



# VH Highlights

## Dear Vestal Hills Family,

I hope this letter finds all Vestal Hills families doing well. February brought with it some cold weather, but our **students continue to go outside** for recess when the weather permits, so please remember to send the children to school with **proper clothing**, including pants, jackets, hats, gloves and boots as needed. (Don't forget to have your child check the **Lost and Found** if a coat, hat, hoodie or mitten is missing!)

**Congratulations** to the following staff! A heartfelt thank you for your years of service and all you have done to support and touch the lives of our students in a positive way!

The following staff will be recognized for **20 years** of employment at Vestal:

Robyn Adams  
Michelle Allen  
Pamela Danek  
Daniel Greenman  
Megan Middendorf  
Jeanie Selby

The following staff will be recognized for **30 years** of employment at Vestal:

Mary Ann Daugherty  
Melissa Schmidt

**National Day of Unplugging** Join a 24-hour global respite from technology. This highlights the value of disconnecting from digital devices to connect with ourselves, our loved ones and our communities in real time. National day of unplugging 2020 from sundown to sundown, March 6-7. [www.nationaldayofunplugging.com/](http://www.nationaldayofunplugging.com/)

**Welcome 2020-21 Kindergarteners!** If your child will be five years old on or before Dec. 1, 2020, and will begin kindergarten at Vestal Hills Elementary in the 2020-21 school

year, please contact the district office at 607-757-3500 to obtain a registration packet.

**No school for students** on March 12 and 13 (Superintendent's Conference Day and long weekend).

## Attendance Reminders

If you are bringing your child to school, please remember that **students should be in their classrooms by 8:50 a.m. Attendance is taken by 8:55 a.m.**

If your **child is late**, please come into the office to sign your child in and provide a written excuse.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please **call the nurse at 607-757-2256**. If there is no answer, you can leave a voice mail. Please send a written excuse for the absence when your child returns to school.

An **excused absence or tardy** is when the student has a valid, school-approved excuse such as personal illness, death in the family, religious observance or medical visit.

An **unexcused absence or tardy** is any absence or tardiness for which the student has no valid, school-approved excuse, such as shopping trips, family vacations and oversleeping.

## Executive Functioning Skills:

**WORKING MEMORY** Working memory is a basic mental skill. It's important for both learning and doing many everyday tasks.

- Working memory allows the brain to briefly hold new information while it's needed in the short term. It may then help to transfer it into long-term memory.
- Most kids with learning and attention issues have trouble with working memory.
- Working memory helps kids hold on to information long enough to use it.
- Working memory plays an important

role in concentration and in following instructions.

- Weak working memory skills can affect learning in many different subject areas, including reading and math.

Teaching children working memory skills is key to helping them succeed in school and life. As a staff we continue to focus on Working Memory. The following article addresses Working Memory for children within the home and school. Take a look!! [5 Ways Kids Use Working Memory to Learn](#)

**Special Fridays** Every Friday in the month will be a Spirit Day – wear green, gold or Vestal Hills attire!

## Stay Connected at VHE

Facebook- Vestal Hills PTA page.  
Instagram – vestal\_hills\_elem  
Twitter – look for #vestalhills  
Friend request the Facebook and Instagram pages, and you will receive information throughout the year regarding PTA/School events and notices. Just another way to stay informed at Vestal Hill.

**VHE Webpage** - [sites.google.com/vestal.k12.ny.us/vestahillselementary/home](https://sites.google.com/vestal.k12.ny.us/vestahillselementary/home)

This webpage is filled with information that we hope is helpful and right at your fingertips. Calendars, lunch menus, building schedules & supply lists, along with grade level-specific academic supports, ideas, activities and so much more. The site is pinned to the top of the VHE Facebook page. Take a look – any feedback or suggestions is always welcome.

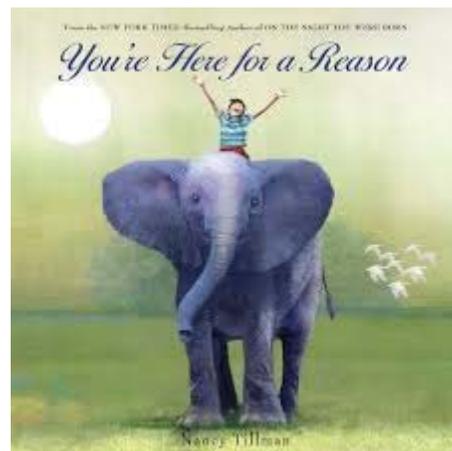


Have a great spring! Vestal Hills is a great place to learn and grow!

– Mrs. Mastro  
VHE Principal

*Principal's Book of the Month*

**You're Here for a Reason by Nancy Tillman**



Hello Vestal Hills Families,

The March Principals Book of the Month shares a special message.

*"You're here for a reason. If you think you're not I would just say that perhaps you forgot... a piece of the world that is precious and dear would surely be missing if you weren't here."*

Every person matters. Here, national–bestselling and beloved author Nancy Tillman shows readers how each of us fits into life’s big picture, and how the world would be incomplete without you in it.

In this beautiful book an important reminder is shared. *That even when things go wrong, it's not the end of your story. That good can come from bad; that things do get better. That life has more in store for you than you realize.*

This book reminds readers that even in the most difficult times, there is a reason for them to exist on this earth. That they are loved and cared for and important; that they matter — that *they are loved*. I hope you take time to enjoy this book as a family as much as we will here at VHE!!

Happy Reading...

**VHE Math Challenge**

We hope you are all engaging in our building challenge to improve math-facts proficiency.

**Math Fact Knowledge** and automaticity is critical as students engage in all math concepts. Please continue to reinforce your child’s math fact fluency for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division—it’s so important! There are a lot of options to help with practice at home on the VHE Website—go to the Parent Resources tab and then select by grade level. Links and QR codes are at <https://sites.google.com/vestal.k12.ny.us/vestalhillselementary/parent-resources>.

These online resources and apps support the racks, 10-frames and number lines being used to develop number sense in our K-2 classrooms:

- The Number Rack—  
[www.mathlearningcenter.org/apps](http://www.mathlearningcenter.org/apps)
- 10 Frame Fill—Classroom Focused Software
- Number Lines—Little Monkey Apps

*"Memorization of math facts is necessary to facilitate mental math, to provide students with fluency during computations, and to move easily through problem situations."* —Susan O’Connell

**Mark Your Calendars!**

2-Mar	Mon	VHE PTA MTG, 7 p.m.
6-Mar	Fri	VHE Winter Bash, 6-8 p.m.
8-Mar	Sun	Clocks Change - Spring Ahead
10-Mar	Tue	BOE Meeting, 6 p.m.
11-Mar	Wed	VHE Toddlers’ Night Out, 5:45-7:30 p.m.
12-Mar	Thu	<b>Superintendent’s Conference Day NO SCHOOL</b>
13-Mar	Fri	<b>Student Holiday – NO SCHOOL</b>
19-Mar	Thu	PTA Cultural Collage, 6 p.m.
20-Mar	Fri	Report Cards Sent Home
24-Mar	Tue	BOE Meeting
25-Mar	Wed	NYS ELA Assessments Gr 3-8
26-Mar	Thu	NYS ELA Assessments Gr 3-8
27-Mar	Fri	NYS ELA Assessments Gr 3-8
30-Mar	Mon	NYS ELA Gr 3-8 Make Ups VHE PTA MTG, 7 p.m.
31-Mar	Tue	NYS ELA Gr 3-8 Make Ups

# Home-School Connection

Curl up with a good book and read together as a family! **PARP (Pick a Reading Partner)** is a whole-year, K-5 initiative at Vestal Hills—Don't forget to fill in the PARP sheets and return them to the school as you complete 100 lines. Our goal is for every student to reach 500. WE CAN DO IT!

During the first week of March, Vestal Hills will celebrate **READ ACROSS AMERICA Day and Dr. Seuss's birthday** with a week full of activities and events. Thank you to our wonderful families for donating socks for the children's home as part of our Dr. Seuss celebration!

**Try a no-television week at home—read a book instead!** Winter is a great time to spend time reading with your children. Reading books that are easier for your child can help improve their fluency, while reading higher level books together with a parent can help improve vocabulary and comprehension. Research is clear that strong reading skills give your child an advantage in education. As Dr. Seuss says, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you will go." Make literacy a priority in your home. Thank you for your support.

**Read Together: Learn Together:** Read aloud to your children, even when they begin to develop the ability to read independently.

Read a Dr. Seuss book with a family member. Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!

Read 10—20 minutes a night. Set aside a special time for reading each day. This time should be seen as fun, not a chore or homework.

Cut the letters Vestal Hills Elementary out of the paper or magazine. Make a collage.

Read a recipe and make a meal together.

Go to your local library and get a membership card.

Take a book out of the library.

Read an article in the newspaper. Share this news with your family.

Pick a letter. Find things in your home beginning with the letter. Who found the most?

Create an audible book with your family.

Find books on topics your child will enjoy, like pets, sports and outdoor activities.

Have children read to you or other children in the family.

Be a reader yourself; children often follow the example of their parents.

Bring many books and magazines along on car trips and vacations.

Visit local bookstores and watch for children's author visits to these stores.

## Counselor's Connections

**Learning how to make friends** and nurture those friendships is a very important part of our children's lives. Through classroom lessons on friendship and conflict resolution, our children learn the skills they need to maintain healthy relationships.

Our third-, fourth- and fifth-graders will be **taking state tests** soon. Here are a few test-taking strategies to go over with your child/children:

1. Relax
2. Give yourself positive messages
3. Read or listen to the directions with an open mind
4. If you get stuck—don't panic
5. After taking the test, reward yourself

## Health Happenings

We are beginning to schedule physical examinations with the school physician. **Physicals are required** for students new to the school as well as for K, first, third and fifth grades, per NYS School Health Law. All students that are still in need of a physical will be scheduled, so now is a great time to make sure you have submitted all current physicals! (Physicals must be dated no earlier than 9/5/18.)

Even though we have had a decline in health office visits as well as students out of school for illness, **influenza** is still out there! Please take a moment to refresh yourself regarding the signs and symptoms of Flu vs. Cold listed in February's newsletter.

Perhaps you have noticed that the birds are singing, the skunks are out and some little flowers are even poking their heads through the ground. As the groundhog predicted...spring is on the way! (We hope...) That said, it is still cold and VERY wet outside. Please, please send your student with the **appropriate outdoor attire for playground**. I am not supplied with enough dry clothes to replace all the wet pants, shoes and socks that have occurred lately during playground time.

**Happy March, Vestal Hills Families!**

We hope everyone is staying healthy and warm this season. February went by so fast, but we have a few things on the calendar for March...

The **Winter Bash** has been rescheduled to Friday, March 6, from 6-8 p.m. A friendly reminder that parents are to remain with their children—no drop offs, please. This event is for VHE students and their younger siblings only.

**Scrip order forms** came home at the end of February. Orders are due back to school by Monday, March 10. Any questions can be directed to Ashley Stuccio at [stucc216@yahoo.com](mailto:stucc216@yahoo.com)

**Cultural Collage** will be held in the evening of Thursday, March 19. We hope you will join us for a fun evening of sharing each other's cultures. Anyone interested in participating can contact Elizabeth Ait Oumessaoud at [eaaitoum@gmail.com](mailto:eaaitoum@gmail.com)

**Yearbook order forms** also came home the end of February. You can order online by March 20 at: [ybpay.lifetouch.com](http://ybpay.lifetouch.com) and enter code 9372220 for Vestal Hills. Please contact Rebecca Greyson at [graysonrebecca@hotmail.com](mailto:graysonrebecca@hotmail.com) for any questions.

We have a **Facebook page** (Vestal Hills Elementary and PTA) where questions and school information can be shared. If you're not already a member, you may friend request to join the page. Please answer the questions when prompted to ensure acceptance to the page, and feel free to Facebook Message or email me if you do not get accepted with in a day or two.

All parents, teachers and guardians are invited to join us for coffee and conversation at our **next two PTA meetings** on Monday, March 2, and Monday, March 30, at 7 p.m.

Sincerely, *Amy Burgin*  
PTA Vice President, [akburgin71@yahoo.com](mailto:akburgin71@yahoo.com)

**PTA Meeting Minutes—February 2019**

**February 3, 2020**

Called to Order at 7:05pm by Amy Burgin

**Principal's Report**

Busy January  
Wonderful Lego Day  
Global Play Day is Wednesday.  
Story Hour coming up.  
Lighthouse and Compass Awards were given to Michael Wong and Hannah Lindsay  
Reflections: students advanced to state level:  
VMS—1 Student  
VHE—4 Students  
100 Mile Club: More than ever before logged  
HS Musical: 42<sup>nd</sup> Street—to visit at the end of Feb.  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade: VMS transitional meeting 2/27  
Tri-Cities to visit in March  
Grant for Maker Space Club—\$236.25 for Materials. Motion to approve Sue Wendell. Second—Jenna Vovos  
Flu: School nurse sending kids home. Practice good hygiene. Custodial Staff disinfecting classrooms.

**Jan Minutes:** Motion to approve Bethany Cutting. Second—Stephanie Matthews.

**Box Tops:** Voted on coloring sheets \*

Winners:  
K: Jackson Peck  
1: Cooper Christopherson  
2: Courtney Tennant

3: Arisha Falak  
4: Laune Halit  
5: Kevin Yue  
\$356.20 so far. Another Check submittal in April/May. Another check coming in yet.

**Cultural Collage:** 3/19 from 6:30-7:30 in the Cafeteria.

**District Council:** Website was redone.  
3/28 Running with the Bears, 3/15  
Registration opens.  
Winter Guard? 2/15  
XL-XXL Shirts for Mascot.  
Online consignment something to look into.

**Family Night:** Blaze Pizza earned \$170.

**Language Club:** 2/11, 4 Tuesdays in the Makerspace Room. Spanish, German, Sign Language & French.

**Reflections:** Maybe Late March.

**Room Parents:** 3/2 Dr. Seuss. Read across American Week—Cupcake donations from parents. Looking into alternative.

**Square One:** Work is done. Shipping out next week. 3/3 Books and stickers will go out. Due back 3/17

**Winter Bash:** 2/7. Volunteers are all good. Hula Hoop Contest still good. Put on flyer in the future that the admission is optional. Wear pajamas, Sneakers and no robes.

**Yearbook:** price decreased. \$12/\$14 this year and next. \$12 if paid by 2/13

**Treasurers Report:** budget sheet balance **\$10,432.52**

**Presidents Report:**  
Fifth Grade Celebration: talk of receipts and forms for reimbursement  
Lego Club: update Mr. Williams.  
Registration open for Utica. Teams up and unning. Kids show off projects. 4 teams is \$200 a kit.\$114 per problem. \$456 needed for next year plus \$200 Registration Fee. Looking to display at Cultural Collage.

**Motion to Adjourn at 8:02\* Lisa Klossner**  
**Second to Motion: Stephanie Matthews.**



**Please join us for the rescheduled Winter Bash on March 6th from 6-8 p.m.! Pajamas can be worn but please no robes or slippers. We look forward to seeing you there! –Mandy Diaz, PTA President**



# Get Up and MOVE!!

## 20 for 20 in 2020

Spring 2020 Challenge  
Student Activity Log

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: Vestal Hills Elementary Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher name: Ms. Harvey and Mr. Moyer

Session	Date	Describe Physical Activity	Length of time
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			



# Get Up and MOVE!!

“20 for 20 in 2020”

NYS AHPERD is sponsoring the “Get Up and Move” physical activity challenge to encourage student to be physically active outside of PE class.

## Process:

1. Students are required to complete at least 20 minutes of physical activity outside of PE or Health class on at least 20 days during the challenge period: February 15- April 1, 2020. (20 minutes can be done at any point during a day, does not need to be all at one time.)
2. Students complete log, recording their physical activity for 20 days and submit to teacher.
3. Students who meet the challenge will earn a prize.

## Guidelines:

1. Contest end on April 1<sup>st</sup>. **Forms must be turned in to Ms. Harvey on or before April 1<sup>st</sup>.**
2. Students physical activity can be ANYTHING that does not occurring during Physical Education class.

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Looking for a fun way to move and to support a great cause?

## Participate in the 2020 Running of the Bears 5k!

The Running of the Bears 5K takes place on **Saturday, March 28, 2020 at Vestal High School**. All proceeds benefit Team Hopefull: Funding research and support services for people with Prader-Willi Syndrome.  
Race day registration starts 8:30 a.m. Kids Run 9:00am Walkers start 9:30 a.m. Runners start 10:00 a.m.  
Age Division and Overall Awards. Additional awards for top Vestal student runners.  
Adult Registration fee: \$25 for runners and walkers. Teams of 8 or more may enter for \$20 per person.  
Student Registration fee (18 & under): \$20. Teams of 8 or more may enter for \$15 per person

Sign up at <https://bears5k.itsyourrace.com//event.aspx?id=10361>

# March

Where Will Your Wings Take You?

## VESTAL HILLS ELEMENTARY

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Day 5 Read Across America Day Team Time  PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.	3 Day 6	4 Day 1 Grs. 1-3 - Puppet Show	5 Day 2	6 Day 3 Gr. 2 - Kelso Gr. 3 - Step It Up  <i>unplug</i> National Day of Unplugging Winter Bash, 6-8 p.m.	7
8	9 Day 4 Tri Cities Opera - "Pinocchio," 9:10 a.m.	10 Day 5 Gr. 4 - Step It Up Kdg. - Puppet Show School Board Meeting, 6 p.m.	11 Day 6 Toddlers' Night Out	12 Superintendent's Conference Day <b>No School</b>	13 Student Holiday <b>No School</b>	14
15	16 Day 1 Gr. 5 - Step It Up	17 Day 2 IRISH DANCERS, 9:10 a.m.	18 Day 3 Buddy Day	19 Day 4 PTA Cultural Collage, 6 - 8 p.m.	20 Day 5 Team Time Report Cards go home	21
22	23 Day 6	24 Day 1 Team Time School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.	25 Day 2 <b>ELA Assessments</b>	26 Day 3 <b>ELA Assessments</b> Team Time	27 Day 4 <b>ELA Assessments</b>	28
29	30 Day 5 K-5 Awards & Celebration Determination & Hard Work PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.	31 Day 6				

Team Time Suggestions: The Ripple Effect, How your actions affect both yourself and others.

Overarching Theme: Determination and Hard Work

Book of the Month: "You're Here for a Reason" by Nancy Tillman