



November Newsletter from Principal Pauls....

December 19, 2025

Dear Parents,

As we wrap up the month of December, it's hard to believe how quickly this year has flown by and that a new year is just around the corner. This season offers a meaningful opportunity to reflect, celebrate, and look ahead with excitement.

I am proud to share outstanding news with our school community. In the most recent statewide rankings, Mills Park Elementary placed among 1,445 ranked schools across North Carolina, earning an impressive #8 ranking in reading and #24 ranking in math. Overall, Mills Park continues to be recognized as one of the top elementary schools in the state. These accomplishments reflect the intentional, high-quality instruction provided by our staff and the dedication, perseverance, and hard work of our students. Their commitment to learning and growing each day is truly inspiring. None of this would be possible without the strong partnership we share with our families, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support.

I would also like to extend a sincere thank you to our families for the kindness and generosity shown to our staff. They have been incredibly appreciative of being spoiled all week with treats in the staff lounge. Your thoughtfulness and encouragement mean so much, especially during this busy time of year.

As we look ahead, I cannot wait to watch our students continue to shine both emotionally and academically in 2026. Thank you for being such an incredible school community. We are proud of what we have achieved together and excited for what lies ahead.

Happy Holidays to you and your family!

Anne Pauls
Principal, Mills Park Elementary



Upcoming Events for January 2026

Dec. 23- Jan. 2: Winter Break, No School for Students
Jan. 5: Science Fair Project Registration 8:00-8:45AM OR 4:00-4:45PM
Jan. 8: Science Fair Awards Assembly 9:30AM - in the gym
Jan. 8: Science Fair Viewing for Families 5:00 - 6:00PM
Jan. 9: Cultural Arts Assembly, Grades Pre K-5
Jan. 12 - 16: Classroom Spelling Bees, Grades 1-5
Jan. 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day., No school for Students and Staff
Jan. 20: School Spelling Bee, Grade 3-5
Jan. 20: PTA sponsored [Book Club](#)
Jan. 22: Second Grade Arts Night, 6:30PM
Jan. 25: PTA sponsored [Spirit Night at Triangle Rock Club](#)
Jan. 26: Teacher Workday, No School for Students
Jan. 30: Quarter 2 Report Cards sent home

2025-2026 WCPSS Traditional Calendar

AIG Spring Nominations

The AIG spring nomination window for third, fourth, and fifth grade students is open now through January 7. You may nominate your child to be considered for an AIG (Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted) referral. *Students who were nominated and referred during the 2025 Fall window cannot be nominated again during the Spring window.* You do not need to nominate your child if he or she is already identified in both areas. You may nominate your child if you would like your child considered for a second area of identification (ELA or Math).

Please complete this [form](#). If you have further questions, please visit the [AIG website](#) or contact our AIG teachers (mblewett@wcpss.net or dbarnett@wcpss.net).

2026 Spring SSA Testing Information:

Single Subject Acceleration (SSA) is the practice of placing a student in a higher-grade level in one subject area. This type of acceleration is for the purpose of providing access to appropriately challenging learning opportunities in either math or English Language Arts.

The 2026 Spring SSA Test Request window is right around the corner as the dates for the SSA process have changed. Please click the [SSA One Pager](#) link for a quick glance at the process. Parents will also be receiving an email from their child's classroom teacher that will include a link to the district Parent Presentation that is highly recommended for you to view in its entirety before deciding to request SSA testing. The presentation will provide in-depth information about SSA, the process, and how to request testing.



WCPSS Remote Learning

I want to take a moment to share an important update and provide clarity around our remote learning plans. On days when in-person instruction is not possible due to weather or other emergencies, students will engage in learning from home using activities and materials provided by their teachers. These days are designed to keep children connected to learning in a way that is supportive, flexible, and family-friendly.

Why Remote Learning Is Structured This Way

Remote learning days are designed with student well-being and family needs in mind. We recognize that learning at home looks different for every family, and our goal is to provide meaningful learning experiences without trying to recreate a full school day at home.

What Families Can Expect

On remote learning days:

- No new instructional content will be taught.
- Live instruction will not be offered, as Remote Learning Days are asynchronous (not live and not together).

Activities will focus on reinforcing skills and concepts students have already learned and will emphasize practice, creativity, and connection rather than new instruction.

Assignments, Materials, and Time Expectations

Assignments and activities will be shared primarily through printed materials sent home in advance whenever possible or through a choice board. Activities may include skill practice, reading and writing tasks, creative choice board activities, and family engagement activities that can be completed at home.

Remote learning activities are designed to be completed within a reasonable amount of time. We do not expect children to work for hours at a time or to follow a traditional school-day schedule at home. Instead, families are encouraged to allow children to work in short, manageable chunks, take breaks as needed, and balance learning with rest and family routines.

Our Commitment

Our commitment is to ensure that remote learning days are:

- Developmentally appropriate
- Flexible and family-friendly
- Focused on reinforcing learning without adding stress



Sick or not feeling well

This is just a reminder as we enter a time of year where many sicknesses arise and spread throughout the school. When students are sick or not feeling well, the information below should be used by parent/guardian(s) when deciding if a student should attend school or if in attendance, used by school staff to notify parent/guardian(s) of the need for the student to be picked up from school.

Symptoms

- Fever of 100.4 or higher (Remain home until fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication)
- Diarrhea (Remain home until free of symptoms for 12 hours)
- Nausea and Vomiting (Remain home until free of symptoms for 12 hours)
- Severe headache
- Red, watery eyes with yellow discharge
- Undiagnosed rash
- Inability to attend learning activities
- Change in a student's typical medical status

*****Reminders*****

Kindergarten Enrollment for 2026-2027

If you have a child who will turn 5 years old by August 31, 2021, enrollment for Kindergarten has begun! Please click on the following link for enrollment details. [26-27 Enrollment Information](#)

Spelling Bee 2026

- Class Spelling Bees (grades 1-5) will be held the week of Jan. 12th. Your child's teacher will communicate the exact date as we get closer to January.
- The School Spelling Bee is scheduled for Tuesday, January 20, 2026. Only class spelling bee winners from grades 3, 4, 5 will participate in the School Spelling Bee.
- [Word Club App](#) - this year, the Bee's premier study tool is completely free for students. Download the app and allow your student(s) to learn their study words through spelling games and quizzes.
- Your child's teacher has shared the links to the Classroom and School Spelling Bee Lists. Unfortunately, we are not permitted to post these lists on our school website.