



## What's the Buzz at Cider Mill School (Family Update for 12/4/20)

Welcome back! We were thrilled to welcome back our students on-site yesterday - the halls are far too quiet without them! I want to thank our entire family community for their support of our school's health and safety. We have many learners joining us remotely for short-term until it is deemed safe for them to return. This type of teamwork will help us all stay in school longer. As we head into the month of December, I offer us all the following thought:

Throughout this month, let us **"Focus on the Bright Spots."** A group of my colleagues were reading a professional text and the concept resonated with me. In the text, Onward, author Elena Aguilar shares the following advice for the month of December: *"When the days are short and you haven't recovered from the exhaustion of late fall, **look for the light**".* Later in the text, the author continues, *"In the Northern Hemisphere, we have ancient traditions of celebrating light in the short days of winter. We gather around candles and fireplaces, display stars as symbols of promise, and decorate our homes with colorful bulbs. People from many different traditions celebrate miracles, hope, renewal, and resilience as our planet approaches the winter solstice."* This month, at Cider Mill School, as we continue to work as a community of teachers, staff, families, and students, let us continue to find those Bright Spots and look for the light *"in ourselves and in others- being reminded that when the nights are long and the sun hangs low on the horizon, we just need to pay closer attention. **The light is always there.**"* Our Cider Mill School community is FILLED with bright spots and light - let's find ways to celebrate each other during the month of December. With that, as always, please contact us directly with any questions at [falconej@wiltonps.org](mailto:falconej@wiltonps.org), [okeefec@wiltonps.org](mailto:okeefec@wiltonps.org), and [catalanol@wiltonps.org](mailto:catalanol@wiltonps.org). Below are the BookMark hyperlinks that will take you directly to particular sections of the newsletter.

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[Arrival & Dismissal - School Messenger](#) **NEW Update**

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**Picture Day Make-ups** - We are expecting photo make-up day in January and are currently waiting for a date. Lifetouch is now in the process of producing the packages and bundling them by teacher to send back to the school for distribution. They shut down the order site during this time because a stray order or 2 would be too hard to match up with the teacher's bundles. If you did not pre-order pictures, you will receive a proof sheet in a package in those teacher bundles. The proof sheet will have your student's image on it as well as a PORTRAIT ID. Use this code to enter into [mylifetouch.com](http://mylifetouch.com) to see your student image on-line and order from there.

**Math Practice for Multiplication Fact Fluency:** A lack of fluency in basic math fact recall significantly hinders a child's subsequent progress with problem-solving, algebra and higher-order math concepts. Through automaticity, students free up their working memory and can devote it to problem solving and learning new

concepts and skills (Geary, 1994). Here's a video and article that explains why we approach fact fluency the way we do:

[There IS a Difference Between From Memory and Memorization](#) Graham Fletcher - Video

[Research Suggests That Timed Tests Cause Math Anxiety](#) - Article

It is expected by the end of grade 3, students know multiplication facts within 100. The beginning of the year starts with a study of the foundation facts ( $\times 0$ ,  $\times 1$ ,  $\times 2$ ,  $\times 5$ ,  $\times 10$ ). After students have had some time to build understanding and strategies, the other facts are introduced ( $\times 3$ ,  $\times 4$ ,  $\times 6$ ,  $\times 7$ ,  $\times 8$ ,  $\times 9$ ). Students learn to use facts they know (foundation facts) to figure out other facts.

ex. If students know 10 groups of 9 ( $10 \times 9 = 90$ ), then 9 groups of 9 is  $90 - 9$  or  $(9 \times 9 = 81)$

The 3rd grade report card provides an opportunity for parents to see their child's progress in learning multiplication facts across the year. It is typical to see a dip in level of mastery in T2 as students will just have learned strategies for facts beyond the foundation facts.

All students in grades 3-5 need to practice multiplication facts regularly to maintain and/or improve their level of automaticity. Students have been provided choices for self directed practice alternatives.

*\*Note Students CAN use a multiplication chart during any units in grades 3-5 in which the focus is not single digit times single digit.*

**Examples of Practice Alternatives:** [Targeted Strategy Practice](#) [Game Targeted to a Specific Fact Family](#)  
[The Multiplication Course \(You Tube Video\)](#) [Game to Practice All Facts](#)

**Progress Report Update:** PowerSchool Parent Portal will be open to view your child(ren)'s progress reports on December 16th. As a reminder, classroom teachers will not provide comments for the first trimester since conferences were just held a week ago. For special areas and world languages, students with a mark below a "3", "I", or an "R" will receive comments.

Please review the [letter that was sent from Dr. Chuck Smith's](#) office about accessing the Parent Portal.

**MAP Assessment Overview:** MAP testing will begin on Monday, December 7 and continue through the week. The testing company indicates that the reading test and the math test should take about an hour each but each student will have 2 hours+ to complete the testing. Classroom teachers have shared the classroom testing schedule and remote students are scheduled to take their tests in small groups at the same time with a separate proctor other than the classroom teacher.

Before Thanksgiving, all parents were sent this [SAMPLE document](#) with the remote instructions just in case they decided to go remote. Since the remote testing is done in small, pre-planned groups with their own Zoom links, families will be notified of their link today and the times for the various tests. Any families who decide to go remote over the weekend will be given opportunities to test, however, it may not be possible to do it at the same time as the classroom.

After the tests are done, the district will be notifying parents of the results. Should you have any questions, please contact [Cathrine O'Keefe](#), Assistant Principal.

**Recess Updates:** One recess ball was distributed to each class right before the Thanksgiving break. We are waiting on guidance from our health director when we can have more equipment available for each student. Students are only allowed to use this ball with gloves on - any type of gloves that fully cover the hand and fingers will work. Additionally, each recess/lunch aide has been given a set of plastic discs they will use to organize recess games. Students will only touch these with their feet while they participate in an organized game.

## Arrival/Dismissal School Messenger Update **NEW!**:

ARRIVAL			DISMISSAL	
In the morning, you may turn left into Cider Mill from School Road.			ALL traffic from Kristine Lilly Way/ Route 7 in afternoon! No left hand turns into Cider Mill from School Road.	
CARS:	7:20-7:33	7:33-7:45	2:00-2:13	2:13-2:25
	Last Names A-Le	Last Names Li-Z	Last Names A-Le	Last Names Li-Z
BUSSES:	7:20 - 7:40		2:00 - 2:20	

As we are continuing to improve our dismissal procedures, we recently discovered there is a School Dismissal Manager Add-On called "FastLane." We are going to move to using this procedure starting on **January 4, 2021**. We will be piloting this with four classes from December 14 - 23.

**For this to be successful, please use the following directions to set up your account correctly no later than Wednesday, December 23, 2020.**

We will be utilizing FastLane for our CM Pick Up North Lot and CM Pick Up South Lot dismissal. Please know there will be a series of questions asked when setting up your student's FastLane dismissal. It is best to select *Any Parent of <student's name>* for your family's pick-up person so that all members will have their Parent Personal Identification Number (PIN) accessible on the day of pickup should that pickup person change last minute. Click [here](#) for more information.

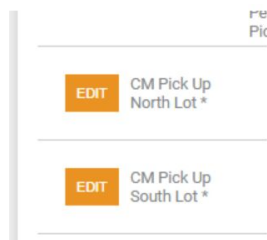
We are using the "Parent Self Check-In" option. Pick-up People will need to download the School Dismissal Manager app on their phone. It looks like this:



There will be a blue check-in button within your SDM account at dismissal time. This button will become available ten minutes before dismissal begins. The FastLane button is only seen for 2 hours at dismissal time. Any other time it is just the PIN that is present. Once the pick-up person arrives at the check-in location, he or she will "check-in" on their app, which alerts the classroom teacher to send the child out to the pick-up location. **It is very important to only**

**check-in once you come to our check-in location on campus. There will be clear signage to indicate where you must check-in.** Checking in prior to will cause delays and security issues with our dismissal process.

Please read through the attachment to set up your account for the "FastLane" add on in School Dismissal Manager. This video may also help: [How-To video: SDM Account Features](#). FastLane has been activated to your SDM account already. You will only see FastLane questions when you select one of these two dismissal options. All other options will not have questions. Dismissal options:



Please ignore the "Event Check-In/Check-Out option." The Event Check-In/Check-out does utilize a QR code but for other events (dances, festivals, morning check-ins, etc. ). It is not associated with the end of the day dismissal so please do not worry about this feature.

We thank you in advance for your help with this and hope you can set up your account appropriately no later than December 23, 2020.

**COVID Update:** The District continually updates it's [COVID-19 Update Page](#) - please click on this site for the most updated information. Additionally, at each Board meeting Dr. Kevin Smith gives the community an update on the current transmission and positivity rates. Additionally, Parent at Large, Michelle Krupa, posts a summary

of the BOE Meeting on the CMPTA Facebook page. ***At this time, due to the number of cases in the community, the school at large must carefully monitor daily for symptoms.*** Every family should be in the routine of checking temperatures both at night and in the morning before coming to school. If your child is sick, has had exposure due to sports/events or is not feeling well, please stay home and participate in learning remotely. Please email [Fallonk@wiltonps.org](mailto:Fallonk@wiltonps.org) (attendance secretary) if your child stays home for remote learning or a sick day.

#### Up-coming Dates:

- MAP Assessment: begins the week of 12/7
- Progress Reports go “Live” in Parent Portal - 12/16 at 12:00 pm
- Shortened Day Schedule (11:45 dismissal begins) - 12/23
- Complete School Dismissal Manager FastLane Setup - 12/23
- No School for Students - 12/24 - 1/3/21 for the Holiday Recess
- School Resumes - 1/4/21
- School Dismissal FastLane Pickup Begins - 1/4/21

Take Care!

*Jen, Catherine, and Lauren*

