

Kaye M. Breon  
Principal

# Tiger Tales

Brian Vanisko  
Assistant Principal

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

**November 5, 2021**

## Mark Your Calendars

<b>Monday, November 8</b>	Last Day to Submit Veterans Day Recognition Info
<b>Tuesday, November 9</b>	Last Day to Contribute to the Holiday Gift Card Drive
<b>Tuesday, November 9</b>	WFES PTA Fundraiser at Walker's Tap & Table
<b>Wednesday, November 10</b>	Report Cards Issued
<b>Thursday, November 11</b>	Wear <b>Red</b> , <b>White</b> and <b>Blue</b> in Honor of Veterans Day
<b>Mon/Tues, Nov. 22 &amp; 23</b>	Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences – <b>3 Hr Early Dismissal (12:45pm)</b>
<b>Wednesday, November 24</b>	<b>Schools Closed for Students</b>
<b>Thurs/Fri, Nov. 25 &amp; 26</b>	<b>Schools &amp; Offices Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
<b>Wednesday, December 15</b>	Schools Close 3-Hours Early (12:45pm)
<b>December 23-31</b>	<b>Winter Break – Schools Closed</b>
<b>January 3</b>	Schools Reopen

## School News

### Staff News

- Please join us in welcoming **Mrs. Diana McKinney** to the WFES family and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Team. She officially starts on Monday, November 8, 2021. Mrs. McKinney comes to us with extensive teaching experience. Over the past 16 years she has taught Pre-K, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at St. John's Lane Elementary School in the Howard County Public School System.
- We extend tremendous thanks to our Reading Specialist, **Ms. Kelly Sweeney** for her flexibility, patience, and dedication to ensure the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students had a consistent teacher and rigorous instruction until a permanent teacher could be secured.
- A huge Tiger Shout-Out to **Mrs. Morgan Pratt**, **Ms. Katie Donegan**, and **Mrs. Janet Yingling** for their endless planning and preparation, and constant support to students and to each other.
- We have received an update from our Building Supervisor, **Mr. Stewart Custis** who continues to recuperate at home. He reports to be slowly getting better each day. He is working hard with physical therapy, but misses all of his WFES friends. He is very appreciative of the cards, prayers, and get well wishes he continues to receive.

## Parent/Teacher Conference Scheduling

Parent/Teacher conferences are an extremely valuable opportunity to talk directly to the teacher(s) of your child/children. This fall, conferences will be held virtually from November 22 -24, with the majority of teachers holding conferences during the afternoon and evening on Monday and Tuesday. Conferences are fifteen minutes in length, and we suggest that you do not schedule back-to-back conferences if you have more than one child.

**Fall Conferences will be scheduled with the Language Arts/Homeroom teacher.** The conference scheduling window is from **8:30am on Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup> through 4:00pm on Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup>**. To schedule your conference go to <http://www.hcpss.org/connect/> . For additional information please see these directions [SYN073 Parent Conference Parent.pdf](#)

Parents needing/requesting separate conferences, please contact Colleen Green at 410-313-5512 during the scheduling window.

### GT Math Conferences with Mr. Haskins

November Conferences will be held for 4<sup>th</sup> Grade GT math students.

5<sup>th</sup> Grade GT Math Conferences will be held in February.

### Related Arts Teachers

If you have questions or would like to discuss your child(s) progress in Related Arts, please contact the teacher directly:

- [Mr. Umla](#), Vocal Music
- [Mr. Talbert](#), PE
- [Mr. Delpo](#), PE
- [Mrs. Petrilla](#), Media
- [Mrs. McDonald](#), Technology
- [Mrs. Schroder](#), Art
- [Mr. Diener](#), Strings
- [Mrs. Clavell](#), Band

Please contact [Colleen Green](#) or [Penny Smith](#) if you have questions or need support. They can be reached at 410-313-5512 during regular school hours.

## Accessing Report Cards Starting November 10

### Access the Family File

1. Go to <http://www.hcpss.org/connect>
2. Enter your HCPSS Connect Login ID and Password. Use your parent login, not your child's.
3. Click the last icon on the left side "More Options (Family File, Report Cards, etc.)"
4. Click the Report Card link to access this quarter's report card

Please take time to review the following document: [Understanding Your Child's Elementary School Report Card](#)

## Update Your Family File

While you are scheduling conferences and accessing report cards, now is the perfect time to 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.

## Veterans Day - Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup>

West Friendship will be observing Veterans Day on Thursday, November 11, 2021. **We will have a school spirit day in honor of our Veterans. Students and staff are encouraged to wear red, white and blue to school on Monday.**

We value and appreciate the important role played by our veterans and service men and women. In honor of Veterans Day, West Friendship would like to recognize these heroes who serve our country. To all who have served or are currently serving, we thank you!

During our morning announcements, we will be sharing the names of veterans and/or service men or women connected to our West Friendship students and staff. Please use the following link to provide this information, including your child's name and grade. We must have this information by noon on Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Please click on the following to submit the name of an honoree:

[Veterans Day Service Recognition](#)

## 2021 Holiday Gift Card Drive

Once again this holiday season, WFES is hosting a school wide gift card drive. The last day to contribute will be Tuesday, **November 9<sup>th</sup>**. If you are able, please consider donating \$10.00 or more in the form of a gift card from any of the following locations: Weis, Giant, Walmart, or Target. These gift cards will go directly to local families who need our support during the upcoming holidays.

Gift cards can be dropped off in our front office. Our fabulous PTA, is partnering with us again this year, and will be providing a quick, and easy way for you to help by visiting <https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/150468> to make a monetary donation. All Gift cards are due by 3:00 pm on November 9th. We are so very grateful for our WFES community and appreciate your support.

Please contact WFES School Counselor, [Mrs. Schnebly](#) with any questions.

## Happy Diwali to Those Who Celebrate

Diwali is a festival of lights and one of the major festivals celebrated by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and some Buddhists, notably Newar Buddhists. The festival usually lasts five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika. Let's celebrate the festival in the true sense by spreading joy and light up the world of others. Happy Diwali!!

## Native American Heritage Month

November is [Native American Heritage Month](#), or as it is commonly referred to, American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. This month is a time to celebrate rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories and to acknowledge the important contributions of Native people. It is also a time to educate the general public about tribes, to raise general awareness about the challenges Native people have faced both, historically and in the present, and the ways tribal citizens have worked to conquer these challenges.

## WFES Rainbow Representative

Rainbow Representatives ensure that schools are allies and advocates for LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families. The school Rainbow Representative attends quarterly meetings, receives and disseminates information regarding LGBTQIA+ topics of interest to the school and school community as appropriate, and provides instructional support for educators. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact West Friendship Elementary's Rainbow Representative Cassandra Greene at [cassandra\\_greene@hcpss.org](mailto:cassandra_greene@hcpss.org).

## Outdoor Recess

As we head into our winter months, now is the perfect time to share our school system's policy regarding outdoor recess. As you are aware, we take students outside each day for recess. This is a great opportunity for students to get some fresh air, exercise, and a much needed break from their academics. With that being said, we want to make sure that we keep students healthy so that they can be in school each day. If the wind chill (AKA "Feels Like") temperature is 20°F or above and no falling precipitation (no more than a sprinkle or mist) we will go outside for recess.

## Please Label Student Belongings

As the temperatures drop, please make sure students are dressed appropriately for the bus stops, as well as for recess. Please make sure students have coats with them for recess. We want to keep students safe and healthy. **Please be sure all student clothing (coats, sweaters, hats, gloves) are labeled with your child's name.**

## Updates to COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement for Volunteers and Visitors to WFES

HCPSS is implementing changes to the vaccine and weekly testing requirements for community stakeholders that were announced at the start of the school year, in a continuing effort to maintain learning environments that are healthy and fully able to provide instruction and support for all students, while balancing multiple layers of staffing challenges and workloads.

### Volunteers

All volunteers who interact with students or in or around a classroom setting with students will soon be required to show proof of full vaccination in order to be in a school. Because HCPSS does not have staff capacity to track and verify testing results, there WILL NOT be a testing option for volunteers.

HCPSS uses the PinPoint platform to verify vaccination status and is developing a vaccine verification process for volunteers, who will be required to complete the verification process at least five school days prior to entry into a school.

### Summary for Volunteers

Vaccinated volunteers will need to complete the PinPoint platform verification process 5 days before entering the building.

Volunteers will only need to complete the verification process one time before the first visit into the building.

Unvaccinated volunteers will NOT be able to volunteer at the WFES school building. However, you are welcome to complete at home tasks as needed.

WFES will be coordinating volunteers in the near future and will be grade/class specific. Grades/classes needing volunteers will reach out soon to schedule. Volunteers who wish to volunteer in the building will need to have vaccination information uploaded into the PinPoint platform five days prior to the first visit to the school building. This is a onetime process.

All volunteers who interact with students will be required to use the PinPoint platform to show proof of full vaccination at least five school days in advance. [Learn how to access and use the PinPoint VaccineCheck platform.](#)

- Additionally, all [volunteers must complete a Confidentiality Training Course](#) about protecting the privacy of our students, staff, and schools, and the [Child Abuse and Neglect Training](#) about reporting any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Howard County Department of Social Services.

### School Visitors

To limit interaction with students in the school building, visitors are not permitted to attend events that occur indoors or outdoors during the school day.

Parents/guardians are also not permitted to eat lunch in the school cafeteria or in the designated outdoor eating area for students.

Parents/guardians and visitors who enter the school building to pick up or drop off their child, or for other reasons that do not involve interaction with students, are not required to show proof of vaccination or testing. They are, however, required to be masked regardless of their vaccination status.

## Ready to Read Act Parent Notification

In accordance with Maryland's Ready to Read Act (2019), COMAR(2021), and the request from the Howard County Board of Education, all Howard County Public School System students in grades kindergarten to 5th grade will participate in a screener for identifying potential reading difficulties.

Please see the attached flyer for information. [21-22 Ready to Read Act Parent Notification](#)

## School Counseling News

The HCPSS Elementary School Counseling Connection Newsletter is a great resource for students and parents to read together. Included in this November issue you will find information about how to celebrate National Gratitude Month and Native American Heritage Month. Also included is the art of writing Thank You notes and using Meditation to help with focus and concentration.

[November ES Newsletter: Issue 3](#)

## From our Health Room

Thank you parents 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](#)

## Update for Food and Nutrition Services

Due to national food supply chain shortages and delays, HCPSS Food and Nutrition Services currently faces a number of food and paper product delivery shortfalls. These supply chain issues force our suppliers to make unanticipated substitutions, which may result in HCPSS menu changes on little to no notice.

Thank you for your understanding as we continue to meet these challenges in order to provide healthy and nutritious meals each day.

## 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.

## 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](#).

## Absence Email Reminder

- Excuses for absences from school are required by Maryland law. **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.** You may attach any documentation from medical professionals, if needed. If this information is not included, the note will not be accepted. This email goes directly to our Attendance Secretary. Thank you in advance for adhering to our absence reporting procedures. **This email is used to report absences only.**
- Please do not send changes to transportation to this email address, as we will not see the changes. Any time there is a change in transportation, and any time your child has an after school activity, you must send a hard copy note to school with your child. Do not send an email, as it may not be seen if there is a substitute in your child's classroom.

## Dismissal Arrangements

- All students will be sent home their usual way unless they have a hard copy note with alternate arrangements, signed by their parent/guardian. Please do not expect a child to relay this important information. This often causes confusion. Do not send an email, as it may not be seen if there is a substitute in your child's classroom.
- Students will not be permitted to ride any bus other than the bus which they are assigned. Students have assigned seats on the bus, and seating is limited.

## Text Message Access

HCPSS and WFES often communicate important information that we need parents to know immediately via text messages. If you receive our texts, then you do not need to do anything else! If you do not, we highly recommend that you opt-in. Here are the instructions on how to opt-in to text messaging...

- Text the word "YES" to 67587 from the wireless device you wish to receive texts on.
- You will receive an "opt in" message from HCPSS sent from SchoolMessenger.
- Text Y and hit send.
- You will now begin receiving text alerts from WFES and HCPSS.
- [Click here for additional details & troubleshooting](#)
- Please have a close relative, family friend, and daycare provider sign up for HCPSSNews alerts. This is a helpful safeguard on unexpected early dismissal days. Community members or any non-HCPSS can sign up to receive messages [by visiting this sign-up page](#).

## Student/Parent Handbook

The 2021-2022 [Student and Parent Handbook](#) is now available on the HCPSS website. This resource is helpful for navigating the school year and includes information about HCPSS practices, policies and services available to support and enrich learning. A printed version of the handbook is no longer provided.

## Family and Student Support

### Information and Application for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS)

Yes, school lunch and breakfast are free for all students this school year. However, FARMS eligibility provides so much more than just free or reduced meals. You could be eligible for discounts for summer school, SAT, recreation programs, Maryland Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and internet programs. Please visit <https://www.hcpss.org/food-services/farms/> to see the numerous opportunities that students may qualify to receive. You may apply online or request a paper application from the school office by calling, 410-313-5512. If you have additional questions regarding the FARMS program, please review the [FAQ Section](#) or email <mailto:foodsvc@hcpss.org>.

# Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMs)

Qualifying families can receive free or reduced-cost:

- School meals
- Health insurance
- HCC tuition
- SAT, ACT and AP exam fees
- Camps, sports, child care
- Many other benefits



Learn more and apply:  
[www.hcpss.org/farms](http://www.hcpss.org/farms)

## PTA Information

### PTA Fundraiser at Walker's Tap & Table

Take a night off from cooking and support the PTA on Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, from 11:00am to 9:00pm. Walker's Tap & Table is located at 2465 Route 97, in Glenwood, Maryland. Please present [this printed flyer](#) or show on your mobile phone for the WFES PTA to receive 10% of sales. If placing a carry-out order, please mention WFES when calling in your order.

### PTA Staff Appreciation Committee

Parent/Teacher conferences are fast-approaching and will be held later this month. Those days are always extra-long for our dedicated WFES teachers and staff, so the PTA Staff Appreciation Committee treats them to a meal to make the day a bit easier. If you are interested in making a donation towards the meal purchase, please click on the link below. Thank you for your support and contributions!

<https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/543098>

If you have any questions or wish to join or support the Staff Appreciation Committee with planning and events, please contact Glenda Hernandez Tittle at [glendahtittle@gmail.com](mailto:glendahtittle@gmail.com)

### Spirit Wear Sale

In case you missed the first round, we are reopening the Maryland Flag design Spirit Wear store. Take the opportunity to check a few things off your holiday gift list! Orders are due by November 10 to ensure distribution before Winter Break.

Order here:

<https://stores.inksoft.com/wes550>

### PTA Newsletter Paw Prints

In the [November issue of Paw Prints](#):

- We chat with School Nurse Beth Collora about tooth boxes, why she's up at 4:30 a.m. and how Covid has changed her job.
- Find out why Principal Kaye Breon has a new and VERY important title.
- Tons of pictures from recent PTA activities including the Outdoor Movie Event, Custodian Appreciation Day and the winner of the first-ever Trunk or Treat.

- More details on how to help our school and community this upcoming holiday season as well as info on fundraisers next month.

Paw Print question: What are your holiday or end of year traditions? Send your photo and share your tradition with Paw Prints editor Nicole Lozare Huber at [wfeseditor@gmail.com](mailto:wfeseditor@gmail.com) to be published in our December newsletter.

## Join the PTA

Becoming a member of the PTA does not mean you must volunteer. It simply means that you are donating to help enhance the school experience for our students. The PTA funds school-wide presentations, family fun events, teacher appreciation activities, and additional items needed by the teachers for their lessons and classrooms.

Family Membership dues is \$25. Join the PTA by visiting the following link:

[https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/113487?fbclid=IwAR27qCNyWKQQ26k\\_JAz2COW-aW6KFu7xSw-Bm2ST1lllehXWc1V2et-gWsY](https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/113487?fbclid=IwAR27qCNyWKQQ26k_JAz2COW-aW6KFu7xSw-Bm2ST1lllehXWc1V2et-gWsY)

## Community Information

### New HCPSS Community News and Programs Site

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).

## Native American Heritage Month Celebration

Howard County Library System will host a celebration at the East Branch Columbia Library on Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am to 3:00pm. Please see the [attached flyer](#) for a full schedule of events.