

Kaye M. Breon  
Principal



Brian Vanisko  
Assistant Principal

**West Friendship E.S.**  
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**Web Site:** <http://wfes.hcps.org/>  
School Hours: 9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**December 18, 2020**

## From Our Administrators...

Dear West Friendship Families,

As the year 2020 comes to a close, I would like to thank our wonderful parents for their partnership with us as we work together for each child's success. I know this school year has been very different and challenging. I feel fortunate to be a part of this wonderful community. I would like to thank all of our parents for your ongoing support during virtual learning!!!

Our staff, students, and families continue to amaze us with their resilience, kindness, and willingness to help one another as we all keep navigating distance learning! We hope that our entire community has the opportunity to spend many moments away from screens and technology and find family moments that bring you joy!

Some parents have asked what to do if they have a card or gift for a staff member. Parents are welcome to bring it to school before noon on Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will let staff know they have something at the school to pick up. Your kindness is greatly appreciated.

For our families who celebrate a holiday this time of year, Happy Holidays! For our families who are not celebrating at this time, we wish you well until we return in the new year!

Kaye Breon, Principal

Brian Vanisko, Assistant Principal

## School News

### Instruction During the Week of December 21<sup>st</sup>

During the week of December 21<sup>st</sup>, no asynchronous assignments in Content, ELA, Math, or Related Arts will be assigned to students. This includes Dreambox and LexiaCore.

Students will have synchronous Related Arts as scheduled but no asynchronous Related Arts assignments. Likewise, synchronous Social Studies instruction will occur on Monday, December 21 for grades K, 2, and 4 and on Tuesday, December 22 for grades 1, 3, and 5; however, there will not be Social Studies asynchronous follow up lessons.

Do your kids have any missing work to still complete for school? Are they caught up on all assignments for ELA, math, science, social studies, health, art, music, PE, media, and technology? With no asynchronous work assigned during the week of December 21, this is a **GREAT** time to catch-up on any missed work. Teachers will be able to answer questions during the short week.

Students can submit assignments throughout the Winter Break, but teachers will not be able to check their work or respond to email until January 4.

Please do not wait until the end of the quarter to complete asynchronous work.

WFES is trialing grade level synchronous support time for students on Wednesday afternoons. These sessions will be provided by our wonderful Paraeducators!

Again, this Wednesday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will be offering synchronous support time for students in each grade to check in for assistance with their asynchronous assignments.

Synchronous supports will be available using the following schedule and Google Meet Code:

Grade Level	Synchronous Support Time	Google Meet Code
Kindergarten	1:00 – 1:30pm	wfes-support-grk
Grade 1	1:00 – 1:30pm	wfes-support-gr1
Grade 2	2:00 – 2:30pm	wfes-support-gr2
Grade 3	1:00 – 1:30pm	wfes-support-gr3
Grade 4	2:00 – 2:30pm	wfes-support-gr4
Grade 5	1:00 – 1:30pm	wfes-support-gr5

We hope to have many of our students take advantage of this opportunity for synchronous supports this Wednesday. We will be collecting participation data in order to make decisions about whether to continue or expand these opportunities following the winter break.

### Attention Parents Who Work on Federal Property and Members of Military

Parents/guardians who work on a federal property in Maryland and/or are a member of a uniformed service can qualify HCPSS to receive additional federal funding by completing the Impact Aid form **online by December 31st. Impact Aid supplements the HCPSS operating budget to enhance the teaching and learning that takes place in Howard County classrooms.**

To complete your online Impact Aid form:

1. [Log in to HCPSS Connect](#)
2. Select More Options from the left navigation
3. Select Federal Impact Aid from the middle

### Display of Student Preferred Name in Google, Synergy, and Canvas:

A new process will be enabled in January 2021 to allow students to show a **preferred name** in Synergy, Canvas, and Google. Students can follow this process:

1. Go to [hcpss.me](http://hcpss.me)
2. Go to Synergy
3. Click on “Student Info” in the lower left
4. Look for the “Preferred First Name” field to see what is there now.
5. This name will show in Canvas and Google beginning the first week of January, 2021
  - If you do not want this name to show or would like something else to show, contact your administrator by December 21, 2020.
  - If you do want this name to show, you don’t need to do anything.

**Note:** The preferred name will carry over from year to year unless a change is requested. Once a requested change is made, that preferred name will remain for the student’s HCPSS career unless another change is requested through the school secretary/administrator.

For students who are transgender or gender non-binary, there is an additional procedure to mask their legal name and/or gender assigned at birth, providing additional confidentiality. If you think this

may apply to you, please reach out to your school counselor to discuss. Let your counselor know that you are interested in learning about the **presenting name** option/masking process.

## Elementary Student Workload During Virtual Instruction

Families, particularly of primary students, have expressed concerns about the virtual elementary workload including the complexity of asynchronous lessons, the number of content areas taught, and the number of weekly asynchronous assignments. In order to support elementary students with successfully navigating during virtual instruction, the following adjustments have been made:

- Students will only have asynchronous assignments in social studies, science, or health during a given week. There will not be an overlap of instruction or assignments for these content areas.
- Health lessons will be taught for one week during the marking period and include two synchronous lessons and two asynchronous lessons instead of five asynchronous lessons as assigned in the first quarter.
- The length and complexity of social studies, science, and health asynchronous assignments have been reduced.
- Related arts asynchronous assignments have been streamlined.

## Winter Break Meal Services

Howard County Public Schools will be closed for winter break from Thursday, December 24, 2020 through Friday, January 1, 2021. There will be no meal service during this time. To ensure children have access to essential nutrition during the holiday period, families may pick up additional meals in advance of the break. [Click here](#) for complete details.

## WFES December School Spirit Days

Show your school spirit and join in the fun!

**Tuesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> is Pajama Day** ~ Students may wear their comfy pajamas to class today!

We encourage students to email pictures so we can tweet them out. Please email photos to [Kathleen\\_Donegan@hcpss.org](mailto:Kathleen_Donegan@hcpss.org), then look for all the awesome WFES School Spirit on Twitter!

## Absence Email Reminder

**Please do not send your child's absent note through Canvas.** All absent notes must be emailed to [WFESabsence@hcpss.org](mailto:WFESabsence@hcpss.org) and **include student name, date of the absence, and the reason for the absence.** If this information is not included, the note will not be accepted. This email goes directly to our Attendance Secretary. You may cc: your child's teacher in the same email. Thank you in advance for adhering to our absence reporting procedures.

## Family and Student Support

### Family Support and Resource Center Newsletter

Do you have a child with an IFSP or IEP? The HCPSS Family Support and Resource Center (FSRC) offers a weekly email just for you! FSRC communications include helpful workshops, resources and community information specifically geared to supporting your journey. As a parent of a child with an IFSP/IEP, you should already be receiving the email, but if not, let us know so we can include your contact information in our database. You can also email specific questions to [FSRC@hcpss.org](mailto:FSRC@hcpss.org)

### Student Services Team Update

Each year, the Howard County Department of Community Resources and Services publishes a catalog of the many Organizations within the County who serve our families and children. Please take a moment to glance through the most recent catalog!

- [2020 Howard County Parent's Guide to Resources and Information from Infancy through the Teen Years](#)

Now, more than ever, we recognize that it takes a village to care for our kids and families. Inside the catalog, you'll find organizations assisting with a range of services (childcare, education, special needs services, support groups, sports, etc.). Have a look!

## **PLEASE COMPLETE: Free and Reduced Meal Application**

Once you have completed your Family File Information, a screen will pop up asking you to complete the Free and Reduced Meal application. Please complete the FARM application if you think you will qualify or if you have qualified in the past. Qualifying for FARMs provides benefits for meals, reduced Comcast internet fees and much more! Please find the [FARM application here](#).

## **Technology**

### **What happens if I/my child has a connectivity or other issue logging on to class?**

We recognize there may be times the applications HCPSS is using for virtual learning may not work as anticipated. This may be due to the nationwide increase in demand on these services or an issue with your local internet provider. HCPSS teachers will be understanding and flexible if interruptions to technology services cause delays in assignment submissions and missed virtual learning sessions.

Additionally, if there is a power outage or other situation out of the student's control that would prevent them from completing an assignment, the student or parent/guardian should contact the teacher as soon as possible to alert them to the issue and determine if the due date can be extended. [More information](#) is available online.

## **Technology Security**

As we continue to rely on technology, it is critical that each of us does our part to ensure that technology is used safely. Threats to our online safety and the health of our technology are present every time we click a link, open an email or visit a website. HCPSS has provided [helpful guidelines](#) on our website that you are encouraged to review, follow and share.

### **TO DO - HCPSS Google Play Store-- Parents must OPT IN for students to access!**

Did you know that HCPSS has curated a new set of supplemental digital tools that are available for students to use? Parents must complete a very quick (less than 1 minute) process in order for their child to access these resources like various coding apps, digital books and other reading materials, and more. Please OPT IN to the HCPSS Google Play store as soon as possible.

These supplemental digital tools are approved by HCPSS and comply with federal, state and Howard County Board of Education student data privacy policies. Due to Google's settings, students must access this set of tools by utilizing Google's menu of additional services, which requires consent by a parent or guardian.

To provide consent:

1. Log in to [HCPSS Connect](#).
2. Select More Options from the left panel.
3. Select HCPSS Google Menu from the middle of the page.
4. Click the check box to provide consent. Changes are saved automatically.

A parent or guardian must provide consent for each student by selecting the student's name at the top of the page.

Please note:

- HCPSS cannot guarantee that apps are available on devices other than HCPSS Chromebooks.

- Teachers may or may not choose to use any or all of these apps during instruction. Students will be notified when a particular app will be used for instruction.
- If you do not provide consent for your student's access to these digital tools, your student's teacher will provide alternative enrichment activities.
- In addition to these Google tools, HCPSS has approved a robust set of [supplemental digital tools](#). Your child's teacher will notify you of the particular supplemental digital tools being used in each class via email or on their Canvas course page.

## County Information

### HCPSS 2020-2021 Inclement Weather Protocols

New inclement weather protocols were shared with staff and the community for the 2020-2021 school year while in virtual, small groups or hybrid instructional models. More information about the [four possible inclement weather decisions](#) are provided on the HCPSS website.

## Mark Your Calendars

- Tues., Dec. 22** School Spirit "Pajama Day" – Wear Your Comfy Jammies to Class
- Wed., Dec. 23** Grade Level Synchronous Support Time Available!
- Dec. 24 – Jan. 1** Schools Closed for Winter Break
- Thurs., Dec. 31** 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Memory Book Photo Submission Deadline
- Mon., Jan. 4** Virtual Learning Continues!
- Tues., Jan. 12** WFES PTA Restaurant Day/Night at E.W. Beck's – 11:30am to 9:00pm
- Wed., Jan. 13** PTA Meeting via Zoom – 6:00pm
- Mon., Jan. 18** Schools & Offices Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Thurs., Jan. 28** End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Marking Period
- Fri., Jan. 29** Schools Closed for Students – Professional Work Day

## PTA News

### Get Involved! Join the PTA!

Help support West Friendship Elementary by [joining the WFES PTA](#). The cost of a family membership is only \$15. So many benefits for minimal cost! Thank you for your support!

### Help Wanted!

Our incredible PTA Treasurer, Heather Campbell, will be moving at the end of 2020, so we are looking for a volunteer to fill this important position. This is a great way to become more involved in the PTA! Here is a brief list of responsibilities. Please email [president@wfespta.com](mailto:president@wfespta.com) with any questions or if you would like to volunteer. We are sending thanks in advance for considering this opportunity!

- Maintain custody of PTA funds
- Maintain receipts, expenditures, and reconciliations of bank statements

- Make disbursements as authorized
- Present a brief report of current financial standings at each PTA meeting

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Memory Book

**Attention 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Families:** To remember these special years in elementary school (at WFES or elsewhere), the Memory Book Committee is putting together a special book just for our 5<sup>th</sup> grade class. The book is like a yearbook and will contain candid pictures of the children throughout their elementary school career, thoughts/memories/advice from the staff, and a page dedicated to each individual child with photos that you provide to us. [This letter](#) will give you more information about the types of photos and how to submit them,

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yzTQOis4sN2Nj53algAUkaTD50QM\\_Uij/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yzTQOis4sN2Nj53algAUkaTD50QM_Uij/view?usp=sharing).

**Important Deadline -- Photo Submission Deadline is: December 31, 2020**

## Amazon Smile

Help support West Friendship Elementary Schools PTA by shopping on Amazon through Amazon Smile. You get the same great deals and benefits offered by Amazon while supporting our school! Just go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), and login to Amazon using your regular username and password. Search for and select West Friendship Elementary School PTA under charitable organizations, and you are ready to shop! And yes, we know it's spelled wrong on Amazon's page. Unfortunately, we can't change it.

## WFES PTA Restaurant Fundraiser on Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>!

The WFES PTA has another Restaurant Night coming up! Restaurant Nights are fun and easy fundraisers. Just dine at or order from the restaurant on the given date and the WFES PTA will receive a percentage of sales! Please mark your calendars for the following date:

- **E.W. Beck's \* 7565 Main Street, Sykesville \* 410-795-1001**  
**Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am to 9:00pm**

A portion of sales will be given to the WFES PTA. A flier will be posted prior to January 12<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to present the flier when you pay to ensure the PTA receives credit! Order carryout or delivery!!

Please share this information with family and friends!!!

## Community News

Please visit the HCPSS website [Community News and Programs page](#) for upcoming events and programs sponsored by non-profit organizations.

## Winter Wonderland Trivia Night

Do you want to test out your math and science knowledge and possibly win a prize? Join the Atholton STEM Advisory Committee's *Winter Wonderland Trivia Night* on **Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, from 6-7PM** (open to all ages). To join, use this Zoom link: <https://hcpss.zoom.us/j/95652906134>.

Please feel free to tell your families and friends! The more, the merrier

Hope to see you there,

The Atholton STEM Advisory Committee