

Kaye M. Breon  
Principal

# Tiger Tales

Brian Vanisko  
Assistant Principal

**West Friendship E.S.**  
12500 Frederick Road  
West Friendship, MD 21794  
P: (410) 313-5512



**Web Site:** <http://wfes.hcpss.org/>  
School Hours: 9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

**January 28, 2022**

## Mark Your Calendars

Monday, January 31 Report Cards Issued via Synergy – [Understanding the Elementary School Report Card](#)

**Tuesday, February 1 Schools Closed for Students – Professional Learning Day**

Thur., February 3 Vision & Hearing Screening for all Kindergarten, First Grade & New to MD Students

Friday, February 4 Sports Jersey/Shirt Spirit Day

Wed., February 9 Vision & Hearing Rescreening

**Thur., February 10 3-Hour Early Dismissal – Parent/Teacher Conferences**

**Friday, February 11 3-Hour Early Dismissal – Parent/Teacher Conferences**

February 14 – 18 Kindness Challenge Sprit Week

Wed., February 16 Group & Individual Spring Portraits – More Information to Follow

Wed., February 16 PTA Fundraiser at Bushel and a Peck – More Details to Come

**Mon., February 21 Schools & Offices Closed – Presidents' Day**

Tues., February 22 5<sup>th</sup> Graders - Registration Deadline for Middle School Courses through HCPSS Connect

## School News

### WFES COVID-19 Absence Reporting

We are asking families to follow the guidelines below to report any student absence(s):

- COVID Related Absences - report here: [WFES COVID-19 Absence Reporting](#)
  - Students displaying symptoms of COVID (a COVID Like Illness)
  - Students who are in Quarantine as a Close Contact to a known Positive case of COVID
  - Students who are Positive for COVID (with or without symptoms)
- All Other Absences - report here: [WFESAbsence@hcpss.org](mailto:WFESAbsence@hcpss.org)
  - Illness not related to any COVID like symptoms (sprained/broken wrist, dental, lice, etc.)
  - Travel, Family Events, Family Emergencies
  - Other

### From our Health Room - Daily COVID-19 Self-Screenings

All parents/guardians are to perform a [COVID-19 health check](#) every day before your student leaves home. Students are not to come to school if they are experiencing any [symptom\(s\) associated with COVID-19 or other communicable disease](#).

We thank you for keeping your children home when they are experiencing various illnesses. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to contact the health room, by calling 410-313-5515 or email school nurse at

[Elizabeth\\_Collora@hcpss.org](mailto:Elizabeth_Collora@hcpss.org). If you want to test your child, please don't go to the ER unless the child is having difficulty breathing. [mobile covid testing sites](#)

## Scheduling Parent/Teacher Conferences

Please join your child's **math Teacher** for Parent-Teacher Conferences. All conferences will be held virtually on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> via Google Meet. Online conference registration **begins on Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, and will continue through Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. No conferences will be scheduled after February 4<sup>th</sup>.**

Directions on how to schedule a conference with your student(s) Math teacher are [attached](#). **5<sup>th</sup> Grade GT Math** conferences are available at this time (**4<sup>th</sup> grade GT math conferences were held in the Fall and will not be held at this time**).

Below is a summary of the attached directions:

- Login into [HCPSS Connect \(Parent Account\)](#) Go to the **navigation pane (left side)**, **Select Conference, then Select Parent Scheduled Conferences (upper right-hand corner)**.
- You should be able to see all your students in the top, left corner of the screen.
- Conferences will be 15 minutes in length (30 minutes for ELL only). Please keep this in mind when selecting a slot for additional children. It is best not to select back-to-back time slots due to the virtual setting.

Once you have completed your conference registration(s), you can see the schedule in your **parent connect access account** by selecting **More Options, Conference Scheduling, View My Conference Schedule** in the **navigation pane (left side)**.

## Accessing Quarter 2 Report Cards

Report cards will be accessible via HCPSS Connect Synergy after **5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 31<sup>st</sup>**.

Parents/guardians may access them following the [instructions for accessing report cards online](#). [Answers to frequently asked questions on grades and testing](#) can be found online. Quarter 3 classes began on Tuesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>.

## WFES Valentine Celebrations on February 14<sup>th</sup>

WFES students and staff will be celebrating Valentine's Day on Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Each grade level will organize a short time within the school day which will allow the exchange of Valentine's and a few **(non-food)** classroom activities. Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Due to allergies and HCPSS Policy 9090, no Valentine cards or goodie-bags with food or candy are permitted. **Please do not send in Valentine's that contain candy. These types of Valentine's will NOT be distributed due to student safety.** Pencils, stickers, trinkets, etc. are allowed.
- Teachers will send home class lists. It is expected that if your child chooses to give out Valentine cards, he/she will give one to each child in the homeroom class.
- Individual teachers/grade levels will be in contact with families for any specific needs.
- Celebrations are for students and staff, parent volunteers will not be required.

## WFES School Spirit Days

Show your school spirit and join in the fun!

February 4th: **Sports Jersey Spirit Day!** Football season is almost over. Wear your favorite football or other sports jersey today.

February 14: - February 18th: **Kindness Challenge Spirit Week!** Details are forthcoming!

## Kindness Challenge Spirit Week

Kindness Challenge Spirit Week is coming **February 14<sup>th</sup> - February 18<sup>th</sup>!** Stay tuned for specifics on this exciting week-long event!

## Hearing and Vision Screening by Howard County Health Department

**On February 3, 2022** all Kindergarten, First grade, and students new to Maryland Public Schools will participate. If your child wears glasses, please make sure they are wearing them for the screening. If you would like your child exempted from this screening, email the school nurse at [elizabeth\\_collora@hcpss.org](mailto:elizabeth_collora@hcpss.org). **Rescreening date will be February 9<sup>th</sup>.**

## Field Day News

HCPSS has advised Field Day planning and events for the 2021-2022 school year may return to normal. As with all HCPSS volunteers, Field Day volunteers must adhere to HCPSS guidelines regarding [masks](#), [vaccine requirements](#), and other [Volunteer Training](#). In order for Field Day to run smoothly and be a fun event for our student, we will need the assistance of many parent volunteers. If you have not already done so, please complete all of the required volunteer trainings and vaccine requirements as soon as possible. It is a three step process.

1. Complete the [Confidentiality Training](#), download and print the certificate
2. Review the [Child Abuse Training PowerPoint](#), download and print the certificate
3. Use the [PinPoint Vaccine Check Platform](#) to verify your vaccination status

## 2021-22 Yearbooks Are Now on Sale

It's not too early to order your 2021–2022 West Friendship Elementary School yearbook! The deadline for ordering is April 15<sup>th</sup>. To make sure your child will have a yearbook when they are delivered at the end of the school year, you must order through our school photographer. Books will NOT be available for purchase after the deadline of April 15<sup>th</sup>. Don't delay, order today! Books are \$20.00.

Please view this [flyer](#) for directions to order online (your student should be bringing home a paper copy later this week). Click [HERE](#) to begin your order.

Please reach out to [Penny Smith@hcpss.org](mailto:Penny_Smith@hcpss.org) with any questions. Thank you!

## Important Messages for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Families

### Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Testing:

Due to anticipated staff and student COVID-19 related absences, we will be postponing the January census administration of CogAT in 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Middle School GT Class Recommendations

Although the CogAT administration may be delayed, all 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will be considered for potential placement in 6<sup>th</sup> grade GT classes using all available performance and assessment data in accordance with Maryland COMAR for Gifted and Talented Education. This includes data from students' 3<sup>rd</sup> grade CogAT administration in December 2019, if available.

From February 14<sup>th</sup> to March 4<sup>th</sup>, we plan to administer CogAT to any 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who do not have a prior CogAT score as well as all students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade GT Math. The data will assist with identification for Accelerated GT Math and provide an aptitude measure for students who had no previous CogAT test.

From February 8<sup>th</sup> until February 22<sup>nd</sup>, families will be able to review course recommendations and may request a course placement that is different from the school's recommendation through HCPSS Connect.

If you have any questions about GT placement, please contact our school's GT Resource Teacher, Mr. Haskins at [nathan\\_haskins@hcpss.org](mailto:nathan_haskins@hcpss.org)

## Important Message for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Families

### Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) Testing:

Due to anticipated staff and student COVID-19 related absences, we will be postponing the January census administration of CogAT in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade GT Math Placements**

From February 14<sup>th</sup> to March 4<sup>th</sup>, we plan to administer CogAT to all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. Placements for 4<sup>th</sup> grade GT Math will be made following the CogAT administration and will include all available performance and assessment data in accordance with Maryland COMAR for Gifted and Talented Education.

If you have any questions about GT placement, please contact our school's GT Resource Teacher, Mr. Haskins at [nathan\\_haskins@hcpss.org](mailto:nathan_haskins@hcpss.org)

## **Opting-In to Text Messages**

### **Text Messaging**

#### **How can I opt-in to receiving text messages?**

Text the work "YES" to 67587 from the wireless device you wish to receive texts on.

#### **I received a text message that says if from SchoolMessenger. What does it mean?**

*An opt-in invitation message was sent by HCPSS using SchoolMessenger from 67587 and said: Howard County Public Schools alerts. Reply Y for approx. 5 msgs/mo. Txt HELP 4 info. Msg&data rates may apply. See [schoolmessenger.com/tm](http://schoolmessenger.com/tm)*

To continue receiving text messages, reply with Y. If you do not reply, you will not receive any future text alerts from School Messenger, the HCPSS News service provider. Text alerts include weather-related closings and emergency information.

## **2022 Academic Calendar Updates**

In order to provide school-based staff with additional time to address their increased workload and to support employee well-being, the Board of Education approved updates to the current [academic year calendar](#). Three-hour early dismissals now will take place on the following dates:

- February 16, 2022
- March 16, 2022
- April 27, 2022
- May 18, 2022

## **Update Your Family File**

**Please make certain your Family File is up-to-date. We will be using these to dismiss your student(s) on unexpected closing days.** Do not wait until that day to make changes. We may have already printed information prior to you making changes. In addition, HCPSS utilizes Family File for parents/guardians to supply emergency information. If you haven't done so already, [please verify and/or update information for your child\(ren\)](#) for the 2021-22 school year.

## **2022 Summer Programs Preview Available Online**

Parents/guardians and students can now view/download the [2022 Summer Programs Preview](#), which includes descriptions of HCPSS' four summer programs and enrollment information. Online enrollment requests for current HCPSS students will open at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Outdoor Dining and Outdoor Recess**

When we are able, we will offer outdoor dining during the winter months. We will also have outdoor recess whenever we can. Please have your students wear proper winter weather attire (coats, hat, gloves, etc.) so they are prepared for outdoors. The following factors are considered in determining if recess is to be held outside:

- Temperature and humidity

- Wind chill
- Heat index and air quality
- Age of students
- Length of time outdoors
- Adequacy of the children's clothing
- Condition of the playground
- Falling precipitation (more than a sprinkle or mist)
- Thunder and lightning

Generally, it is assumed that students will be outside for recess when the temperature combined with the wind chill is not less than 20 degrees Fahrenheit or the heat index reading is less than 95. Children with certain health conditions may need special accommodations during extremely hot or cold weather. Parents of those children should provide medical documentation and may be consulted to determine if other arrangements are necessary.

## Mask Policy

We continue to remind our students, regularly, about wearing their masks properly. We are reminding them that their mask should cover their nose and mouth. In addition, students must wear their mask on the school bus. Please check to be sure your child has a mask each day before leaving home. It is a good idea to place an extra mask in their backpack. We just want to keep everyone safe.

## Early Dismissal Procedures

If you need to pick up your child early for an appointment that is close to the end of the school day, **please do so before 3:30pm**. After 3:30 pm, it is very difficult for our front office staff to get students while assisting with dismissal procedures. We appreciate your assistance with this! Thank you!

## HCPSS Emergency Closing Notifications

In times of emergency/weather closings or delays, information is shared through our website, email, and text, Twitter and the HCPSS weather hotline. The school system's operating status can always be found on the [HCPSS Status website](#). [More information about Emergency closings and information sources](#) is provided online.

## Community News

In response to community requests for resources, HCPSS' new [Community News and Programs](#) website makes it easy for families to find educational and recreational resources, events and after-school programs beyond the school day by non-profit organizations."

Community organizations requesting their announcements be shared in school newsletters should visit [community-programs.hcpss.org](http://community-programs.hcpss.org) for more information. Questions should be directed to the Public Information Office at [publicinfo@hcpss.org](mailto:publicinfo@hcpss.org).

## Stay up-to-date on vaccine clinics, Covid testing, and more.

[Link to the Howard County Health Department](#)

## Vaccination Clinics

5–11-year-old clinic for 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of Pfizer

Saturday Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> from 10-4 at the Florence Bain Center (5470 Ruth Keeton Way, Columbia, MD 21044)

Registration preferred, link below. Will also accept walk-ins.

1<sup>st</sup> Dose on 1/29: <https://kordinator.mhealthcoach.net/vcl/howardcokids1>

2<sup>nd</sup> Dose on 1/29: <https://kordinator.mhealthcoach.net/vcl/howardcokids2>



## Howard County Conservancy Summer Camp

[Click Here for Flier](#)

### Mental Health Resources

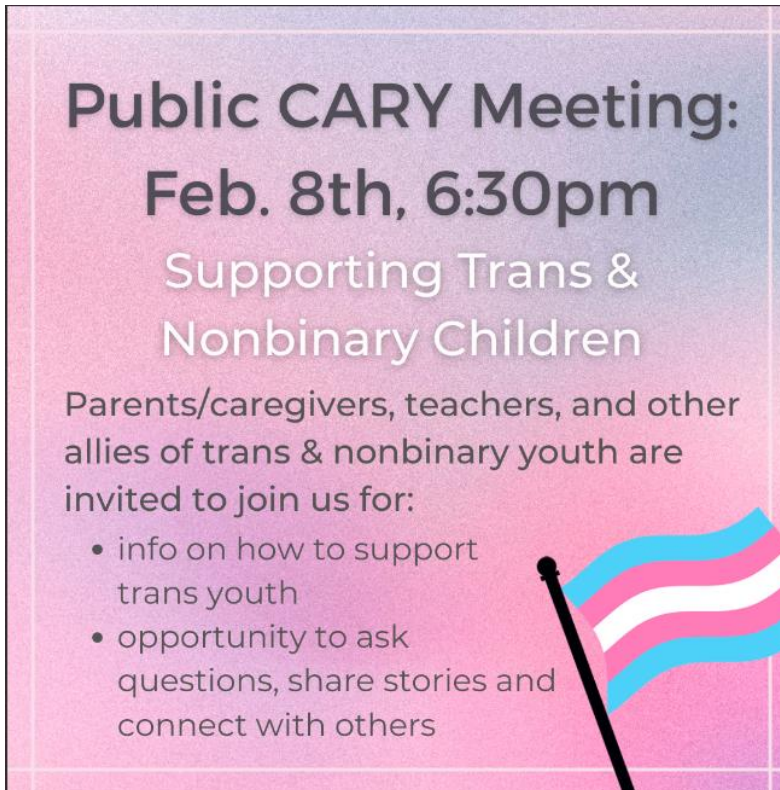
- [Foreign-Born Support Services/Bilingual Support Services](#) - Updated Resources
  - Bilingual Mental Health Professionals
    - [Asian American Health Initiative \(AAHI\) Mental Health Providers Youth](#)
    - [Chinese](#)
- [Grief & Loss](#) - New Resource

### Community Allies of Rainbow Youth

CARY, Community Allies of Rainbow Youth in Howard County, is sponsoring a virtual program on understanding and supporting transgender and non-binary young people.

It will take place on Tuesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Anyone can register using [this link](#).

CARY is an organization started by CHS parents that advocates to improve opportunities for LGBTQ+ young people.



**Public CARY Meeting:**  
**Feb. 8th, 6:30pm**  
Supporting Trans &  
Nonbinary Children

Parents/caregivers, teachers, and other allies of trans & nonbinary youth are invited to join us for:

- info on how to support trans youth
- opportunity to ask questions, share stories and connect with others