

# WILDCAT WATCH

Volume 10  
January 28, 2009

## Mr. Hunsinger's Wildcat Wisdom

Winter weather is here and we will be sure to have some crazy weather in the next few weeks. Stay safe and warm and continue to check your weather reports so you will be prepared for possible early closing and school cancellations.

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I appreciate the large response regarding the redistricting committee. We have had more than 20 people send in the form to be on the committee. We drew four names for the committee, and we wanted to be sure we had no two representatives from any one area or development. As it turned out, we have four parents and a staff member on the committee. The parents on the HWES team with the area of our school they represent are as follows: Andrew Maly-Cordell (Homestead Village); Tim O'Donald (Brentwood Park); Beth Fisher (Scots Fancy) and Kelly Nelson (Ponderosa Estates). If for some reason someone selected for the team cannot carry out the assignment, I will pick someone else from the applicants. Ms. Conley, a third grade teacher at HWES, will also be on the team. We will do all we can to share information regarding the redistricting in HCPS and the timeline they hope to follow.

The proposed redistricting initiative schedule will be:

Conduct focus group meetings to determine requirements -- 1/5 - 2/15/09

Staff analyze data; formulate recommended modifications to affected attendance area boundaries - 2/09-6/09

Present recommendations to affected regional focus groups -- 6/09 - 8/09

Revise/modify recommended modifications to affected attendance area boundaries -- 6/09 - 1 1/09

Present recommended modifications of affected attendance area boundaries to Board of Education 11/09-12/09

BOE conducts public hearings -- 1/10 - 2/10

BOE approval -- 3/1/10

Implement phase I -- 3/10-8/10

Implement phase II -- 3/11 - 8/11

Review/adjust/modify if necessary.

For updated information check [www.hcps.org](http://www.hcps.org).

(Click "Elementary Redistricting" button on lower left under navigation links.)

Available data:

enrollment data; annual growth report; subdivision data; transportation policies; school profiles; Title 1 schools; BRAC information; current attendance area maps; redistricting process/timeline; Pre K- program listing and capital improvement timeline.

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On February 6, report cards will be sent home. Please be sure to carefully look at the information and discuss it with your children. I appreciate the time and effort this staff has placed into each of the report cards. If there are questions or comments, be sure to address them in the space provided on the report cards.

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If you have a child who is part of an after school program like YMCA, Celebree and others, make sure you know the plans for weather-related late starts and early closings.

## Dates of Importance

February 3	Redistricting Committee -- 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Aberdeen CEO
February 6	Report Cards Out
February 13	Early Dismissal
February 16	Closed – President's Day
February 17	PTA Meeting -- 9:30 a.m. -- Homestead Media
February 20	Book Fair Preview Night and Game Night Homestead Building - Specifics out soon from PTA.
February 23	Book Fair Week in Homestead and Wakefield Buildings - Schedules out before 2/23.

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## Education Week Report: When students miss class time, learning suffers

David E. Marcotte and Steven W. Hermelt, both researchers at the University of Maryland, reviewed 20 years of state reading and math test data to determine if missed school days affected students' scores. Every day a child is out of school, for whatever reason, his or her learning achievement suffers.

When students miss school due to illness or other reasons, some will fill in the missed instruction on their own, some will stumble but recover and some, unfortunately, will stumble, falter and be confused for the remainder of that unit. Regardless, learning suffers.

You can read the entire Education Week article at <http://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/nation-at-risk-25-years/index.html>.

## Important Dates for Parents of Students Grades 3 through 5

The Maryland State Assessment (MSA) will be given this year on the dates as follows:

Third grade: March 18, 19, 24 and 25

Fourth grade: March 16, 17, 23, and 24

Fifth grade: March 17, 18, and 19

Every child in the state of Maryland is required to take the MSA. If they are sick and unable to be in school on one of the test days, they will take a make-up test on the day they return to school. This pulls them out of instruction time which means they have that work to make-up. If a child is ill, they need to be at home, but please do all you can to have your child to school on time during these testing days. All parents/guardians will receive a report of their child's test scores.

Fifth grade students will take the Science MSA online between the dates of April 22 through May 12.

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They Say It's Your Birthday... The Homestead-Wakefield Elementary School Media Centers would like to welcome the newest Birthday Book Club Members for the month of January. The following people had birthdays recently and their parents purchased books for the libraries in their honor. The books they selected display a special plate with their names on the inside cover. Happy Birthday and a big Birthday Book Club welcome to the following students:

**Grade K:** Joseph B, Jacob H, Angelina M, Alexandria P, Connor S,  
Natalie W

**Grade 1:** Alex C, Samantha C, Paula M, Sophia P, Yianni P,  
Jenna T

**Grade 2:** Alexis A, Addie K, Nathan R, Emily S, Timmy S,  
Billy T, Hannah Y

**Grade 3:** Kevin L, Jack McG, Juliette M, Audrey M, Gabby  
S, Tim T

**Grade 4:** Jack D

**Grade 5:** Blake M

If your birthday is in February, NOW is your chance to join the Birthday Book Club. May will be the last Birthday Book Club of the 2008-09 school year. Ask your teacher or school librarians (Homestead Building: Mrs. Walker; Wakefield Building: Mrs. Miller) for an application today!

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### GT News from Mrs. Limpert

#### **National Geographic Geography Bee**

Congratulations to the National Geographic Geography Bee finalists and winners. In December, the preliminary bee was held to determine our finalists. The top 10 finalists competed in the final rounds of the National Geographic Geography Bee in January to determine our school winners. **Congratulations to Matthew S, our school Geography Bee for 2009.** Congratulations also to our second place winner, **Jared O** and to our third place winner, **Jack C-W**. The following students were our remaining Geography Bee finalists...

Casey K- Ms. Lyons  
Thai N- Mrs. Rosso  
Zach C- Mr. DeHart  
Noah R- Mrs. Hoch

Julie B- Mrs. Leon  
Grace C- Mrs. Leon  
Tarek A- Ms. Lyons



#### **Engineering Challenge Underway**

In April, several students from Homestead to participate in the Maryland Engineering Challenge to be held at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. Our two teams to enter the challenge will all be required to design and build a working theme park ride model using recycled materials. Good luck to the following students...

Andrew B- LaRue  
Jack A- Miller  
Daniel W- Coppage  
Wilson P- Bohlman

Jonathan N- DeHart  
Logan D- Healey  
Jack S- Bohlman  
Adam C- DeHart

#### **Science Fair Coming Soon!**

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are busy preparing for the annual science fair to be held on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Please mark this date on your calendars- parent visitation is from 1pm-3pm that afternoon. If you have questions regarding the fair or student projects, please feel free to e-mail anytime! [deborah.limpert@hcps.org](mailto:deborah.limpert@hcps.org)

**TRASH FREE TUESDAYS ARE HERE!** We're doing our best to cut down on solid waste, and we are asking that students bring lunches to school that are trash free! All students are encouraged to continue with our tradition of packing trash free lunches on Tuesdays and everyday!

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#### **Music News**

Third graders have started their recorder unit. Students are working hard learning their music notes and practicing their skills at home. All students will be participating in "Recorder Karate", a program which rewards students at different achievement levels with colored strings on their recorders. Within the next week your child should show off their first belt – WHITE. A concert will be presented in June to the parents celebrating our accomplishments.

Please encourage your child to remember their recorder on music days.

#### **Upcoming Music Dates:**

February 18 - String Day - daytime field trip and 7 p.m. concert for 5th grade string students

February 24 - Band Day - daytime field trip and 7 p.m. concert for 5th grade band students

May 6 - 5th grade Spring Concert, 7 p.m. at Patterson Mill MHS

May 27 - 4th grade Spring Concert, 7 p.m. at Homestead gym