

January 28, 2022

Greetings West Sylvan Middle School Families,

We did it with teamwork! Yesterday marked the end of our first semester of the 21-22 school year back in-person with our scholars! Just a reminder, that this is a four-day weekend *for our scholars* with today being an Educator Planning Day and Monday being the recently adopted School Climate and Educator PD day. While educators will be working, the campus will be closed to the community Friday 1/28 and Monday 1/31, and all emails and calls will be returned next week.

Thank you for continuing the daily health screenings with your scholars! Please keep scholars home when you may have health concerns, and notify our attendance office directly about absences, whether COVID-19 related, or otherwise. Educators can be contacted via email to see how to access missed assignments remotely while absent.



February 1st Marks the New Semester and Qtr. 3:

Due to various Educator changes which have been announced, and the change in the Quarter, there will be various changes to schedules. With new Educators joining the team, there is also an opportunity to reduce some class sizes in some of our offerings.

Dear Families,

As you might know, reducing class sizes is one of our highest priorities in supporting student access to curriculum. Due to a few staffing adjustments for the second semester, we have found the opportunity to add an extra 6th and 8th grade Math course that will significantly reduce class sizes in two periods.

We are also making some adjustments with our World Culture classes, as Dr. Graham steps into her new class as an 8th grade Social Studies teacher, AND as we reduce Ms. Yarlott's Games and Strategy elective into the new Math class.

While these additions are exciting, it does require us to move some scholars into those new courses. Most scholars were informed of all their class adjustments today, if they were impacted, but I would encourage you to review your StudentVUE this next week for any schedule changes that may be affecting your child's classes.

- New Elective Classes should be seen by Monday, January 31st.
- Year-long classes should be accessible by Wednesday, February 2nd (which cannot be applied until grading has been completed.)

Also, some families and/or scholars have independently asked for schedule adjustments, which we will be working to attend to, *if possible*, during the next couple of days.

We thank you for your patience as we navigate the new semester, and please feel free to reach out to either Ms. Krauel or Mr. Keller if you have questions.

Thank you and have a great 4 day weekend! - Ben Keller & Evening Krauel

Test to Stay Program:

The Test-to-Stay program is in action. If your family has yet to complete the consent forms [here](#), please complete them and either scan them to nhartman@mesd.k12.or.us or have your scholar return them to the school's Main Office window. If a consent form is completed, any non-symptomatic scholar who may have been exposed to an individual with a positive COVID-19 result *on campus* could test to stay on campus. We would give the BinaxNOW rapid nasal swab test on campus to non-symptomatic scholars who are not fully vaccinated and could have been in close contact with someone on campus with a positive COVID-19 test. Pending a negative result, scholars would return to class, rather than automatically being advised to quarantine at home. There would be one more necessary test on campus within 5-7 days from the initial close contact, also. [Here](#) is more information.

OHSU COVID-19 Screening Kit Information:

An easy and free way to test weekly! Especially while tests are hard to find in stores, this is an easy and free way to have your scholars tested weekly for your own family's knowledge. Scholars will do the saliva test at home and return the kits the following day at the Main Office. We will be back to our usual schedule of sending the tests on Thursdays next week. This week, we sent them Wednesday so that we could still send in kits to OHSU prior to the extended weekend. OHSU picks up the kits the day after distribution, processes them, and sends results directly to families. Please note, OHSU advises that if your scholar has had a positive test, their tests will likely be inaccurate for up to 90 days following that positive result. Scholars may drop off signed forms to our attendance window, or families can scan and send them via email to jsolonche@pps.net. If you haven't signed up and are still interested, the forms are below.

Consent forms to sign and return to West Sylvan:

- [OHSU Weekly Screening Authorization Form](#)
- [General Consent School Opt-In Form](#)

Uploading Proof of Vaccinations:

Families can also upload their scholars' vaccination status when they complete the yearly registration verification processes. Directions to upload items are [here](#) for ParentVUE. When families have items uploaded, this information shows up in ParentVUE under the documents tab on the scholar page for internal administrative review.

COVID-19 Updates:

There were three additional positive cases reported on campus this week. Any families directly involved were already consulted.

Notes of Appreciation?

Thank you to the families who have submitted notes to WSMS team members! These notes really do brighten the days of our educators! 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!

Educator Welcomes:

We are welcoming two new Educators to our teaching team for the second semester! Dr. Michelle York, a long-time Math teacher at WSMS, has been promoted to a district Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) role. Ms. Rosemary Boardman is taking over Dr. York's classes beginning on February 1st! As we mentioned last week, Mr. Bruce Morrison has also joined our WSMS Math team! He has taken over Katy Yarlott's 6th grade Math classes for the remainder of the school year! Both Educators are highly skilled and enthusiastic about working with our middle school scholars to nurture and foster their love of math! We feel very fortunate to have both educators join our team mid-year in a time when staffing across the nation is a challenge.

Yearbooks: LAST CALL!

Our Yearbook staff is still collecting pictures for this year's issue. Did you know it's easy to share photos to be included in the Yearbook? Just go to hjeshare.com and enter the code **sylvan22** to upload your photos (use all lower case for the code). MASKS OFF please. We want to see our scholars' shining faces in the yearbook! Be sure to accurately label each photo with the scholar's name and grade. There's no guarantee every photo will be included in the book, but we will try our best. [Tutorial for using eShare](#). [Tutorial for using eShare from your phone](#).

All sales of yearbooks will be pre-ordered directly through an outside company. Yearbooks will not be purchased through the school. If you do not preorder, we will likely run out of yearbooks, and there will be no opportunity to get one later in the year, as the company only prints a set number of copies, which are determined through preorders . To order your yearbook, go to yearbookordercenter.com and enter code 6339. Yearbooks are \$35 currently. We want all of our scholars to have a visual memory of their time back on campus during the 21-22 school year.

Lost and Found clean out:

Please remind your scholars to check the lost and found for missing items. We have two Lost and Found areas on campus - one for general items, which is located by the steps to the Gym, and a

locked one in the Main Office for valuable items. The items in the general Lost and Found will be completely cleaned out on Friday, February 18. Items will be donated to the PPS PTA Clothing Closet at Marshall.

8th Graders Attending Lincoln HS 2022-23:

Any 8th grader who is enrolled to attend LHS next year may start their online forecasting for course selections on Monday, January 31st. Please see the information attached [here](#), and check your emails regularly for updates from the LHS team if your scholar will be a Cardinal next school year. A counselor from LHS will be on our WSMS campus on February 9th for 22-23 to consult with 8th graders who are unsure how to complete the forecasting. Please watch the tutorial videos provided and contact the LHS counseling team with any questions as you proceed with forecasting online as a family.

8th Grade Promotion Planning:

Thank you to anyone who indicated an interest in helping plan the 8th grade promotion! Mark your calendar now for the evening of June 9th for a culminating promotion at Lincoln HS. In past years, there was a PPS year-end culminating activity at Oaks Park. This is not allowed for the 21-22 year through our schools due to the unknowns related to COVID-19. Parties and events sponsored by our WSMS Foundation, however, could still proceed. Anyone interested in either helping plan events, set up events, or simply donate to help purchase items to make 8th grade promotion special for our 8th graders is encouraged to complete this interest [form](#). We will start meeting in the upcoming month. All details related to specifics about the evening of June 9th are still pending and are dependent on COVID-19 protocols and restrictions.

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).

Daily Loaner Laptops for Scholars:

We have a very limited (two) supply of loaner laptops when scholars forget their laptops at home. Please help remind our scholars to take their school laptop to and from school each day.

WSMS Drama Production 2022:

We are so pleased to announce that Kacey CdeBaca will be working with our talented scholars to audition for and put on a spring play for 2022! Auditions will begin February 7th, with a free audition workshop held the week before auditions. More information can be found on the flyer [here](#) or you can email dramawestsylvan@gmail.com with any questions.

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. 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](#).** 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.

Food Services and Lunches:

Breakfast and lunches continue to be free for all scholars throughout the year. During lunches, scholars who want to remain indoors have indoor options for both eating and their free time. After eating, there are several alternate locations scholars may visit to spread out such as the library, the lower gym, classrooms for lunch clubs, and our outdoor patio spaces and field area. Regardless of the temperature, many scholars still feel most comfortable both eating outdoors and remaining outdoors throughout recess to engage in outdoor play. Please encourage your scholar to dress for the weather if they are choosing to play outdoors in colder temperatures. Understanding that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to this unstructured lunch time, we are allowing scholars to choose indoors or outdoors, assuming that it is not pouring down rain.

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 do not pick up your scholar between 3:00pm-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.

Scholar Counseling Supports:

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)

Mark your calendar now in preparation:

No School for Scholars/Educator Professional Planning Day: Friday, January 28th

No School for Scholars: January 31st, School Climate and Educator PD Day

2nd Semester/3rd Quarter Begins: February 1st. Some classes may change due to changes in quarter-based electives, educator changes and class size balancing.

No School for Scholars: February 21st

Spring Break: March 21-25th

Enjoy the weekend! Go Wolfpack!

Jill, Evening and Ben