

## Dear West Sylvan Families,

We hope that you are enjoying your last days of summer break with your scholars and that everyone is looking forward to the start of the 2022-2023 school year! We are busy finalizing many items in preparation for the return of our Educators and our scholars! Educators are engaged in Professional Development and planning August 24th-26th and August 29th. The campus building will be open for families again on **Tuesday, August 30th**, which is the first day of school for 6th graders only. On August 30th, only 6th graders will come to campus for a JumpStart day together. **Wednesday, August 31st** will be the first day of school for 7th and 8th graders. We look forward to having all scholars, grades 6-8, together on campus on August 31st.



We've outlined some important information below, and we will make every effort to send weekly bulletins once the school year begins, typically every Friday.

### Schedule Questions:

Schedules will be available for viewing in Synergy through the ParentVue portal the week prior to school. Please look for a communication closer to August 24th alerting you to check ParentVue. If you see possible errors in a schedule, such as missing Math or World Language placement, or inaccurate classes, please contact one of the following staff, who will support a conversation in making necessary changes.

**6th Grade:** Counselor: Ricky Almeida: [ralmeida@pps.net](mailto:ralmeida@pps.net);

Administrators: Jill Hunt [jihunt@pps.net](mailto:jihunt@pps.net) and Ben Keller [bkeller@pps.net](mailto:bkeller@pps.net)

**7th Grade:** Counselor: Kandace Abney: [kaabney@pps.net](mailto:kaabney@pps.net) &

Administrator: Ben Keller, [bkeller@pps.net](mailto:bkeller@pps.net)

**8th Grade:** Counselor: Rebecca Cohen: [rcohen@pps.net](mailto:rcohen@pps.net) &

Administrator: Jill Hunt, [jihunt@pps.net](mailto:jihunt@pps.net)

### School Supply Lists:

Please visit our school website throughout the year to stay updated. A suggested school supply list has been posted on the school website throughout summer. Lists are also here for your viewing and preparation:

[General Supply List](#)

[8th Grade-Specific Supply List](#)

### **Electives Still Available:**

Some electives were added after scheduling last year, and we are still recruiting to add interested scholars to these elective classes. Arabic, Music, Speech and Communications, and Leadership for 7th and 8th graders still have space in our electives. [Sign up here](#), if your scholar would like one or more of these electives instead of something chosen last year.



### **7th/8th grade - Exploratory Arabic & Arabic 1/2** [Video](#)



### **6th Grade - Speech and Communication**

Speaking in public is the number one fear of most people, but it doesn't need to be! In this sixth grade Introduction to Speech class, students will begin to develop skills in oral communication which are fundamental to interacting with others. This semester class is designed to acquaint students with the basic principles of public speaking such as focusing on content and organization as well as delivery, including eye contact, voice inflection and volume. In addition

to presenting speeches, students will learn other communication skills including but not limited to: how to email your teacher to ask for help, how to accept constructive feedback, and how to apologize, all skills necessary in order to be able to communicate effectively. [Communication video](#)



### **7/8th Grade - Leadership**

In Leadership you will be working to develop leadership skills by learning about the various qualities and attributes that make a good leader. Students will also work to understand issues of fairness and justice in our world, and how they impact each of us. Students will learn critical thinking skills revolving around social justice with a goal of becoming agents of change within the school, community, and world.

Additionally, students will identify areas where they can positively improve and support the climate of our school and community. Students may have opportunities to plan, organize, and carry out projects to make our school a more united and welcoming place to be.

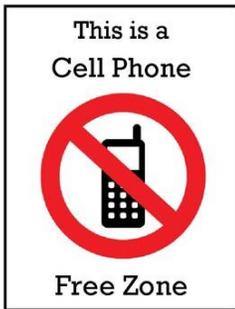
### **6th/7th/8th Music Exploration**



This course is a semester-long arts course designed for scholars who are interested in learning about music. Throughout the semester, students will explore many different aspects of basic music theory, such as learning how to read notes, rhythms, ukulele/guitar tabs, chord sheets, etc. In addition, we will explore various instruments such as the ukulele, guitar, drums, percussion and piano/keyboard. We also explore various genres of music, old and new to apply

our knowledge of music theory and instruments to dive deep into what we hear in music. Scholars will also get opportunities to explore their own interests while connecting them to things we learn in the class.

## Electronics Policy:



WSMS is a cell phone free zone from 9:00 AM - 3:45 PM daily. We request and advise all families to keep scholars' cell phones at home during the school day. If a scholar brings a cell phone to school, they will be expected to store their turned-off phone in their locker throughout the *entire* school day (including lunches). Important messages can be sent to our main office via email, and emails will be forwarded to your scholars. Time will be allowed for students to check their emails during the last period of the day.

## Transportation:

For questions about your scholar's bus route, district transportation options, or times for pick-up, visit the Transportation Department's [website](#). The WSMS office is unable to change bus schedules, and all calls regarding buses will be redirected to the Transportation website. There is a note that bus routes will be updated in late August, so stay tuned. **On Tuesday, August 30th, only 6th graders should come to campus.**

## Safety updates:

Masking is not mandatory at this time, but continues to be recommended. Scholars and Educators are welcome to choose whether or not to wear a mask based on individual needs and preferences. We continue to recommend physical distancing, and all PPS updates can be found on the main PPS website.

## Cafeteria/Menus:

Students are welcome to bring their own sack lunch and are encouraged to bring a reusable water bottle daily to refill throughout the school day in our water fountains. Scholars will have to pay for school lunch, and information about plans and assistance are [here](#). We have three separate lunch times, by grade level (see bell schedule here). There will be spaces for students to spread out in our gyms and outdoor space during lunches to maintain the 3 feet of distance, to the extent possible. Menu information and pricing is available [here](#). This will be updated throughout the year.

## 2022-23 Menu Prices

|       | <b>Breakfast</b> | <b>Lunch</b> |
|-------|------------------|--------------|
| PK-8: | \$1.60           | \$3.00       |
| Adult | \$3.00           | \$5.50       |
| Milk  | \$0.50           | \$0.50       |

## Lockers/Chromebooks/Supplies:

All students are assigned a locker that is shared. There will be time during the first week of school to learn how to use lockers and explore the building. Backpacks must be stored in lockers throughout the day. Our hallways are small, and large backpacks only increase the crowding during travel from class to class. We advise the use of a tote bag or a handle folder in place of any backpacks. 7th and 8th graders who still have their Chromebooks from last school year should bring their charged device to school daily. Scholars without Chromebooks will be issued these devices during the first week of school. Educators will continue to incorporate a variety of lessons that access school technology resources to enrich classroom instruction and to reinforce 21st century skills. Other laptops will not always work with all required programs. Chromebooks can be stored in lockers if not needed at home.

**Tuesday, August 30th, 2022**

**6th Grade Jump Start Plan**

The items below describe what will occur on the first days of school.

These items will be retaught throughout the first weeks of school.

- Scholars will tour campus and learn how to find classes.
- Scholars will review their schedule and learn about getting help with their schedule.
- Educators will explain school systems: electronics rules, restrooms, office passes, Advisory schedule, counselor passes, passing time, school rules, and attendance.
- Scholars will get help with lunch systems - learning where to eat lunch, cafeteria systems (hot lunch, table arrangements, garbage, excusal, recess areas, recess equipment, entry and exit routes).
- Educators will explain individual classroom procedures.
- Scholars will visit their locker assignments and practice opening their lockers.
- Scholars will review their student agendas (a planner to add resources).
- Scholars will establish peer connections and meet new students.
- Scholars will participate in getting acquainted with activities to build a collaborative environment.
- Educators will explain counseling supports and introduce the Counselors.
- Educators will review bus drop-off & pick up procedures/systems (where to wait before school, parent pick-up/finding bus system, alternate bus riding communication).

**7th and 8th Graders' First Week:**

There will be a modified version of the JumpStart items for our returning 7th and 8th graders from August 31st to September 2nd to review important expectations, reissue Chromebooks to anyone who needed repairs over summer, assign new lockers, and learn the schedule. More details will be shared closer to the start date.

**Bell Schedule with Advisory:**

To increase the amount of time dedicated to building connections for our scholars with adults and to increase opportunities for academic support and engagement in school clubs for all, we have added Advisory to the end of each school day for this year. We are adding this valuable time for our scholars to engage in meaningful social-emotional work and community building. During the first week of school only, an Advisory class will be at the beginning of each day to introduce WSMS successful learning strategies for all scholars. [Bell Schedules for September 6th and Beyond](#)

**New Teachers/Staff Members:**

|  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Michael Derheimer,</b><br>Learning Specialist,<br>Special Education | <b>Adam Clay,</b><br>Learning Specialist,<br>Special Education | <b>Rylie Wolff,</b><br>Learning Specialist, ISC | <b>Ola Sofi,</b><br>Visiting International<br>Arabic Educator |
| <b>Heather Straube,</b><br>6th Grade Block and<br>AVID-8 Educator      | <b>Carter Latendresse,</b> ISC<br>Paraeducator                 | <b>Judy Cunha,</b><br>Media Center Assistant    |   |

## Community Care Day, 2022:



**SAVE THE DATE:** Saturday, August 27, 2022, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Project Community Care is a wonderful opportunity for community members to help beautify our school grounds before students return for the school year! Volunteers come together to complete tasks from weeding, to picking up litter, to spreading mulch around flower beds. Together we can grow a sense of community and school stewardship.

Volunteers of all ages are welcome. Your time and energy will have a direct impact on students, families, teachers, and the neighborhood of WSMS. Bring some tools, work gloves, and let's beautify campus together!

### Additional Opportunities for Scholars:

- **Join the Morning Choir Club!**

Does your child like to sing? They are welcome to join our before-school Choir Club at West Sylvan Middle School! Choir is a wonderful way to be involved in the Arts. Students will develop a healthy vocal technique, build musicianship skills such as reading music and ear training, sing music from a variety of styles and cultures, and be part of a fun community of awesome kids who love to sing. More sign-up information coming soon!

### List of School Clubs:

- Visit our Counseling Corner [here](#) for a list of clubs and opportunities for students to connect and get involved. Students are also encouraged to start additional clubs each school year.

### Opportunities for Family Connection:

- **Project Community Care:** Saturday, August 27th from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- [Sign up to Volunteer! We want your help!](#)
- **West Sylvan Foundation Information: Get involved, show school spirit, and support WSMS!**  
<https://www.westsylvanfoundation.com/>
- **Rotary Host Families: HOST FAMILIES NEEDED!!**

The Rotary International Youth Exchange is looking for families like yours to host students! Hosting a foreign exchange student is a life-changing experience. Not only does it allow for students and families to learn about another culture and broaden each of their perspectives, it presents the

opportunity to make lifelong friends from around the world. Host families can choose to partake in either short or long term exchanges. They will receive more information about hosting opportunities and the application process as we reach the school year. If you are interested, please fill out the [survey at this link](#). Thank you!

### General Questions:

Jerda Solonche, Administrative Assistant: [jsolonche@pps.net](mailto:jsolonche@pps.net) (staff, financial)

Kirsten Crombie, Administrative Assistant: [kcrombie@pps.net](mailto:kcrombie@pps.net) (attendance, enrollment, withdrawals)

**Here are some dates to save on your calendar now in preparation:**

*6th graders only:* **Tuesday, August 30th** ~ Jump Start at 9:15 AM

*All grades:* **Wednesday, August 31st** ~ School begins at 9:15 AM

**No School due to holiday: Monday, September 5th**

*6th Grade Minute-to-Win-It:* **Friday, September 9th** at 3:45 PM - 7:00 PM \*(optional outdoor event on the WSMS field hosted by our West Sylvan Foundation)

*Back To School Night:* **Wednesday, September 21st** at 5:00 PM -7:00 PM

**No School for scholars due to Educator Planning Day: Friday, September 23rd**

Communications related to the upcoming school year will continue to come from both our West Sylvan and PPS district team with regular updates for the start of the school year. We wish you a safe, relaxing, and peaceful remainder of the summer, and we look forward to working with you at the conclusion of August!

**Go Wolfpack!**

Jill and Ben