

# Whittier Wildcat News

WHITTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



January 2020

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 5

## From the Principal

Happy Holidays Whittier Families! Thank you for your amazing support at Whittier to help each student succeed every day, and I wish you a joyful and restful two-week winter break as we finish 2019! Thank you for your support in attending Whittier's 2019 Holiday Concert earlier this week. It was an incredible evening for everyone who attended the event and it was such a special and meaningful moment for our students. We really appreciate the organization and leadership provided by Mr. Spencer for putting on a great holiday show, and we loved seeing our Whittier students shine on the big stage. We will certainly miss Mr. Spencer's leadership in directing the performances, but we are fortunate that he will still be able to serve our school, students, and families for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

I communicated out to Whittier families earlier in the year that Kim Grenier, Whittier's office assistant, will be retiring. Her last day at Whittier will be Thursday, January 30, 2020. She has served Whittier for 35 years with 29 of her service years as Whittier's office assistant. We are very sad to see her leave, but also excited for her new adventures and opportunities to spend more time with her family. To recognize Ms. Kim's service to the Whittier community, we will be hosting a farewell gathering on Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. in the library so students and families are able to say their "good byes." All Whittier families are invited to join us for this celebration.

Whittier will be honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by having two assemblies on Friday, January 17, 2020, in the Whittier cafeteria. The first assembly will be at 8:55 a.m. for kindergarten through first grade students. The second assembly will be at 9:45 a.m. for third through fifth grade students. All families are welcome to join us for either assembly. We will have guest presenters from the Everett Community College Diversity and Equity Center who will communicate Dr. King's dream. They will also explain how he has inspired us to be accepting of all people while finding peaceful and respectful ways to live and interact with each other.

As we near the mid-point of the school year, our first and second grade teachers will begin the process of administering the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). The DRA assessment tool provides teachers with excellent information and feedback as a mid-year assessment check to show us your child's reading progress. Literacy research shows that a big indicator for reading improvement with children is based on the overall volume of reading that occurs. Please continue to support your child in their reading improvement and encourage them to read at home every day. Your efforts will help to ensure that your child becomes a stronger reader and a strong learner.

I want to thank all families for your dedication to your child's education and attendance at Whittier. Strong attendance is essential to school success and sometimes we don't realize how quickly absences, excused and unexcused, can add up to academic trouble. Chronic absences, missing 10 percent of the school year or just 2-3 days every month, can translate into our young learners struggling to develop foundational literacy skills that can impact their ability to read by third grade, and this can significantly harm their readiness for middle school and beyond. Good attendance helps all children do well in school and eventually in the workplace because developing the habit and the strong mindset of attending school every day prepares students for success on the job and in life. Please continue to make attendance a high priority for your child throughout the school year. Strong attendance will lead to great success for your child!

Thank you for your ongoing support at Whittier and enjoy the rest of our winter season!

-Tony Wentworth, Principal

**Tony Wentworth**

Principal

**Whittier Elementary School**  
916 Oakes Avenue,  
Everett, WA 98201  
[www.everetsd.org/whittier](http://www.everetsd.org/whittier)

**January 6**

Return to School

**January 10**

LIF Early Release- 1:35 pm dismissal  
Drama club begins 1:35-3:00 pm

**January 13**

Smart w/ Art starts 3:00-4:00 pm

**January 15**

PTA Meeting in Library @ 7:00 pm

**January 17**

LIF Early Release- 1:35 pm dismissal

**January 20**

MLK Jr. Holiday – NO SCHOOL

**January 24**

1<sup>st</sup> Semester ends  
LIF Early Release- 1:35 pm dismissal  
PTA Movie Night 6:30 pm in cafeteria

**January 27**

NO SCHOOL- Teacher workday

**January 29**

Stemtree Robotics starts 2:50-4:00 pm

**January 30**

Ms. Kim's last day...Happy Retirement!

**January 31**

LIF Early Release- 1:35 pm dismissal



## January Library News

December was a quick month for us in the library. We spent the second week enjoying our amazing book fair. **A HUGE thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who made this fun, weeklong event possible!** All money we receive comes directly back to our Whittier library, so we can continue to order wonderful reading materials for students to enjoy. Thank you, families for your support!

**Please encourage reading at home over the winter break! Here are a few ideas ...**

- \*Go to the Everett Public Library to get books.
- \*Pick out a new chapter book for your family to read before bedtime each night.
- \*Ask your child what topics he or she would like to learn about, and research about them online or with a book.
- \*Have fun rereading favorite books (family members can take turns picking books).



**Please look for library books at home that your child may have misplaced. Books not returned become fines on your child's account.**

~Shannon Heining  
[sheining@everettsd.org](mailto:sheining@everettsd.org) (425) 385-4308



## Whittier PTA



Happy Winter Break, Whittier Wildcats! We hope each of you have a fun, safe holiday break. We have some exciting events coming your way when we return to school in January!

The Whittier PTA Family Movie Night is on Friday, January 24th (movie tbd). Doors open at 6pm. Bring your blankets & pillows, claim your spot and grab some goodies & other concessions before the movie starts at 6:30pm. Please remember, cash or check only for concessions.

If you are in the midst of cleaning out your closets with bags of unwanted household and clothing items intended for donation, consider donating your items to our 5th Grade Camp committee's Value Village 'FUNDrive.' Please call or text FUNDrive Chair, Lisa Wilson at 425.268.9543 to arrange to drop your items off with her prior to the fundraiser date on January 12th. The more you donate, the more money is raised for next year's 5th graders to attend camp in the fall.

Our next PTA meeting is Wednesday, January 15th, from 7-8pm. We encourage your attendance and all are welcome. It's an informal meeting with updates from the members and administration. And if you aren't a PTA member, please consider joining. If you are a PTA member, it doesn't obligate you to volunteer. Truth: Whittier's many activities would not exist without the hard work of the PTA. Thank you, volunteers!

We encourage you to find us on Facebook for events information, and more throughout the school year.

Happy New Year 2020!

Amy Smith, President  
Erica Youngman, Vice-President  
Heather Reid, Treasurer  
Karen Zulinke, Secretary

## After School Opportunity

Smart with Art will be offering a pastel class at Whittier starting January 13<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in enrolling your student, please contact [www.smartwithart.net](http://www.smartwithart.net) for registration information.

Winter 2020 **Smart with Art**

Find your School and Register Now:  
[smartwithart.net](http://smartwithart.net)

The Properties of Pastels- Discovering Oil and Chalk  
Join Smart with Art as we explore oil and chalk pastels in this all new session. We will discover their unique properties and learn how to properly work with each medium as we create beautiful works of art. We will discover art history, new and exciting art techniques all while using our imagination! This class will allow students to expand their creative skills as we learn the unique properties both oil and chalk pastels offer artists.

Questions?  
[office@smartwithart.net](mailto:office@smartwithart.net)



## Why Do Kids Have Trouble with Transitions?

by Katherine Martinelli

Being asked to switch gears is a common trigger for problem behavior like whining and tantrums

Humans are creatures of habit. Even when we welcome it, change takes more energy. So perhaps it's not surprising that children often find it difficult to make transitions between activities, places and objects of attention. Being asked to stop one thing and start another is a very common trigger for problem behavior, especially for kids who have emotional or developmental challenges.

"Transitions are hard for everybody," says Dr. David Anderson, senior director of the ADHD and Behavior Disorders Center at the Child Mind Institute. "One of the reasons why transitions may be hard is that we're often transitioning from a preferred activity – something we like doing – to something that we need to do."

### What does trouble with transitions look like?

Difficulty with transitions can manifest in a number of ways depending on the child and the setting. It can take the form of resistance, avoidance, distraction, negotiation or a full-blown meltdown. Some of these reactions are the result of kids being overwhelmed by their emotions. And some are what they've learned works to successfully delay or avoid the transition.

A child told it's time to leave the playground might throw a tantrum initially because he can't manage his anger or frustration, but if he's found that it has worked to delay leaving the park, he's more likely to do it again. "It really depends on how the adults in his life have responded," says Dr. Matthew Rouse, a clinical psychologist in the ADHD and Disruptive Behavior Disorders Center at the Child Mind Institute. Other kids may not tantrum but instead master the art of whining, distracting, or negotiating with the adults in their life.

### What's behind transition problems?

While transitions are triggers for lots of kids – what parent hasn't gotten resistance from a child being asked to stop playing a video game and come to dinner? – they are particularly difficult for kids with emotional and developmental issues. And while the behaviors may be the same, experts point out that the reasons behind the behavior are different for kids with different challenges. Here we look at why children with ADHD, anxiety, autism and sensory processing issues, find transitions particularly difficult.

For kids with ADHD, it all comes down to what they perceive as rewarding, says Dr. Rouse. While the disorder is described as an attention *deficit*, experts say it may be more useful to think about it as difficulty *regulating* attention – turning your attention to something you are expected to do, rather than something that you find rewarding.

"Kids with ADHD have fewer neurons in their reward centers, or neurons that aren't as active in the reward centers of their brains, so they find things throughout their day less rewarding," he explains. When they do find something rewarding, they tend to hyper-focus on it, which explains why someone with ADHD seems all over the place but then can play video games for hours. Ask them to do something less rewarding (like putting away Legos), and you might hit resistance.

Dr. Michael Rosenthal, a clinical neuropsychologist, adds that children with ADHD have a tougher time managing their emotions than other kids. "There's also research that shows that the wiring in the brain centers that are involved in helping kids exercise control over their emotions are less developed, so you get bigger emotional displays from them compared to kids who don't have ADHD."

Although transitions can be similarly challenging for kids with autism, the reactions tend to be more extreme, and the issue is rooted in a different difficulty. "For kids with autism," says Dr. Rosenthal, "the world is just an incredibly confusing and overwhelming place, so the need for sameness and predictability is adaptive," or practical. It's not simply that changing activities is upsetting, it's that any deviation from the routine can feel like the rug is being pulled out from under them.

Dr. Rosenthal refers to this as cognitive inflexibility and says that it also explains why those on the autism spectrum have hyper-focused interests and tend to prefer doing the same things in the same order. "Any unexpected changes or transition for a kid with autism disrupts their equilibrium."



## January is School Board Appreciation Month

The month of January marks the annual observance of School Board Recognition – a time to salute the work of school board members and celebrate public education. You can learn more about [board members online](#). You can also watch past school board meetings on the district's YouTube channel.

## Good Citizenship Day

**Register  
to vote  
here.**

Good Citizenship Day shall be observed on January 16. On that day, social studies teachers coordinate a voter registration event in each history or social studies class attended by high school seniors. Students who will be eighteen years of age or older by the time of the next general election will be given the opportunity to register to vote online in the classroom. Paper registration will also be made available in the classroom.

## Delayed start or closed schools

If we must cancel school or delay the start of school, we will use our parent communication system to call in the morning, typically around 5:30 a.m., with a brief message about the reason for closure or delay. We will also use local media and post the message on our website. **If there is no announcement about Everett Public Schools, school is on the regular schedule.** More information and resources for school closures or delays is on the district website under the *Parents* tab.

In cases of inclement weather or other emergencies, please:

- check your email or phone for district messages
- listen for media announcements
- view the district's website at <https://www.everettsd.org/>
- watch district [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) accounts

## Food and Nutrition

This month, the Food and Nutrition Department brings you potatoes grown in the PNW! Be sure to check out our menu for dishes containing this tasty Harvest of the month!

Did you know that potatoes are the most popular vegetable grown in the US and are an excellent source of Vitamin C, B6 and potassium? Find out more by checking out the Harvest of the Month flyer on our website at <https://www.everettsd.org>

I have so many potato jokes. I just don't know where to starch.





## Safety tip line


Do you or your student have a concern about someone experiencing bullying or harassment? Or have you perhaps heard a rumor about someone bringing a weapon or drugs to school? **Report it!** You can talk directly with your school's office or you can call, text or email your concern.

If there is reason for concern about safety on a designated walkway to school, call 9-1-1 immediately for authorized, quick help. We have strong partnerships with local law enforcement who share our interest in safe schools and neighborhoods.


Student safety is a priority for all of us. Working together, we can help make our neighborhoods and schools nurturing places for students to safely learn and grow.

### 3 easy ways

Text or call

 855-637-2095

 1350@alert1.us

 <http://1350.alert1.us>

## Attendance Reporting in the Morning

If you would like to report your student absent in the morning, please use one of the following methods:

- Whittier Attendance Email – [WHEAttendance@everettsd.org](mailto:WHEAttendance@everettsd.org) (1<sup>st</sup> choice)
- Whittier Attendance Phone Line – 425-385-4305 (2<sup>nd</sup> choice)

If you are emailing your student's teacher, please include the Whittier Attendance Email @ [WHEAttendance@everettsd.org](mailto:WHEAttendance@everettsd.org). This keeps the office informed of your child's absence and this will help us avoid sending out a call to you when you have already reported the absence to the teacher.



3900 Broadway  
Everett, WA 98201  
425-385-4000  
[www.everettsd.org](http://www.everettsd.org)

Everett Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are:

- Title IX Officer/Civil Rights Compliance Officer – Mary O'Brien, [MO'Brien@everettsd.org](mailto:MO'Brien@everettsd.org), 425-385-4106, PO Box 2098, Everett, WA 98213
- 504 Coordinator – Becky Ballbach, [rballbach@everettsd.org](mailto:rballbach@everettsd.org), 425-385-4063, PO Box 2098, Everett, WA 98213
- ADA Coordinator – Randi Seaberg, [rseaberg@everettsd.org](mailto:rseaberg@everettsd.org), 425-385-4104, PO Box 2098, Everett, WA 98213



# January 2020

## Whittier Events



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
← WINTER BREAK →						
5	6	7 Spanish Club 3-4 pm French Club 3-4 pm	8	9	10 LIF 1:35 dismissal Drama Club 1:35-3 pm	11
12	13 Smart w/ Art Begins	14 Spanish Club 3-4 pm French Club 3-4 pm	15 PTA Meeting 7pm In library	16	17 LIF 1:35 dismissal Drama Club 1:35-3 pm	18
19	20 MLK Jr. Holiday NO SCHOOL	21 Spanish Club 3-4 pm French Club 3-4 pm	22	23	24 LIF 1:35 dismissal Drama Club 1:35-3 pm End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester PTA Movie Night 6:30 pm	25
26	27 NO SCHOOL Teacher Work Day	28 Spanish Club 3-4 pm French Club 3-4 pm	29 Stemtree Robotics Starts 3-4 pm	30 Ms. Kim's Last Day Happy Retirement!	31 LIF 1:35 dismissal Drama Club 1:35-3 pm	28

Office Phone:  
425-385-4300

Attendance Line:  
425-385-4305