

Kaye M. Breon
Principal

Tiger Tales

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

October 1, 2021

Mark Your Calendars

Friday, October 8	Flu Vaccination Sign-up Deadline
Saturday, October 9	WFES PTA Sponsored Community Yard Sale
Wednesday, October 13	PTA Chipotle Fundraiser – 4:00 to 8:00pm
Wednesday, October 13	PTA General Assembly Meeting – 6:00pm
Friday, October 15	No School for Students – Professional Work Day
Wednesday, October 20	School Spirit Day – Wear Orange for Unity Day!
Wednesday, November 3	End of 1 st Marking Period
Thursday, November 4	Schools Closed for Students – Professional Work Day
Wednesday, November 10	Report Cards Issued

School News

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. 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](#)

Flu Vaccine Clinic

Influenza, also known as the flu, is a serious illness that affects people of all ages. One of the best ways to prevent the flu is through vaccinations. We are pleased to join with the Maryland Partnership for Prevention (MPP) to offer flu vaccinations at our school.

West Friendship Elementary will be holding a flu vaccine clinic for all students on **Wednesday October 13th**. They will be given at **NO CHARGE TO YOU**. Now, more than ever, it is important to protect your family through vaccinations. If you would like your child to be vaccinated, please register **BEFORE Friday, October 8:**

Fill out the consent form online at:

<https://tinyurl.com/HoCPSSFlu2021>

1. Type your child's school name in **Search by Name** then press the blue **Search** button.

2. Click on the **Sign Up for Flu Vaccinations** button for your child's school.

You may give permission for your child to be vaccinated using (1) an online form at <https://tinyurl.com/HoCPSSFlu2021> or (2) the hard copy form attached to this message.

We urge you to protect your family from the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone ages 6 months and older get a flu shot. Please visit www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm for more information about the flu vaccine.

[WFES Flu Clinic Consent Form - Paper Version](#)

[WFES Flu Clinic Consent Form - Spanish Version](#)

Please contact our nurse at elizabeth_collora@hcpss.org with any questions.

Howard County GT Program Parent Academy, October 13th & 14th

HCPSS families interested in the Gifted and Talented (GT) Program are invited to come learn about the advanced-level offerings available and how their students can become involved. The evening will begin with an overview of GT Education Program offerings followed by a question-and-answer session with Central Office GT Education Program staff. Elementary and Secondary programs will be covered on separate days. Families may attend one or both nights. Registration is required for these events.

Elementary Focus: Wednesday, October 13, 7 – 8:00 p.m., being held virtually via Microsoft Teams

Secondary Focus: Thursday, October 14, 7-8:00 p.m., being held virtually via Microsoft Teams

For more information and to register, please visit the [HCPSS GT Program Parent Academy announcement](#).

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.

National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15th to October 15th is celebrated each year as National Hispanic Heritage Month. When people celebrate Hispanic American Heritage Month, they often just focus on Mexico. But Hispanic and Latin Americans come from many different nations. In fact, September 15th was designated as the starting day of Hispanic Heritage Month because it is the Independence Day of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Similarly, Mexico, Chile, and Belize celebrate their Independence Days on September 16th, September 18th, and September 21st. Each of these nations has its own unique culture and traditions, and immigrants from these countries have and continue to add value to, and enhance the evolving culture of this county. Please join us as we highlight and celebrate the tremendous contributions and impact of our Hispanic/Latinx community.

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 Parent Empowerment Virtual Conference

Families of students receiving special education services and anyone interested can register by Oct. 6 to attend this free [conference](#), being held Oct. 12-14 via Google Meet. The conference will cover topics related to supporting your child's learning and participating in the IEP process.

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 Custodial Appreciation Day

National Custodial Appreciation Day is fast-approaching and the PTA/Staff Appreciation Committee would like to celebrate the hard work and dedication of our fabulous WFES custodial team: Mr. Custis, Ms. Hamby and Ms. Frimpong! We would like to surprise them with lunch, a basket of their favorite treats, coffees, etc. If you are interested in providing donations for their gift baskets, kindly enter your information in the SignUpGenius using the link below. **Please deliver all items by 4:30pm on Tuesday, October 5th in the school's vestibule .** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040e4da4a92eabfe3-national1>

If you would rather make a monetary donation for the lunch and gift basket for our custodial staff, please click on the MemberHub link below:

<https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/521874>

Thank you for all you do to support our amazing WFES staff!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Glenda Hernandez Tittle at glendahtittle@gmail.com.

PTA Yard Sale

Start cleaning out those closets & pull out the storage bins! We are so excited to host the FIRST EVER, WFES PTA Sponsored Community Yard Sale!

Spaces are limited, so don't miss out! The best part? You're directly supporting the amazing initiatives the PTA plans throughout the year while earning yourself some extra dollars as well!

<https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store?category=Community Yard Sale> and see flyer for more details! (if needed, click on Community Yard Sale on the left menu).

[WFES PTA Community Yard Sale Flyer](#)

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, effective October 1st. Join the PTA by visiting the following link:

https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store/items/113487?fbclid=IwAR27qCNyWKQQ26k_JAz2COW-aW6KFu7xSw-Bm2ST1IIIehxWc1V2et-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

Why does the mushroom always get invited to pizza parties?

Because he's such a fungi!

Please place an order today -- the Marriotts Ridge HS PTSA really needs your support!

Little Caesars Pizza Kits - Go to bit.ly/MRHS-Pizza

Orders are delivered right to your doorstep via FedEx.

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