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# The Watershed Gazette

May 2021

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## Principal Update:

May is a busy month! We are opening for more in school learning (4 days a week!), we have a spring fling to prepare for, and we are preparing for summer! I cannot wait to see everyone on campus on May 22nd for our Spring Fling! Here are some ideas of what is happening at the spring fling:

- Tree dedications for our teachers of the year (Mr. Mendel and Ms. Wiggins)
- Performances from our bucket bands at different grade levels
- Exhibits of learning for Unit 3
- Food Trucks!!

Career experiences with professionals in Environmental Careers

Celebrations of our community!

After a year like this, I really hope we can come together with our mitigation strategies to have a joyful experience. Masks and social distancing will be required. And we will have plenty of hand sanitizer!

### **Some reminders about our pick up and drop off:**

Please begin to teach your child how to prepare for car entrance and exit without adult support. Our goal is to enter and exit 150 students in less than 15 minutes.

Car dismissal tags are required for pick up. If someone comes to pick up your child without that tag, we will ask them to park and bring their ID to check. It will take longer than them having the car dismissal tag.

On May 10th, dismissal begins at 2:40 pm. Some lunches for in-person students have shifted. Please keep an eye on ClassTag for information about the schedule from your child's teacher.

Your Principal, *Lori Widney*

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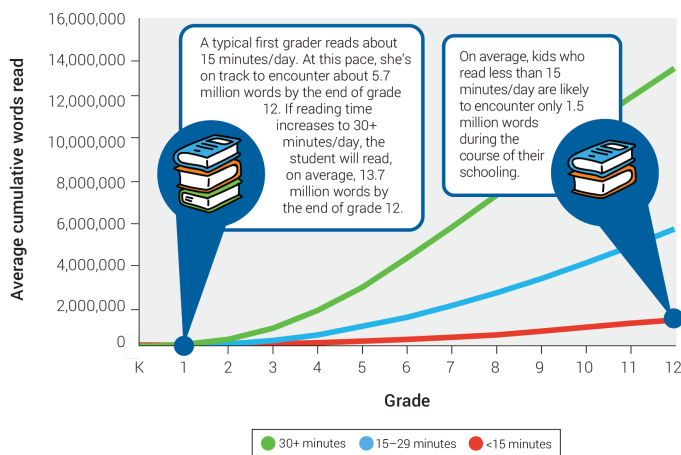
## EPIC Reading Incentive

What is EPIC? [www.getepic](http://www.getepic) is a digital library and allows students the opportunity to read books on their level. This is free to educators and our teachers are using this as one way to provide more reading opportunities for students. The website is open and free to students with a teacher code from 7am to 4pm. After these hours, students are permitted to log on for up to 2 hours per week if a parent registers the child. Teachers will send links to non-registered people this coming week and we will begin counting toward our goal on May 10<sup>th</sup>!

The EPIC mission for WPCS students is here! We challenge the school to read a total of 5,000 books on EPIC in one month. This goal is very doable if every student helps by reading. If this goal is reached, the students will have the opportunity to tape Mrs. Widney to the wall. We are thrilled if your child reads books outside of EPIC, but for this contest we are only counting books read on EPIC. By using this program the only extra work required of our dedicated, fabulous staff is to turn in class totals weekly (and EPIC provides this information).

The goal is to promote the love of reading and be able to tape Mrs. Widney to the wall. Please email any questions to Dr. Fair at [efair@bcps.org](mailto:efair@bcps.org)

**Vocabulary exposure increases  
with daily reading time**



## Important Dates to Remember:



Can we make  
this happen,  
TURTLES?!?!

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<p>May 3rd - Kindergarten Conference Day - No School K 7 pm Parent volunteer and wellness mtg May 4th - 6:30 pm Parent Communications mtg. May 5th - 6:30 pm Events committee Mtg. May 10th - First day of Cohort D 4 day in-person learning May 11th - Family Tech Talk (Parent Committee sponsored) <a href="#">details</a> 7 pm <a href="#">EAF Committee</a> May 13th - Systemwide Professional Day - No School May 20th - 7 pm Diversity Equity and Inclusion mtg. May 22nd - Spring Fling 11 am - 2 pm May 30th - Memorial Day - School and offices Closed</p> <p>Breakfast and Lunch are free for every student this school year:</p> <p><a href="https://bcps.nutrislice.com/menu/watershed-public-charter/in-school-meals/2021-05-29">https://bcps.nutrislice.com/menu/watershed-public-charter/in-school-meals/2021-05-29</a></p>	
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## From the School Nurse

Hello Watershed family. Month of May is here and so is allergy season. I am just reposting helpful links about seasonal allergy.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/4-must-kids-seasonal-allergies-201604129511>

How to differentiate Allergies and Colds

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/4-must-kids-seasonal-allergies-201604129511>

Also, every Month we send and collect the Attestation form for each student who is attending Watershed public Charter school in person. It's never too late to submit any other Health School Forms to me. A reminder to everyone to do social distancing, wear your mask properly, and keep washing your hands. Our students are doing great following these mitigation strategies.

Please remember to put extra clothes in the book bag for your child for school.

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## Grade level updates

### Kindergarten

This spring is so busy and exciting here in Kindergarten. In integrated ELA we continue our last unit entitled "Guardians of the Watershed." This month we will dig deeper into observing problems that humans have caused on the Earth. Topics of study include trees, plants & seeds, birds, and insects.

Through these topics we will guide the students to identify solutions to the Earth's problems. We are encouraging them to recognize the negative impact humans have had on Earth and to make a positive impact now and for the future. All of this is in preparation for our final project. Stay tuned for specific information on how your child will create a solution to Earth's problems.

In phonics this month we will continue learning and applying the long vowel sounds and spellings for all vowels. Be sure to practice independent reading and writing daily. Repetition is the key to remembering sight words. So please be sure to read and do activities with them daily as well.

Coming up in math, we will be starting Unit 7 which will introduce students to the concept of measuring by weight. We will explore comparing objects to determine which are "light" and which are "heavy." Be on the lookout for directions for building your own balance scale using a clothes hanger and cups. After we spend a little time with weight, we will return to practicing counting by 10s and 1s, to 20 and beyond. We will also review creating and solving story problems using addition and subtraction. Continuing to practice these skills outside of class time will help your child with his/her developing number sense.

May 3rd is Kindergarten's final parent-conference day of the school year. There will be no school (virtual or in-person) for kindergarteners that day. Be sure to check Class Tag for sign-ups.

### First Grade

This month, we have been working with geometry! The first graders are learning about the attributes of shapes, and are working on being able to describe two and three dimensional shapes in many different ways! There are two and three dimensional shapes hidden everywhere - how many different shapes can you find in your living space? In phonics, we are continuing to work with consonant blends such as /\_ng/, /\_nk/ and 'schwa' that sounds like the /u/ sound in 'tug' but has many different spellings! Looking ahead, we're going to move away from short vowel sounds and towards the many spellings of long vowel sounds! In our Project Time

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lessons, we completed our Mini Design challenge as practice in using the Engineering Design process. The Engineering Design process is one way inventors solve problems by following several steps - Ask, Imagine, Plan, Create, and Improve. We're beginning to collect data about bees we see outside to set up for our end of unit project where we'll design an invention to help meet the needs of our local bees! On the way, we'll practice opinion writing to support telling about our inventions at the end of the unit.

We are going to be exploring bees that are native to Maryland. Learning about the physical needs of Maryland's native bees, and brainstorming ideas of how to increase the native bee population on the Watershed Campus.

## Second Grade

For the remainder of the year, we will focus on special vowel spelling patterns called diphthongs in phonics. The most common of these spellings are “aw/au” like hawk, “ow/ou” like cow, and “oy/oi” like boy. We will continue to work with decoding multisyllabic words by using prefixes, suffixes, and looking for little words in big words or breaking apart words into compound words.

In math, we have been working on counting and adding coins. Without access to coin manipulatives, this has been a virtual challenge. To enhance counting ability, regularly practice skip counting by 5's and 10's. You can take turns with your child or count as a family by going around in a circle while in the car or on a walk. Another fun strategy is the “5's Chant”. To do this, one person says the 5 and the other person says the following 10. We are also including links to digital resources to practice counting money.

1. <https://www.nctm.org/Classroom-Resources/Illuminations/Interactives/Coin-Box/>
2. <https://www.ixl.com/math/grade-1/compare-money-amounts>
3. <https://www.ixl.com/math/grade-1/count-pennies-nickels-and-dimes>
4. <https://www.mathlearningcenter.org/apps/money-pieces>

During the week of April 19th, families received information from the second grade teachers regarding our Unit 3 Project via Class Tag. The focus of this project is what causes erosion and what can be done to prevent it. Students will conduct 4 experiments using different materials. After conducting all the experiments, each student will determine which was the most effective in preventing erosion.

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## Third Grade

Third grade has been working hard at researching, reading and discussing some of the major ecosystems on earth. We began with deserts and have just completed rainforests. We learned about climate, species (plants and animals), and their adaptations. We also learned about changes brought about by human activity. We discussed how important the rainforest is to our earth's climate and how deforestation of the rainforest is a big problem for life on earth. Next, we are moving on to the coral reef. We are so excited about learning all about that ecosystem.

In mathematics we have just finished up our unit on time and fractions. We are now starting the next unit on multiplication and division. In writing, we are working on opinion writing. We discussed the difference between facts and opinions, which we all know is an important distinction! Opinion writing will come into play in our study of ecosystems, as we will be writing down our ideas about conservation related to the earth's ecosystems.

We are so excited that the cicadas are coming! Brood X is set to emerge any week now. We hope to use this opportunity to become more appreciative of all species, even big insects! We will be talking a lot about the cicadas in class, and here is an informative article about Brood X from the University of Maryland that you might find interesting:

<https://extension.umd.edu/resource/cicadas>

## Fourth Grade

We have been studying how some human actions have negative effects on the environment. Students chose an 'environmental threat' to write about, telling the impacts of that threat and suggestions for lessening the impacts of the threat. We will soon study forms of energy and make a small model of a device that harnesses renewable energy.

We just finished up Unit 5, which covered Geometry, and we are now moving into Unit 6! Unit 6 will focus on the relationship between multiplication and division. Students will be working on multi-digit multiplication, including 2-digit by 2-digit and up to 4-digit by 1-digit! Students will also be working on dividing numbers up to 4-digits by 1-digit numbers.

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## Special Areas

### Music

In music, we are re-visiting the concepts of melody, with renewed energy since we recently received permission to use our singing voices in the building! Students in all grades are honing their "Curwen Solfege" hand signs, so our virtual learners may participate in performing individually with the in-person learners, and performing as a whole group using musical sign language. Students in 2nd and 3rd grade continue to have fun and learn by using Music Chrome Lab to compose songs using their new learning about melody. 4th Grade students are composing an ensemble percussion piece using the "Flat.io" music notation website. Ask your students what they have been creating! The submissions I've been getting are truly special.

Some students are using their in-person time to perform as an ensemble in our new bucket band. We hope to perform for you at the May 15th Spring Fling!

In Innovation, 3rd grade is working on writing skits to show what they are learning about native species here in Maryland. I have asked students in 3rd grade to use Schoology to record any interesting nature sounds around them and submit on their Schoology Music Course so we can use them in the final video. Thank you for all you do to help support your student's musical learning at Watershed!

## Parent Committee Updates:

### Parent Volunteer and Wellness Committee



Thank you to all of the families who helped plan Teacher Appreciation Week and for your generous contributions of time, talents and financial donations.

Thank you for the time you have given to volunteer opportunities at Watershed this school year. Remember to continue logging your volunteer hours using this form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSciY2MgKs0-e5dhGfwLH3BeKyg7wFzFYpBqHyHZrbUL3uQhHg/viewform>

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Ways to volunteer include but are not limited to:

- Serving on a Committee
- Attending Committee meetings
- Volunteering for opportunities on the school campus as announced
- Assisting with virtual/distance learning (this also extends to family members helping)

If you have questions, please email them to [volunteers@watershedpcs.org](mailto:volunteers@watershedpcs.org).

Our next meeting is on Monday, May 3 at 7 p.m.

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/nfg-wahw-ifw>

Or dial: (US) +1 601-589-1194 PIN: 338 572 555#

Thank you to all of the families who helped plan Staff Appreciation Week and for your generous contributions of time, talents and financial donations.

## **Join Us for a Family Tech Talk Event - 5/11/21 7pm**

Texting, livestreaming, TikTok, Fortnite. Technology is changing fast, and many of us are struggling to stay one step ahead of our kids and learn everything we can about being online. (Not an easy task when most of them know more about it than we do!)

Join us for a virtual Family Tech Talk presentation with an Internet safety expert from Trend Micro, who will share the latest trends, give advice on how to help your child use the Internet responsibly, and answer parent questions in a Q&A session. The Zoom event will be on **Tuesday, May 11 at 7pm**. Meeting link will be provided. Email [Communications@watershedpcs.org](mailto:Communications@watershedpcs.org) with questions.

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WPCS Environmental Action & Facilities Committee will hold weeding sessions to tidy up the school garden on 5/8 from 10am-1pm. Bring your own gloves and weeding tools and direct any questions to Alexia





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Savold (lexiadolce@gmail.com) or Leah Wenck (Straus.wenck@gmail.com)

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Come be a part of our Committee Meetings:

5/3/21 7pm Parent Volunteer and Wellness

5/4/21 6:30pm Parent Communications

5/5/21 6:30pm Events Committee

5/11/21 7pm Environmental Action and Facilities Committee

[meet.google.com/zaa-vywx-oei](https://meet.google.com/zaa-vywx-oei)

5/20/21 7pm Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## WPCS Board Updates:

Watershed Public Charter School is now a Maryland Green School!!

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) is pleased to announce that Watershed Public Charter School has been certified as a 2021 Maryland Green School. Maryland Green Schools are part of a national and international community of sustainable green schools. Our students are becoming better stewards of our Earth's resources and developing a better understanding of their own local environment. There are 672 active Maryland Green Schools, 36% of all Maryland schools.

Our school has demonstrated and documented a continuous effort to integrate sustainable environmental management practices, environmental education curriculum, professional development opportunities, and community engagement into our daily operations. This award signifies that our school has made a commitment to developing stewards of the earth and reducing the environmental impact of our school.

This year outdoor classrooms become part of a prevention strategy for keeping us healthy during the COVID- 19 pandemic. "Our Maryland Green Schools are using the school grounds as an extension of the classroom," said Laura Johnson Collard, MAEOE executive director. "The CDC continues to urge us to spend time outside of buildings to stay healthy."

Thank you to all of our students, families, teachers, administrators and partners for making this awesome achievement possible!

About MAEOE: MAEOE is a non-profit organization. MAEOE's mission is to encourage, engage and empower the community to understand, responsibly use and promote the natural world. MAEOE's Maryland Green School program began in 1999. For a complete listing of Green Schools and Green Centers visit [www.maeoe.org](http://www.maeoe.org).





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](mailto: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.