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Principal



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

**September 4, 2020**

## From Our Administrators

Dear West Friendship Elementary Families,

It has been a busy week at West Friendship Elementary! Thanks to all the families who took time out of their busy schedules to pick-up their Chromebooks, school materials and to join us for various meetings this week. In addition, thank you to our staff for their dedication and hard work to prepare for our semester of virtual learning.

The Howard County Public School System has issued an attendance-specific email address to each school. The new attendance-specific email address for WFES is [WFESAbsence@HCPSS.org](mailto:WFESAbsence@HCPSS.org). Office staff will review the incoming attendance related messages.

All of us are excited for this long holiday weekend! Enjoy this last bit of summer with your family. Relax, have fun, stay safe, and be well! We look forward to seeing students on the first day of school on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>!

Yours in Education,

Ms. Breon and Mr. Vanisko

## School News

### Additional Distribution & Collection Date/Time

We want to thank all the families that came by the school on Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> for the Distribution & Collection. It was a very successful day!

Not everyone was able to make on the 1st and we have a few new families register that we want to make sure they get materials. You might also have found a Media book or two laying around the house that you want to return.

So, we are offering another date and time for Distribution & Collection of materials:

**Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 8am - 9am**

### Materials Pick-up

All Students will pick up a bag of learning materials

Students who weren't issued an HCPSS-issued computer last year will pick up a Chromebook.

19-20 Pick-up of **Protect the Ocean T-Shirts**

### Materials Drop-off

Media books, Media books, Media books

Textbooks/other classroom books

School-owned instruments if not being played this year

Chromebooks if you are moving out of Howard County

- Before arriving, write the name of the person picking up the device and the student's name, and grade level in large letters on an 8.5' x11' piece of paper. Create one sign for each student. This paper will be shown to staff during device pickup to help ensure all participants maintain social distancing.
- Support: After picking up the Chromebook, families can use the [directions for connecting a Chromebook to Wi-Fi](#) to connect it to their home network. Additionally, if your student(s) has forgotten their username or password or is new to HCPSS, they can use the [Account Self Service directions](#) to retrieve their account credentials. If your student has questions on how to use the technology to access instruction or is having technical issues, please reach out to one of your child's teachers and/or Library Media Specialist at their school.
- Agreement: Upon taking possession of an HCPSS-owned Chromebook, families agree to the [HCPSS Student Mobile Technology Duties and Obligations](#).

## **Virtual Instruction Responsibilities, Expectations and Best Practices**

A successful virtual instruction program for the 2020-2021 school year requires [collaboration and shared responsibilities](#) among students, educators and families.

## **Google Meet Expectations for Students and Parents/Guardians**

To ensure a positive, productive and enjoyable learning experience for all participants, it is important that all students and parents/guardians adhere to these [Google Meet Expectations](#), which include online behaviors for students and privacy guidelines for parents.

## **Family File**

**It is required that all families, including returning families, verify or update information for every child in the family, every school year.** Please Note: Although schools remain virtual through 1/28/21, it is important that we have up-to-date emergency contact information for each student, in the event that our staff need to communicate directly with our families.

- You can access the Family File by logging in to HCPSS Connect at [www.hcpss.org/connect/](http://www.hcpss.org/connect/). Parents who are new to the Howard County Public School System will receive a welcome email with instructions on how to activate an account. Once you have logged into the [HCPSS Connect](#), select the Family File tab on the left-hand side, and then select the blue underlined "Family File" towards the center of your screen. Once logged in, parents/guardians will be asked to provide, update, or confirm the following information:
  - Student Information
  - Parent/guardian Contact Information
  - Emergency Contacts
  - Medical Information
  - Media Release (photo approval)
  - Data Confidentiality
  - PTA/PTSA Directory
  - Please note, if the section you are looking for is not allowing you to move forward, then there is a question/checkbox on that page that may still need to be addressed. Please make sure to re the prompts at the top of each tab, and click to expand each section.

- Parents who have forgotten their login credentials may click the “Forgot Password” link on the sign-in page.
- If a parent completed the Family File **prior** to August 10<sup>th</sup>, the information entered will be attached to the 2019-2020 school year and the Family File will be considered incomplete.

## HCPSS News

[HCPSS News emails and text alerts](#) keep families up-to-date on news and events, and delivers real-time notices of emergency closings and information. All HCPSS News subscriptions are generated from the information provided in Family File and have been automatically updated for the 2020-2021 school year. Parents/guardians new to the system are automatically enrolled for email notification, and [must opt in to text alerts](#).

## School Calendar

Make sure you know important dates on the [2020-2021 academic calendar](#). There are no printed calendars; you may view the online calendar and/or download printable calendar PDFs on our website. The calendar is subject to change.

## Change of Address

A change of Address cannot be made through Family File. If you have recently moved, please contact your child’s new school as soon as possible. As we are preparing for the upcoming 2020-2021 School Year, it is imperative that we have accurate addresses on file for all of our students. If you have moved, and have not provided us with your updated information, we ask that you email the following documents to Mrs. Green at [Colleen\\_Green@hcpss.org](mailto:Colleen_Green@hcpss.org)

- A completed change of address form
- A copy of your new lease or deed
- A copy of a current utility bill with your new address

## Leaving WFES

If your child will not be attending West Friendship this year, please contact Mrs. Green at [Colleen\\_Green@hcpss.org](mailto:Colleen_Green@hcpss.org) or Mrs. Smith at [Penny\\_Smith@hcpss.org](mailto:Penny_Smith@hcpss.org). This allows us to have accurate classes and we can provide you with the information needed to enroll your child at their new school or information for homeschooling. Please complete the [Withdrawal Request](#) form and return Mrs. Green. In addition, if you are planning to homeschool you must complete and submit a [Home Schooling Notification](#) form to the Home Instruction Office.

## Kindergarten and New Student Registration On-Line

- Please share with your friends and neighbors
- Parents/guardians of children who will be five as of September 1, 2020 must enroll their children in kindergarten for the 2020-2021 school year. Complete registration information can be found at <https://www.hcpss.org/enroll/>
- Registrations should be submitted online. Parents will have the opportunity to upload documents during the registration process. You can find documents required for registration at <https://www.hcpss.org/enroll/#docs>. If parents choose to not upload documents during the registration process, they will be notified of alternative methods to submit the required documents after we have received the registration.
- Registration Questions - contact Mrs. Colleen Green at [Colleen\\_Green@hcpss.org](mailto:Colleen_Green@hcpss.org)

## School Supply Lists

Please find the school supply list for all elementary schools [here](#). For the 2020-21 school year, there is one supply list for all elementary schools. The number of supplies on the list have been reduced to keep costs down for families and reflect those most essential for virtual learning.

## Immunizations

All children must have the required State of Maryland immunizations in order to attend school, including in districts utilizing virtual instruction. In partnership with the Howard County Health Department and the Maryland Partnership for Prevention, HCPSS will offer several immunization clinics, at no cost to families, for any student who may need vaccines during the week of September 21. Please contact our school nurse, Beth Collora at [mailto:Elizabeth\\_Collora@hcpss.org](mailto:Elizabeth_Collora@hcpss.org) immediately if you are unsure if your child needs school required immunizations. Please review the [attached flyer](#) for clinic dates and locations.

## Learning at Home Tips

Below are some tips that you may find helpful or useful as you prepare your child for this year of learning. We recognize that all families are at a different place at this time in terms of school readiness, but for those of you who are curious as to ways you can support your child, we have compiled a beginning list for you.

- **Provide a designated learning space for your child.** This will help your child with understanding that school is important. If your child has their own area that is strictly for their schooling, they are less likely to be distracted and it will help your child get in the zone for learning. This can be a small table, a small TV tray, a corner table in a kitchen, etc. Please do whatever works best for you, however, we recommend that this area has a “permanent” spot in the house.
- **Within the designated space, have organized items that your child will be able to find, put away and use.** This will allow students to work in their area without needing to leave it to find needed materials.
- **School box** or bin for crayons, pencils, scissors, glue and markers
- **Headphones** are helpful to avoid distractions to others AND they will block out distractions from the house
- **Small whiteboard or thick paper in sheet protectors** and black expo markers. Often teachers will ask your child to hold up their work and paper can be hard to see in an online format.

## Updated Information on Meals

Meals will be provided at no cost to all students through December 31, 2020, subject to U.S. Department of Agriculture funding availability. The food services program during the 2020-2021 first semester (September 8, 2020-January 28, 2021) will consist of Grab-and-Go meals served Monday through Friday from 8–9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m., beginning Tuesday, September 8. Breakfast and lunch can be picked up at either meal time. [More information](#) can be found online.

## Mark Your Calendars **\*\*Google Meet codes will be sent for events\*\***

**Mon., Sept. 7      Schools & Offices Closed – Labor Day**

<b>Tues., Sept. 8</b>	<b>Distribution/Collection of Devices/Materials – 8-9:00am</b>
<b>Tues., Sept. 8</b>	<b>First Day of School for K-5 Students</b>
<b>Wed., Sept. 9</b>	<b>PTA Meeting – 6:00pm</b>
<b>Tues., Sept. 15</b>	<b>Band &amp; Strings Night for Parents &amp; Students – 6:30p</b>
<b>Mon., Sept. 28</b>	<b>Schools &amp; Offices Closed – Yom Kippur</b>

## PTA News

### WFES PTA Restaurant Nights

The WFES PTA has organized two Restaurant Nights! Restaurant Nights are fun and easy fundraisers. Just dine at the restaurant on the given date and the WFES PTA will receive a percentage of sales! Please mark your calendars for the following dates:

- **Restaurant Night at Tony's Pizzeria**  
Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:00am to 9:00pm  
Here's a reason to not cook tonight! A portion of sales goes back to WFES PTA. Make sure you mention WFES PTA when you pick up your order!
- **Restaurant Night at Chipotle**  
Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:45am to 10:00pm  
A portion of sales goes back to WFES PTA. Make sure you mention WFES PTA when you pick up your order!

Please share this information with family and friends!!!