

June 10th, 2022

Happy Friday West Sylvan Middle School Families,

With this last communication of the 21-22 school year, our entire WSMS Educator group would like to extend our gratitude to our families for all you have done to support and help our scholars this year! To say that these were uncommon and challenging times would be an understatement. Our Educators did such a phenomenal job providing safe and rigorous learning experiences, in spite of all of the challenges. Thank you to all of our Educators and our families for your collaboration this year! We look forward to many more enhanced opportunities for collaboration in the 22-23 school year! Last night's Promotion Ceremony was full of smiles, laughs, some tears, and a lot of hope for the bright future ahead of this class of 8th graders! We have one last WSMS Foundation event this evening to celebrate the 8th grade Class of 2022.

- **8th Grade Graduation Party at Oaks Park** hosted by the West Sylvan Foundation! This will be an **optional** evening event for our 8th graders hosted by our Foundation at Oaks Park on the evening of 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.*

New 22-23 Staffing News:

Rosemary Boardman will continue with our team teaching math.

Judy Savinar will join Clair McInnis in the library as our new Library Assistant.

Michael Derheimer will be teaching in the Learning Center.

Carter Latendresse will be joining our ISC paraeducator team.

Rylie Wolff will take over teaching our ISC program.

Arabic Educator from TCLP grant: TBA

Saying Farewell to our WSMS Educators:



Howard Goldstein, a math Educator in PPS since 1992, is retiring. Howard has brought science to life for scholars for several generations of WSMS families, and we trust that he will both enjoy retirement, and hopefully, join us again soon to help sub once he's bored of being away from campus!



Katherine Yarlott will officially retire. Ms. Yarlott has been one of our beloved math Educators since 2004 in PPS. We have missed Ms. Yarlott since her departure earlier this year, and we trust that retirement will be full of relaxation and new adventures!



Daniel Polzin, one of our 7th grade block Educators, will be moving abroad this summer and taking on a new teaching position next school year in Columbia while getting to finally join his new bride. We thank Dan for his years of service with PPS since 2014 and for his unwavering dedication to our WSMS scholars and families. We wish him lots of success in his new chapter!



Lili Pill-Kahan, our ISC Educator since 2019 in PPS, recently received a promotion to be a TOSA in Special Education for PPS for next school year! We are excited to continue having Ms. Pill-Kahan's support to our school in her new district role next year!

COVID-19 Updates

We finished our final week with positive COVID-19 cases. The good news is you will receive no more notifications about COVID-19 from our school for all of summer!

Counseling Supports

Counselors will be unavailable throughout the summer months due to their contractual vacation period. Their last day will be June 10th.

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](#).

West Sylvan Handbook 2022-23

The new West Sylvan Handbook for the 2022-23 school year is updated and can be found here. Please review all of the information with your student(s) prior to returning to school on August 30th, 2022. Thank you!

Parents/Guardians: We Need Your Help in Social Support & Education For Your Kid(s)!

The most prevailing issues that we have seen at West Sylvan this year, upon returning to in-person learning, is with lower social skills, over-exposure to social media, and issues pertaining to Title IX (sexual harassment). We deeply appreciate your partnership in educating and practicing positive social skills, setting healthy boundaries around social media exposure and engagement, and knowing what sexual harassment is, both verbal and physical.

The rise in both online and in-person bullying and harassment is alarming, and it is spilling into the school setting. This includes the unwanted exposure to conversations and “stories” which deteriorate our kid’s positive self-esteem, practicing using unkind words and hurtful phrases, threats, and social ostracizing, just to name a few concerns. Additionally, it is important to teach your kids how to recognize content that is meant to negatively influence young minds, such as racism, violence, references to guns, and overly sexualized content and images. It is important to teach your kids how to report such sites and content when they come across it. If you hear your kids making comments that contain language which purports sexual assault, use of weapons, or racist language, please take the time to address it with them and educate as a family.

Resources:

[PPS Title IX Website](#)

[How to report inappropriate content on TikTok](#)

[How to report inappropriate content on Instagram](#)

[How to report inappropriate content on Snapchat](#)

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](#). 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 **West Sylvan 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.

Mark your calendar now in preparation:

Pride Month: June

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

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

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:

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, Ben and Evening