

White River School
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February 11, 2019

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning, but for children, play is serious learning.” ~Fred Rogers from fredrogerscenter.org

Dear WRS families,

I am very pleased to announce that on Friday, February 15th we will initiate a school wide play day. As you may know, in the past two years we have increased recess time at WRS. Our veteran staff has observed that through play students can improve their problem resolution skills, improve communication skills, increase creativity and imagination and practice empathy. Research shows that unstructured play time has dwindled over time while young children are being diagnosed with ADHD, major depression and anxiety at an alarming rate. At WRS we also know that physical movement breaks can help to “upregulate” children and help them engage in learning more easily. You are likely aware that we are challenging our kids to go out and play for an hour a day in our Passport to Winter Fun program. This initiative also supports this effort.

This idea comes from a blog called Cult of Pedagogy, follow [Cult of Pedagogy here](#) or, type it into your browser:
https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/play-day/?fbclid=IwAR37Xs7MdYh5s2DXgQgZdbmPo-IZMYPZiX1oh17znje7BnOwGCjMeL_s8eg

You can see Global School Play Day in action by following [this link](#) or by typing it into your browser: <https://twitter.com/search?f=images&vertical=default&q=%23gspd2017&src=typd>

Here’s how you can help:

CALL FOR TOYS - Help your child bring **ONE THING** he or she wishes to play with to school on Friday, February 15th. The only restrictions: they must bring toys and these toys may NOT require batteries or electricity. No devices are allowed, nor are toy guns allowed. Give them some ideas: board games, dolls, Legos, blocks, trucks, cars, racetracks, playing cards, empty cardboard boxes, markers, jigsaw puzzles, towels (for forts), social games (charades, Pictionary, etc.) The only exception on the electronics rule would be a board game that has an electronic timer. How about toys that can be played with in the snow to dig, explore and get messy? One of the options is to play outside. **Your child must bring all winter gear to have this option!** You may want to show your child [photos of past GSPD events](#) to open their eyes to unfamiliar types of unstructured play. IF POSSIBLE, LABEL HER/HIS NAME ON THE ITEM THAT YOUR CHILD BRINGS IN.

HERE IS THE MESSAGE TO WRS STAFF:

PLAY! NO SCREENS - NO STRUCTURE - **from morning until lunch time**

On February 15th, allow your students to spread their toys out around the room or take the kids outside and just PLAY!

- **Don't organize** anything for your students.
- **Don't tell them how to play** with the toys/games.
- **Don't interfere** with your students unless you see something that could physically hurt a child (this does not include something that may be physically uncomfortable for a child.)
- **Don't Leave Them Unsupervised** as the day is unstructured by adults, but not unsupervised.

Please remember also that we will hold our annual Read on the Beach day at WRS on Friday afternoon! This event is an annual tradition that our students seem to love and our staff loves that it brings our school community together to enjoy a peaceful afternoon.

Upcoming Events:

February 14, 2019 - PTA 6:30 P.M.

February 18 - 22, 2019 - Winter Recess (school closed)

March 21, 2019 - Early Release for students

March 22, 2019 - Parent Teacher Conferences (no classes for children)

April 15 - 19, 2019 - Spring Recess (school closed)