

# Keepin' Up With WMS

Corona Virus Pandemic Declared March 16, 2020

## We Are All in this Together!

On March 12, we said good bye and told them that we would see them on Monday. We wished our precious students a great weekend!

Then, on Friday during Teacher PD day, we were told to get our lesson plans ready for online teaching just in case.

On Monday, March 16 the governor announced schools are closed. All of a sudden students were learning by themselves, Mom & Dad were either working from home or deemed an essential worker.

Parents, students, teachers, and administrators were all thrown into this new reality!

Our district mobilized offering food, laptops, and a place to call when you need someone to care.

Teachers and students mobilized by using Google Classroom or Plus Portals to stay organized. They stayed connected using Zoom or Google Meet to learn a mini lesson, ask questions, or just hang out.

We first thought this is only for a little while, then came April 21, schools are closed for the entire school year! We have established or new normal until the last day of school. We all miss each other!

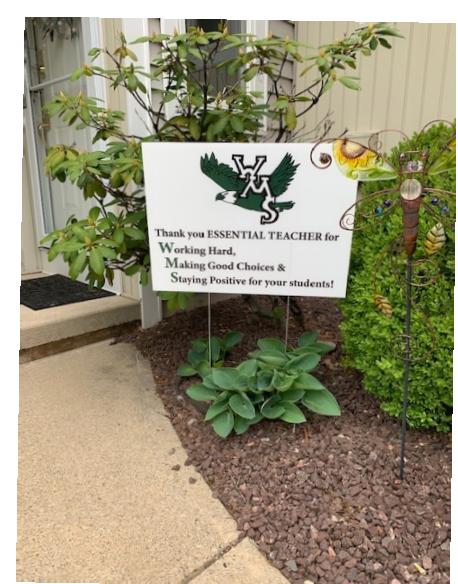
But, we're doing great! We are all working hard, doing our best, because we are all in this together!

The governor recently announced that Massachusetts will reopen in four phases. The Phase 1 plan began on May 18.

We all need to continue to wash our hands, cover our face, and maintain a friendly socially distance of 6 feet.

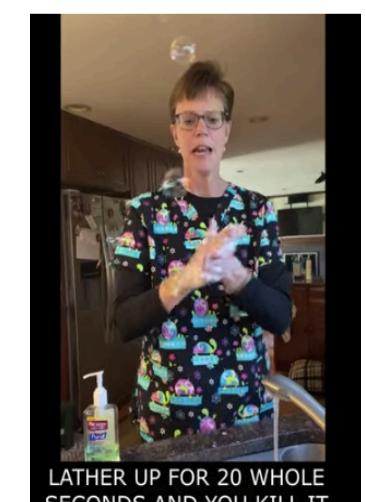


## Highlights of How WMS is in this Together!



Mrs. Greenwood 3\_27

Lara Kirk



Posting Caring Video Messages

# Keepin' Up With WMS



## 8th Grade Celebrates Kindness on Valentine's

By: Kaleigh K.

Our 8th grade students celebrated kindness by designing and crafting friendship dolls then watched the movie The Princess Bride where battling evil leads to a dream come true ending. Throughout this school year, 8th graders being student leaders and role models for students in grades 6 & 7 focused their attention on participating cooperatively with one another while following WMS' core values of Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Caring, and Honesty.

During advisory times, eighth graders learned the value of kindness and friendship. Some groups sent shout outs to teachers, some focused on positive vocabulary words such as compassionate, confident, engaged, excited, grateful, hopeful, inspired, joyful, peaceful, refreshed, and thrilled to name a few. Some formed community circles where the group is posed a question and one at a time, students share their viewpoint while the rest of the circle members listen.

Congratulations 8th grade for spreading kindness throughout WMS!



## What is Valentine's Day?

By: Carley L., Kayleigh K., & Lindsay L.



Valentine's Day is the epitome of love and passion! A whole holiday dedicated to showing how much you care for others, and how much you appreciate them. I hope that this Valentine's Day, you will share your appreciation and love for the ones that mean the most to you.

The origin of the holiday dates back to Roman times, which celebrated appreciations, when it was called Lupercalia. On this day, around mid February, a festival was held for the ones you love. The origin of the holiday dates back to the Roman times, when the coming of spring. But when the 14th century came about, Pope Gelasius changed the ancient festival to the holiday we all know and love, Valentine's Day. When the olden festival was changed to St. Valentine's Day, it started to become more entwined with romance and the celebration of love.

Customary gifts on this day include candy, teddy bears, and roses, but the most famous gift to give by far is a Valentine's card. Named after the holiday, this love letter or just an appreciation card expresses the writer's fondness or respect for the receiver. People of all ages celebrate Valentine's day so help promote kindness at WMS by sending a Valentine! Not all gifts need to be store bought, the gifts that mean the most are the handmade ones that show you truly care. So this Valentine's Day, we encourage you to send a Valentine to show your appreciation!

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We are WMS Strong  
because  
We're All in This Together!



# Performing Arts Winter Concerts

## Strike Up the Band!

By: Victoria H.

The WMS Band Concert was a huge success! From the saxophone trio, to the combined band finale, the band received standing ovations. Our band director, Mr. Cuoco, helped lead the band kids to success and make it a truly amazing concert. He has been teaching for two years now, and he couldn't be happier. "Last year was my first year, and I was so nervous, but after the first concert, all my worries went away." The songs played by the bands were:

**6th Grade:** Penguin Promenade, Mammoth, and Heritage and Reflection

**7th/8th Grade:** Temple of Ka-Uka, Celtic Air and Dance, and El Toro

**8th Grade only:** Prelude to a Festival

**Combined Grades:** Jingle Bells! Samba Bells!

Saxophone Trio: Carol of the Bells

They have been working on these pieces since mid September, and openly expressed their worry towards Jingle Bells. "I didn't expect perfection, but what I got was amazing." The band kids will start learning new music soon. The next concert will be on May 20th, 2020 at 7:00 pm, at Minnechaug Regional High



## Singing From Our Hearts

By: Eva H.

On December 18, Wilbraham Middle School had their first Chorus Concert of the year. It went very well! The auditorium was filled with 750 people at Minnechaug Regional High School. That's amazing! As a group the, 6th and 7th graders sang Hanukkah, Hanukkah Festival of Lights By Douglas E. Wagner, and Shoulda Been a North Pole Elf, words by Andy Beck and Brian Fisher and music by Andy Beck. They sounded amazing with their loud volume! The Combined Choirs sang Let It Go. music and lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez and arranged by Greg Gilpin. They also sang Perfect Christmas Night, words and music by Paul O' Neill, Robert Kinkel and Jon Oliva and Arranged by Greg Gilpin. And finally the 8th grade Choir sang Nuttin' for Christmas By Sid Tepper and Roy C. Bennett and Arranged by Carl Strommen, and Sleigh Ride, words by Mitchell Parish, music by Leroy Anderson and arranged by Mark Brymer. The vocal soloists by grade were 6th grader Laila Hosnander who sang The Christmas Song by Robert Wells and Mel Torme, 7th grader Mike McGrath who sang Mary Did You Know by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene, and 8th grader Cece Sheehan who sang Silent Night (Emmanuel) by Matt Maher. The speaking soloists were 8th grader Abyssinia Haile, 7th grader Anotonia Mascaro, and 6th grader Maddie Dos Santos.

Ms. Marybeth DeForest Choral Director did an amazing job of helping the kids to prepare. To make the concert even better there were live accompaniments, Mrs. Ania Bostock, Piano, Mr. Tom Ingram, Bass/Guitar, Mr. Ed Dupont, Percussion, and Mr. Richard Cuoco, Trumpet and his also the Band Director at Wilbraham Middle School.

## Mark Your Calendars



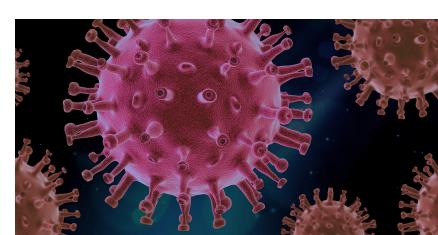
### After School Mini Sessions:

April 29, May 3, 10, 17

**May 13:** Choral Concert  
7pm MRHS

**May 14:** Band Concert  
7pm MRHS

**Cancelled because of  
Covid-19**





## The Philadelphia & Washington DC Field Trip Update!

By: Julianana G.

If you haven't signed up for the Washington ,D.C. and Philadelphia field trip, you should soon because the sights that the 8th graders are going to see will be amazing! We are spending about a day in Philly and the rest of the trip in Washington. Philadelphia, once called the City of Brotherly Love, has the Liberty Bell which has a message behind it from the bible, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." (Leviticus 25:10) The Liberty Bell is a symbol of freedom and justice. Philly is also where the Declaration of Independence and Constitution was signed about 230 years ago! We are visiting, by guided tour, the Independence National Historical Park, where we will see the Liberty Bell Center, a world heritage sight where the Declaration of Independence was adopted and the U.S. Constitution was written. We will be standing in the same building as George Washington once did when he oversaw the debate of the Constitution there for about 4 months in 1787.

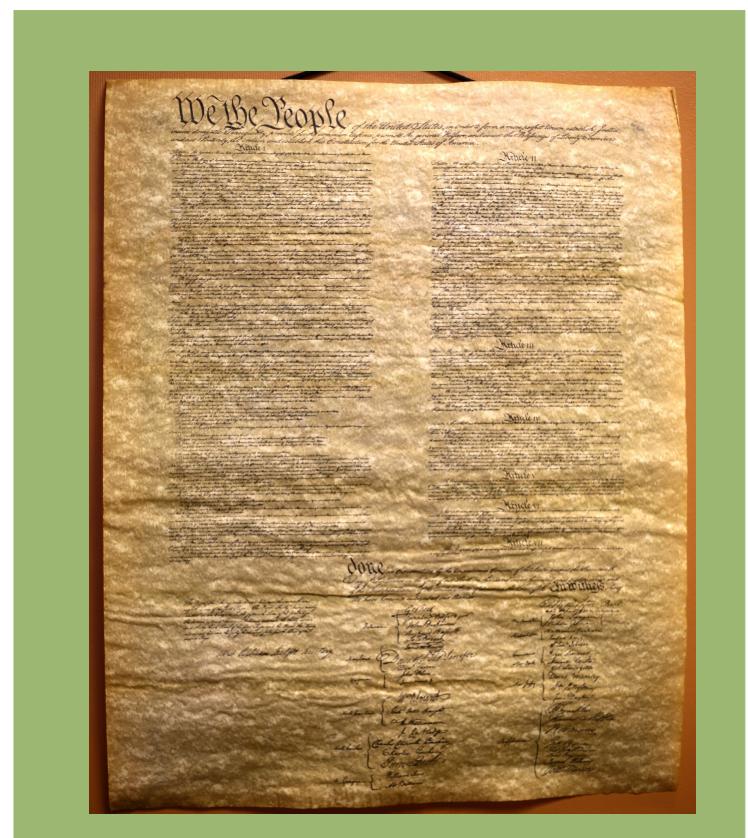
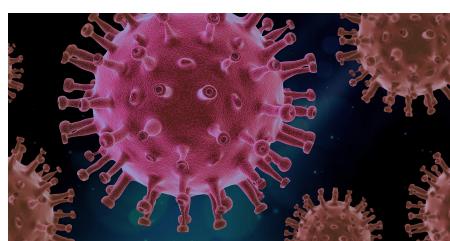
Meals are included with your purchase of the trip. We will be eating lunch in Philly where they have a great Philly cheesesteak! Dinner is in Washington provided by EF Explore America, an organization who dedicates themselves to offer student field trips and educational tours.

If you are concerned with the cost, there are scholarships available. To get one, you can write a letter to Mr. Mazza on why you request one and why you want to go to DC/Philly. They don't give out full scholarships, but they can help! The school committee has already given two students this year, receiving \$300 each toward the trip. We encourage you to sign up if you have not yet. **It's going to be a lot of fun!**



Liberty Bell across from Independence Hall

**Trip Cancelled because  
of**



The Declaration of Independence

### Our Staff

**Writers & Journalists:** Mrs. Slawiak's First Semester Grade 8 Students (8F & 8G)

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**Faculty Sponsor:** Mrs. Slawiak

**Note:** Any WMS student can publish with the approval of their ELA teacher.





## WMS Eighth Grade Student Becomes an Author!

### Book Review: Birds of the Stars by Katja Wurm

By: Lindsay L., Kayleigh K., & Carley L.



Everyone is talking about the new book, written by one of our fellow student, Katja Wurm! We know this book is going to be a bestseller, from the way she effortlessly describes the setting of her majestic fantasy realm, to the way she weaves her own type of magic by making you feel as if you were really amongst the fantastical beings. As part of the writing club, she has been telling her tales since she was in sixth grade. She has a gift of storytelling, the way she captures the attention of an entire school by writing a novel worthy of awards. As for the artistic structure of the book, Trinity Mutti provided the terrific cover art, that captures the very essence of the magic flowing through the pages of the book.

Katja's talent for telling tales doesn't stop there, she developed dynamic characters that feel relatable and almost human like, aside from the fact that they are fantastical. In an interview we asked her what character was by far her favorite creating, "Yanna, a sorceress that is the caretaker for the main character, Meira." Already we can tell what a thrilling book this will be, from a Fantasy genre, action packed adventures are in store!

Meira, the main character in this tale, is young when she is hidden away in the forest. Found in the woods, she is taken to a sorceress, Yanna, whom will be her caretaker until she is old enough to fulfil the prophecy that she was meant to fulfil. We strongly encourage you to pick up this book, and give it a read. The book is available on Amazon and at the Wilbraham Public Library, and if you're lucky, Katja and Trinity will sign it for you. "We are so proud and inspired by Katja!" Says a fellow writing club member. "Always remember to work hard and trust your friend's, because they will always pull you through the rough spots!", Katja reminds us. So anyone who is scared to share their creative writings, don't be! You are you, and you are perfect, so do what you love and bring your dreams to life!

Dear Katja & Trinity: Keepin' Up With WMS sends their sincerest apologies for not publishing your & Trinity photo.

### Life as a Teacher and Singer

By: Kate T.

Mr Cavanaugh, a seventh grade science teacher here at WMS, started playing music at the age of thirteen. When asked why he performed he said "It is fun and it makes people happy." He doesn't like to stick to one genre so he plays rock, heavy metal, pop, and country. But he says his music is mostly like Led Zeppelin. For instruments Mr Cavanaugh plays mostly guitar but he also plays the guitar and the ukulele. His favorite guitarist is Eddie Van Halen of the band Van Halen. One of his favorite songs to play is Hotel California by the Eagles. He performs mostly at local bars, restaurants, festivals, and private parties. I asked him if he was ever in a band and he said yes, he is in two bands right now. His current favorite singer is James T.W whose music is a lot like Ed Sheeran, his most popular song is called "When You Love Someone" reaching number twenty eight on the Billboard charts. A lot of musicians don't like the new music so I wondered what he thought about popular artists like Billie Eilish or Post Malone he said he doesn't like the new music as much as he likes the older music but he keeps an open mind. A lot of times when people want to make it big in the music world think about auditioning for The Voice or America's Got Talent, so I asked him if he ever considered auditioning for them and he said he thought about it but he loves teaching too much and could never give it up and he didn't want to move away from his family. Of course I had to ask if he ever met any famous singers and he has met Aaron Lewis who is the lead guitarist in the band Staind, a rock band formed in Springfield Massachusetts. I asked him if it is hard to be a teacher and a singer like the popular TV show Hannah Montana and he said "Yes, because I'm always tired after working all day."

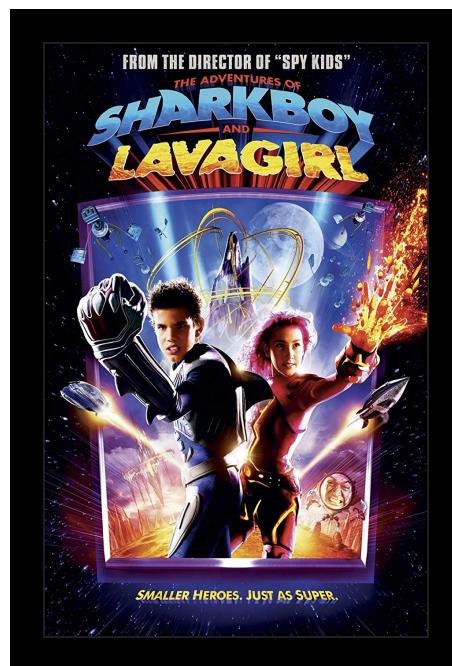




## ~Movie Bash~

### The Adventures of Shark Boy & Lava Girl

Reviewed By: Allison P.

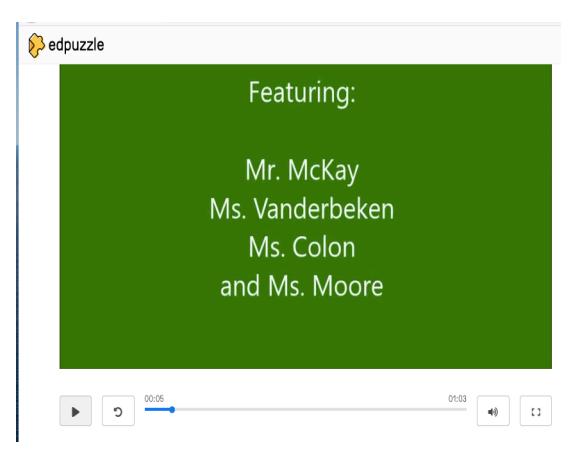
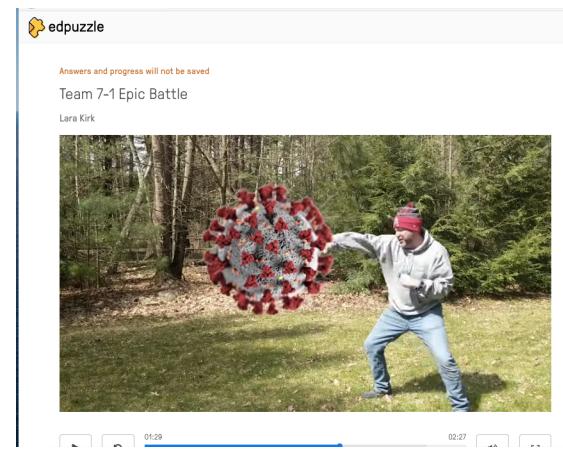
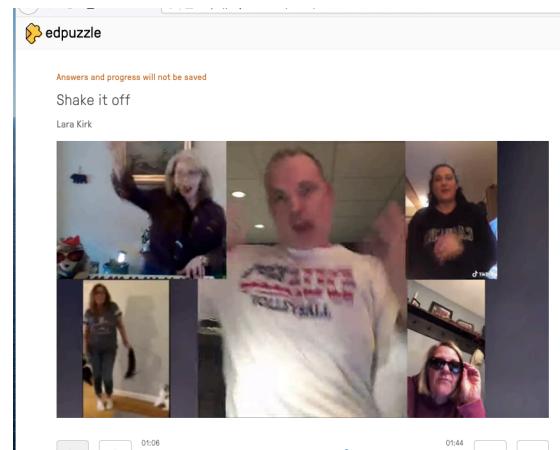
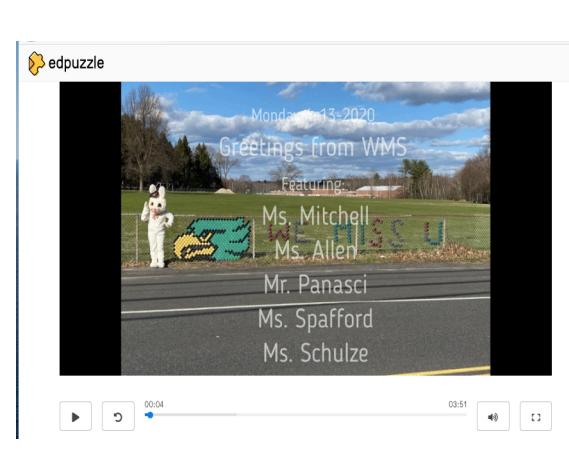
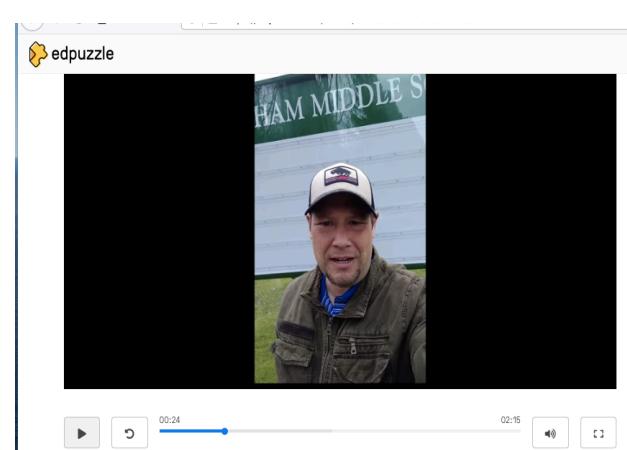
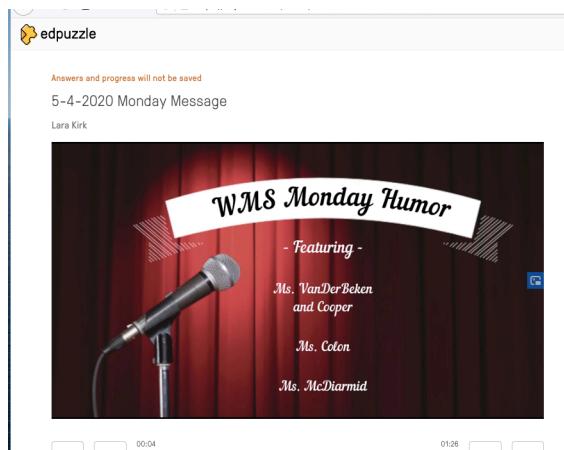


This marvelous movie is a family friendly action movie. It was released in June of 2005 and written and directed by Robert Rodriguez. The main actors in it are Taylor Dooley as Lavagirl, Taylor Lautner as Sharkboy, Cayden Boyd as Max, Sasha Pieterse as Marissa, Jacob Davich as Linus, and Goerge Lopez as Mr. Electric and as Mr. Electricidad. Some supporting actors are David Arquette as Max's dad and Kristin Davis as Max's mom.

The movie is set in Max's home town, Austin, Texas, and in an imaginary place called Planet Drool. Planet Drool is a place that Max dreamt of because he was bullied by Linus when Linus found Max's dream journal. This journal is where Max wrote or drew all of his dreams so he can remember them later. This bullying caused him to be traumatized so his dream world became his reality and his imaginary characters Sharkboy and Lavagirl came to life and lives on Planet Drool. One day they came to Max's school in desperate need of help and Max was the only one who could help them. They took Max to Planet Drool so he could help fight the darkness. The darkness was killing Planet Drool. Since Linus took Max's dream journal Max cannot remember his dreams so he can't help save Planet Drool. Sharkboy and Lavagirl are saying he has powers but they aren't allowed to tell him what they are, he has to find out what the are on his own. The darkness is controlled by evil Mr. Electric who is Mr. Electricidad, Max's teacher. Mr. Electric controls Planet Drool, but Max controls him but he doesn't know.

I would highly recommend this movie because the entire movie contains many adventures, I don't want to spoil it for you. You can stream it on Netflix or you would probably find a DVD of the movie at your local library.

**For Great Entertainment Watch WMS Videos Found on Plus Portals!**



## Mini Sessions

By: Ava S. & Dakota J.

After school mini sessions are all about having fun and hanging out with a variety of students! It's an opportunity for students to have a good connection with an adult at school. One of the best things about mini sessions is seeing the number of different social groups. It's a good way to have fun at school, and not have it be academic.

Paper Quilling is run by Ms. Allen. It is a way of rolling paper to create pictures and designs. It is an amazing creative outlet. Paper Quilling takes a lot of skill to create such intricate pieces of art. This activity helps students stretch their creative mindsets.

Mrs. Tengren runs the card playing club. This session was created to show that math, numbers, and counting can be used in a fun way. One of the many games that will be played is Cribbage. Cribbage involves playing and grouping cards in combinations to gain points.

Dodgeball is a fun way to be competitive with Mr. Murphy. They play mostly traditional dodgeball, but sometimes they like to mix it up. Dodgeball is a team sport where players practice how to have good sportsmanship. Dodgeball is a great way to have fun.

If you like having fun while you workout, try Muscles with Mazza. This mini session is held in the workout room next to the gym. Everyone has a good time while working out with Mr. Mazza's bubbly personality. Everyone has fun, while getting fit.

Creative Writing is a great safe space to share your writing. In Creative Writing students learn about each other and themselves. Ms. Nicotera runs this mini session and loves to read everyone's work. She also edits if a student wants to self publish. The WMS student Katja recently published a book of her own. This mini session has continued to grow throughout the years. Creative Writing is a great outlet to let your imagination run wild!

Overall mini sessions are a great way to have fun at school. The cost is \$10, and the sessions are from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. If your parent can't pick you up a late bus is also available.

Our third round of mini sessions began on March 4. There are lots of new offerings including Karaoke, Pound & Ground, and Magic the Gathering Club.

Have you ever wondered who tends to the needs of the school on a daily basis? Who is in charge of the recycling program? Or who makes sure the building is clean? The person behind these activities is Mr. McKay. Mr. McKay has been an employee in the district for the past eleven years. He spent the majority of that time working at TWB in Hampden before moving over to WMS in 2018. His work day starts early, at 6:00 a.m., and he works long and hard usually past 3:00 p.m. Over the past few years, he has put a great deal of time and effort into improving the waste management programs at WMS. Mr. McKay says one of the most successful efforts has been the recycling program, especially in the cafeteria. "As students, you guys are doing a great job recycling plastic water bottles during lunch.", he said in regards to our recycling success. *(continued next column)*



## Shopping at WMS

By: Jacob F. & John T.

The school store located in our cafeteria is a place where you can buy your school supplies. It is open Monday, and Wednesday during lunches. Beyond school supplies like pens, pencils, and paper, the store sells water bottles, pom poms, and book bags. They have a wide variety of products like clothing items like t-shirts, sweatshirts, and long sleeve shirts. The school store is important because kids need things last second, the store has a price range of the products is 5 to \$15. It usually has at least 50 items in stock. The store has been open for 5 years. Using REACH tickets in the store will be coming soon. If you want to work at the store during your lunch, you can go see Mrs. McMahon in the library for more information on how to work there.

## WMS is the Greenest & Cleanest School Ever!!!

By: Ben L.



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Schulze

The switch from styrofoam trays to fully reusable plastic trays in the lunchroom has helped the trash reduction and recycling movement as well he explained.

Even with the many good things that are going on, Mr. McKay said there are a few things that we as students could improve. He says, "The biggest issue right now is the mistreatment of the bathrooms." Some bathrooms are left messy on a daily basis. This is something that could easily be fixed. If the students act responsibly. He explained that students can best help by saying something if you see something. "This place is pretty much your second home, don't let others mistreat it.", he said. Mr. McKay is one of the most hard working employees in the school. He should be recognized for all that he does for our school. If you see him in the hallways, be sure to give him a thank you.

## Featured Athletes

By: Ann Marie P. &  
Sophia C.



7th grader Audrey, plays basketball and soccer. In soccer, she usually plays defense and in basketball she plays a variety of positions both defense and offense. She plays soccer and basketball because it's fun and she loves spending time with her friends. Audrey says that she wants to learn how to shoot free throws and shooting, which is a foot skill that leads to more goals. Audrey doesn't post on social media but her coaches usually do when they have a game. Before games to get herself ready for the game, her coach tells her to listen to music, and she drinks water during her games.

Audrey's favorite subject in school is Social Studies because she is interested in learning all about the past. In her free time she loves to read and write. She also has a German Shepherd mix dog named Dixie that she plays with outside all year round.

7th grader Liz plays basketball and swims. Liz practices swimming and her favorite stroke is the breaststroke. Liz's coaches are Tim Vanderbeaken, Amy Parent, and Kim Nowicki. She swims because she likes the competition and the fun while swimming. You'll see Liz on the basketball court with her favorite athletic shoes, Nike as a guard. She likes to practice layups before the game to get ready. Her coaches for basketball are Mr. Slattery and Mr. Prairie. Off court, Liz likes to study History.



## Cultural Exchange: African Drums Assembly

By: Mike R.

The African drumming show was held at WMS in the auditorium. They were called the Bamidele Dancers & Drummers. The Bamidele Dancers & Drummers are art educators, composers, musicians, dancers, and choreographers, from Africa, America, and the Caribbean. They are dedicated to the preservation of African and African rooted culture through dance, music, and songs. The members are expertise in African, Caribbean, and Brazilian culture. The main girls name is Marilyn M. Sylla. Marilyn is from America, and received many awards for her dancing and drumming abilities. Marilyn has also taught at many different places all over America and Africa. Another member of the drummers was Sekou Sylla. He has also won some awards for his dancing and drumming. He also teaches everyone all over the world about how important African culture is. Sekou speaks English and is fluent in French, Sou Sou, and Malinke, which are his tribal languages. There was also one other guy that was performing with them. Her could not speak fluent English, but he did speak his own language and taught us how to say some stuff in his language. Marilyn was a very good dancer and she had us get on our feet and start dancing. She also had some people go up onstage and dance onstage for the whole school to see. They performed twice for each grade! They were very fun to watch. African Drumming holds a special symbolic meaning. The drums are called djembe or jembe. They first came to life in the 12th century, the Mandinke tribe (Sekou's tribe) were the ones who came up with the drumming. They were very good and I hope to have another assembly that they could perform.





## Life in Japan

By: Ava M. & Mia K.



7th grade ELA teacher Mr. Pisacane has traveled to over 70 countries. One of his favorites was New Zealand, where there are incredible landscapes, ranging from tall mountains with fluffy snow, to boiling hot springs. He also enjoyed Slovenia, which he describes “as if you’re 200 years in the past”. But the one that really stood out to him was Japan. He lived there from 1998 to 2001. Mr. Pisacane had a love for Japan starting as a young child. He remembers racing inside to watch his favorite anime series, and listening to Japanese music. As he got older he got into Japanese books, and decided to study the language, although he only knew a few words when he decided to move. His decision to move to Japan started when he studied filmmaking in college and took a particular interest in Japanese directors. He eventually graduated and applied for jobs. The interviews for filmmaking jobs were stressful and the some of the interviewers were just plain rude. He thought about his love for Japan, and decided to move and apply for jobs there. When he arrived, he decided to work as an English teacher, but in order to do so, he was instructed to learn Japanese in 6 months, “well enough to do your job” or else he would be fired. This put an incredible amount of pressure on him. He barely learned any in the first month and he was anxious and fearful. However, with hard work and perseverance, he ended up learning Japanese. But his verbal communication wasn’t perfect. He could understand and say a few sentences, but it took about two years to be able to have a casual conversation and understand everything.

When he first arrived, he was terrified. He was “the only non-Japanese person in my town.” It was extremely hard for him to communicate and ask for simple things, like paying bills or asking for directions. He remembers walking into his new apartment and watching Indiana Jones, and having no clue what they were saying. “Thank God I knew that movie so well, or I would have had no idea what was going on,” he said. Understanding the language is one thing, but learning how to read and write was “next to impossible”. When he arrived, he expected the country to feel foreign, but it felt surprisingly familiar. It reminded him of America in many ways. This led him to be more comfortable with the situation.

He went to visit the beautiful city of Tokyo and when he got off the bus, he was amazed. “It was like Disney World,” it was so clean, not a scrap of litter to be seen.

For a city so big, it was incredibly quiet and very safe. “You could walk down a dark alleyway at 3am and you wouldn’t even have to worry.” Something Mr. Pisacane loved about Japan was that everyone was “always very polite and considerate.” The people there would never purposely bother one another, “I was there for seven days, and I only heard one car horn, because they just don’t want to bother anyone.”

Mr. Pisacane’s favorite tradition in Japan was “Hanami”, where people spend hours looking at Japanese Cherry Blossoms. Cherry Blossoms come from large trees that bloom in the Spring, they look like flowers and are different shades of pink. You could bring a picnic and eat next to the trees, while the blossoms would fall around you. He liked them so much that once he got back to America, he planted two trees in his yard. He shared an experience about a festival called “The Great Festival of Fujisaki Hachimangu Shrine” or the “Kumamoto Drunken Horse Festival”. This is held in September every year, and there were dozens of horses in the streets with loud music blaring. The horses were fed large amounts of alcohol, causing them to become drunk and act in a strange way. Mr. Pisacane shared his love for Japanese food. He really enjoyed a dish called “shabu-shabu”. The thin meat they use for this dish is Yakiniku. They would bring a plate of marinated meat to your table, then take the Yakiniku and cook it on a grill that is built into the table. Mr. Pisacane also shared his opinion of the weirdest food there, raw chicken intestine, which he described as “slimy and gross.” Candy in Japan is “gourmet”, as Mr. Pisacane describes it. His favorite was a little box that distributes tiny pieces of chocolate. One last thing he shared about food was convenience store meals. Amazingly, stores like 7-11 had excellent quality foods, it had “really nice sandwiches, and properly cooked food.” And yes, for those wondering, people in Japan do call our food “American food”.

After three happy years in Japan, he decided to move back to America. He misses so much about it. He misses his old friends and he is upset that he is losing touch with them, he says he wants to “reconnect with them in the next few years.” He said if the opportunity came, yes he would move back to Japan, but right now, there are things to take care of, therefore he and his wife will stay in America. He emphasizes that, “I am not anti-American. I just hate how people here think we’re number one and that somehow makes everyone worse than us. We all have good things and bad things. We should respect and appreciate all cultures, not just our own.”

Since he moved back, he has revisited Japan three times and wants to visit again. “Make a point to go to Japan at least once in your life. It will be so worth it.”



## Student Voice



### WMS' Cell Phone Policy: Should Cell Phone Be Allowed in School?

By: Derek S.

The Cell Phone Policy in the Wilbraham Regional School District states that: "Cell phones and any wireless communication devices are to be turned off and put away out of sight during the school day." Should cell-phones be allowed in school? According to familyeducation.com "Most schools now allow students to have cell phones but require them to be turned off during class." While I personally think cell-phones should be a privilege, they can also be a distraction. There are pros and cons to students having their phones with them in school. A pro to students having their phones in school, is that students can text their parents or guardians in an emergency or schedule change; and a con is that they can be a distraction to students who lack self-control, and who are not capable of using their devices responsibly.

I think phones should be a privilege, and students should only be allowed to use them at recess. Recess serves as a time period where students can talk to friends and have fun. Cell-phones can be good for recess because kids can be with their friends and have a good time looking at memes or funny videos. The cons to having cell phones in school is some students can't be responsible with them. A solution is that kids who are not responsible with mobile devices are not allowed to use them, but students who are responsible should be able to use them only for lunch and recess. They serve no purpose in classes and are only a distraction.

Mrs. Hamilton said that "if students have their cell phones out or even in their pockets they are still thinking about it and they can't truly get away from it." She thinks of school as a "place where you can forget what is happening online. If you're getting made fun of online, nobody should have their phones on them in school, so it is a good place to get away from social media and cell-phones."

In conclusion, I think students should be allowed to have their cell phones at recess to have fun with their friends. I hope that when the adults at WMS read my article, that they could consider taking action, such as contacting me to review my research, talk it over with our student council, and eventually consider surveying parents.

**Reference:**

Cohen, Maya. "Cell Phones At School: Should They Be Allowed?". Familyeducation, 2020, <https://www.familyeducation.com/life-cell-phones/cell-phones-school-should-they-be-allowed?slide=1#fen-gallery>. Accessed 16 Jan 2020.

### WMS' Homework Policy: How Much is Too Much?

By: Kaden G.

Is homework really beneficial? Even though it can reinforce learning, it still isn't that beneficial. People have lives outside of school (Sports, Family, etc.). Studies show that kids our age average 3.2 hours of homework. School is a time to be doing work, and out of school is not a good time. Kids have sports, and they want to spend time with their family and friends homework. "A poll of high school students in California found that 59% thought homework was their greatest source of stress, and 82% agreed that they were "often or always stressed by schoolwork."

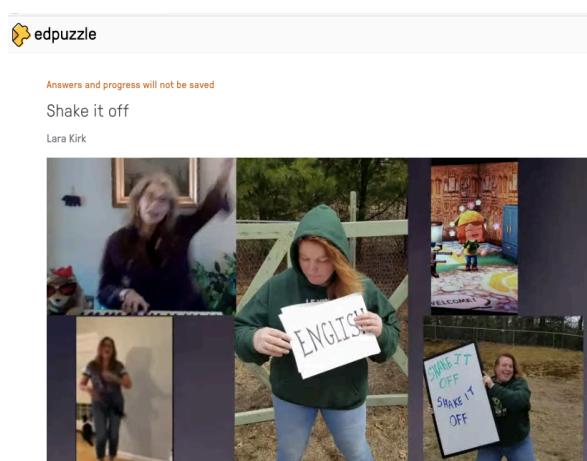
I recently interviewed Mrs. Hamilton, the 7th grade Counselor and asked her some questions. This is what I got: She helps students socially and emotionally. She helps kids with their challenges, social lives, and conflict going on in their lives. She says that homework can be beneficial but there are better ways to educate people out of school. She is against homework. She thinks students receive too much homework, and she thinks students should have no more than one hour of homework a night.

I interviewed the 6th grade math teacher Mrs. Simon, and got different results. She said she is with homework, and it is extra practice for your work. She said no more than an hour of homework a night is a good amount. I think this is a reasonable amount of homework, but it is still too much.

In my opinion, I do not agree with homework. Personally, it gives me too much stress and is unnecessary because we already learn a lot in school. I also don't like the way that teachers hand out homework to students. Most teachers, just print homework papers online and it is really boring. I think if teachers put more effort into their homework they would get more effort from the students.

**Reference:**

"Chicago Tribune - Should Kids Have Homework? The Great Debate Chicago Tribune.com. N. p., 2019. Web. 9 Aug. 2018.



Team 6-1 Agrees - No Homework!



## Grade 6 Students of the Month

By: Afia A. & Abigail D.

**Note:** Keepin' Up With WMS sends their sincerest apologies if any student(s) were left out due to Mrs. Slawiak's class change or the Corona Virus.

Aezlin R. was also one of the select students who was given the title of Student of the Month.

Aezlin is on team 6-2. She enjoys reading and writing, so naturally her favorite class is English. Her favorite book author is Marissa Meyer and one day, she aspires to become an author and have a book published herself, she also wants to be a baker as well. Aezlin's favorite TV show is "Stranger Things", and her favorite movie is "Harry Potter; Order of the Phoenix". Aezlin plays volleyball, basketball, and softball. Aezlin sees her mom as her role model and looks up to her. Over the summer she enjoys spending time with her family and friends. Bright Sea".

Colin S. was one of the select students who won the title of Student of the Month. Colin is on team 6-1 and has Ms. Mahan as his startime teacher. His favorite class in school is social studies with Ms. Kirk. Colin says when he grows up he wants to be an engineer. He also wants to help a lot of people when he grows up. He enjoys playing basketball and golf, and loves to swim over the summer. He also enjoys watching the movie "Home Alone" and his favorite book is "Kid Owner" by Tim Green. Colin admires and looks up to his grandfather.

Cora P. is a member of team 62 was Student of the Month for December. She enjoys reading, social studies, and math and wants to be an amazing volleyball player. She has read 18 books since August 2019 and at the moment does not have a favorite author. Cora's favorite movies are Maleficent 2 and Jumanji 1 & 2. She plays volleyball and gymnastics and sees Simone Biles a 2016 Olympic Gold Medalist for artistic gymnastics as a person that she admires. Over the summer Cora is looking forward to playing outside and swimming. She enjoys spending time with her family and pets Bear and Hugo are her dogs, and Biscuit and Panther are her bunnies.

Daniella M. is a member of team 61 was one of the select students who was given the title of Student of the Month for September. She enjoys reading and her favorite book is Cake Pop Crush by Suzanne Nelson. Daniella wants to be a nurse because she loves helping people. She plays tennis and over the summer Daniella is looking forward to traveling with her parents the people she admires and she enjoys her free time with her pet cat named Nala.

Emma B. is a sixth grade student here at WMS. Emma's favorite subject in school is science and she wants to be an engineer when she grows up. In her life, Emma wants to graduate college and get a good job. Emma plays soccer, she also swims. Over the summer she enjoys swimming, going on vacation, and just being with family and friends. She looks up to parents who she finds very inspiring. Emma has two dogs, Baloo, a Newfoundland, and Sandy, a Golden Retriever. Her favorite movie is "Star Wars", and her favorite book is "Beyond the Bright Sea".

Kelly B. is in sixth grade here at Wilbraham Middle School. He enjoys playing ice hockey and is aspiring to play in college. Over the summer, he likes to practice his skills in the sport by playing street hockey with his neighbor. His role model is Wayne Gretzkey, a former head coach for ice hockey. His favorite movie, no surprise is "A Miracle On Ice". On a different note, he likes "The Lost Rainforest" series by Eliot Schrefer. He also participates on a baseball team and has a canine buddy named Koda.

Kelly C. is a hard working sixth grader who finds herself liking math and English classes. She enjoys hanging out with friends over the summer and she looks up to the WNBA women. Kelly would like to be a professional soccer or basketball player, or a businesswoman. She loves to read the book Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper. Her favorite pet is Louise, her beagle. Kelly likes to watch "Napoleon Dynamite", as it is her favorite movie.

Logan B. is in the sixth grade and is on team 6-2. He loves to do math and it's his favorite subject in school. When Logan grows up he wants to make it to the NFL and be a professional football player. He plays football and basketball and loves to be outdoors. Logan looks up to his father and sees him as a role model. His favorite book is Brave, by Rose McGowan. Logan's favorite movie is "Billie Madison", and his favorite TV show is "The Simpsons". Logan has four pets, three dogs and one cat. Their names are Bare, Buddy, Suess, and Stella.

A special thank you to Olivia R. who coordinated all the writers for our Student of the Month feature. She developed the survey so that all writers could write consistently! She managed the project by a schedule!!!



## Grade 7 Students of the Month

By: Evelyn L. & Emily E.

Note: Keepin' Up With WMS sends their sincerest apologies if any student(s) were left out due to Mrs. Slawiak's class change or the Corona Virus.

Alex W-P's favorite subject in school is Social Studies, and he also plays football and baseball. Someone he looks up to is Alexander Fleming, who was a famous biologist. His favorite TV show is The Arrow, and his favorite book is Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. Although he isn't sure what he wants to be when he grows up, he would like to completely learn Japanese. Over the summer, he enjoys sleeping in, and Alex also has a red footed tortoise name Tullula.

Alison M-R's favorite subject in school is Social Studies, and she likes playing field hockey, basketball, and lacrosse. Her favorite movie is High School Musical, and her favorite book is Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper. Over the summer, she enjoys going to the beach and relaxing. Someone Alison looks up to is her mom. The thing she would like to achieve most in her life is to go to college for teaching, because when she grows up she wants to be a teacher.

Nathan P. likes ELA, but he also has a passion for basketball. Basketball is what he enjoys doing over the summer, the thing he wants to achieve most in life and what he wants to be when he grows up is a pro player, and he also admires Kemba Walker a player for the Boston Celtics. He likes the book Hatchet, and his favorite movie is Jumanji. Nathan also has two dogs, Bear and Hugo.

Skylar W-M really loves ELA, but she also wants to be a biochemical engineer, and wants to aim high for what college she goes to. She also likes playing basketball and participating in track and field. At home, she has a dog named Duke, and she looks up to her mom. To relax over the summer, she likes to swim in her pool and hang out with her friends. She likes watching "The Office", and her favorite movie is 13 going on 30. Skylar also loves the book Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger.

A special thank you to Olivia R. who coordinated all the writers for our Student of the Month feature. She developed the survey so that all writers could write consistently! She

Taylor M-M's favorite subject is Social Studies. She is very passionate about gymnastics, she practices over the summer, she wants to get to do gymnastics in college, and she looks up to Simone Biles, who is an American Olympic gymnast. But, she also wants to be an orthodontist when she grows up. Her favorite movie is The Parent Trap, and her favorite book is Refugee. Taylor also has a dog named Elsa.

Ethan P-C's favorite subject is math. His favorite book is The Book Thief by Markus Zusak and his favorite movie is Aquaman. Over the summer, he likes to play sports. He plays baseball and swims. When he grows up, he wants to graduate college and become a lawyer. He looks up to his mom, and has a dog named Gracie and a cat named Fiona.

Ian W-M's favorite subject in school is Math. His favorite movie is "Dark Crystal", and his favorite TV show is also Dark Crystal. His favorite book is Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card. Over the summer, he enjoys going to camp. He does mixed martial arts and acting. When he grows up, he wants to be either an engineer or a lawyer, and would like to successfully make a hydro-electric power train one day. He has a dog named Alex, and looks up to Sam O'Nella.

Marissa B-T's favorite subject in school is math. She has two dogs, Bella and Bentley. Her favorite movie is "The Lion King" and also likes the TV show "Hannah Montana". Her favorite book is The War That Saved My Life by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. Over the summer, she enjoys going to the beach. She does gymnastics and looks up to Simone Biles, an Olympic gymnast. When she grows up, she wants to go to college and become a surgeon.

Sofia V-C's favorite subject in school is science. Her favorite TV show is "Lost In Space", and her favorite book is Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls. Over the summer, she enjoys sports, reading, and going to the beach. For sports, she swims and plays soccer. When she grows up, She wants to become a successful anesthesiologist. She has two Siamese snowshoe cats, Hanna and Lily. The person she looks up to is her brother.



## Grade 8 Students of the Month

By: Afia A., Paige H. & Mary H.

**Note:** Keepin' Up With WMS sends their sincerest apologies if any student(s) were left out due to Mrs. Slawiak's class change or the Corona Virus.

Aby H. is in Mrs. Powell, team 82 math teacher and star time. In school she enjoys the subjects math and science the most. During the summer she enjoys vacationing and visiting her family and friends. Aby looks up to Ben Carson, an American Politician. Her favorite TV series is "Grey's Anatomy" and her favorite movie is "Hidden Figures". Aby's favorite book is The Selection and her favorite author is Kiera Cass. Becoming a doctor is what she would like to achieve most in life. In her free time, the sports she enjoys to play are soccer and field hockey. When she grows up she would like to be either a general or pediatric surgeon.

Erika P. who became Student of the Month in November is a member of Ms. Walulak's startime and team 81. She enjoys Science class, playing volleyball, and she enjoys her Black lab named Hudson. Erika looks up to her parents and admires their success in their chosen professional worlds. Erika aspires to become a doctor and she dreams of it weekly while watching her favorite television show, "Grey's Anatomy". She looks forward to the summer when she can enjoy swimming, hanging out with her friends and chilling.

Gabe T. is in Ms. Moore's star time. His favorite subject in school is Spanish class. Over the summer he enjoys playing hockey with his friends. Hockey is also his favorite sport. The one thing he would like to achieve most in life is to make the NHL. In life, he looks up to Ms. Moore, his star time and ELA teacher. He has a dog named Max.

Katja W. is in Ms. Schulze's startime. Over the summer she enjoys reading, swimming, and hiking. Her favorite movie is "The Tale of the Princess Kaguya" and her favorite TV show is "Fairytale". Her favorite book is The Shadow and Bone Trilogy. When she grows up she would like to be an author. She plays volleyball and dances. She would like to graduate college and have a good job one day. She has a cockatiel named Fred. In life she looks up to her Oma and Opa.

Lylah J. who became Student of the Month in October is a member of Mrs. Hokanson star time and team 81. She enjoys her Spanish class, playing soccer and basketball and her dog named Boomer. Lylah looks up to her older sister because she is her role model. Her favorite book is Wonder by R. J. Palacio. Her favorite movie is "Five Feet Apart", and her favorite television show is "The Vampire Diaries". She wants to become a physical therapist for athletes. She looks forward to the summer when she can enjoy hanging out with her friends and family activities.

Mary Heinold is in Mrs. Hosnander's startime. During the summer, she enjoys to sleep in. Her favorite subject in school is social studies. Her favorite movie is "Captain America: The First Avenger". She would like to graduate college later in life. Her favorite book is The Hobbit by JRR Tolkein. She plays field hockey and she also wrestles. She has two cats named Harley and Sushi and a hamster named Willow. She looks up to her sister, Clare.

Nick P. is in Ms. Moore's star time. His favorite subject in school is social studies. In the summer, he enjoys swimming. Nick's favorite movie is "Dumber and Dumber". His favorite author is Gordon Korman. The sports he enjoys are soccer, basketball, lax and wrestling. He has two dogs named Enzo and Vito.

Siena D. is in Mrs. Schulze's star time. Her favorite subjects in school are math and social studies. During the summer, she enjoys going to the beach. Her favorite movie is "The Art of Racing in the Rain" and her favorite TV show is "Supernatural". Siena's favorite book is The Siren by Kiera Cass. She plays volleyball. She also has three bunnies named Oreo, Ginger, and Maple. She has two other fish named Bob and Marley. She looks up to her neighbor Sophia. She wants to work in the law field when she grows up.

A special thank you to Olivia R. who coordinated all the writers for our Student of the Month feature. She developed the survey so that all writers could write consistently! She



## At WMS We Celebrate Student of the Month

### Grade 6



### Proud Parents



### Grade 7





## At WMS We Celebrate Student of the Month

Grade 8



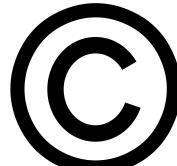
Proud Parents





## The Ethics of Copyright

By: Jackson D.



Did you know that if you are a creator of a tangible expression then you are protected by copyright? Copyright is a law that protects the creator of a tangible expression and gives them the right to say how other people can use it. If someone breaks the law or infringes on a copyright then they will have to go to court. If they are guilty then they will have to pay a large amount of money to pay for the damages. Copyright protects literary works, musical works (Musical works can include sheet music, musical lyrics and many more), dramatic works, motion pictures, sound recordings, dance, software, architecture and many more. Under certain circumstances then it is ok to use a part of someone's work, this is called fair use. If you go to copyright.gov you can apply, it takes three months and it costs \$35.00 for a copyright. A copyright can last 70 years.

If someone takes a portion of a creative work, they can end up in the court of law. A famous example is the song "Blurred Lines" by Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams, they got sued by Marvin Gaye's family for \$5.3 million because the beats sounded similar. Copyright is important for you because having access to a digital equipment speeds up the creative process. However copyright doesn't protect everything. For example, if someone has a YouTube channel and they sing on it, it is not protected by copyright anyone can use it. So remember if you create a tangible expression then you should get it copyrighted to be protected.



## Technology



## Google Drive and the Importance of File Management

By: Aren B.

I've organized my Google Drive in my Info Tech class and I've got to say, I like it. It isn't very in depth and it's super easy. It's just folders with documents and files in them. And you can even add more folders in folders. An organized Drive is really easy to navigate and access in quick situations. Formatting and organizing your Drive and files are very important.

My Drive for this school year is very organized. The beginning is a 2019-2020 School Year folder and if you go into that folder you'll see all of my blocks from A→E and even Information Technology. Within those folders are various documents from science posters and english essays, but everything is well organized and I can find my files in a flash.

There are many ways that an organized Google Drive could help. For instance, you're walking home from school at 2:30 knowing you have baseball practice at 3:30. You have an english assignment that will take a while. You'd like to get it done as soon as possible so you get your laptop. Luckily, your Google Drive is organized and you can finish your assignment without looking for 15 minutes.

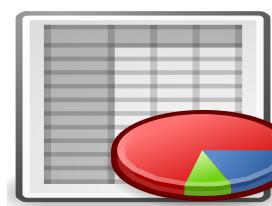
There are so many situations when an organized Google Drive could help you. I urge you to organize your files and Drives. It's really easy to navigate and work on things. You never know. It may really help you in high school.



## Express Your Creativity with Google Slides

By: Keegan D.

If you ever need to make a presentation for any class Google Slides is a go to resource. You can even use it on any device such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, and PCs so if you ever need to add a last minute fix on the bus or in the car, you can use your phone. And you can collaborate with friends if you are doing a group project you don't need to be on the same device you can share the project with your group. You can even search for things you need without opening a new tab you can use explorer built into Google Slides. And you don't even have to type in black and white you can use any colors and any fonts you want to use. Another cool feature that Google Slides that you can use is you can insert pictures into your slideshow. You can also insert audio whenever you need it. You can also insert a video or even draw your own picture by using shapes. You can also insert a table or a chart so if you need to make one for a math or science project you can insert any size you want. And a very cool feature is word art you can make any shape and any color and size. You can never even spell a word wrong again by using spell check. And even if you don't know what something means there is a built in dictionary. And even if you prefer not to type and you prefer to talk then you can use voice typing. And there is built in help so if you need training you can use the built in help. Another great feature in Google Slides is word art. In word art you can change the color and even the font of your work. The information that I used came from Google. So after reading this I hope you decide to use Google Slides for your next presentation.



## Technology

### Google Sheets

By: John F.

Google Sheets is one of the most useful Google applications that students can access from any Google account. Google Sheets is so useful because it makes it much easier for people to organize data because the spreadsheet is an electronic document arranged in rows and columns to form a grid. This grid enables you to organize text and numbers in a table format, and visualize data in the form of graphs. The most common used graphs are line graphs, pie charts, bar graphs and time lines. Furthermore, using Google Sheets enables you to perform simple calculations, like adding subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, as well as find measures of central tendency, including mean, median, and mode. For more complex math, Google Sheets has many built in functions and built in formulas to calculate or analyze your data.

Another great feature you can use in Google Sheets, is the application's ability to convert numbers into money or percentages. The conditional formatting feature allows you to analyze data easily. All you need to do is select a rule that applies to your data and select a color, which makes the entire cell of the data that applies become highlighted for easy recognition.

Nevertheless, I would strongly recommend using Google Sheets anytime you need to analyze data with accuracy and precision from a project in any one of your classes, and in many careers such as accounting finance, engineering, marketing, sales management, and general management.



### Stay Organized with Google Keep

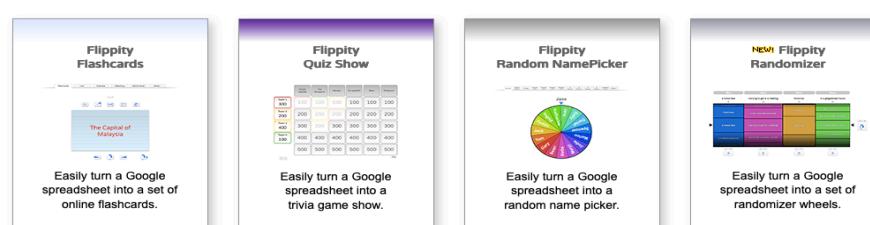
By: Nate B.

Google Keep is an application that ranks third in the world for note taking. You can create and keep their notes on. Google Keep allows note-taking in the form of images, text, lists, and audio. It is available on cell phone platforms Android, iOS, and computers. You can use color and labels to organize your notes for each subject. Google Keep users have the opportunity to color-code their notes with organize them. Another good factor about Google Keep is they have an autosave feature which is very nice because it's more efficient and quicker. Using Google Keep can sync all of your notes from multiple devices so while you're shopping you can use your cell phone instead of bringing a laptop. There is also another amazing factor about Google Keep which is sharing. If you are absent, your friends can share their notes with you. You can access Google Keep notes and reuse them for an assignment using docs, slides, and sheets. You don't have to write the same thing twice, and you can finish assignments quickly easily. As you can see, Google Keep is an app that is helping you be organized so you can do well and have an efficient life.



### Create Study Games with Flippity

Flippity.net turns Google spreadsheets into a cool study tools. For example you could turn a spreadsheet into flashcards or a wordsearch. To add Flippity, click the "add-ons" button on the menu bar. Then search for "flippity". Click the free button and your done. This is very useful for studying and I personally use it! Flippity is similar to quizlet, but easier to set up. There is also a lot more templates to choose from. Here are some other types of tools and games you can do: word search, crossword puzzle, word scramble, quiz show, hangman, and even make a mix and match game. Flippity is a really cool and useful tool I would strongly recommend it. Keepin' Up with WMS uses it for our crosswords and word search puzzles!



A few examples of what games you can create with Flippity.net.

## At WMS, We...



Participate in Parades  
Just to See YOU!



Become Artists After School  
with Friends!



Dare to Act Silly,  
Just to Entertain you!



Join in the  
Cultural Exchange Fun!

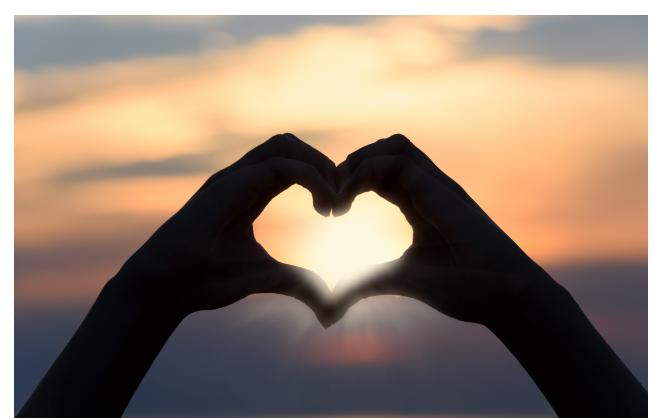
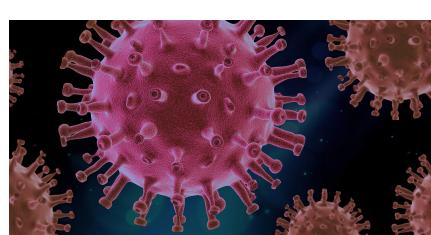


We Compete Academically

Congratulations Ben L., WMS School champion winning the National Geographic Geography Bee!

Ben would have represented WMS at the MA state level, but the event was:

**Cancelled because of  
Covid-19**



## At WMS, We...



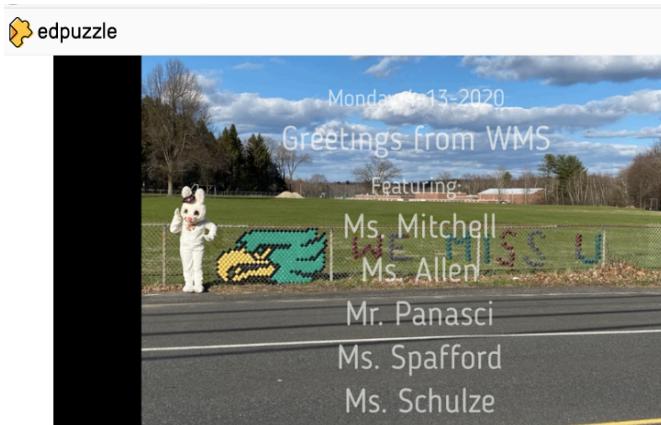
Display Our Art on WMS' Walls



Advocate for a Cleaner World!



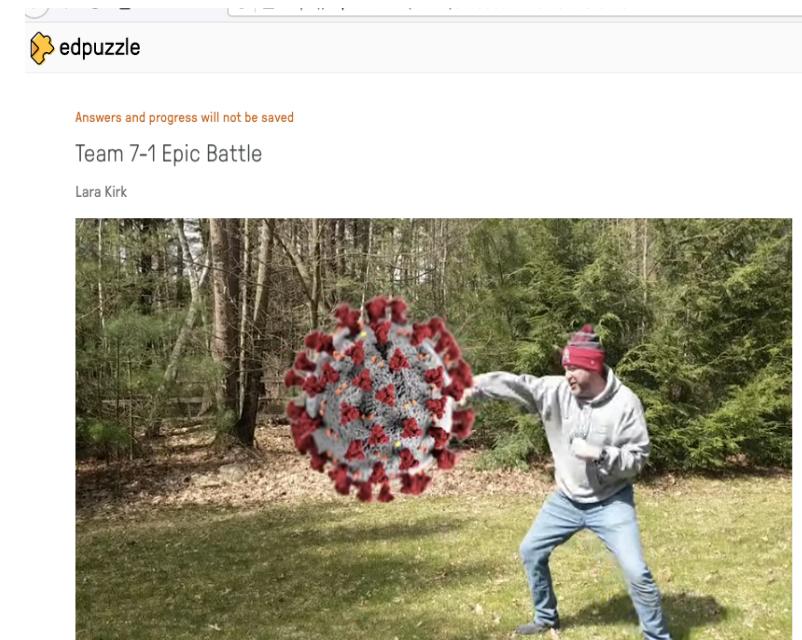
Learn Robotics to Prepare for High School



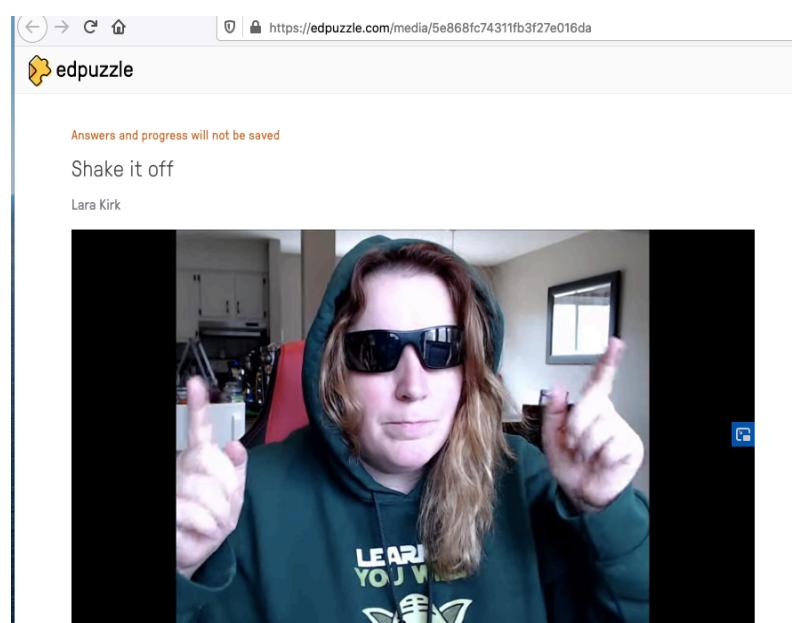
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# Just for Fun!

# Word Search

By: Evan C.



# Crossword Puzzle

By: Dan R.



Word Direction: → ↓ ↘ ↙

## Clues

- Cards ◦ candy ◦ hugs ◦ pink ◦ teddy bear
- February 14 ◦ chocolate ◦ kisses ◦ red
- St. Valentine ◦ cupids ◦ love ◦ romance
- Valentines Day ◦ hearts ◦ love songs ◦ roses

### Across

4. A symbol of love
5. Febuary 7th
6. Cupid
8. Febuary 13th
9. Febuary 10th
10. Febuary 9th
11. Teddy bear
13. Valentines day

Down

1. Febuary 12th
2. Febuary 8th
3. Febuary 11th
6. Heart
7. What valentines day is all about
12. The opposite of love

