

# THE WASHINGTON POST



## Principal's Message

Important Phone  
Numbers

Mrs. Karen Gray  
Principal

(860) 645-4813

[b59kgray@manchesterct.gov](mailto:b59kgray@manchesterct.gov)

Mrs. Joan Charnas  
Assistant Principal

(860) 647-3336

[b21jchar@manchesterct.gov](mailto:b21jchar@manchesterct.gov)

Ms. Elisabeth Heil  
Social Worker

(860) 647-5018

Carla Trovato

Secretary

(860) 645-4813

Ms. Mindy Olson

Nurse

(860) 645-4813

Cafeteria

(860) 645-4813 ext.60153

Attendance Line

(860) 645-4813

After School Program

(860) 647-6973

Candita Lopez

PTA President

Hello Washington Families,

Welcome back to the 2014- 2015 school year, it has been a fantastic beginning. It is evident that every child has begun to make a relationship with their new teachers, seen old friends and made some new ones. Over 300 people attended the Back to School BBQ. It would be amazing if we could keep the attendance that high for all school events, especially the Open House on Thursday September 18<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 pm -6:00 pm..

As we transition into the school year, please remember that outside supervision does not begin until 8:45 am. Our school doors will open at that time and all children are welcome to go directly to their classrooms. Breakfast is from 8:30 am until 8:55 am. If your child eats breakfast at school and arrives after 8:55 am they will receive an alternative breakfast to bring to the classroom from the office. School officially begins at 9:05 am, so it is expected that all children arrive by this time.

Three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, every child will have access to a healthy snack such as carrots, apples, pineapples and string beans. So if your child comes home asking for a vegetable that you don't normally cook, ask them when they sampled it. Continuing with the theme of healthy, Washington does follow the Board of Education policy regarding healthy snacks. Unhealthy foods brought in for celebrations will be held in the main office for you to pick up at the end of the day, such as cupcakes, cookies and/or cake.

Please use our new phone number, 860 645 4813, to contact the main office, report your child's absence, talk to the nurse or hear about any new on goings at Washington.

It is a pleasure to spend the day with your child, thank you for sharing him/her with us.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Karen Gray



## Creating Reading Habits

With the busy summer months, setting a daily time to read may have been difficult. Returning back to school and the fall schedule is a good time to reestablish good reading habits. Here are some tips:

- 1. Give Your Child Options of When to Read...choice leads to less struggles with reluctant readers.**
  - After a snack and time to play outdoors before dinner
  - After dinner
  - In bed before lights-out
- 2. Allow Your Child to Choose a Place to Read**
  - Make reading fun by allowing your child to read under a table, outside under a tree, in a make-shift tent with blankets, laying on the floor, in bed
- 3. Gradually Increase the Amount of Time to Read...starting with 30-60 minutes right away may make reading a chore rather than something enjoyable.**
  - Start with 10-15 minutes
  - Add 5 minutes every week or two until they're reading 30-60 minutes a day depending on homework and grade level
- 4. Include Reading to and with Your Child**
  - No matter how old the student, they still enjoy listening and talking about good books
  - Read books that your child wants to read but are above his/her present ability
  - Take turns reading pages or take on roles as characters and share the reading
- 5. Family Reading**
  - Establish a time for the entire family to read together, this models the importance of reading
  - Rotate who gets to pick the reading time and where everyone will read

The key to establishing good reading habits is to make reading a fun and enjoyable activity!

Next month I'll share tips on helping your child choose "just right books" for his/her ability level.

Happy Reading!  
Dr. Fiano  
Reading Consultant



Mariel Frey – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Born and raised in Lancaster, PA. Went to school at Virginia Commonwealth University, where she played division 1 volleyball and got her Bachelor's of Interdisciplinary Studies and her Master's of Teaching. Relocated to Connecticut in 2013 with her fiancé'.

Elisabeth "Betsy" Heil – School Social Worker

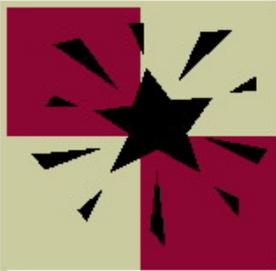
- ✚ Worked with children in a variety of settings: summer camp, preschool, before & after care, and clinical settings
- ✚ Went to UCONN School of Social Work and studied Groupwork
  - ✚ Loves back to school shopping
  - ✚ Joining the team on September 22<sup>nd</sup>
- ✚ Hobbies are snowboarding, mountain biking, and hiking

Jennifer Webster – Numeracy Interventionist

Welcome students and families! My name is Jen Webster. I am the Numeracy Interventionist. Prior to joining the Washington family, I taught 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Illing Middle School for many years. I am originally from New York. I love New York style pizza and going kayaking on Lake Erie. Throughout the past 15 years I have studied and developed many talents such as American Sign Language and writing in ancient languages. I am very excited and honored to be working with the Washington Elementary students this year!

Brittany Hall – Coordinator Family Resource Center

Hello Everyone! My name is Brittany Hall, and I'm the new coordinator of the Family Resource Center. Coming from a large family-as the middle of seven children-I have developed a strong passion for working for the success of children and families. I worked at the FRC for a year back in 2010. Between then and now, I worked directly with families for another program in ECHN's Family Development Center. As things come full circle and I find myself in the same great place I began this journey, I am beyond thrilled to be back at Washington and a part of the school community. Latasha has told me great things about the faces that have come along since my time here in 2010. I am incredibly excited to be part of the Washington team again! Thank you to the staff and parents who have introduced themselves, given such warm welcomes, and kind words. It's great to feel welcomed again already! I cannot wait to meet the rest of you all!



Washington Elementary School

# Washington Fitness Star

September 2013



## CT Physical Fitness Assessment

This newsletter to 4th and 5th grade students and parents of Washington Elementary should help provide a better understanding of the fitness tests your students will be undergoing during physical education this fall. Starting in 4th grade, Connecticut Schools begin a series of fitness testing to be repeated every 2 years until the end of high school. This year, the Fitness Gram is being implemented allowing teachers to compare your child's results to age-based norms and standards and determine whether our students are meeting health-related standards of fitness. These age-based comparisons will help emphasize personal fitness and de-emphasize comparisons between classmates. The tests that will be performed are push-ups, curl-ups, the pacer, and the back-saver sit and reach. These tests measure upper body strength, abdominal muscular endurance, cardiovascular fitness, and lower body flexibility, respectively. Sufficient practice will be given for all students during class to learn the tests and become familiar with the format.

One of our goals in physical education is to promote lifelong physical activity and to achieve a health-enhancing level of physical fitness. This means we not only want our students to enjoy and value physical activity but also reap health benefits from doing so in the areas of cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and maintaining a healthy body composition. By testing our students in these areas, we help ensure our program is supporting these goals. Please read on to find out more about the individual tests and how you can help your child prepare for the test date in early October!



## Reaching Greater Lengths

To test lower-body flexibility, students will perform the back-saver sit and reach test. To perform the test correctly, students must sit with one foot against a box (no shoes) and the other leg tucked in beside it with the knee bent (as in the picture shown to the right titled "sit 'n reach stretch"). Reaching with both hands over the leg that is straight, students will stretch as far as they can and a score in inches is recorded using a box like the one pictured to the right.



To improve flexibility, the best thing to do is to practice your stretching every day. It is a great routine to do before going to bed or after practicing the curl-ups and push-ups and only takes a few minutes! Follow the stretch routine shown to the right to help improve your lower body flexibility and keep your muscles working smoothly and efficiently. Hold each stretch for 10-30 seconds before the next.

## Simple At-Home Stretches

Butterfly Stretch



Sit 'n Reach (R/L)



Double Leg Stretch



V Stretch



Cross-Over (R/L)



## Push Your Way to Better Strength!

As mentioned before, students will be testing upper body strength with the push-up test. Strength and endurance are important in activities of daily living, maintaining functional health and promoting good posture. Students will perform as many push-ups as possible to a cadence of 20 push-ups per minute lowering their bodies to a 90-degree elbow angle and back up again. During the test, students are allowed 1 form correction and will be stopped either on the second form correction or when they have completed as many push-ups as possible. The following list is considered a form correction during the test:

1. Stopping to rest or not maintaining a rhythmic pace (staying on cadence)
2. Not achieving a 90-degree angle with the elbow each repetition
3. Not maintaining correct body position with a straight back
4. Not extending arms fully

Remember that regular physical activity and natural play movements such as climbing, carrying, pushing, and pulling will all promote upper body strength and endurance. I am encouraging our 4th and 5th grade students to practice push-ups at home every night on their own and your help and support is needed! This skill takes time to develop and practice is the only way strength will develop properly. Follow these guidelines for improvements in your upper body strength:

Warm up by practicing your "push-up planks" and "static push-ups" for 30-60 seconds each and then rest (see pictures below).

Perform your push-ups (as many as you can do) with perfect form and watch for those form corrections!

Try wall push-ups or knee push-ups (see pictures) if you are not achieving a 90-degree elbow angle on the way down.

After a week, try increasing the number of push-ups you do by 1 until you can increase it again!

Push-up Planks



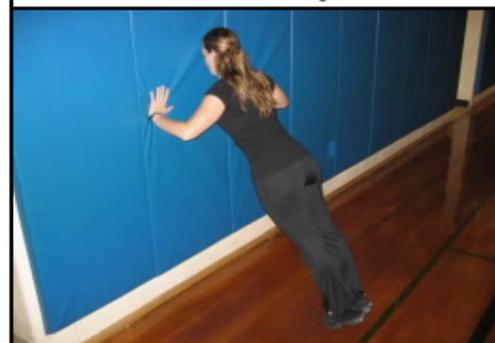
Static Push-up



Down Position (90 degree elbows)



Wall Push-Ups



Curl-Up "DOWN" Position



Curl-Up "UP" Position



## Core Happenings

The fitness curl-ups are used to test abdominal muscular endurance (also known as your "core"). Students will perform as many repetitions as possible to a set pace using a pre-recorded voice that says "up" and "down" for the 2 positions shown in the pictures to the left. As the students curl to the "up" position, they must also touch the far side of either a 4.5-inch or a 3-inch measuring strip (depending on their age) that is placed on the ground (strip not shown). This means that their hands must slide forward on the ground (over the strip) for a distance of 3 to 4.5 inches to complete the curl-up. The head should touch the ground on every "down" position before lifting the shoulders back up for the next repetition. Students should avoid forcibly reaching with their arms or hands but should simply let the arms passively move along the floor in response to the lifting action of the trunk and shoulders.



Curl-Up Strips Used For Testing

This curl-up is slightly different than a traditional sit-up but as emphasized previously, students will be given plenty of class time to learn the new movement and practice before the test. At-home practice is always encouraged a few times a week in order for your child to reach a level of fitness that enhances their well-being and overall health.

## The Pace of it All

One of the most challenging tests is The Pacer test for cardiovascular fitness. Students will run as long as possible back and forth across a 15-meter distance at a set pace that gets faster each minute. The test gets harder as time continues and students are encouraged to pace themselves by starting slow and increasing their speed as the pace gets faster. Remember the focus for all tests is for the students to reach a health-enhancing level of fitness, not on performance. This means that in order to reduce our risks for heart disease and other illnesses related to inactivity, a certain standard of performance must be maintained on the tests. Sufficient practice for all tests will be provided during class, however, students are always encouraged to do additional aerobic activity on their own. Aerobic activity means continuous activity such as riding your bike, taking a walk, or playing games that involve lots of movement and raise your heart rate. Please encourage your children to play or exercise each day for a minimum of 1 hour and know that you will be helping your child become healthier through increased aerobic activity. The American Heart Association recommends that children should perform 30 minutes of enjoyable moderate-intensity physical activity each day.

On behalf of the physical education department in the Manchester Public Schools, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for reading about the fitness testing and for helping us achieve our healthy fitness goals.

Sincerely,  
Mr. Phillips





## Important Dates To Remember



**Sept. 1 - No School - Labor Day**

**Sept. 9 - School Photos**

**Sept. 10 - After School Orientation 6pm**

**Sept. 17 - Early Dismissal 1:17 pm - Prof. Development**

**Sept. 18 - Open House 4:30 - 6 pm**

**\*October 4 - Cross Country Challenge**

