



## What's the Buzz at Cider Mill School (Family Update for 4/30/21)

May is upon us! The warm weather and sunshine is such a blessing and brightens all of our days. Below you will find a plethora of information about important upcoming events for your children. In the upcoming month, we continue to celebrate kindness with our "Kindness Rocks" project and begin to gear up for our end of year celebrations. Please take a moment and mark your calendars accordingly! 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 [birdl@wiltonps.org](mailto:birdl@wiltonps.org). Below are the BookMark hyperlinks that will take you directly to particular sections of the newsletter.

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### **Spring Events & School Wide Celebrations:**

- **Kindness Rocks: The Kindness Rock Project** is a project, started by Megan Murphy from Cape Cod, MA, where people paint pebbles or cobbles and leave them for others to find and collect. Notes, symbols and messages that promote kindness are added to the rocks. Photos of the painted rocks and hints of where to find them are sometimes shared on social media like Facebook and Twitter. The project started in the U.S. and has spread to the U.K., Australia, and New Zealand as well as other countries.
  - Rocks were due to homerooms 4/30
  - They will be primed next week
  - Students will begin designing during art class the week of 5/10 - Stay tuned for more.
- **Closing House:** This year, we will continue with closing-house as a way to celebrate the culmination of student success, work and learning, but we will need to do so in a remote manner like we did last year. Teachers will send out more information as they finalize plans for the virtual celebration.
- **Team Fun Day:** We will not be having a traditional field day. Grades 3-4 will celebrate as a class during their last 3 PE classes and our 5th graders will have a Team Fun Day on May 27th (rain date 5/28). More information to come.
- **CM Walk-A-Thon:** Our PTA is organizing our Walk-a-Thon fundraiser for this year. There will be a 2-week window of time where each class will sign-up for a 30-minute block of time on the track between May 10-21 to walk the track. Stay tuned for more information about the details.
- **CIDER MILL End of Year Countdown:** [Click Here for Countdown](#) (A twist on the traditional A-Z!)
- **5th Grade "Moving-up", Celebrations & Parade: This year, we are planning 3 parts for our 5th graders' Graduation Celebrations**
  - **Graduation Parade** similar to last year ~ 6/9 11-1, 6/10 rain date (details to follow)
  - **Moving-up Certificates** by house 6/7 or 6/8 (details to follow). Unfortunately, due to our current guidelines, families may not attend this in-school event.



- Staff will create a **"Celebrations" Video** to celebrate the work completed in special areas and events throughout our 5th graders' year. The video montage will also include head shots of our 5th graders.
- **Yearbooks:** Yearbooks are ordered and we are waiting on the exact date for distribution.

### **Wilton Reads Author Visits & Racial Equity and Inclusion Work at Cider Mill School:**

- On April 29, 2021, our PTA sponsored author, [Andrea Davis Pinkney](#) visited with all of our students at Cider Mill. The presentations were inspiring and thought-provoking for our students.
- On Wednesday, 5/5/21 (@ 12pm), Cider Mill administrators will meet with our students for a whole-school read aloud of **"Let's Talk About Race"** (by Julius Lester) and an activity on exploring the concept of identity - [Zoom Link](#).
- Throughout the year, our staff have been engaged in excellent **professional learning experiences with presenters from CREC on the topic of Racial Equity and Inclusion**. One key idea embedded within Wilton Public School's Portrait of the Graduate is that our learners will embrace diversity. One way to accomplish this value is to provide opportunities for students to see themselves and explore others' identities within the texts they read and explore.

Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop shares: *Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created and recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books. (1990, p. ix).* If you're not familiar with Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, I urge you to find out more [here](#).

### **Courageous Conversation COMPASS**



We will culminate this learning with a late May staff meeting where teachers explore a plethora of books that celebrate diversity through children's literature. With the support of both PTA and District funding, we are very excited that each classroom will receive a set of 15 "window & mirror" texts to add to their classroom libraries. Toward the end of May, staff will engage with these texts and a protocol called the [Courageous Conversations Compass](#).

**Math Homework & Upcoming Forum:** Thank you to our families who completed the math survey earlier this month and to those who joined our Parent Math Forum Thursday morning. For those unable to make it, here is the link to the [presentation Slide Deck](#) and the [Zoom Recording](#) (passcode: Ue3Z5f.1). There is information about homework expectations and Sail Into Summer (summer learning resources) in the slide show.

**Earth Day & Reformation of CM's Green Team (Zero Waste):** This month we want to thank all of our staff who helped our children celebrate Earth/Green Month in some manner. With the help of Wilton's Zero Waste Coalition, we are excited to give our Zero Waste efforts a bit of a "reboot" this month. We are officially forming our Cider Mill Green Team to support these efforts in our school. A few items to highlight in this area:

- **Student Passion Project (Elyse Pencu) - Let's Make Wilton Clean!**  
Elyse has designed a contest geared to helping "clean-up" our town! [Please see this flyer](#) - the class with the most collected bags of garbage wins a pizza party sponsored by our Zero Waste Coalition.



- **Zero Waste** - The picture above shows a 3D representation (created by Sara Quantock) of the number of cups used by one person who drinks a take away coffee or tea every day for a year. This model contains 365 used cups that all end up in landfill. Covid has prevented consumers from taking their reusable cups into coffee shops to be refilled which is understandable. BUT, the real problem is that these single use items exist. And this is just the tip of the iceberg single use items are EVERYWHERE.

**Physical Education:** [PE ACES 2021](#) Cider Mill Families are invited to celebrate National Physical Fitness and Sports Month this May! Please access the Mind and Body Calendar here to maintain or improve wellness each day by completing the challenges and being physically active. When your child brings the completed calendar to their Physical Education teacher, they can receive a special Champion Certificate.

**Arrivals/Drop-offs:** please be sure anyone picking up your children knows how to use SDM Fast Lane- link to [SDM Fast Lane QUICK GUIDE](#). When folks do not use the system, it slows the process down for everyone in line. Thank you for your support!

**Up-coming Dates:**

- April 29 ~ Visiting Author Andrea Davis Pinkney
- May 1-7 ~ National Physical Education and Sport Week!
- May 8 ~ Annual Town Budget Vote
- May 11 ~ PTA Turnover Meeting 10-11
- May 28 ~ [Hats for Hometown Help](#)
- May 31 ~ No School for Students and Staff ~ Memorial Day
- June 2 ~ Proud to be a CM Member Day! - Wear all 4 House Colors
- June 4 ~ Exercise Dance Day! Wear sneakers & workout clothes
- June 8 ~ Mismatch Day! Wear as many mismatched clothes as you can
- June 9 ~ Shortened Day - 11:55 Dismissal
- June 10 ~ Shortened Day - 11:55 Dismissal
- June 11 ~ Last Day of School! Shortened Day - 11:55 Dismissal

We hope you enjoy the beautiful weather this weekend!

*Jen, Catherine, and Lauren*