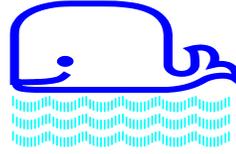


# “THE WHITNEY WHALE WATCH”



April 1, 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are certainly in a year of transitions. This is especially true at this time of year. Spring began a few weeks ago. Next Monday our students return to school for a five day week. We have many families registering their kindergartners for next year while we are transitioning sixth graders to the middle school.

April

## April Vacation:

This past Monday, Dr. Robinson sent out a very important communication. The following is a highlight of her message. “As you are aware, the CDC has determined the following guidelines - 1) a 10 day quarantine after travel with; 2) testing 3-5 days after travel. **So, with that having been said, we have decided with an abundance of caution to be on Remote Learning, the week following the Spring Recess (Week of April 19th).**” Per the note from Stratford Public School Nurses on March 29<sup>th</sup>, “Please inform your school nurse if you will be traveling so they can assist you with quarantine, testing options and return to school dates. As a reminder it is important even during a school break you notify your child’s school if they test positive for COVID-19 or are on quarantine due to an exposure.”



## Return to School:

Students return to school for five days next Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Wednesday will be an early release day. On March 12<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Gejda, our Assistant Superintendent, sent out communication with details about this return. For students returning five days per week she stated the following for in-person learners: “If your child does not attend school **in person** on any day, your child will be marked **absent**. You should follow the attendance protocol for reporting an absence.” Dr. Gejda also reviewed general guidelines for our distance learning plan. She reminded everyone of the expectations. “Engaging in distance learning education classes requires that all participants are respectful and adhere to the behavioral expectations set by the educator conducting the distance learning class.” Please reference this communication from March 12<sup>th</sup> if you have any questions about the return to the building. At the March Board of Education Meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup> the Board voted to keep Wednesdays at the elementary day as early dismissals. School ends at 12:30 on these days with the remainder of the day designated for teacher collaboration efforts. Students who are in-person learners in school need to have their Chromebooks in school with their chargers next week.



## Superintendent Uyi Otunde:

As you know, there was a Special Board of Education Meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> to announce our new Superintendent. July 1<sup>st</sup> is Dr. Uyi Osunde’s start date as our new Superintendent of Schools. He has been the Principal of Windsor High School since 2016. He has also been a Counselor and Assistant Principal in the high school setting.



### **Learning Garden:**

P.T.S.A. and Mrs. Eigo are working closely to design the Mrs. Patterson's Learning Garden. Through the generosity of many families and staff members, we are able to purchase a plant, plaque and bench which will be located in our Learning Garden. I appreciate everyone's generosity in this effort. Mrs. Patterson was a passionate and dedicated educator. This garden will be a beautiful memorial for her.



### **Student Achievement:**

Report cards will be posted next Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. Additionally, fifth graders are taking the NGSS (Next Generation of Science Standards) assessment next week. Fifth graders who are learning remotely will take this science assessment after vacation. Students in grades 3 – 6 will also be administered the Smarter Balance Assessments which are scheduled for **April 21<sup>st</sup> – May 25<sup>th</sup>**.



### **COVID Reminders:**

We need to keep everyone safe as the end of the school year comes to an end. If anyone in your household is sick or not feeling well, please keep everyone home and do not send your child to school. If you are unsure, please call or email Mrs. Ciuci, our school nurse, at 203-385-4198 or [ciucit@stratk12.org](mailto:ciucit@stratk12.org). If anyone in your household is going to get a COVID test, please keep everyone home and do NOT send your child to school until you receive a negative test result. Please call or email Mrs. Ciuci to let her know. Please remember to send your child to school with a full water bottle every day. At arrival and dismissal we have designated doors to enter and leave the building. If you are taking your children out of state, it is important that the school knows and that your family follows the school's guidance for traveling out of state.



### **Parent Goal:**

Schools regularly survey families in order to best meet the needs of the students. Our parent goal was derived from our spring 2019 Parent Survey. It states that, "Eli Whitney students will feel a sense of belonging in their school and learning environment." If you have ideas that would support this effort, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher, Mr. Veteri or me.



### **Invention Convention:**

As you know, our Invention Convention was a virtual experience that took place between March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 19<sup>th</sup>. We are so proud of all of our fourth graders for their creativity and perseverance. This project requires a great deal of hard work. The following students were recognized as Honorable Mentions: Pria Cerrone, Darien Ledee and Hailey Ramirez. The following students were Winners: Michael Boisvert, Nicholas DiRoma, Colby Dorso, Sienna Kaplan, Olivia Nealon, Elizabeth Negron, Grace Rehm, Lilli'Onna Thompson, Alice Varner, Violet Varner and Emily Wargo. We wish these students the best as the competition moves to the state level.



### **Pop Up Art Show:**

Our wonderful art teacher, Mrs. Booska, invites all of Eli Whitney families to participate in an art show that is planned for a date in May. The project will be done at home and everyone will decide how it will be completed. The final products will be displayed on our back field. Masks and social distancing are required.



### **School Pictures:**

Students will have their pictures taken next week from April 7<sup>th</sup> – April 9<sup>th</sup>. All CDC guidelines will be followed and social distancing will be maintained. Individual pictures will be taken and will be used to digitally create class photos. Students will NOT be standing next to each other. Appointment times will be sent out soon for distance learners to be photographed on Wednesday afternoon from 12:00 – 3:00. K – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will have their pictures taken on Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. On Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, grades 4 – 6 students and PDL students will be photographed.



### **The JiJi Challenge:**

The JiJi Challenge continues to grow. As you know, this initiative recognizes students for their accomplishments in ST Math and is based on the number of completed puzzles in this math program. K–1 students should complete between 30 - 60 puzzles weekly, while students in grades 2–6 are expected to solve between 45 – 90 puzzles in a week. There are 159 students in the 500 Club and 108 students in the 1000 Club. Additionally, there are 65 students in the 1500 Club and 21 students in the 2000 Club. The 2500 Club has 10 members while the 3000 Club has nine members. Lastly, seven students are in the 3500 Club.



### **Sixth Grade:**

We have many traditions for our sixth graders. Sixth graders received their t-shirts last week as many students and teachers wore their “Whitney” blue shirts. Yearbook plans are underway and promise to be a treasured keepsake. Parents and teachers are also planning a newer tradition -- lawn signs for our sixth graders. Additionally, the picnic and awards ceremony are both being carefully organized in an effort to adhere to safety guidelines.



### **Principal’s High Five:**

We continue to celebrate students who consistently display our five behavior expectations: Being Responsible, Respectful, Honest, Safe and Kind. Our March students include the following: Nova Garcia, Michalina Krawczyk, Summer McLean, Alex Wendland, Megan Jacko, Nate Newman, Taylor Sheftic, Hailey Piper, Alexandria Cook, Tali Cerrone, Julian Figueroa, Conner Touch, Giovanni DiTuri, Ryder Shaw, Sophia Garcia, Sophia Perillie, Pria Cerrone, Iahn Restituyo, Noah Carella, Jayden DeValda, Ryan Jacko, Caitlyn Battaglia, Colten LaBrecque, Keeley Tolido and Davis Sansonetti.



### **Safety Reminders:**

As the weather warms up, new safety concerns also arise. If students want to ride their bikes to and from school, a permission slip MUST be completed. Everyone needs to wear a helmet when biking. Bikes should not be ridden on school grounds during the school day. Bikes need to be locked in the bike rack during the school day. We also need to remain cautious while walking on school grounds. Adults also need to be careful when driving children to and from school. Please remember NOT to park in the four handicapped parking spaces in the front parking lot. We need to reserve these spaces for their intended use. The only people who should be accessing this parking lot are drivers who are using their handicap markers. The south front parking is for staff only. If you are driving your children to school, it is important to use the back parking lot. As we know, Huntington Road is a very busy street and we need to keep everyone safe. Additional patience is needed in the back parking lot at both arrival and dismissal. If you experience a problem during arrival or dismissal, please reach out to any of our staff members who are located around the building. Students should be arriving at school just before 8:30 when supervision begins. Finally, kindergartners need to have a responsible adult waiting at the bus stop.



### No Food Policy:

One of the purposes of the district's "Food Allergy Management" policy is the prevention of severe allergic food reactions. *"Administrators and teachers will encourage non-food related alternatives to celebrate developmental milestones and student accomplishments."*



### P.T.S.A.:

Our Spirit Week in March was a lot of fun!!! As you know, Thursday was Theme War Day. The winning theme was "Hawaii Five-O" in Mrs. Hernandez's second grade classroom. Prizes for the classroom will be delivered next week. The Whitney Wear deadline has been extended to April 11<sup>th</sup>. The site is <https://eliwhitney.new.memberhub.store/store> and it accepts credit cards. The online store is open until April 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. The next P.T.S.A. Meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. The P.T.S.A. Board is looking to fill a couple vacancies for the 2021-22 school year. Anyone interested in a position is asked to attend the April meeting to learn more. P.T.S.A. elections will be held at the May meeting, which will be May 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. This will be the final P.T.S.A. meeting of the school year. Please email [eliptsa@gmail.com](mailto:eliptsa@gmail.com) if you have any questions, comments or concerns. The P.T.S.A.'s annual plant sale is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>. Painted ceiling tile orders are due by Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, but early orders are welcome. The drive-thru pick up for the tiles is Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in our back parking lot. The drive-thru drop off for finished tiles is Sunday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the back parking lot. All volunteers will wear masks and gloves. Costs are: \$30 for one tile and kit, \$50 for two tiles and kits, \$75 for three tiles and kits. Flyers and order forms have been sent home and can be found in our Virtual Backpack on Eli Whitney's website. You can email [elifundraisingptsa@yahoo.com](mailto:elifundraisingptsa@yahoo.com) with any questions about this initiative. Lastly, the P.T.S.A. Board would like to acknowledge and thank Suzanne Kenny for her hard work and dedication over the past few years. Suzanne has brought efficiency and enthusiasm to everything she has done with the Eli Whitney P.T.S.A. She has been our Treasurer for the past two years and has always been willing to help out wherever she can. Suzanne has worked to beautify the grounds before the start of school the past two years and worked to prepare picnic tables so our students can enjoy some outdoor learning time together. Suzanne's youngest child is moving on to middle school (where we are sure she will join the PTSA) and she will be missed here at Eli Whitney.



### Upcoming Events:

There is no school tomorrow, April 2<sup>nd</sup> in observance of Good Friday. Report cards are posted next Friday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. April vacation is also around the corner. School is closed from Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 16<sup>th</sup>. **Students will be learning remotely the week after vacation. We will return to in-person learning on Monday, April 26<sup>th</sup>.** Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> is an early dismissal (12:30 p.m.) day for PLC's. Please be sure to have arrangements made for your child's dismissal.

Spring is a delightful time of year at Eli Whitney Elementary School. Our students have made an incredible amount of academic and social growth thus far. We need to remember that appropriate standards of behavior need to be in place and students in every classroom will be engaged in rigorous instruction. All established routines must continue. Again, let's all make a very conscious effort to be mindful of the safety measures established at Eli Whitney.

Kindly,

*Victoria K. Florek*

Victoria K. Florek  
Principal