

The Owl Oracle

Watergrass Elementary • 32750 Overpass Rd • Wesley Chapel • (813) 346-0600

September Events

- 9/12 Boy Scouts Round
Up 6:30-7:30 Café
- 9/14 Progress Reports
available on
MyStudent
- 9/20 Picture Day
- 9/21 PTA Family Night at
Chuck E. Cheese
- 9/26 Health Screenings

October Events

- 10/05 Grade 4
(Gaudens/Chatmon)
visit EMC
- 10/08 Grade 4
(Hoffman/Cusmano)
visit EMC
- 10/12 End of
Quarter One
- 10/15 Teacher Planning
*No school for
students*
- 10/18 Grades 4 & 5 visit
Wesley Chapel
Performing Arts
Center
- 10/23 Report cards
available on
MyStudent

From the desk of Mr. Mitchell

Welcome to the 2018-19 school year. We are off to a great start! We are excited to welcome Mrs. Shauger as our new Assistant Principal! I know many of you have already met her. We are very fortunate to have her. She has six years experience as an assistant principal.

How can you be involved with Watergrass Elementary this year? Join our PTA and sign up to be a volunteer. Information is available on our website. We are always looking for PTA supporters. We are also happy to have volunteers in the pods and for field trips. Check our website for online registration.

Also, we have a School Advisory Council that meets monthly. Meetings are open to everyone, you do not have to be an official member. We will be meeting on the second Monday of each month at 4:00 PM in the media center. The focus of the meetings will be on our School Success Plan and strategies we are implementing. Join us when you can.

Our website will be your another source of information. Be sure to visit regularly for current dates and events. We also have a Facebook page, an Instagram account, and a Twitter feed. If you want information about WGES you will have no problem staying current.

When picking up students in the afternoon we prefer that you stay in your car and pull through the line. However, if you do park and walk up, remember to bring your hang-tag with you. Also, to keep all pedestrians as safe as possible, please use the crosswalk at the front of the car line.

Thank you for your support! If Mrs. Shauger or I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Stay Connected!

WGES updates, events and news can be found on a variety of social media sites and websites.

School Website

<http://wges.pasco.k12.fl.us/>

Pasco County Schools
Website

<http://www.pasco.k12.fl.us>

Facebook

[@watergrasselementaryschool](#)

Twitter

[@watergrasselem](#)

Instagram

[@watergrass](#)



Be sure to join our PTA! You can find more information about what the PTA does for our school and community by going to:

<http://wges.pasco.k12.fl.us/wges-pta/>



Like WGES PTA on Facebook for frequent updates!

PTA Family Night

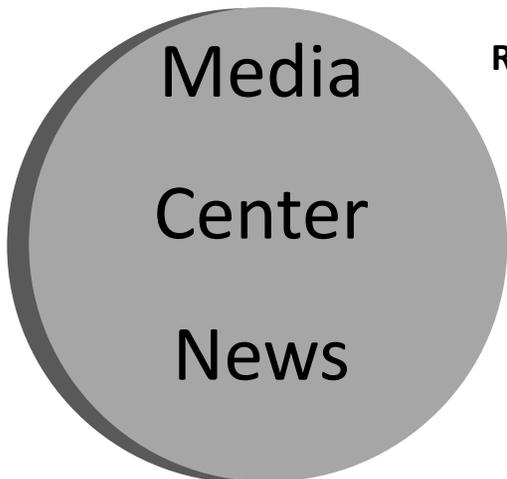
Our first Family Night will be on Friday, September 21st at Chuck E. Cheese.



Watergrass PTA has donated funds and time to support our students' literacy. Here are a few examples of their support:

- *BookTaco licenses for grades 2, 3 and 5
- *RAZ Kids school wide licensing
- *WT level chapter books for media center
- *Non-fiction books for media center
- *Special seating for reading spaces in the media center

Thank you to the businesses, families and staff that support WGES PTA and an even BIGGER thank you to the board members of PTA for putting literacy first!



Remember to send in your Box Tops!

Thank you WGES families for participating in our Box Top collection! We collected \$696.70. The funds go towards reading incentives for

Reading Steps in 1st and 2nd grade and SSYRA Challenge Brag Tags. Please send Box Tops to school by October 31. Our goal is to raise \$1200 this year. We know we can reach that goal with your support!



See the page 9 for information on this year's SSYRA Challenge!

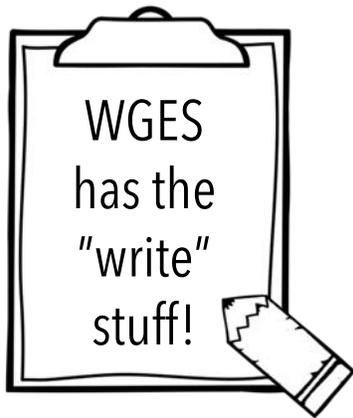




OWL EYES on Writing!

Each month, we will be featuring updates, short stories and comics created by the young authors of Watergrass Elementary. If you are interested in sharing your child's work, please send an email to Mrs. Saez with your child's name and teacher.

jsaez@pasco.k12.fl.us



5th Grade by Faith Nnamdi

Hello, Owls! My name is Faith Nnamdi. I am in fifth grade, and I am going to talk about my experience so far as a fifth grader.

Fifth grade has been excellent! It is so much fun to come to school and learn. I have made new friends and also found so much about myself these last couple of weeks. I missed a few days of school due to a cold virus which triggered a life-threatening asthma attack. This experience taught me to live to the fullest and to be thankful and appreciate everything I have. I also discovered that I would rather be at school if I had a choice and that's why it makes me feel sad sometimes when kids complain. I think we should be grateful that we can go to school or even get out of bed.

I love my teacher "Mrs. Pickard." She is a great teacher who is always pushing me to my best. The kids in my class are entertaining to be around. Everyone has been so kind. I learned that if you find the right friends, you will be happier to learn because if you are sad, your friends will be there for you to comfort you. I think I have been succeeding in all of my goals so far this year. If I work hard and stay focused, I think this could be an excellent year for me.

That is how my fifth grade has been, and I'm looking to my last year as an Elementary student.

Winter is Here by Josh Griffin



Team News



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Burrowing Owls- Kindergarten

The Kindergarten Burrowing Owls would like to thank all of our families for sending in supplies and snacks to help our day run smoother. We are having a successful start to the year and appreciate your support at home.

It was nice to meet so many of you at Open House. If you would like to conference with your child's teacher, please let them know. We are more than happy to set up a time to go over any questions you have. Our students are learning so many things during the school day, and it is important to be sure everyone arrives on time. Please plan for your child to arrive at school at 9:30. The tardy bell rings at 9:45. Also, be please sure to label items like backpacks, lunch boxes, and jackets. Many items look the same and we want to be able to return lost pieces to their owners. Thank you for your help with this!



Pygmy Owls- 1st Grade

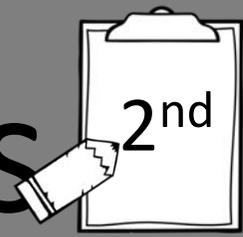
We are off to a great start in First Grade! Thank you to all who continually check student binders and ClassDojo. These are the two best ways to keep open communication between the teacher and parent.

We have begun recording Reading Steps. For every *15 minutes* of reading students do at home they will earn *1 step*. When they reach 10 steps they will earn a reward. They will continue to earn little incentives as they climb to 100 steps. As much as we would like students reading every day, we know things come up and this isn't always possible. Please be honest when recording reading minutes for your child. If they miss a day it's okay and if they read more than 15 minutes that's great too! We will start checking out books in the media center this week and the Bookshelf app is available. Both are great resources for getting kids in grade-level appropriate text.



Time to Play!

Team News



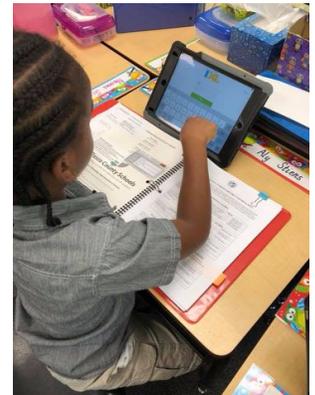
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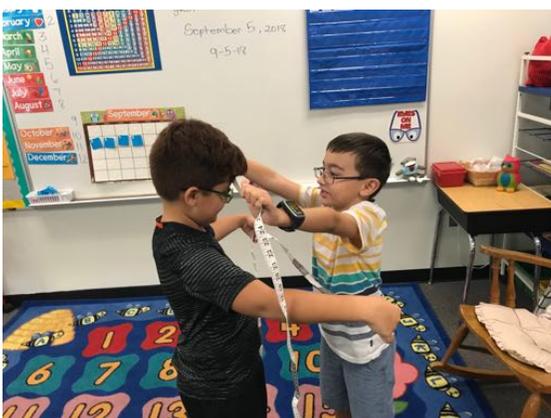
Eagle Owls- 2nd Grade

Need support with math homework? Here's how you can help support your child at home with Eureka Math:

- If your child would benefit from using concrete objects for support, provide pennies (or other counters) to help them break apart numbers into two parts. The use of fingers is also encouraged!
 - Encourage your child to explain how they know the correct answer. For example, "I know that $10 - 7 = 3$, so that means $10 - 3 = 7$. Three and seven are parts and 10 is the total.
 - Practice counting the "Say Ten" way. Say a two-digit number (e.g., 23 or 37), and ask your child to repeat it the "Say Ten" way (2 tens 3; 3 tens 7). For fun, invite your child to say some numbers for you to repeat the Say Ten way.
- *Also, please document your reading minutes/steps in the planner.



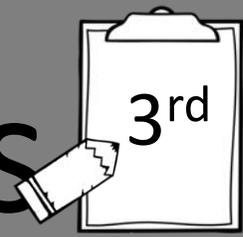
Mrs. Reidy's class are learning their logins for iXL and how to navigate through the app.



2nd Grade Loves to Learn!

Mrs. Horrigan's 2nd grade class is working on using scientific tools to make observations.

Team News



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Snowy Owls- 3rd Grade

Our Snowy Owls are off to a great start!

In Math, our students are studying the properties of multiplication and division. We are using equal groups, arrays, and repeated addition strategies to help us multiply and divide. Our students are also using programs like Khan Academy and FasttMath as resources for extra practice and fluency.

Parent Tips: GreatMinds.org/signup, <https://embarc.online/>, or even a Google search of "Eureka Math Grade 3 Module _ Lesson _" will provide you with some quick resources including videos of Mr. Duane that will help you assist your child at home!

In Language Arts, our students have been reading The Case of the Gaspig Garbage. Our focus is on character traits and how a character's actions can change the events and the outcome of the story. Our students have all been level checked and we are excited to start IRLA conferencing, goal setting, and beginning our Chapter Book Challenges. We have also started using *ReadTheory* and *BookTaco* for comprehension practice.

Parent Tips: Help your child find a book series that they are excited about reading and have him/her read for 20-30 minutes nightly. Third grade is a big transition year from learning HOW to read to reading to LEARN, so have conversations about what they are reading. It can really make a difference!

In Science and Social Studies, we are learning about the scientific method and the tools that scientists use. We will also be learning about maps and mapping skills.

Parent Tips: Visit www.sciencebuddies.org to not only review the scientific method but find fun activities to do at home! Pull out a map or a globe you have at home and find the compass rose and locate different places on the map using cardinal directions.

If you haven't already, please make sure that you connect to your child's classes by joining *Class Dojo*. You can either sign up for an account online or directly through an app on your phone! We share all kinds of information and even pictures through this site and you don't want to miss out! We look forward to a wonderful year together!

Team News



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Spotted Owls- 4th Grade

Hurray for 4th Grade!

We have had a great start to the year. Our students have been learning and practicing how to be ready, responsible, and respectful.

Soaring into Academics:

We are continuing to use IRLA and Power Goals. We have a VERY exciting "Hook Book" cart in our pod that students are allowed to check out books from. We really want to focus on the LOVE of reading.

How you can help: Have your child read 30 minutes nightly. Help them search for books they are interested in, and books similar to those they have enjoyed in the past. 4th grade expectations are to finish one chapter book each week.

In English Language Arts, we have started reading *The Tarantula Scientist*. Students will be identifying key details, making inferences, finding the main idea, and making connections with science. We are getting students excited about writing through narratives.

How you can help: Review some of the ELA topics with your child while they're reading at home. Students can even practice inferencing while watching TV! For writing, it would be helpful for you to talk to your child about taking their time, and following the writing process. Many students need help in planning their writing.

In math, we are going over place value, rounding, and adding and subtracting multi-digit numbers.

How you can help: There are many online tutorials, videos, examples, etc. online that can help you help your child. If you Google search "Eureka Math Grade 4 Module ___ Lesson ___" there are tons of resources!

In Science and Social Studies, students will be learning about what a scientist is, the scientific method, and more. In Social Studies, students will be learning about the geography of Florida, and map skills.

Upcoming Events:

- Progress Reports September 14
- Comprehension check September 28

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Great Grey Owls- 5th Grade

Welcome to the 5th grade and to the Great Grey Owls! We are excited to start the year and look forward to working with you to make this year memorable for your child. We have a lot planned for Quarter 1 and need your help to make it a success. Please make sure you are signing your child's planner nightly and checking their Boomerang Folder daily for important papers and work that goes home.

Our Fifth graders are "*Owl About Reading*" this year! We will continue to use IRLA to assess and monitor students' reading development. They will also be given a *Power Goal* that will target a specific need in reading comprehension, fluency or vocabulary. The goal for 5th graders is to be at an Orange Level and reading one chapter book a week. Teachers will be conferencing with their students weekly to monitor progress of student *Power Goals*. We will be using the Boomerang Folder to communicate levels and *Power Goals* with you. *Power Goals* can be expected to change every two weeks. Be on the look out for these goals to help your child reach their fullest potential. Good readers read every night for 30 minutes and complete a reading log.

We are going to delve into Organized Prompt Writing while using the RACE Strategy this year. *RACE means Restate, Answer, Cite and Explain*. Your child will certainly be able to show specific text evidence while responding to a prompt in writing.

Great Grey's are Mad About Science! We will be focusing on the Scientific Method, Heredity, and Reproduction of Plants and Animals this quarter. Encourage your child to review their science journal nightly!

We are focusing on Geography and Explorers of the New World in Social Studies. Your child will be able to name important land features of the United States and identify all continents at the end of our first unit. We will then explore how the New World was founded and discuss the explorers.

In math we are finishing up Module 1 on place value concepts as well as adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing decimals! There is daily math homework which comes with a "Homework Helper" page to show students how to solve the problems. Students can also use the Khan Academy website to practice and review the math topics at home.

We are going to be taking some exciting field trips to see the Florida Orchestra perform in October and then we'll visit Crystal Springs at the end of December. If you are interested in being a chaperone, speak with your child's teacher and make sure you are an approved volunteer for this school year. You have to fill out the application every school year! We look forward to an exciting year!



WATERGRASS ELEMENTARY

SSYRA CHALLENGE

SUNSHINE STATE YOUNG READER AWARD BOOKS

For Students in grades 3, 4 and 5

WGES media center is offering a WONDERFUL opportunity to our intermediate readers. The *Sunshine State Young Reader Award* is a selection of 15 books. SSYRA titles are selected by media specialists from all around the state of Florida. The goal is to read all 15 books by May 15 and vote to select the BEST book!

Parents, please encourage your child to participate. Bookmarks are available in the Media Center to help students keep track of the books they have read. Whenever your child reads a book, they need to take a quiz *OR* conference with their teacher to show comprehension of the story. They will then earn a **Brag-Tag for each title** to show their LOVE of reading!

Students are also eligible for the additional prizes below:

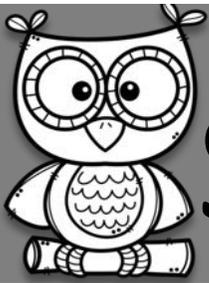
- 5 books by January 8: Create your own Cupcake
- 8 books by March 8: Pizza Party!
- All 15 books by May 15: SSYRA Voting and Banquet in the Media Center

Please contact Mrs. Saez or Ms. Cozart in the media center if you have any questions about the SSYRA reading challenge. We hope to see students checking out these books soon!

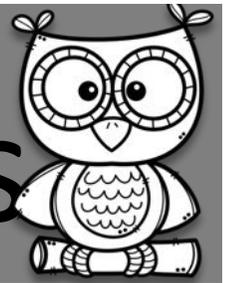
jsaez@pasco.k12.fl.us

mcozart@pasco.k12.fl.us





Specialists News



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Music Notes

We are very busy in music learning to keep a steady beat, our different voice, instruments of the orchestra and much more.

4th & 5th grade students have begun to work on our upcoming musical, "Lights! Camera! Action!" This show will be presented November 6th at the Center for the Arts at Wesley Chapel at 7:00 PM. Permission slips have already gone home about this, so please get yours turned in!

Please go to Mrs. Reinhold and Ms. Nickerson's website for more information on the music department.

<http://connectplus.pasco.k12.fl.us/kreinhol/>

School Counselor's Corner

Welcome back to another great year! I look forward to getting to know all of our new Owls, and continuing to work with all students. I have been enjoying my first round of visits into classrooms Kdg-5th. As in previous years, School Counselors in Pasco County will be delivering the Safer, Smarter Kids program in all grades. Look for information sent home with your children after our lessons. In addition, this year I will be partnering with our one and only Learning Design Coach Mrs. Saez to work on a "Be Internet Awesome!" campaign made available through Google. Together we will work to help our students navigate the Internet with good digital citizenship and smart decision-making. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for assistance. I am available to support all students and families.

Meredith Ward

WGES School Counselor

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Health Screenings will be conducted at school on September 26th.

The following screenings are required by Florida statutes:

Kg – Vision & Hearing

1st – Vision, Hearing, Height & Weight

3rd – Vision, Height & Weight

We will also be screening all 2nd graders for vision & hearing due to the grade level gifted screening.

These screenings do not replace your child's need for regular health care and check ups. **If you do not want your child to participate in screening**, please send in a written request for exclusion to the front office at least one week before the screening date listed in the first paragraph.



Be Internet Awesome.

