

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.

October 14, 2021

Mark Your Calendars

Friday, October 15 Schools Closed to Students – Professional Work Day

Wednesday, October 20 School Spirit Day – **Wear Orange** for Unity Day!

Friday, October 29 Grade Level Tiger Celebrations

Wednesday, November 3 End of 1st Marking Period

Thursday, November 4 Schools Closed for Students – Professional Work Day

Wednesday, November 10 Report Cards Issued

School News

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](#)

Halloween

While we recognize that Halloween activities/celebrations held during the school day have been a tradition in many schools, including West Friendship, we will not be holding Halloween specific activities during the instructional day. This decision was made for several reasons, including the growing number of WFES students who have been choosing to opt-out of Halloween celebrations, and the new [HCPSS visitor/volunteer](#) protocols. Please be advised that grade levels will hold their Tiger Celebrations on Friday, October 29th.

School Counseling News

The HCPSS Elementary School Counseling Connection Newsletter is a great resource for students and parents to read together. Included in this latest issue you will find information regarding National Hispanic Heritage Month, National Bullying Prevention Month, Building Positive Relationships, and using Mindful Art to help relax and de-stress.

[ES Newsletter - 10/2021](#)

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](#)

Gifted and Talented Advisor Council

If you are interested and available to be a Gifted and Talented Advisor Council (GTAC) Parent Representative for our school community for this academic year, please register at <https://forms.gle/9Pxkm9bvchTEwKrA8>

Parent Representative Job Description: Parent Representatives are the bridge between the GTAC and their school communities.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Sharing GTAC news with your school. For example, we will send you GTAC “Highlights” for you to share at platforms, such as PTA meetings. If a GTAC update is not currently part of your PTA meeting agenda, please contact your PTA President and request to continuously share GTAC highlights at upcoming PTA meetings;
- Promoting GTAC-sponsored events at your school, like our Parent Academies and the Educator Recognition Event. GTAC will continuously share news/events and flyers to post in your PTA e-mailings and/or school display; and
- Supporting your GT Resource Teacher(s). Occasionally checking in with them to see if/how you can provide any help or assistance with routine activities and/or with special events.

Additional Responsibilities (optional):

- Attend the Steering Committee Meetings in effort to obtain news firsthand and/or actively participate by volunteering to serve on the Steering Committee, and/or advocate for the GT Program with the Board of Education.

Our next virtual GTAC Steering Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 20th, 7-8:00 p.m. Once you are registered as a Parent Representative, you will be placed on our email list and provided with additional information closer to the meeting. If you are unable to attend, a highlights summary will be sent following the meeting.

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.

National Bullying Prevention Month – Unity Day on October 20th!

Did you know that October is National Bullying Prevention Month? West Friendship Elementary will celebrate Unity Day on Wednesday, October 20th! Wear **ORANGE** to show unity for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion, and to send a visible message that we believe that no child should ever experience bullying.

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 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.

Procedures for Visitors and Volunteers

We are excited that we can once again allow visitors and volunteers into the building. Teachers are planning their volunteer needs and will reach out to you in the coming weeks. Parents are asked to please read and complete the following procedures now, so you can be ready when volunteer opportunities become available.

- Parents & visitors entering the school for a brief visit to pick up or drop off their child, or for other reasons, are not required to show proof of vaccination or testing. They are, however, required to be masked regardless of their vaccination status.
- Parents are not permitted to eat lunch in the school cafeteria with students at this time.
- Parents who are [conducting classroom visits or observations](#) must provide proof of vaccination status or a negative COVID-19 test (within seven days of the current date) to school administration when they check in at the front office.
- Visitors should [perform a COVID-19 health check](#) every day before coming to an HCPSS building and should stay home if they are experiencing any symptom(s) associated with any communicable disease.
- Please be prepared, sometime after October 4 all volunteers entering HCPSS schools to interact with or support students must provide proof of vaccination status or a negative COVID-19 test (within 7 days of the current date) to school administration when they check in at the front office.
- Volunteers must be masked regardless of their vaccination status. Volunteers may be able to access the free weekly testing offered within school and office buildings, subject to availability of tests. Volunteers should [perform a COVID-19 health check](#) every day before coming to an HCPSS building and should stay home if they are experiencing any symptom(s) associated with any communicable disease.
- 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.

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>.

PTA Information

Outdoor Movie Night

The WFES PTA is proud to bring another fun event for our students and families. Please join us on **Friday, October 22 starting at 6PM.**

- Mask making stations
- Purchase Spirit Wear
- PTA Membership Table
- Concession Stand

Movie will start at 7:15 PM.

What to bring:

- Small bills and change for the concession stand. Cash only.
- Chair or blanket (extra blanket as it may be chilly at night).

- Flashlight to help you navigate.

For more information, visit <https://mywfespta.weebly.com/news--events.html>

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

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 for more information. Questions should be directed to the Public Information Office at publicinfo@hcpss.org.

Marriotts Ridge HS PTSA Little Caesars Pizza Kits

Please support this Little Caesar Pizza Kit Fundraiser!

[Bit.ly/MRHS-Pizza](http://bit.ly/MRHS-Pizza)

These kits are delivered to your doorstep via Fed-Ex (kits arrive cold - *NOT* hot and ready to eat.)

Sponsored by the Marriotts Ridge HS PTSA. This fundraiser benefits our entire community by supporting programs such as:

1. Mental health guest speakers
2. After Prom - The After Prom is a substance free event for students to go to after attending their prom. This event helps keeps our entire community safe.
3. Stock up on pizza for Halloween. This will help cut down on the amount of traffic while our young ones are trick-or-treating.

Don't delay and place your order today! **Sale Ends October 27th**

*Shipping Tip - they ship 2 kits to a box. To get the most out of shipping costs, order in quantities of two.

Clothing Giveaway Sponsored by Grace Community Church

Clothing Giveaway for ALL Family Members! All clothing is FREE!

Saturday, October 16, 2021, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

North Laurel Community Center, 9411 Whiskey Bottom Road, Laurel, MD 20723 * 410-313-0390

For questions or more information, contact Sharee Campbell, MSC Coordinator, at 410-313-0220 (voice/relay) or scampbell@howardcountymd.gov. www.howardcountymd.gov/msc This information is neither sponsored nor endorsed by HCPSS or the school.