



Wanamassa Elementary School

October 1, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the month of October! We are now a few weeks into the 2020-2021 school year and it has been a start like no other. Thank you for all that you are doing for our students and staff, it is appreciated and necessary in these uncertain times. It was fun to hear the students' summer stories over the past few weeks and I'm thrilled that many happy memories were created this past summer. There will be many more happy memories created this school year as well. I can't tell you how great of a feeling it was to see the students come back to school in person. It is fuel for the soul. I know you are thrilled as well and like me, can't wait to get back to normal. I am happy that our district has opened, while many others haven't. We certainly have our challenges, but we will continue to be patient, flexible and work together.

Please see the important information below:

Fire Drill

We had our first two fire drills (one with each cohort) over the past week and students and staff did an excellent job. We need to practice a fire drill and another safety drill each month. For the first few drills, they will be announced so that students and staff can acclimate to new procedures and ease back into preparing for an emergency.

Bikers

It is awesome to see so many students and parents bike to and from school each day. We will be putting another bike rack on the other end of our campus (near the library entrance) for those that ride down Bendermere Avenue, east to west. This way, one doesn't have to ride through the front of the building area during those busy arrival/dismissal times.

– **Tweet**

Do you have a Twitter account? If so, please follow [@WanamassaElem](https://twitter.com/WanamassaElem). You will be informed of school events, important information, school closings, pictures, educational resources, the promotion of student and staff achievements, etc. We look forward to sharing the successes of our students with you and building on our positive school culture. This Twitter account is being used to send information out to our followers. If you have a school question or concern, please contact the appropriate staff member via the phone or email.

Open House

Open House was originally scheduled for Monday, September 14th. As mentioned in my Opening Week Zooms with parents, we will obviously not have a formal program in person. In lieu of the traditional Open House, your child's homeroom teacher will schedule a parent only Zoom/Google Meet to discuss curriculum, the start of the school year, expectations, etc. There still is a lot of uncertainty, but the staff can share some important information and resources with you about your child's school year. If

you haven't already heard from your child's teacher, they will be in touch soon. I realize many of you have communicated with the teachers over the past month in many ways and my hope is that we get back to normal as soon as possible.

Week of Respect & School Violence Awareness Week

Throughout the state of NJ, the Week of October 5th is designated as **The Week of Respect** and the week of October 19th is designated as **School Violence Awareness Week** (we refer to it as "School Safety Week"). Our continued goal is to provide a safe and orderly environment for students and to promote the other three "R"s in education: Respect, Responsibility and Relationships. There will be a number of activities throughout these next few weeks that will focus on safety, kindness, respect, etc.

Each year we expect our young learners to be respectful, kind and responsible for their actions. A combination of admonishment, appropriate guidance, important feedback and even discipline can be used for those that do not follow our school rules and code of conduct. So far, student behavior, actions, feedback, etc. has been extremely positive, and I am so proud of their resiliency during these difficult times.

This upcoming week students are encouraged to take part the following:

Wanamassa Elementary School
Week of Respect
October 5th-9th

Monday: (5th)
"Sock it to bullying"
Wear your favorite or craziest socks

Tuesday: (6th)
"We are all a team" -
Wear your favorite team jersey or colors

Wednesday: (7th)
"Dreaming of Kindness" -
Wear your pajamas

Thursday: (8th)
"Peace, Love, and Kindness" -
Wear tie dye, colorful clothing, or dress in a 70s peace theme

Friday: (9th)
"We might all be different, but we are all Spartans" -
Wear school spirit or school colors

Parent/Guardian/Care Giver Protocol for Virtually Learning

To maintain a positive, productive learning environment and assure confidentiality for students and teachers during distance learning, all parents/guardians are asked to follow the following privacy guidelines.

- Google Meet/Zoom virtual sessions are designed for students. To prevent disruptions to the learning environment, parents/guardians should not actively participate in sessions, although parents/guardians may assist their child with technology and/or remain nearby. Students should be the ones engaging with their teachers and class when they have questions or providing responses.
- Do not video record, audio record, photograph, live stream, or transmit in any other way any part of a Google Meet/Zoom virtual sessions, including not posting on any social media platform.

- Any confidential or personally identifiable information related to students participating during Google Meet/Zoom virtual sessions should not be collected, discussed, or shared.
- Parents/guardians should not engage with other students or teachers during Google Meet/Zoom sessions. If you need to speak with your child during a session, first mute your child's microphone.
- If a parent/guardian has a question, please email your child's teacher.

Parents/guardians should email your child's principal with any questions or concerns regarding privacy or virtual classroom expectations. Thank you for your support and cooperation in ensuring that distance learning is a positive, productive, and enjoyable experience for all participants.

PTA

A letter was emailed yesterday with important information. Please take a moment to read through it, if you haven't already done so.

I enjoyed speaking to many of you during those September Zoom presentations a few weeks ago. I can honestly say, things have moved along better than I expected. Morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal have been seamless, students seem so excited to be in school and we are dealing with many technological issues and problems as we are made aware of them. One thing I know is that our incredible staff is teaching in a way that is so difficult. There will be issues, especially with technology every day. Students will have trouble logging in, someone can be bumped off, teacher presentations can be affected by so many different issues. With most of America utilizing these online platforms, there will undoubtedly be problems each day. Nonetheless, the teachers are committed to helping you help your child, in school and at home. I just ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate this school year.

Remember, children of any age become motivated and stay interested if their parents exhibit sincere interest in what they are doing and are supportive of the school's efforts; so please demonstrate a positive attitude toward school. You are your child's most important role model, and positive comments toward education are those from which your child will benefit the most. That is more apparent now than ever before.

It's my 11th year here at Wanamassa Elementary School. It started as an unknown, but with each day we are seeing more and more successes. There will be difficult "pockets" of time for all of us. I ask again for your patience, understanding and support. I hope that everyone has a positive outlook this year. This is truly a very special school, community, and I wish everyone a wonderful Fall season and school year. Thank you for all you do to assist us in educating your children. I am happy and proud to work with you, the staff and our children.

Sincerely,

Victor R. Milano

