantry and we are looking for easy foods for kids to be able to cook!



WinterKids App (formerly the Passport)

The WinterKids App provides free and discounted opportunities for children to try skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, ice-skating, tubing and even ice climbing! You can purchase a membership to the mobile app for \$35.00 (Winterkids also offers a generous scholarship policy to families in need). If you are interested please use this discount code when purchasing the app: **WINTERFUN20**. Kids who participate in outdoor activity are healthier, and studies show healthy, active kids also learn better.

Our Eagles of the Week

Grade 3: Grace McKay has been nominated by several classmates to be this week's EAGLE! Grace helped Brynleigh get her bracelet back. Khloee said that Grace is always focused on her independent work. Reese said that Grace helped clean up the bathroom one time and is always listening to the teacher when others are not. Lauren says that when Grace had something hard to do she takes a deep breath and gives it her best effort, she always uses her manners, and always has a smile on her face. We thank you Grace for being a great role model!

Grade 4: Mrs. Veilleux is nominating **Bear Burnham**. Bear always demonstrates having an awesome attitude. He treats others with kindness, maintains a growth mindset and is always putting a smile on peoples faces. Bear is also engaged in his learning by using his time wisely, cooperating with others and showing respect. Keep smiling and spreading kindness, Bear!

Grade 5: Mrs. Brockway is nominating **Julianna Ripley** for her awesome attitude and effort in class. We have been focusing on growth mindset this year in class, and Julianna has done an exceptional job showing that. She is always positive about any challenge that comes her way, and has worked so hard this trimester. Keep up the amazing work Julianna!

IMPORTANT DATES

December 2 - Champions Assembly - Presentation of collected items to the Waterville Humane Society.

December 2-6 - Scholastic Book Fair at WES.

December 3 - Early Release - noon dismissal

Grade 5 Chorus Concert at 7PM

December 5 - PTA meeting at WES - 6PM

December 6 - Trimester 1 Report Cards will be sent home.

Polar Express at MHS PAC - 6PM

December 13 - Holiday Sing Along at the MHS PAC at 12:30 for district K-5 students.

December 14 - PTA Holiday Dance at WES - 6-8PM

December 16 - Chorus Field Trip

December 23 - January 1 - No School

January 2 - Students return from break

