

**Who we are**

Julieann Haskins coordinates lessons for students in kindergarten through third grade in the downstairs lab. She also supports our reading initiative working with small reading groups. Tom Welch teaches grades four through six and coordinates all technology use at WES.

Lab lessons change often to reflect changes in curriculum and the growing technological skills of both students and teachers. Students today are digital natives and our main focus has become using technology to support the classroom teachers in helping children learn.

**New Email**

We have switched our email to GoogleApps. Our addresses remain the same. This switch will reduce the work required to manage our own system and resolve some problems communicating with certain domains. GoogleApps will also help us bridge the *Appleworks / Word* compatibility issue.

**New Web Site**

We have enlisted PowerIT to work with us on a new web site. Our old web site was great when it was created six years ago, but we wanted a format that would allow for more access and easier publishing. The new site will have more up to date information, more contributors, and will grow as our entire community learns to use its many features.

One new feature, called eAlerts, allows for parents to subscribe to the WES Newsletter and the Special/Urgent Communications groups. By subscribing you will receive the newsletter and other notices via email. This will save copying labor and paper!

Teachers will be able to add forms and links to their homework, school organizations will be able to post agendas and minutes, and administrators can get out important information through their blogs.

We will also attempt to highlight a few of the many special projects, celebrations, and guest presentations that take place at WES. We hope you will bookmark [williamstownelementary.org](http://williamstownelementary.org) and use it regularly.

**What we do**

Because today's students are accustomed to viewing giant screens, computers, and gaming consoles, our primary role is to help them learn to use these same tools to acquire meaningful skills and concepts. We also have lessons on using our digital tools safely and appropriately.

This year, in addition to supporting and extending the classrooms' science and social studies programs, we have added some applications to support the school's literacy initiative. *Lexia* has three levels of individualized phonics support. *Read Naturally* promotes fluency and comprehension for developing readers. We have also expanded our *Accelerated Reader* offerings with an online subscription that offers quizzes and vocabulary practice for books read independently. As of March 5, our students have passed quizzes on 2487 books reading 64,911,792 words!

In math we subscribe to *Mathfacts in a Flash* to help teachers track student progress in basic facts automaticity. Knowing their tables automatically (by direct retrieval) allows students to focus on higher concepts and multiple step problems more fully.

Collaborating with Williams College and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Grant, we have been able to offer intensive professional development for our teachers. Each summer for the last eight years, twelve teachers have participated in a technology boot camp where they learn new skills and develop technology infused science lessons for their grade levels. We also strive to support our teachers with laptop computers.

In addition, Hughes tutors and work study students from Williams College work in our labs to assist students and teachers.

[williamstownelementary.org](http://williamstownelementary.org) is changing