

May 27, 2022

Happy Friday West Sylvan Middle School Families,

We are nearing the end of the school year, and are hopeful that our families are weathering this latest wave of various illnesses. We continue to recommend masks as a defense mechanism against spreading illness. As a reminder, this is a long weekend due to the federal Memorial Day holiday on Monday 5/30.

With just a couple weeks left in the school year, Educators will be wrapping up final units, completing some final statewide testing and encouraging scholars to do their very best to finish out the year successfully. We will be engaging in our year-end check-in processes in the coming weeks: collecting textbooks, library books, cleaning out lockers, and preparing our scholars for their summer vacation, which begins on June 11th. Summer can be an exciting time for some, and for others, Summer can mean a loss of routine, stability, the known schedule of a school-day, and the contact with friends and adults who have been a support all year. If your scholar is feeling anxious about Summer, please encourage them to talk with our Counseling team.

We enjoyed a second night of 5th grade family visits on Monday and a 5th grade field trip to WSMS on Wednesday during the school day morning. It was wonderful for our team to meet families and 5th graders in person and show them around our campus! We look forward to inviting our newest group of learners into the WSMS community in August! Also, our Band and our Choir had opportunities to perform this week at LHS, and they did a remarkable job showcasing their skills. Our band warming up is pictured below.



COVID-19 Updates

We have continued to have daily reports this week of positive COVID-19 cases, leaving scholars and staff members home for five days from the onset of symptoms (with the first day counting as day zero). For any scholars who are home, we encourage you to check class Canvas pages, and to email Educators for any work that can be done remotely. In total, we had 39 reported cases this week confirmed by our MESD partners, which include both staff and student reports. While local and school guidance has not changed at

this time, you can review the best practices to stay safe and keep your scholars safe [here](#), and **masking is recommended**.

Counseling Supports

Any time there is an upsetting event on or off of campus, such as this week's mass shooting in Texas, and the previous tragedies in Buffalo, we reach out to our Educator team to alert them about the ways to support scholars with additional social-emotional needs. On Wednesday, our Educator team had resources shared to help with conversations about the most recent acts of violence, and our Counselors have been available to meet with scholars throughout the week for additional support. Outreach from families for help connecting our scholars to Counselors also helps us to provide services in a timely manner. An additional district message went out yesterday to families, which articulates the various steps that our district takes for safety. The message is [here](#), if you missed the correspondence.

For 8th Grade Families:

- **Promotion Announcements:** You should have received a Save the Date card to the address that we have in our Synergy records.
- **Promotion Yard Signs:** These are now available in the Main Office for 8th grade family pick-up **beginning on Tuesday, May 31st**. If you're picking up for several families, please let our office know, so we account for them accordingly.
- **Promotion Tickets:** Each family will have **four tickets**, which will be given to your Scholar by their 7th period Teacher and sent home the week prior to the promotion ceremony. Should you be unable to attend or do not need all four tickets, you are welcome to give them to other families who may want additional tickets. The school office will not have the capacity to manage those exchanges.
- **8th Grade Oaks Park Trip** (rides) on Wednesday, June 8th, chaperoned by Educators and Administrators. **Parent chaperones are still needed for this OAKS PARK field trip. Sign up [here](#)**. Scholars who choose to attend will bus to Oaks Park from campus and return by dismissal. Scholars will need to be in good standing (no suspensions, referrals to administrators, patterns of unexcused absences, etc.) to attend. This is a fun privilege, not an automatic right. **Permission slips** went home with students this week, and should be returned by Tuesday 5/31. If you did not see the permission slip, you may download a copy [here](#).
- **8th Grade Promotion** is at Lincoln High School on Thursday, June 9th at 6 p.m. Each scholar will receive **four** guest tickets for family members, due to limited capacity. More information was shared through a flyer given to students in their Block classes.
- **WSMS Foundation Oaks Park Event for 8th graders:** This will be an *optional* evening event for our 8th graders hosted by our WSMS Foundation at Oaks Park on Friday, June 10th. Families will have to self-transport for this event, as it is a Foundation-sponsored event. Sign up at [this link](#), where more information can be found for those who want to participate. Parents sign up [here](#) to help with the event. *These events are only for WSMS scholars.*

For 7th Grade Families:

- **Neon Nights Glow Party sponsored by WSMS Foundation:** Friday, June 3rd in WSMS Gym from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Sign up at the link [here](#), and pay in advance to attend. Please recruit a parent friend or two (or three) and sign up [here](#) to help host our first in-person 7th Grade community event! *These events are only for WSMS scholars.*

For 6th Grade Families:

- **[6th grade skate party hosted by WSMS Foundation!](#)** Wed, June 8th, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at the [Oaks Park Roller Rink](#). These events are only for WSMS scholars.

For Families with 5th Graders Coming to WSMS in 2022-23:

We enjoyed seeing many families in person! Also, the short visit to WSMS was a quick way for classes to see campus in person and experience some fun activities. We also shared a slidedeck of similar information on our school website so that anyone who could not attend the evening sessions can also review the information. For a preview “walk-thru” of West Sylvan’s building, you can view a new **virtual tour** [here](#). Thank you to one of our WSMS Foundation parents, Giovanni Cafiso, for creating this virtual tour!

Mr. Almeida will be the Counselor working directly with 6th graders in the 2022-23 school year. If you have questions about classes or supports for 6th grade, please email Mr. Almeida at ralmeida@pps.net. Mr. Almeida is currently the Counselor for our 8th graders, so please give him time to respond, as he has a very full and busy schedule wrapping up the year with our current 8th graders.

Host Family Needed for an Arabic Educator for 22-23 School Year:

We are still looking for a family willing to host the Educator, who is coming from Egypt, and will be joining the WSMS team. Through American Councils, the Educator is given a living stipend of approximately \$1000/month to pay for living accommodations, if hosted by a private family. There would be two separate needs:

1. A host family to provide a comfortable space for the Educator to stay for a short-term stay during the first two weeks upon arrival in the U.S. while we secure housing (arriving on August 11, 2022).
2. A host family to provide a room for the Educator for the school year (August-June, 2023) and possibly help with transportation needs to and from WSMS for work, as the Educator would not have their own transportation.

If you are interested in being a host family in one or both of these capacities and would like more information, please fill out the form [here](#).

Chromebook Laptop Updates:

Due to end of year collection, we will no longer be sending off chromebooks for repairs, and we will not be giving out loaners to take home. Any chromebooks in need of repair should be turned in to Ms. Crombie in the Office, and scholars will be issued a new chromebook in the Fall. Current 6th and 7th graders will be given a permission slip on Tuesday 5/31 to bring home for you to sign and return if your scholar will be keeping their chromebook over summer.

Campus Closed for Summer Dates:

Starting on **Monday, June 13th**, campus will be closed to the public. Educators have a few contractual days to work on final grading and end-of-year items in private, and the building will not be open to visitors. We will also have some remodeling of our ISC special education classroom occurring over summer, so the building will be partially taken over by construction. Additionally, all office staff leaves for summer by June 24th. Phones will not be answered in their absence, as the offices are closed during the summer months. Staff will return messages and emails beginning in August. Counselors and Educators will be on Summer break until school resumes for Educators on August 24th. Administrators work sporadically throughout the summer months, as there is also allotted vacation time. Emails will be the best way to reach out for questions over summer, and thank you for your patience in understanding the summer break allowance after a very challenging school year.

Interested in Volunteering and Being More Involved?

Become an approved PPS volunteer by following the information [here](#). Our Library and classrooms are spaces where we can use family volunteers through the end of the school year, especially during our lunch

period of time from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. each day. The Library can use help from 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily. Once your application is approved, please contact the Main Office to see how and when you can be of service.

As we continue to plan for next school year, we are hopeful that we can have more families involved in regular school activities such as volunteering on campus, taking part in our **WSMS Foundation**, and serving on **School Site Council** and **School Climate Committees**. If you may be interested in having a voice in one or more of these school groups, please sign up [here](#). Also, the [22-23 PPS approved calendar](#) is here for your future planning. We are still waiting to hear about whether the first day of school will be a day when all scholars attend, or if there will be a modified schedule to allow 6th graders an orientation day on their own prior to the rest of our scholars joining for the the start of the year.

Student Chromebooks For Summer:

Thank you for everyone's help with the new One-to-One chromebooks this year. It is now time to inventory/return/repair them. Please read the section below that pertains to your students' grade level:

8th Graders:

All eighth grade students will turn in their WSMS chromebooks and chargers on Wednesday, June 8th. They will receive PPS chromebooks next fall at Lincoln High School, or any other PPS High School they attend. Please have your students remove any stickers, drawings, art work, etc. before returning their device. Lysol wipes seem to work well for this task. If the chromebooks are broken, please tell the folks collecting the chromebooks.

6th and 7th Graders:

If your child needs their chromebook over the summer, please fill out the permission slip (coming home with students on Tuesday 5/31) and return it to Ms. Crombie in the Office. Please read the information/responsibility sheet carefully. If you and your student are not willing to abide by these responsibilities, please have your student turn in their chromebooks and chargers on the following days: Monday, June 6th for sixth graders; Tuesday, June 7th for seventh graders.

No permission slip = no chromebook.

Mark your calendar now in preparation:

No School (Memorial Day Holiday): Monday, May 30th

Pride Month: June

7th Grade WSMS Foundation Sponsored Event: Friday, June 3rd in the WSMS Gym (6:30-8:30 p.m.)

8th Grade Field Trip to Oaks Park: Wednesday, June 8th (during school hours)

6th Grade Oaks Park 80s Skate Party: Sponsored by WSMS Foundation on Wednesday, June 8th 7-9 p.m.

8th Grade Promotion: Thursday, June 9th 6 p.m. at Lincoln HS

Final School Day 21-22: Friday, June 10th (grades finalized by the next week)

8th Grade WSMS Foundation Sponsored Oaks Park Party: June 10th (evening)

All: [22-23 PPS approved calendar](#) is here for your future planning.

MYP News:

We are excited to be gaining momentum again in our professional development goals toward eventually being an authorized IB Middle Years Programme. [Please visit this slide deck for more updates on WSMS MYP implementation](#). MYP lessons and units focus on inquiry, discussion, analysis, critique and defense of work, critical thinking, investigation projects, and performance-based assessments. Developing the MYP

Learner Profile means an emphasis on teaching scholars to be inquirers, knowledgeable, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, educational risk-takers, balanced and reflective learners. Our families can also learn more about our work toward MYP authorization [here](#). We look forward to advancing our work at WSMS and applying for authorization in 22-23! Thank you to our WSMS Foundation for fundraising and supporting the staffing needs that help us continue to make progress toward becoming an approved MYP school program.

WSMS Foundation:

Please support our WSMS Foundation! Every contribution helps our school by allowing us to fund educational opportunities and events for your scholars! Please consider donating to WSMS Foundation to help support important instructional additions for our scholars in the coming school year. Every donation helps!

You can donate and find out more information about our WSMS Foundation and their amazing work for our scholars [here](#). Also follow them on Instagram @[west.sylvan.foundation](#) and check out our West Sylvan students in their [school](#), [sports](#), [performances](#), [events](#)...

If you have a scholar event, announcements related to scholars and their achievements, or you'd like to advertise let us know. [Email Lisette Crepeaux at thecrepeauxs@gmail.com](mailto:thecrepeauxs@gmail.com).

Help with Cell Phones:

Our catch phrase that we use at WSMS regarding cell phones during the school day is, “**Out of sight and away, unless we say.**” **For the 2022-23 school year, we are revising our cell phone policy to address the constant issues with phones as distractions in the learning setting.** Any additional monitoring you can put in place to keep an eye on your scholars’ social media activity is also greatly appreciated! There are times when scholars may need to access their devices for family reasons or even in instructional settings, and they should speak with an adult if such a need arises. Also, several families have had concerns with their scholars’ use of cell phones throughout the day for non-instructional reasons. We will continue to remind scholars of this expectation throughout their school day. If scholars post inappropriate content on social media, please report the account for review and help them take down inappropriate items and shut down their access.

Some families have inquired about apps that can restrict various features on cell phones for scholars throughout the day so that they are not on social media and are not tempted to engage with others through social media platforms. Here are some tips we have given families: **NY Times Article: [The Best Apps for Managing Your Kids Phone](#); [Support for Apple](#); [Support Google](#); [Family Time Article & Tips](#); [Verizon Support](#).**

Picking Up Scholars:

Per Oregon law, *an approved adult is required to sign out any scholar* who leaves campus before the end of the school day. Our office has been experiencing heavy family traffic prior to our 3:45pm dismissal, due to daily early pick-ups. If possible, we ask that you avoid picking up your scholar between 3:15pm-3:45pm as you will not find parking, and our office staff is limited in the afternoons. Any planning around that time frame is appreciated.

Resources for Family Extended Learning, Support and Activities:

- [PPS Summer Enrichment Opportunities](#) (multilingual)
- [Arleta Triangle Square Community Survey](#)

- VIBE of Portland [Lift Youth Voices Summer Mural Project](#)
- Bustin' Barriers [Summer Camps for Kids Experiencing Disability](#)
- Saturday Academy [Summer STEAM Camps & Classes](#)
- Portland Metro [Fire Summer Camp](#)
- Benson Tech Youth United [Multi-Sport Summer Camp](#) (FLIER UPDATED)
- Cognizart [360 Arts Summer Camp](#)
- VIBE of Portland [Art Camps, Classes, No-School Workshops](#)
- VIBE of Portland [East Winds Summer Camp](#)
- OSU [Summer Reading Program](#)
- Multnomah Early Childhood Program ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)) ([Vietnamese](#))
- Portland Parks & Recreation Preschool [2022-2023 Registration](#)

Scholar Counseling Supports (Counselors will move with grades for 22-23):

- 6th Grade:** Counselor: Kandice Abney: kaabney@pps.net &
Administrator: Ben Keller, bkeller@pps.net
- 7th Grade:** Counselor: Rebecca Cohen: rcohen@pps.net &
Administrator: Evening Krauel, ekrauel@pps.net
- 8th Grade:** Counselor, Ricky Almeida: ralmeida@pps.net &
Administrator: Jill Hunt, jihunt@pps.net

General Questions:

Jerda Solonche, Principal's Administrative Assistant: jsolonche@pps.net (faculty, school business)
Kirsten Crombie, Administrative Assistant: kcrombie@pps.net (scholar/parent concerns, attendance, enrollment, help with scholar laptops, withdrawals)

Notes of Appreciation?

The notes left for our Educators really do brighten a lot of days for many of our team members! If you have a kind note to share, we'd love your feedback [here](#) to celebrate the ways in which WSMS adults support your scholars and your families! A little appreciation goes a long way and can really uplift someone's day!

Enjoy the longer weekend! Go Wolfpack!

Jill, Ben and Evening