

April 22, 2022

Happy Friday West Sylvan Middle School Families,

It's hard to believe that we have just seven Fridays left in the 21-22 school year! We are already starting to plan for next school year, and with our ability to be back in-person for events, we would love more families to be involved in regular school activities next year 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](#). Today was both Earth Day and A Day of Silence, and we had a number of our scholars involved in leading activities around campus for both events. We are so fortunate to have such a diverse and passionate group of scholars who want to be leaders for events that speak to their values. Also, the [22-23 PPS approved calendar](#) is here for your future planning.



*Mural above is by several of our scholar-artists: Sophie Megy, Alexis Droege, Aileen Droege, and Philippa Mirsky

For 8th Grade Families:

- **8th Grade Oaks Park Trip** (rides) on Wednesday, June 8th, chaperoned by educators and administrators. 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.

- **8th Grade Promotion** is at Lincoln High School on Thursday, June 9th at 6 p.m. so that you can start planning ahead. Each scholar will have **four** guest tickets for family members. More information will be shared as we get closer to the date.
- **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. More information will be sent in the coming months for those who want to participate.

For 6th Grade Families:

- **Outdoor School** permission packets went home through science classes. Outdoor school will be on **May 16th and May 17th, off-site.** There will be two day trips to off-site locations for a modified outdoor school experience. The day trips will have school bus transportation, leaving WSMS at 9:30 a.m. and returning to WSMS around 6:30 p.m. both evenings. Both lunch and dinner will be served both days. **We anticipate that some families may have concerns about the evening pick-up and may need assistance. If you will be unable to arrange for pick-up those two nights, please respond [here](#).** We are working on an alternative transportation option for any families in need of assistance those two nights.
- **6th grade skate party hosted by WSMS Foundation!** Wed, June 8th, 7-9 at Oaks Park

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

We will host two in-person informational sessions at WSMS on Monday, May 9th and Monday, May 23rd from 4:30-6 p.m. These will be opportunities to hear from school administrators, get an overview of WSMS classes, programs and supports and see the campus. If you are interested in attending in-person, please sign-up [here](#). We will also share a video of similar information so that anyone who cannot attend these sessions can hear information. We are also collaborating with our K-5 schools to arrange an in-person visit for 5th graders with their teachers on May 25th. More details on that visit will be shared as we finalize details with our feeder school teams.

West Sylvan TAG (Talented And Gifted) Updates:

- **TAG Nominations:** All students nominated in the past two years (2020-21 school year and 2021-22 school year) have been identified or not as TAG. Parents and guardians of students nominated **last year (2020-21)** should have **already received notification** of this by mail. Parents/guardians of students nominated **this year (2021-22)** will be **notified soon** by mail; our central TAG department is **currently preparing** these letters.
- **Single-Subject Acceleration (SSA) in Math - April 15-May 15 Application Window:** If you are a seventh grader interested in: 1) accelerating in from 7th Grade Common Core Math into Compacted Math Year 2 for 8th grade, or 2) accelerating from Compacted Math Year 1 into Geometry for 8th grade, **contact your current math teacher:** they will first confirm whether or not your MAP math assessment data **falls in the range for eligibility.** If SSA *is* recommended, families will meet **virtually** to fill out the SSA application **with** the student's current math teacher. For more information, see the [PPS TAG SSA](#) page or the [West Sylvan TAG page](#).

[SSA Parent Guide](#)

[WGA Parent Guide](#)

- **Whole Grade Acceleration (WGA) - Applications open April 15-May 15.** [See information about WGA from PPS TAG here.](#) Please contact the West Sylvan TAG Coordinator, Laurel Richards, at lrichards@pps.net for **next steps**.

Interested in Volunteering?

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. Once your application is approved, please contact school administration to see how you can help.

Mark your calendar now in preparation:

Choir trip to Cleveland HS: Wednesday, April 27th

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month: May

Teacher and Administrator Appreciation Week: May 2nd-6th

6th Grade Outdoor School: May 16-17th off campus *day* camps, returning at 6:30 p.m.

Spring Band Concert at Lincoln High School: May 24th

5th Grade Visit to WSMS: May 25th, rising 6th graders are invited to be bused to WSMS for a morning of introduction and welcome to middle school with their teachers

No School (Holiday): Monday, May 30th

7th Grade WSMS Foundation Sponsored Event: June 3rd 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)

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Classes for 22-23:

We are looking for applicants to join our AVID elective for the 2022-23 school year. Why is an AVID experience a good thing? AVID scholars have a history of proven excellence with 94% meeting all 4-year university requirements, 90% accepted directly to 4-year universities out of high school, 84% persist in the second year of university. If you are interested in having your scholar join AVID, and your scholar is also interested in joining AVID, please complete this interest [form](#).

MYP News:

WSMS completed our consultancy visit this week. 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.

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

Through the American Councils for International Education, WSMS has been awarded a grant for a fully-funded educator to join our team to teach Arabic for up to 20 hours a week as an additional World Language option for the 22-23 school year. We are 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 to pay for living accommodations, if hosted by a private family. There would be two needs:

1. A host family to provide a comfortable space for the educator to stay for 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 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, please fill out the form [here](#).

Staffing Updates:

We would like to welcome **Haley Anderson** to our educator team through the end of 2021-22. Haley is teaching Study Skills classes for our scholars with IEPs and will be providing case management for many of our students with IEPs. We are lucky to have Haley aboard as we move forward!

Also, due to our reduced enrollment for the 2022-23 school year, our administrative leadership team will also be reduced. Next year, WSMS will have a Principal and one Assistant Principal, rather than two Assistant Principals. We were disappointed to learn about this reduction in leadership given the constant needs of our Middle School.

Drop-off and pick-up:

We have family concerns about fellow family members who are driving unsafely in our parking lot and in the streets near campus during drop-off and pick up. Please drive slowly, watch out for the various scholars who are likely not looking at the movement of vehicles, and yield to humans as they cross.

Community Care and Neighborhood Safety:

Our neighbors in the West Slope community ask that while parked and driving in the neighborhood we all continue to practice care and kindness toward their property, and that we report any damage to the homeowners should an accident occur. They also ask that we please do not block their driveways during our pick-up and drop-off times. We appreciate your cooperation!

WSMS Foundation:

Thank you so much to our Foundation for the updates and new look of the counseling space in the front of our building! We appreciate your support and vision in making this new look a reality for our scholars!

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:lisette@thecrepeauxs@gmail.com).

Daily Loaner Laptops for Scholars:

We no longer have a supply of daily loaner chromebooks to issue when scholars forget their chromebooks at home. Please help remind our scholars to take their *fully charged* PPS-issued chromebook to and from school each day. We distributed BumpArmor cases to all scholars, and we ask that you please encourage your scholar to use the case to protect and extend the life of their device.

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.**” 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 we encourage speaking 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.

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.

COVID-19 Updates:

There was one COVID-19 case reported this week.

Resources for Family Extended Learning and Activities:

- **Fentanyl & Teen Substance Use Awareness Night:** Multnomah County, the Big Village Coalition and Portland Public Schools are partnering to host [this virtual event](#) on Tuesday April 19th from 7:00-8:30pm. [Click here](#) to register.
- **Child Vaccine Catch-Up Clinic:** McDaniel HS, April 13 ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)) ([Chinese](#)) ([Vietnamese](#)) ([Russian](#)) ([Somali](#)) (other dates & times [listed here](#))
- **Verselandia!** ([April 28, 2022 Flier](#))
- **Cognizant 360 Arts Summer Camp**
- OSU STEM Academy [AWSEM Club](#) Spring Dates ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#))
- Multnomah Youth Commission accepting applications ([flier](#)) ([FAQ](#))
- 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 weekend! Go Wolfpack!

Jill, Evening and Ben