

**The Week At WHMS**  
**(parent edition)**  
Week of January 10, 2022



**Thought for the week:**

“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose a response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

– Victor Frankl

**Weekly Calendar:**

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Sat/Sun</u>
1/10	1/11	1/12	1/13	1/14	1/15-1/16
Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	
3:00p – Special presentation for all Winter I teams from Northwell Health about drug & alcohol abuse  <b>Club Meets:</b> Chess Club  7:30p – Joint PTSA/PTA/ SEPTA meeting @ HS VCR	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> period: Hackathon practice for team members  All day – ELA PD w/ Randi Roschnotti  3:00p – department meetings	1:15p – PST meeting  <b>Club Meets:</b> Dignity & Tolerance	<b>Club Meets:</b> Art Club; Mathletes	8:45a – RTI meeting	

**Instructional tips:** (from *Edutopia*)

**How to Give Assessments a Boost With PBL** by Heather Wolpert Gawron (exerpts)

*Middle school teachers can update their assessments by offering students authentic opportunities to display what they have learned.*

There are many mixed messages in education. For instance, there are tons of mandated tests to help schools identify and analyze data, but I believe there's also a moral imperative to ensure that learning is authentic and meaningful to students. These two principles, assessments and authenticity, need not be an oxymoron. They can support each other, but it does take 21st-century student-centered design. The students of 2021 aren't the students of 2019, and our [pacing guides](#), grading practices, and traditional assessments are showing the dust of inflexibility. The research on student engagement always showed the need for lessons and assessments to be meaningful and relevant, but as students

returned to school, we're seeing evidence in behavior and academic issues that students aren't just hoping for more authenticity, they are demanding it.

### **MAKING ASSESSMENTS MORE AUTHENTIC**

To make your assessments more authentic, you don't need to start over. It's important, however, to ensure that student voices are heard. Many times, assessments exist as a task created by the teacher or a program, but authenticity considers each individual student.

To make an assessment more authentic, just think of turning up the dial on any of the following ideas:

- Having students reflect on and assess their own work
- Ensuring that there are audiences for their work beyond the teacher
- Using assessments that focus on topics of real-world significance, structure, and problem-solving
- Allowing students to select topics of focus

Here's a document I created with a list of options to help turn up the dial on authentic assessments. (SEE SEPARATE ATTACHMENT)

### **AUTHENTICITY AS A PART OF THE CLASSROOM CULTURE**

One of the ways to ensure that assessments are authentic is to use more elements from project-based learning (PBL) in the classroom. In PBL and in any of its many branches—design-based learning, inquiry-based learning, service-based learning, etc.—systemic authenticity is a prime directive. Assessments are utilized to help a teacher understand the students' trajectories, strengths, and growth areas without sacrificing authenticity.

For instance, Telannia Norfar, an Oklahoma high school teacher and coauthor of [\*Project-Based Learning in the Math Classroom\*](#), uses a more authentic assessment system in her math classroom. This system is a cycle of formative assessments, each followed by critique and revision, that lead to a summative assessment, all of which are based in real-world scenarios. After interviewing a family, her students create an individual financial analysis for it. Formative assessments, like first explaining the basic compound interest formula, scaffold students toward their final presentation to their clients. You can [view her authentic system of assessment](#) in action on YouTube.

Creating a more authentic assessment experience isn't just about occasionally offering more choices of prompts or allowing students to write a letter to a principal. It's about creating a classroom culture that honors student voice and agency, where students know that what they are learning will make an impact on the world outside of school.

For full article see <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-give-assessments-boost-pbl>

#### **Items of importance:**

- **WEATHER NOTICE**: we have outdoor recess, outdoor AM line-up, and outdoor PE daily unless it is raining. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing and outerwear. We only stay indoors if the temperature falls below 30° or the wind chill falls below 28°
- **Have you downloaded the West Hempstead App yet?** It is available in the App Store and Google Play, just search "West Hempstead." This will let you keep track of everything happening in our school and access documents such as this "Week @ WHMS" newsletter.

- Let me know when you have exciting learning taking place that I can tweet out and be sure to tag @WH\_MS RAMS if you tweet yourself

#### Items of interest:

- From Ms. Walker and Ms. Gould, our yearbook advisors: "Parents, a great way to celebrate your child in the yearbook is to purchase an ad. Also, please note, not enough yearbooks have been ordered to date. If you are interested in your child receiving a yearbook please go to [www.jostens.com](http://www.jostens.com) and order as soon as it is convenient."
- We are pleased to offer our staff the "Parents as Partners" webinar series with Educational Consultant and Trainer Dr. Jennifer Bashant. These free webinars are accessible live or as recordings. Go to <https://www.whufsd.com/page/parents-as-partners-webinar-series> for more information. **FINAL WEBINAR ON 1/19/22**
- Our club calendar is available on the website at: <https://www.whufsd.com/o/whms/browse/221769>. Students should listen to AM announcements for the most up-to-date information about meeting dates and locations.
- The **extra help schedule** can be found at: [https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded\\_file/1553808/Extra-Help\\_Schedule\\_MS\\_21-22.pdf](https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1553808/Extra-Help_Schedule_MS_21-22.pdf). Students should take advantage of teachers' availability to do their best work.
- The Homework Center is open after school on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. See details below:

### Homework Center Information: 21-22

Homework Center is open 2:45-3:45 on the following days

Day	Teacher	Room	Notes
Monday	Ms. Healey	257	Support available for any subject, or just a quiet place to work after school.
Wednesday	Ms. Geiger	17	
Thursday	Ms. Rogan	16	

#### "COVID Corner" Information:

- I cannot say how vital it is that **if your child, or anyone in your home, feels sick, your child MUST REMAIN HOME FROM SCHOOL.** Call the nurse or Mr. Murray for advice on when it is okay to return to school.
- Please remember to **send your child** to school **with a** reusable or paper **mask each day**. A number of students are "forgetting" their masks on a regular basis and asking for masks at the front door.
- **Please send your child to school with a refillable water bottle.** Our water fountains are "COVID-safe" and only the water bottle filler function is available.
- For more information about the COVID vaccine for 5-15 year-olds, go to: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>

**Looking ahead:**

Monday, January 17:

- ***NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Jr. Day***



Tuesday, January 18: *Day 1*

- Writers workshop PD with Randi, ELA team
- Select department meetings, 3:00pm
- Board of Education Meeting, 7:30pm @ HS VCR

Wednesday, January 19: *Day 2*

- Savvas math PD, all day
- PST meeting, 1:15pm
- Parent & Family Webinar Series (last program), 7:00pm

Thursday, January 20: *Day 1*

- Schools-to-Watch Committee, 3:00pm
- "Coffee & Conversation" with Mr. Rehman, 7:00pm

Friday, January 21: *Day 2*

- Savvas math PD, all day
- RTI meeting, 8:45am