

May 13, 2022

Happy Friday West Sylvan Middle School Families,

May is half-way over, and we are finishing up our statewide testing for English, Math and Science. This testing cycle has to be completed by the end of the school year, so we are doing our best to incorporate testing times in Math, English and some Science classes for these statewide exams. As May moves forward, we also want to acknowledge that there have been challenges with staffing throughout the *entire* school district, all year. Unfortunately, with the large number of *district wide* absences, there are simply not enough Substitutes each day to cover all of the absences. All year many of our Educators have given up their planning periods to help cover classes for absent colleagues when we do not have enough Substitutes, and Counselors and Administrators also cover classes for absences. I say all of this so that you have context if your scholar mentions, "We had a sub in class today." Our WSMS Educators do a wonderful job of preparing plans for Substitutes when they are absent, and we simply are not seeing enough Substitutes district-wide to cover for absences. We are continually grateful for all that our Educator team does each day to help each other during challenging times.

#### **OUTDOOR SCHOOL Information**

In additional news, our sixth graders will be **off-campus this coming Monday and Tuesday, May 16-17,** for Outdoor School day camps. We are glad to bring this opportunity back in a limited capacity as we approach the end of an unusually challenging school year. Some families requested evening bus transportation after students return from ODS. Please use the following link to access a list of addresses that PPS transportation was able to support. [Outdoor School Evening Transportation Assistance \(Responses\) - Parent communication-4.pdf](#). You will see your address, bus number, and bus stop that will be used for evening drop off. **Transportation was not able to provide services to all requests due to limited capacity. If there is another bus on the list that is already provided, your child may ride the bus to one of the drop-off locations, with admin pre-approval upon return from ODS,** otherwise other arrangements will need to be made to pick up your child. **Students will be returning from ODS around 6:30 p.m. and can be picked up at the front of the building, like normal, upon return.**

Lastly, we've seen an increase in the number of reports of COVID-19, recently. 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 again, [here](#), and masking is recommended.

#### **COVID-19 Updates:**

There were 20 COVID-19 cases confirmed this week who had been *on campus*. **Please read the PPS Communications updates that came out today in a separate communication regarding masking updates for next week.**



#### For 8th Grade Families:

- **Promotion Announcements:** These are in the mail, and you should receive a Save the Date card to the address that we have in our Synergy records.
- **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. 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. Each scholar will receive **four** guest tickets for family members, due to limited capacity. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.
- **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.

#### 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.

#### For 6th Grade Families:

- **Outdoor School** permission packets went home through Science classes. Outdoor school will be this Monday and Tuesday, **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'll send sack lunches with scholars for lunch, and ODS will provide dinner.

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

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

We hosted our first in-person night on [Monday, May 9th](#) with about forty participants joining us. The second informational session is [Monday, May 23rd](#) from 4:30-6 p.m. There will be opportunities to hear from school Administrators, buy WSMS school spiritwear, get an overview of WSMS classes, programs and supports, and tour the campus. We will also share a slidedeck of similar information so that anyone who cannot attend these sessions can 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 it!

We are also collaborating with our K-5 schools to arrange an in-person visit for 5th graders with their Teachers on the morning of [May 25th](#). Principals and 5th grade teams are planning for that fun morning here at WSMS! They will bus to WSMS, participate in some orientation activities with our staff members, tour campus, and get an introduction to Middle School. More details on that visit will be shared as we finalize details with our K-5 school teams. 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](mailto: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 busy schedule wrapping up the year with the 8th graders.

### **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, and would like more information, please fill out the form [here](#).

### **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 [Irichards@pps.net](mailto:Irichards@pps.net) for **next steps**.

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

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 prior to the rest of our scholars joining for the the start of the year.

### **Student Chromebooks For Summer:**

All 8th graders need to return their chromebooks at the conclusion of this year as part of the Middle School checkout. If they have stickers on their devices, it will be a gigantic help for them to try to remove all stickers prior to turning them into the Office. Current 6th and 7th graders may keep their chromebooks over the summer, and there is a family assurance form that needs to be completed prior to the end of the year. More details will follow for the form to complete and the turn-in process for Chromebooks for 8th graders.

### **Mark your calendar now in preparation:**

**Asian Pacific American Heritage Month:** May

**Jewish American Heritage Month:** May

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

**Spring Band Concert at Lincoln High School:** May 24th (evening event)

**5th Grade Visit to WSMS:** May 25th, rising 6th graders are invited to be bused to WSMS with their Teachers for a morning of introduction and welcome to Middle School.

**Spring Choir Concert at Lincoln High School:** May 25th (evening event)

**No School (Holiday):** Monday, May 30th

**[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.

### **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 last 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. 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.

### **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. They work with Beaverton PD to patrol the area in the mornings and evenings, and send their concerns to that team. We appreciate your cooperation!

### **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:Lisette.Crepeaux@thecrepeauxs@gmail.com).

### **Daily Loaner Laptops for Scholars:**

We no longer have a supply of daily loaner chromebooks or chargers 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.**” 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 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.

### **Resources for Family Extended Learning and Activities:**

- [Summer Acceleration Academy](#) webpage
- [PIL Math Trajectory Summer Program](#) (McDaniel)
- [PIL Math Trajectory Summer Program](#) (Roosevelt)
- **Benson Tech Youth United Multi-Sport Summer Camp**
- **Adapted PE Field Day (K-8 flier) (9-12 flier)**
- **Cognizart 360 Arts Summer Camp**
- OSU STEM Academy [AWSEM Club Spring Dates \(English\)](#) ([Spanish](#))
- 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](mailto:kaabney@pps.net) &  
Administrator: Ben Keller, [bkeller@pps.net](mailto:bkeller@pps.net)

**7th Grade:** Counselor: Rebecca Cohen: [rcohen@pps.net](mailto:rcohen@pps.net) &  
Administrator: Evening Krauel, [ekrauel@pps.net](mailto:ekrauel@pps.net)

**8th Grade:** Counselor, Ricky Almeida: [ralmeida@pps.net](mailto:ralmeida@pps.net) &  
Administrator: Jill Hunt, [jihunt@pps.net](mailto:jihunt@pps.net)

### **General Questions:**

Jerda Solonche, Principal's Administrative Assistant: [jsolonche@pps.net](mailto:jsolonche@pps.net) (faculty, school business)  
Kirsten Crombie, Administrative Assistant: [kcrombie@pps.net](mailto: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