

November 18, 2022

Dear West Sylvan Families,

As you look forward to a week home with your Scholars, we hope that the extended vacation time together is fulfilling and full of love. Knowing that many of our families travel next week, the Fall Conferences are offered virtually. Sign ups went out over the last two weeks. These conferences are optional. If you have not been in contact with an Educator to sign up, and you still wish to sign up, please contact the Educator(s) via email prior to Monday to see if there is still a time available. Report cards for the first quarter have been mailed.

Congratulations to Ms. Rebecca Cohen, School Counselor, for being named the Oregon School Counselor of the Year for 2022! This is an exceptional honor, and we are so proud to have Ms. Rebecca Cohen on the WSMS School Counseling Team!



WSMS is participating as a partner in the [Sparrow Project](#) again this school year, where our school community has the opportunity to do community service for a young child with a serious health condition. Partner sponsors working with the Sparrow Project donate funds to the family of the Sparrow based on the number of hours of community service that our Scholars will complete. We will be welcoming our new Sparrow, Soleil, at an assembly on December 1. Our new sparrow loves rainbows, so the Leadership classes will be selling rainbow bandanas at lunches after the break for students to wave at the assembly. We hope that by having a crowd of students waving these rainbow bandanas that Soleil will feel the love and support

that we have for her and her family. Bandanas will be sold for \$2 each and all profits will go to support Soleil's family. Bringing \$2 to lunch on the Tuesday and Wednesday after the break is a great way to begin our support for Soleil and to help her feel welcome at WSMS. Thanks for your support!

Our Sparrow has been introduced through the [PowerPoint here](#). Given that the young child does have health challenges, we want families to have this information in advance if you may want your Scholar to opt out of the assembly. If you have concerns about your Scholar attending the assembly on the 1st, please contact the School Counselor.



**2022-2023
SPARROW**



**WATCH
SOLEIL'S
STORY**

Appreciations?

If you would like to share a kind note of appreciation with any staff member, please [share here](#).

#GivingTuesday is almost here and **THE WEST SYLVAN FOUNDATION** is excited to participate! Held every year on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving - and after the madness of Black Friday! - Giving Tuesday offers us a chance to take a step back and counter the commercialism of the holiday season with the spirit of generosity and goodwill.

Join the movement and support West Sylvan Middle School in raising **\$40,000** to support our scholars on **NOVEMBER 29th!** Your gift in any amount goes a long way.

Want to check it off your list before November 29th? [CLICK HERE TO DONATE NOW](#)

CANVAS Tips for Families:

If you are unsure about how to navigate Canvas to stay updated on assignments and progress for your Scholars' classes, some links and tips are here to help. Canvas provides a pretty comprehensive support library for Observers that answers most technical questions. A linked library is below. Additionally, there are some [home grown videos](#) and [documentation](#) to help support our families to become Observers of their student's account.

[Canvas Observer/Parent Guides](#)

TAG (Talented & Gifted) Identification:

We are excited to announce the TAG link has been condensed into just one form! If you are interested in exploring TAG for your child, please click [here](#) and complete the form **by 11/29/22**. Make sure to drop down to the PARENT option. If you have any questions, please email TAG coordinator Holly Graham: hgraham@pps.net. You can also visit the WSMS T.A.G. website [here](#).

Winter Weather Clothing:

With the weather changing, please help your Scholar bring warm clothing to school along with a jacket on days when it rains. Often Scholars still want to play outdoors in the rain, and we want them to have warm clothing for the elements. Our WSMS Foundation is also starting a WSMS Clothing Closet. Should your scholar need to visit the Clothing Closet, they can see their Counselor for items. We are also accepting donations for lightly used or new clothing items that can fill the WSMS Clothes Closet.

West Sylvan Winter Warmth Drive Announcement from the WSMS Ethics Class:

Dear West Sylvan Parents,

This is a reminder that the Winter Warmth Clothing Drive is beginning on **November 28th**, the day that scholars will be returning to school after the Fall Break, and will end on December 16th, the day before scholars leave for Winter Break.

Sixth Graders are donating new socks, Seventh Graders are donating like-new or new warm hats or scarves, and Eighth Graders are donating like-new or new mittens or gloves.

This school-wide competition will support the Salvation Army West Women's and Children's Shelter for women and children struggling with domestic violence and the Portland Public Schools Clothing Closet helping students in need.

The upcoming Fall Break is a great time for you and your scholar to work together to collect items for donations!

Ms. Melanie's Ethics class thanks you for your support of these two very worthy causes. Go wolves!

Interest in Virtual Scholars or Another Middle School?

While we want WSMS to remain the school our Scholars attend through the middle grades, there are times when families may want to look at other options, due to family needs and transportation needs. Other options, such as Virtual Scholars or another school site, may simply fit family needs in different ways. If you are seeking options, the website is [here](#). Families can submit a "Hardship Transfer" to request another school site. Applications for Virtual Scholars are also available currently.

Run a club! Family Volunteers to Run Clubs on Fridays!

We are looking for PPS-approved volunteers to help run clubs with Students during Advisory period on Fridays. If you are interested in volunteering from 3:15PM-3:45PM on Fridays to run a club, [please complete the form here](#).

Marking Attendance through ParentVue!

Families are now able to record future absences for their Students directly in ParentVUE without needing to contact the Main Office. Please remember, if a student is going to miss multiple days, it is up to the Student and/or Parent/Guardian to communicate absences with each teacher and make a plan for missing work and assignments.

If your Student is going to be Absent for a FULL DAY:

Log in to the ParentVUE website or download and open the phone application. In either case, look for the 'Report Absence' button to the right of your Student's photograph.

Select start date, end date, and a reason from the drop-down list. Remember to click SAVE, and you should receive a popup confirmation.

If your Student is Absent for a **PARTIAL DAY**:

Send an email to westsylvanoffice@pps.net with the date, times, and reason.

No internet access? Call West Sylvan's main line at 503-916-5690 and select the Attendance option.

WSMS 2022-2023 Yearbook Orders:

Each year our Yearbook class, with Educator Mr. Gilley, creates the school yearbook. Go to yearbookordercenter.com, and enter code **6339** to order the 2022-23 yearbook. All sales of the yearbook will be pre-ordered directly through an outside company and will not be available for purchase through the school at the end of the school year. Don't miss your chance to get this keepsake for your scholar!

Family Activities:

If anyone is looking for a fun family activity this holiday season, the **Portland Panto Players** will be performing Peter Pan - the Musical Panto at the Alberta Abbey theater between December 10th and 18th.

Current West Sylvan 8th Grader, Lily Mather, and West Sylvan Alum, Noah Clark, are both part of Portland Panto Players. Panto is a British holiday tradition and hugely popular in the UK with lots of popular songs, audience interaction and some "wink-wink jokes" for the adults.

This will be our fourth show and we are fast becoming a new holiday tradition for Portland audiences having sold out almost all of our prior shows. Tickets and more information available at Portlandpantoplayers.com

West Sylvan families and friends can use promo code - WestSylvan - to get a \$3 per ticket discount.

Hope to see you at the show!

American Sign Language Morning Club :

Our ASL club has started meeting once a week in the Library at 8:30AM. Scholars are participating in a virtual club run by Lincoln High School's senior ASL students. The LHS students will meet with WSMS students over GoogleMeet to teach and practice basic ASL items, such as learning the alphabet and some simple signs. ASL is one of the languages offered at LHS, so this club could be a nice introduction to some basic ASL learning in preparation for a future class at LHS. [The poster with dates is here.](#) The teacher overseeing the students running the club is Ben Malbin, LHS Educator.

Bus Expectations for Success:

Several school bus drivers are submitting referrals for Scholars due to inappropriate behavior on the school buses. The bus ride to and from the campus is considered part of the school day, and all PPS Conduct and Discipline policies apply during those periods while on the bus.

If Scholars receive bus referrals and are creating an unsafe environment on the bus, they may be suspended from riding the school bus. Families would have to transport Scholars if bus rules cannot be respected. While we want everyone to have a transportation option to school, the ride experience must be safe for all. Families are being contacted if bus safety is compromised to discuss next steps for their individual Scholars. There are videos on each bus, and we request

videos to investigate misbehavior so that Scholars and Families can be involved in correcting the issues.

School Volunteers:

We sincerely appreciate all family members who have been volunteering in our Main Office, our Library, and joining us for school lunch periods and recess to help with supervision! The additional adults around campus really help with these busier spaces and the busiest times of the school day! If you are already an approved PPS volunteer, you are welcome to come to campus any day of the week when your schedule permits, and we will find a way that you can help on campus! The periods from 11:15AM-1:30PM and 2:30PM-3:45PM are most needed for Lunch recess help and Office assistance! **[Sign up to Volunteer!](#)**
[We want your help \(especially during Lunches or in the Main Office in the afternoons\)!](#)

Student Supports

6th Grade:	Counselor:	Ricky Almeida [ralmeida@pps.net]
	Administrators:	Jill Hunt [jihunt@pps.net] Ben Keller [bkeller@pps.net]
7th Grade:	Counselor:	Kandice Abney [kaabney@pps.net]
	Administrator:	Ben Keller [bkeller@pps.net]
8th Grade:	Counselor:	Rebecca Cohen [rcohen@pps.net]
	Administrator:	Jill Hunt [jihunt@pps.net]

MYP and WSMS:

Our MYP Learner Trait for October is “Principled.” Scholars are spending this month discussing and demonstrating that trait. Our Educator team just submitted our application to become an authorized Middle Years Programme (MYP) Middle School, and we are waiting on feedback for a possible authorization visit this Winter! To find out more about the WSMS International Baccalaureate MYP authorization journey, [please visit this website!](#)



Boundaries for Future High School Students:

If you are unsure which High School your scholar will attend based on your current residence, please visit [this site and enter your address](#) or [here](#). Below is a website to apply to your “choice” High School if a High School is outside of your normal neighborhood boundaries. Applications need to be submitted by the deadline for consideration for any school outside of your normal PPS neighborhood boundary: <https://www.pps.net/schoolchoice>. There is a deadline for applications, so please apply early if you are requesting a high school outside of your address boundaries.

8th Grade Families Interested in Benson H.S.?

Applying to Benson Lottery for the 2023-24 School Year: We will be accepting applications for Benson from Tuesday, November 15 to Friday, December 16th. Students only have to complete one on-line application. The online application will be on the Enrollment website: <https://www.pps.net/schoolchoice>. Students are usually informed of acceptance by the end of January/beginning of February. We will have an in person and online forecasting nights about mid February for students who have been accepted.

Reporting Safety Concerns:

We continue referring scholars to Counseling and mental health providers when needs are identified. [The SafeOregon](#) reporting site is another way to report concerns so that they are investigated.

Reminder to Bring Charged Chromebooks and Chargers:

We have a very small supply - four in total - of extra Chromebooks to loan out for individual class periods when our Scholars forget their devices at home. We currently have a lot of Chromebooks out for repair, and prioritize those students' need for loaners. Please remind your scholar to bring their charged device to school each day.

Visit our Counseling Corner [here](#)

Opportunities for Family Connection and Scholar Extended Activities:

- [**Sign up to Volunteer! We want your help \(especially during Lunches or in the Main Office in the afternoons\)!**](#)

General Questions:

Office Email: westsylvanoffice@pps.net

Jerda Solonche, Administrative Assistant: jsolonche@pps.net (Staff, financial)

Kirsten Crombie, Administrative Assistant: kcrombie@pps.net (students, attendance, enrollment, withdrawals)

Here are some dates to save on your calendar now in preparation:

- ★ **No school for Scholars:** *Optional* Virtual Family Fall Conferences with Educators - **Monday-Tuesday, November 21-22**
- ★ **Fall Break for Scholars:** Monday-Friday, November 21-25th
- ★ **ELD Family Night:** Monday, November 28th at 5 p.m. (invitations sent to ELD families)
- ★ **Band and Choir Winter Concert:** WSMS, 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 8 from 7-8 p.m.
- ★ **8th Grade Visit to LHS:** Friday, December 9th ([link of campus](#))
- ★ **Drama Performance:** Friday, December 16th at WSMS Lower Gym Stage: Donations for admission
- ★ **Winter Break:** Monday, December 19-Monday, January 2, 2023
- ★ **No School:** Monday, January 16, 2023
- ★ **End of 1st Semester (2nd quarter) and Final Semester Grades are Submitted:** Thursday, January 26, 2023
- ★ **No School:** Planning day for Educators, Friday, January 27, 2023

Enjoy your weekend, the week of break, and go Wolf Pack!

Jill and Ben