

May 20, 2022

Happy Friday West Sylvan Middle School Families,

We hope that your week has been a good one, as we near the end of May. Our sixth graders had two days of Outdoor School off-site at day camps at the start of this week. Many of our scholars returned and shared their enthusiasm and excitement about the time away. Several said, "I just wish it had been longer." We were grateful for the opportunity to re-engage our sixth graders in a modified Outdoor School experience, and we are hopeful that next year's group can have even more learning time in those settings.



We also had a mini-assembly for the scholars who have done community service for the Sparrow Club, which was shared earlier in the year, and led by Stacie Tew and Brad Francis, two Educators on campus. The young student, Bryson, was able to visit in person and share his thanks with our scholars. While the grand total is still rising, thus far our scholars have raised nearly \$5000, and have exceeded the 300 hour community service challenge by serving over 500 hours of community service!

Next week, our *rising* 6th graders (current 5th graders) will join us from K-5 campuses to see campus with their Teachers. The visit will be a short morning visit with time for a mini-assembly experience, an art project, time to tour campus, meet Educators, and there will be an opportunity to model the lunch and recess experience of Middle School. Families of scholars in private schools are also encouraged to join. The activities will start at 10:00 a.m., so any families currently attending private schools for fifth grade would simply need to drop off their scholars by 10:00 a.m. and pick up by 11:30 a.m. We look forward to seeing our future Wolf Pack scholars!

COVID-19 Updates:

We've continued to have almost daily reports this week of positive COVID-19 cases, leaving scholars home for five days from the onset of symptoms (with the first day counting as day zero). For anyone who is 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 27 reported cases this week which were confirmed by our MESD partners. 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:

Anytime there is an upsetting event on campus, such as the student fight we communicated about yesterday, we reach out to our Educator team to alert them of the incident and the ways to support scholars with additional social emotional needs. Yesterday, our Educator team was notified of the incident right after lunch concluded so that they could both support anyone who was upset by witnessing the incident, and also identify anyone who was continuing to perpetuate the rumors through postings on social media. Our Educators immediately addressed the incident, asked students to delete any posts that may have been made and talked about ways to be an upstander when others are involved in altercations. Our scholars are able to meet with Counselors for additional support throughout the school day. Educators can refer scholars and scholars can self-refer to Counselors. Outreach from families for help connecting our scholars to Counselors also helps us to provide services in a timely manner.

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. 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:

The second informational session is this coming 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 via our school website. 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 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](#).

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:

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 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:

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month: May

Jewish American Heritage Month: May

Mental Health Month: May

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:

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: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, Support and Activities:

- **LGBTQIA2S+ Support GUIDE:** The SAY Wellness Health Education team at Portland Public Schools is excited to announce the development and release of a new parent and caregivers support guide. This resource was created especially for parents and caregivers of LGBTQIA2S+ youth. It contains helpful information, journaling prompts, local and national resources, and many other gems designed to help parents better understand and support their LGBTQIA2S+ young person. This support guide was reviewed and contributed to by K-12 students at 8 different GSA's around our district. We hope it can be a helpful resource for many families in Portland and beyond!
- **Hello PPS Students! We would like to invite you to the 2022 Student Summit!**

This is an opportunity to learn more about the District, and your role in it! Learn about important District policies like the Climate Change Response Policy, and participate in the Student Town Hall with district staff to make PPS a better place. We will be holding the Summit at OMSI on Monday, May 23rd from 10-2:30 pm. Transportation to the venue will be provided. Please RSVP with us using [this form](#) so that you can get summit updates and reminders. You can find the permission slips in [this folder](#). We hope to see you there! Potential topics may include Title IX, RESJ & CCRP, Civic Engagement, Mascot Changes, and more. If you have any questions, please contact Yian Saechao at yisaechao@pps.net.

- **Summer Acceleration Academy** [details](#)
- **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](#)
- 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 &
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