



What's the Buzz at Cider Mill School (Family Update for 9/20/21)

We are very excited to be back in school with our students for the 2021-22 school year. Our number one goal is the health and wellness of each student at Cider Mill School. Your child's teacher will work throughout the school year to build strong connections among the learners in the classroom community as well as with the adults at Cider Mill School. As we regroup from the effects of the Pandemic, you will hear and feel a focus on Accelerated Learning and Responsive Lesson Planning throughout the district. Our teachers are already working together to review academic data and plan for intentional instruction to target unfinished learning from the last year and a half. However, our teachers know that it is critical for our students to feel connected and emotionally healthy to be able to access learning. Therefore, experiences that include mindfulness, building relationships, play and general well-being will continue to be the first priority at our school as we intentionally respond to all students' learning needs. Teachers are so very happy that classroom environments and processes feel a bit more typical this year. However, it is important that we continue to work together as a community to keep our children in school. Please reach out to the school nurse or administration if you have any questions/concerns about whether your child should be in school or not. Dr. Smith's updates and our District's CoVID website ([WPS CoVID-19 Website](https://www.wiltonps.org/wps-coVID-19-website)) has everything you need about quarantine guidelines and places for CoVID testing.

Below you will find the first section of this newsletter with important information about CoVID-19 protocols. The rest of the newsletter provides important information about upcoming Cider Mill events. Please contact us directly with any questions at falconej@wiltonps.org, okeefec@wiltonps.org, and crossj@wiltonps.org. Below are the BookMark hyperlinks that will take you directly to particular sections of the newsletter.

SECTION ONE:

[CoVID-19 Quarantine Instruction & Protocols](#)

SECTION TWO:

[Cider Mill Enrichment Clubs](#)

[Special Area Fall Updates](#)

[Parent Engagement](#)

[Cider Mill Green Team](#)

[Fall Testing](#)

[Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#)

[Arrival/Drop-Offs](#)

[Up-coming Dates](#)



SECTION ONE:

CoVID-19 Quarantine Instruction & Protocols (as of 9/16/21):

Quarantine Instruction (9/16/21): In light of the continued impact of CoVID, our district is working with staff across all 4 buildings to solidify our Temporary Quarantine Learning plan. The only students eligible for Temporary Quarantine Learning will be those on the school-based quarantine list that is approved by our school nurse and administration. Students who are out due to typical illness or due to travel will not be able to

access temporary remote instruction. We will include details about this plan as soon as they are available. In the meantime, if you believe your child has been in close contact with a positive person and needs to be quarantined, please contact the school nurse (wlasyd@wiltonps.org and kelloggs@wiltonps.org), your child's classroom teacher and administration (falconej@wiltonps.org, crossj@wiltonps.org, okeefec@wiltonps.org) with the date of contact and circumstances of the contact. This will help us set-up temporary quarantine instruction for your child.

As noted in Dr. Smith's 9/17/21 CoVID Update, all visitors to visit our schools must present proof of vaccination at our main office along with their picture ID. Thank you.

As we know, CoVID and quarantines may continue to bring upon feelings of disappointment, loneliness or even isolation for children. The district and our school will continue to work very hard to minimize the number of students we quarantine. However, as we've seen already, there will be a need to quarantine individual or small numbers of students from school. Please review [this article](#) for ways families can support their children in these instances. Also, please save this information below for future reference on guidelines for quarantine.

Quarantine Guidelines - Information located on [WPS CoVID-19 Website](#) and Dr. Smith's updates:

Consistent with [CDC](#), [CT State Department of Education](#), and [CT DPH](#) quarantine guidelines, we follow the options outlined below for anyone who has had [close contact with a COVID-positive individual](#). Vaccinated individuals who have had close contact with a COVID-positive individual should contact their school nurse to confirm vaccination status and protocols for quarantine. **Please contact administration, the classroom teacher and the school nurses (wlasyd@wiltonps.org and kelloggs@wiltonps.org) as soon as you suspect a positive case or close contact with a positive case.**

10-day quarantine option: (Note 14-day quarantines are still recommended by the CDC.)

- Daily [self-monitoring](#) and no COVID [symptoms](#) for 10 days (exposure date is day 0)
- Continued self-monitoring for 4 more days (days 11-14)
- After 10-day quarantine, continued adherence to precautions like mask wearing, avoiding gatherings, etc.

7-day quarantine option:

- Daily [self-monitoring](#) and no COVID [symptoms](#) for 7 days (exposure date is day 0)
- COVID test taken on day 5 or later and negative result - person MUST remain quarantined through day 7 and return to school on day 8.
- Continued self-monitoring for 7 more days (days 8-14)
- After 7-day quarantine, continued adherence to precautions like mask wearing, avoiding gatherings, etc.
- **You must contact our *school nurses* (kelloggs@wiltonps.org and wlasyd@wiltonps.org) if you believe your student has met the criteria for a 7-day quarantine and you would like to be approved for your student's return to school prior to 10 days. **The nurse will respond to your email - our classroom teachers are not able to approve a return to school! If this occurs on the weekend, you may need to wait to be cleared until Monday morning. We apologize for the inconvenience.****

Please be advised that if your student exhibits symptoms at any point during quarantine, your student may not return to school, must isolate, and should consult with your physician.

SECTION TWO:

Cider Mill Enrichment Clubs & Intramurals. Cider Mill Enrichment Clubs and Intramurals will begin the week of September 27, 2021. Please [click this link](#) or write a check to the Cider Mill Activity Fund to pay the one time \$25 Participation fee. The Enrichment Club registration has closed, but you may reach out to Karen Fallon in the main office if you are still interested in participation (fallonk@wiltonps.org). Please [click this link](#) to review the Enrichment Club newsletter shared with families last week.

Intramurals will take new registrations for each activity throughout the year. You may continue to use this [registration link](#) to sign-up your child for intramural participation.

Special Area Fall Updates: Please click here: [Cider Mill Special Areas: Virtual Meet the Team 2021-2022](#) to meet our PE, Music, Art and LLC. These teachers provide a stellar program for our students and it is where many of our children truly shine. Additionally, you can access the [CM Ensemble Rehearsal Schedule 2021-2022](#) at this link.



Parent Engagement:(FACE & Upcoming Events) Our students thrive when there is a strong connection between home and school. The teachers work consistently to understand each child's unique identity and to build an inclusive classroom community where every student feels they belong. To meet these goals, teachers will talk at open house about ways to engage families. Part of this process will be a very short survey for parents to fill out for the classroom teachers. The survey will help teachers understand your family and your child. Families can share information about special talents, a unique job, or cultural tradition. The results will be used by the classroom teachers to increase family engagement and student belonging in the classroom.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: As mentioned above, the celebration of each student's unique identity is one way we build strong and inclusive classroom communities. Dr. Chuck Smith and Karen Brenneke presented this [Slide Deck](#) to the Board of Education during a late August special Board meeting. I encourage all families to review the document to understand how these concepts are addressed in a very developmentally appropriate manner across our schools. In December, members of the Cider Mill team will ask families to join us for a special coffee to discuss more about how we explore the ideas of diversity, equity and inclusion in our school. Below are two examples of activities that your third through fifth graders may participate in this fall:

- **Window & Mirror books** (chapter and picture books): children gain a sense of belonging in their classroom communities when they look around the classroom and see literature that reflect cultures, and families similar to their own. Additionally, as we seek to help our young learners meet the attributes outlined in [Wilton's Portrait of the Graduate](#) (particularly those found under the "Active Socially-Sensitive Citizen") it is equally important for students to learn and explore cultures that may be different from their own. Our teachers work very hard to expose children to all types of literature that provide both a reflection (mirror) and an opportunity to learn and explore (windows) different cultures. If interested, this [slide deck](#) is one I've used to introduce the concept to students.
- **Identity Maps:** Another activity is to have students create an identity map. This process allows students to reflect upon what makes them special and it is a magnificent way to help teachers form connections with their students. Here is another [slide deck](#) that we've used to introduce character identity webs and identity maps with our learners. Here is another [slide deck](#) used during a whole school read aloud last year.

Cider Mill Green Team: The Green Team, composed of parents and teachers, had our first meeting of this school year to plan how to involve all classes and interested students as we strive to increase awareness of how to best recycle our snack and lunch foods/containers. Our "stations" are operational in the cafeteria and

our students are reminded of what materials go into which recycling bins. Our next goals are to invite interested students to help their peers recycle in the cafeteria and to begin collecting compostable snack foods in the classrooms. Stay tuned for more to come in the upcoming month!

Fall Testing (MAP): The fall MAP (Reading and Math) testing began this past week and will continue as makeups are conducted this upcoming week. Students who were out with illnesses or quarantine will have opportunities to complete the tests. Results will be shared with parents when all students in our district are done with testing. This new information will provide updated information to guide student learning.

Arrivals/Drop-offs: In order to expedite a safe and efficient arrival/dismissal system, we ask that parents pull all the way up when dropping off and picking up. This prevents traffic from backing up at the stop sign near the entrance to the school. Our number one priority is to get the busses in and out of the main bus loop - please provide busses the right of way as you continue to take turns allowing cars in/out. Additionally, please do not block the main intersection as this prohibits the flow of traffic and can block the flow of busses. We continue to encourage families to consider bus transportation or carpooling to minimize morning and afternoon traffic. As a way to speed up dismissal even more, we have discontinued the use of Fastlane. While we are able to dismiss students via cars and buses relatively quickly, any delay at Cider Mill creates a domino effect for the other schools. As a district we are working across schools with the Wilton PD to improve efficiencies so all students can get home both safely and quickly. Any changes in procedures will be communicated to parents. We also have been noticing a number of cars arriving after 7:40am. Please know that our drop off ends at 7:40am. As such, if you arrive after 7:40, please do not let your child out as the doors are locked. Instead, park in the front lot and walk your child into the school to sign him/her in. Thanks for your assistance!

Up-coming Dates:

- **Virtual Open House** - teachers and teams will share Zooms accordingly:
Wednesday, September 22 - South Houses; Belden Hill & Kent 6:30-7:15
Wednesday, September 29 - North Houses; Cannondale & Nod Hill 6:30-7:15
- Tuesday, September 28 - Photo Day
- Walk-A-Thon - Thursday, October 7
- Monday, October 11 - District Closed for Columbus Day
- Tuesday, October 12 - No School for Students - Professional Development
- Halloween Parades - Friday, October 29
- Tuesday, November 2 - No School for Students - Election Day / Professional Development
- Turkey Trot - Friday, November 5

We hope you enjoyed the beautiful weather this weekend!

Jen, Catherine, and Jeremy