

# "Hills Happenings"



Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center

October/November 2018

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Hello families of the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center community,

I am excited to welcome you to the 2018-2019 school year! Hopefully the summer has provided you with many memorable opportunities to spend time with families and friends. I'm so excited to serve the children, parents, and teachers of this wonderful learning community. As we prepare to embark on this school year, I am reminded that the beginning of school is a special time, and I am eagerly looking forward to partnering with you as we continue to nurture the ongoing development of your child. Fortunately, Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center continues to be a team of exceptionally talented staff. With that being said, we have hired additional teachers and instructional aides to help us continue in our excellence tradition. These new staff members will be introduced to you later in the newsletter.

To ensure that our learners are receiving developmentally appropriate, challenging, and outcome driven curriculum, we have continued to provide Guided Reading and Small Group Instruction in English Language Arts. This year we have issued one on one I-pads for our learners in grades three and four and for our learners in the primary grades, we have issued a shared device, while keeping in mind that our learners are using technology as a tool to enhance their educational development.

We are also hoping that we streamline our communication with ClassDoJo! This communication device is a classroom communication app/website used to share reports between parents and teachers. Our hope is to have communication easy and accessible.

Our Meet the Teacher Night was on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> and despite the rain we had many parents visit their student's classroom. We had a wonderful amount of Watch D.O.G.S attend the orientation and a huge thank you to Officer Phillips for his help and dedication to the program! If you missed the orientation, we will still have other orientations that you may attend including: Thursday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m., Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 a.m., Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m., and Friday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 a.m. You must attend an orientation to participate in the Watch D.O.G.S Program. You will also need all of your clearances submitted to the District Office before we can schedule your day.

Welcome to the new school year!

Very truly yours,

Kate Bobst



## WHEC School Rules:

**W**alk silently with eyes forward in the hallway.

**H**ands, feet, and objects to yourself.

**E**veryone follows staff directions the first time.

**C**ommunicate using kind words and actions.



## Character Traits

September – Responsibility / Making good choices

October – Respect

November – Appreciation / Thankfulness

December – Kindness

January – Perseverance

February – Honesty

March – Courage

April – Fairness

May/June – Citizenship

## Bus Behavior Expectations:

Everyone agrees that the safety of our children is paramount. Students are expected to follow and comply with the school bus rules for their safety and the safety of other students. Your cooperation is needed by demonstrating/modeling proper bus behavior at all times. I would like to remind you of appropriate bus behavior expectations.

- 1) Students will sit properly in their assigned seats facing forward.
- 2) Students will refrain from throwing any objects on the bus or out of the bus.
- 3) Student items must be secure.
- 4) Students will keep their hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- 5) Students will be courteous to their fellow passengers.
- 6) Students will refrain from shouting and speaking loudly on the bus.
- 7) Students will not change seats at any time.





# Parent Pick-Up:

## Reminders –

- Dismissal begins at 3:15.
- Please follow all parking procedures. No parking in bus lanes or at yellow lines.
- Please carry ID at all times.
- Parents/Guardians sign students out at table. Students are called by staff and escorted to parents/guardians.
- No pets are permitted.
- Please do not use the playground area near parent pick-up.
- Students will be escorted to the Main Office at 3:25. Parents/Guardians arriving after this time will need to sign students out of the Main Office.



## Walker Lines:

Are you aware that your student can exit our building using 3 different walker lines? You may want to meet your child in one of these lines, instead of waiting at parent pick-up. Parents do not sign out students in the walker lines.

**Recess Walkers** – students walk diagonally across the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade playground toward Valley Road.

**Woodland Walkers** – students walk to Woodland Road.

**Lawndale Walkers** – students walk down the driveway to Lawndale Road.



**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Any time your child changes his/her dismissal plans, a note must be sent in the morning to your child's teacher, who then forwards the note to the office. ALL changes must be **in writing BEFORE 12:00 PM** – no exceptions will be made for the SAFETY of your child(ren).

**Please note:** Dogs should not be walked on school property.





# Important Dates



**Friday, Oct. 5**

(Rain date 10/19)

**Monday, Oct. 8**

**Friday, Oct. 26**

**Tuesday, Oct. 30**

**Wednesday, Oct. 31**

**Evacuation Drill**

(be sure to dress for the weather)

**NO SCHOOL**

**Halloween Parade – 2:15**

**Picture Retake Day**

**End of 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter**



**Friday, Nov. 2**

**Sunday, Nov. 4**

**Thursday, Nov. 8**

**Friday, Nov. 9**

**Monday, Nov. 19**

**and Tues., Nov. 20**

**Wednesday, Nov. 21 -**

**through Mon., Nov. 26**

**NO SCHOOL-Staff In-Service**

**Daylight Savings Time ends**

**Watch D.O.G.S. Orientation 7:00 PM**

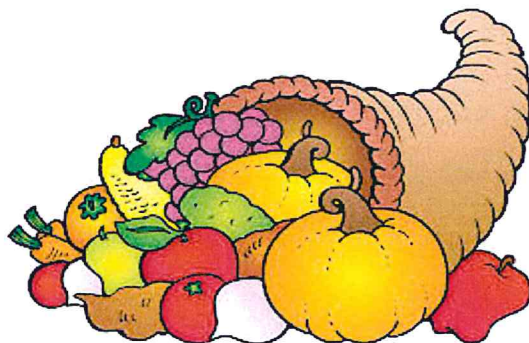
**Watch D.O.G.S. Orientation 7:00 AM**

**NO SCHOOL due to**

**Parent/Teacher Conferences**

**NO SCHOOL**

**Thanksgiving break**



# Relocation Practice

Friday, October 5, 2018

Wear your sneakers and dress appropriately for the weather!



## *Street Crossing and Student Safety*



Parents and guardians: Please be advised that children must cross WOODLAND ROAD with a CROSSING GUARD. We have instructed children to only cross at the bottom of the hill with a crossing guard, or at the top of the hill with a crossing guard. PARENTS who park along the side of the road on WOODLAND MUST NOT WAVE their child on to cross the road at a location other than with a crossing guard. Please work with us to keep our children safe by directing them to cross the street with a crossing guard. Additionally, bike riders are reminded to make sure they wear their helmets when riding to and from school.



Parents - We Need Your Help

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO LABEL ANY ITEM(S) YOU BRING TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE FOR YOUR CHILD TO PICK UP. LABEL WITH YOUR CHILD'S FULL NAME (PLEASE PRINT) AND YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER. THANK YOU!**

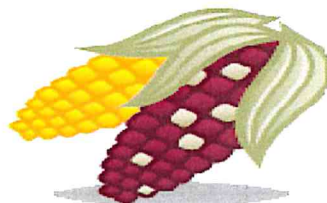
## Music Students Still Needed!

Any students who are still interested in playing an instrument in 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to join! 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is eligible to play string instruments (violin, viola, cello, or bass), and 4<sup>th</sup> grade is eligible to play string instruments and band instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet, saxophone, French horn, trombone, baritone, snare drum, and bells).

Please contact Ms. Godek ([igodek@wyoarea.org](mailto:igodek@wyoarea.org)) about the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade string program, and Ms. Barra ([cbarra@wyoarea.org](mailto:cbarra@wyoarea.org)) about the 4<sup>th</sup> grade orchestra, and Mr. Shuey ([dshuey@wyoarea.org](mailto:dshuey@wyoarea.org)) about the band program.







## Counselors' Corner...

Did you know that Mrs. Kelly McClennan is the guidance counselor for students in kindergarten, first, second and third grade? If your child is in fourth grade, Mrs. Bridget Mayberry is his/her guidance counselor. If you have any questions for your guidance counselors, you may call 610-374-0739. Mrs. McClennan's extension is 4115 and Mrs. Bridget Mayberry's extension is 4356.

Please remind your children that the guidance counselors are always available to them.



## ***Halloween:***

Our Halloween parade is **Friday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:15 PM**. We are asking for your cooperation with the following:

- Students are not permitted to wear masks of any kind.
- Students are not to bring weapons or anything that looks like a weapon.
- After the parade is over, parents should leave the campus immediately so we may begin our dismissal procedure. Only those parents who are volunteers at the parties will be permitted to take their children and siblings home with them. **For the safety of our students, we want to keep dismissal as normal as possible. Therefore, please follow your everyday dismissal procedure.**
- If your family does not celebrate Halloween, please send a note to your child's teacher.

## Notes from the Nurse

Every year parents ask us for guidelines for deciding when to keep children out of school. Common sense, concern for your child's well-being, and the possibility of infecting classmates should all contribute to the decision about whether your child should stay home.

When should I keep my child home from school?

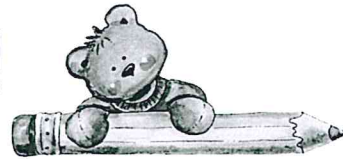
- Fever- children with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher must be fever-free (without fever reducing medications such as Tylenol) for 24 hours before returning to school
- An upset stomach accompanied by vomiting and/or diarrhea
- The beginning stages of a cold when sneezing and coughing are not well controlled. Also, please teach your child to cover sneezes and coughs using tissues or his/her bent elbow, not hands.
- A sore throat with fever and/or a stomachache and/or white spots on the back of the throat
- An unexplained rash
- Injuries that happen at home or over the weekend should be taken care of prior to returning to school. Please notify the nurse with any instructions or restrictions related to such injuries.

Friendly Reminders:

- ALL MEDICATION must be brought to school by the parent or guardian, not the student, and stored in the nurse's office. A log-in process will be completed.
- ALL MEDICATIONS, prescription and over the counter, need to be accompanied by BOTH a parent note and a PHYSICIAN'S ORDER requesting administration by the school nurse during school hours.
- Lozenges/cough drops are considered a choking hazard to our elementary school-aged students. Please consider sending a water bottle with your student to help ease your child's symptoms.
- Students with asthma and/or allergies are recommended to complete action/emergency plans which are available in the health room.
- Some children have bathroom accidents at school even if they don't have them at home. Please pack a change of clothes in your child's backpack "just in case".
- Health forms are available on the district website, [www.wyoarea.org](http://www.wyoarea.org). Click on Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center and select Health Services.



# Kindergarten News!

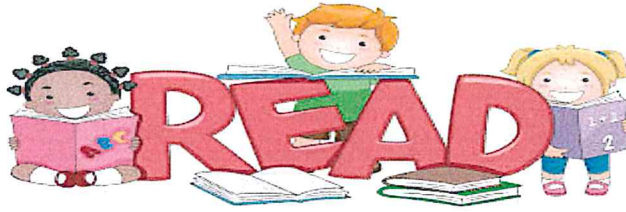


It is fall in Kindergarten! We will be taking our field trip to the apple orchard. We will study the new season as well as Fire Safety.

In Language Arts, we continue to practice our letters and letter sounds. We will also start our Kindergarten writing program: Kidwriting. This is a wonderful program tailor-made for Kindergarten students. Parents are an integral part as they volunteer each week to help out in the classroom with Kidwriting.

This program helps children focus on a few important things including: writing sentences, finger spacing between words and stretching words to hear the letter sounds in each word. The children get to share their writing with their peers and hear the praise from their peers for their good Kidwriting! It is so much fun to watch the children grow in their writing as the year goes on.





## Grade 1 News...

First grade is off to a great start! We have already begun incorporating The Daily Five into our Language Arts block and children are excitedly filling book boxes and practicing the activities of reading to self, reading with a partner, listening to reading, writing and word work during their center time. Special thanks to first grade families for your efforts at home! Nightly practice with spelling and sight words, math review and reading aloud makes all the difference for your child.

Wyomissing Fire Department will arrive in early October to discuss fire safety in the home and at school. Children will enjoy a close up look at the hook and ladder truck and meet with the firemen to hear about the importance of preparedness in any emergency.

Classes will spend several weeks discussing real bears and storybook bears and comparing and contrasting some of our favorite bear stories. Ask your favorite first grader about some of the facts they have learned about these fascinating animals. Also, check in for a description of favorite bears from our fiction selections. Look for our bears of all shapes and sizes as we celebrate this unit at our Teddy Bear picnic on Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup>!





## Grade 2 News...

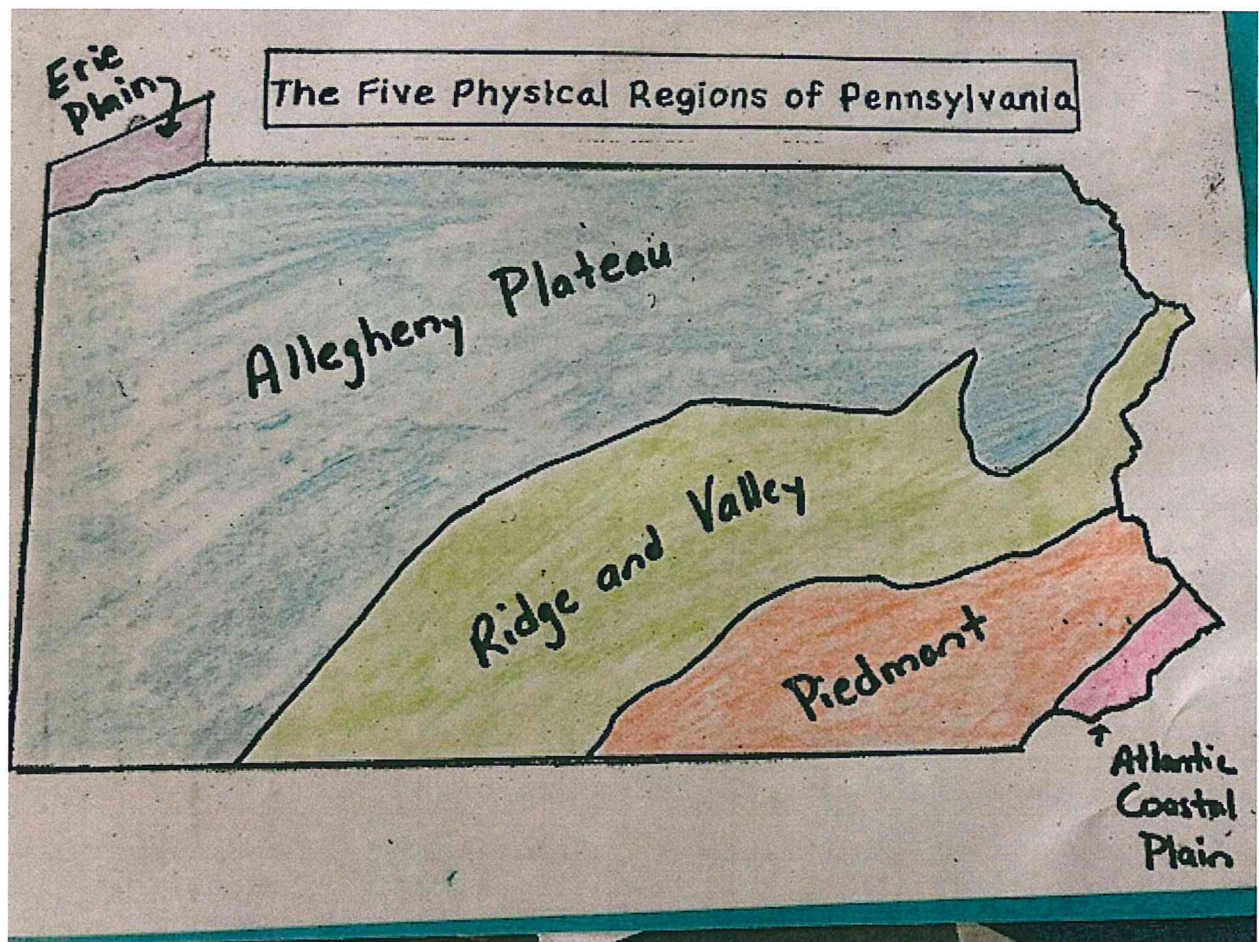
October is Fire Safety Month. In honor of this annual event, our second grade classes will have the opportunity to learn safety tips from the Wyomissing Fire Department! During the visit, the students will learn the proper way to call 9-1-1. Each student will have the opportunity to call a 9-1-1 simulator and answer questions that would be asked in a true emergency.

The firefighters will also provide the students with a hands-on learning opportunity through the use of the fire safety trailer. Here they will be taught about the fire hazards that can be found in a typical household and how to reduce the risk of being injured. The trailer will also have a smoke simulation that will allow the children to practice safe evacuation methods. Our second graders are looking forward to learning fire safety from the very best!



## Grade 3 News...

Third grade is currently studying the state we live in, Pennsylvania! We are creating our own Pennsylvania atlases. First, we created a map showing the 5 regions of Pennsylvania. We use a funny word to help us remember the 5 regions, and that word is EARPA. The next maps we created included a map of the 6 states that border Pennsylvania, and another map labeling the major rivers and Great Lakes found in Pennsylvania. Next up, we are exploring the natural resources found in our state. We are labeling where resources like coal, oil, natural gas, and lumber are located. We look forward to sharing our completed atlases with you!



## Grade 4 News...

Fourth graders feel fantastic about their final year at the fabulous Hills!!

Can you identify the figure of speech in the previous sentence? It is alliteration! Fourth grade students created a figures of speech flipbook including alliteration, similes, metaphors, personification, onomatopoeia, and idioms. The flipbook will be used throughout the year to identify figures of speech in reading and to improve the quality of writing.

Fourth graders began thinking like a scientist by learning the steps of the scientific method: Ask a question, Make a Hypothesis, Design and Perform the Experiment, and Draw a Conclusion. These steps will be used with each experiment in the science curriculum. Ask a fourth grader how the steps of the scientific method were used in experiments which included pencils and a bag of water, raisins and soda, and mixing vinegar and baking soda.



Maps and globes are being used to help identify our location on earth in social studies. Do you know the latitude and longitude of where you live? Do you know we live in two hemispheres? Fourth graders will use this information later in the year to study early explorers and colonial America.

The months of October and November will be especially “eggsiting” in fourth grade!! It’s time for chicken embryology!!





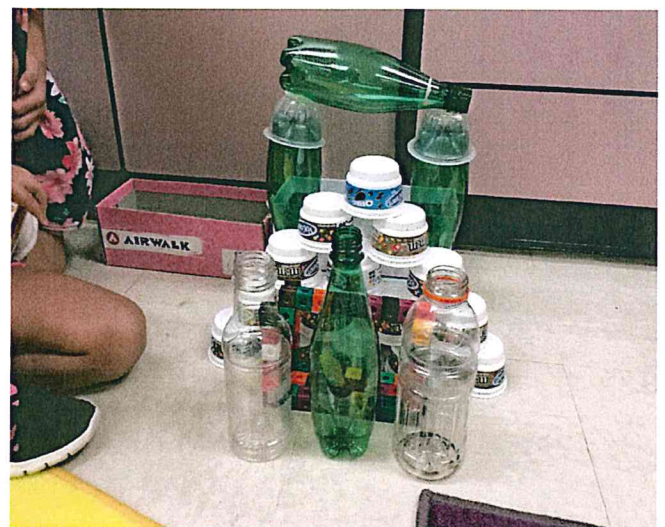
# STEAM Explorations

We are off to a great start in the STEAM Explorations classroom! All of our students started off the year with a STEAM Challenge to create a sturdy sandcastle out of various materials. There were many very creative ideas!

Then we spent some time learning about Growth Mindset and the Power of Yet. Growth Mindset is the idea that our brains can grow when we take on challenges. It encourages students to keep trying and not give up even when things get hard. It teaches them that it is “okay” to fail and that we can learn a lot from our failures. The Power of Yet tells students that they don’t have to know it all yet. It adds a simple three letter word to negative statements and turns them into Growth Mindset statements. For example, “I can’t do this,” turns into “I can’t do this yet.” Hopefully the students can continue to work on a Growth Mindset throughout the year as they take on new and challenging activities in STEAM Explorations and elsewhere! Remember the Power of Yet!

The rest of the quarter will be spent on the 4 C’s of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning: Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity. We will be using a variety of activities including games, STEAM challenges, and literature to learn these essential skills.

The most exciting part of the STEAM Explorations class is that many of the lessons that we are working on are developing skills that are not only necessary for STEAM Explorations, but they are also skills that are essential in so many aspects of life. These lessons will hopefully be pervasive throughout all areas of our students’ lives (school, music lessons, sports, etc.). Most importantly, the students will be learning to keep trying, believe in themselves, and do not give up!



## LOW COST INTERNET FOR QUALIFYING FAMILIES

Internet Essentials is a comprehensive program designed to connect families to the Internet on an affordable basis. Families with at least one child receiving free or reduced lunch prices may qualify for Internet essentials. Participating families pay only \$9.95 per month plus tax, with no activation fees or equipment rentals. For more information, please call

1-855-846-8376.





## Mrs. Main's Music Room News:



Miss Didden's 4th grade class led the school in the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner" during the morning announcements on Constitution Day.

### *Donation of Instruments*

*Is your child's trumpet or violin taking up valuable space in the attic? Now you can clear out that space and help a child learn to play an instrument. The music department is seeking donations of used (but functional) band and orchestra instruments to be loaned to students unable to afford a rental instrument. We will be happy to take woodwind, brass, and string instruments. Your donation is tax deductible. Please contact Cathy Barra at 610-374-0739 ext. 2264 or [cbarra@wyoarea.org](mailto:cbarra@wyoarea.org) with questions.*

### **Take Note:**

*3rd Grade Winter Concert-Thursday, December 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium*

*4th Grade Winter Concert-Thursday, December 13 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium*





My name is Carrie Benkert and I teach Kindergarten and Second Grade music at Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center. I graduated from West Chester University with a Bachelor's of Music in Music Education and a concentration in flute studies. I am also a level 3 Orff certified music teacher, who brings musical exploration, movement, and music literacy into the classroom. Outside of school, I give private music lessons and direct children's music at my church. I live with my husband in Sinking Spring with our two children and puppy, Ruby. I am thrilled to be making music with the students at Wyomissing Hills!



I would like to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Katie Bosch, and I am excited to be joining the 3rd grade team at Wyomissing Hills as your child's teacher this upcoming school year. I am originally from Lancaster, PA and come to Wyomissing Area with 7 years of teaching experience. I have taught grades K-5<sup>th</sup> and spent the 2017-2018 school year teaching 5th grade in the Hempfield School District in Lancaster, PA. In my free time, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, and also love to read and work on oil and acrylic paintings. I am looking forward to a great year at Wyomissing Hills!



My name is Rachael Didden and I am a graduate of Lancaster Bible College with a degree in Early Childhood Education and a minor in Music. I was previously employed by the Wilson School District where I taught second grade. When I am not teaching, I enjoy spending time with my family, running, cooking, reading, and singing. I am so honored to be joining the Wyomissing Hills staff.



Hi! My name is Mrs. DiDonato and I am the new Kindergarten teacher at Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center. Although this is my first year teaching Kindergarten, I've been teaching for 9 years; 7 of which I taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I graduated from Penn State University (GO LIONS!) with my Elementary Education certificate in 2009 and obtained my Master's Degree in Education from Cabrini College in 2012. I reside in New Hanover, PA with my husband, one-year old daughter - Nina, and my golden retriever - Sawyer. I love spending time with my family and friends, going to the beach, reading, taking spin/barre classes, trying out new restaurants, and watching reality T.V...probably more than I'd like to admit.

I've always wanted to teach a younger grade level and I am THRILLED to have the opportunity of teaching Kindergarten at The Hills. My experience has been wonderful thus far and I'm looking forward to the exciting year ahead!







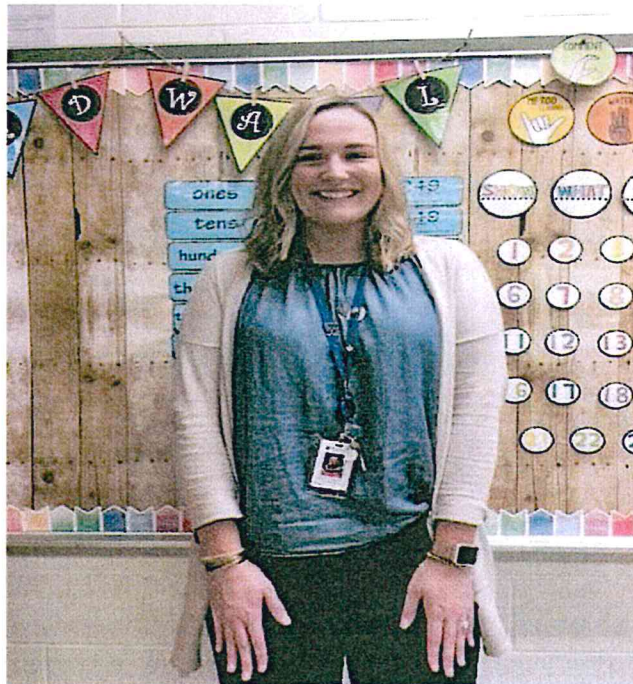
My name is Kristin Hartman and I graduated from Lebanon Valley College in 2017 with degrees in Early Childhood Education and Music. Last year, I spent time as a substitute teacher in the Wyomissing Area School District, Hamburg Area School District, and Kutztown Area School District. I was born and raised in Berks County and I am a graduate of Fleetwood. In my spare time, I love to spend time with family and friends (especially my pets!), sing, play board games, and make crafts.



My name is Alexandrea Koehler and I graduated from Millersville University with a degree in early childhood and special education. Before coming to Wyomissing Hills, I taught at Manheim Township, Lampeter-Strasburg and Wilson. I am a Berks county native, who graduated from Wilson. I have two sweet nephews who I spend my free time with. I am a huge Harry Potter, elephant and peanut butter lover.



The counseling office has a new face! My name is Bridget Mayberry and I will be joining Mrs. McClennan in supporting our students, especially with our 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Although I am new to this role, I am not new to the Wyo family. I have been working throughout the district as the Student Assistance Specialist for the last 5 years. I have been married to my husband, Brad, for 18 years and we have 3 daughters - Brenna (16), Kaitlyn (14) and Karrigan (11). I am very excited to be part of the WHEC team this year



My name is Gretchen Rahauser, and I teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade. I graduated from Millersville University in May 2017 with a degree in Early Childhood Education and a minor in STEM. I started my teaching career in the Reading School District teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and then taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in the Owen J. Roberts School District. I currently reside in Ephrata with my husband. I am so excited to be at WHEC and to be a Spartan!