

Kaye M. Breon  
Principal

# Tiger Tales

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Assistant Principal

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

**September 17, 2021**

## Mark Your Calendars

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Monday, September 20</b>  | Gifted/Talented Information - 5:30pm<br>Grades 4 & 5 Back-to-School Night - 6:00pm |
| <b>Tuesday, September 28</b> | Fall Picture Day for Students!   |
| <b>Saturday, October 9</b>   | WFES PTA Sponsored Community Yard Sale   |
| <b>Wednesday, October 13</b> | PTA Chipotle Fundraiser – 4:00 to 8:00pm   |
| <b>Wednesday, October 13</b> | PTA General Assembly Meeting – 6:00pm  |
| <b>Friday, October 15</b>    | No School for Students – Professional Work Day                                     |

## School News

### Thank You, PTA

Many thanks to the WFES PTA, Staff Appreciation Committee, and our wonderful and generous community! Our instructional staff were able to enjoy an evening meal and dessert as they prepared for the grade level Back-to-School-Night(s). The meal was greatly appreciated as most of our staff did not have time to go home prior to the Back-to-School Night presentations. Please know that your many acts of kindness are sincerely appreciated by each member of our staff. Thank you for your generosity and support!

### 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.

### Back-to- School Night – GT, Grades 4 & 5

We are looking forward to meeting our last group of parents during the Back-to-School Night for Gifted Talented, Grade 4, and Grade 5 parents on Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. Our teachers will share information on curriculum, schedules and expectations, along with the opportunity to see your child's classroom. Please read the following information carefully for specific logistics and expectations for the evenings.

- BTSN presentations are intended for adults only – we respectfully ask that only parents/guardians attend.

- All visitors must follow the county mask guidance and wear a mask for the entire time they are inside the building, regardless of vaccination status.
- For parents/guardians unable to attend in person, a Google Meet will be opened in order for parents/guardians to listen and watch the Grade Level PowerPoint Presentation only. This will not be interactive, so teachers will not be able to respond to questions in the virtual format. Questions can be emailed to the homeroom teacher.
- For the Google Meet option, you must log-in using your child's HCPSS credentials. A specific Google Meet Code/Link will be shared by each grade level through a Canvas Announcement.
- If attending virtually, we ask that you mute your microphone and please know the Chat feature will be disabled.

### **Monday, September 20 – GT, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Grades**

5:30pm – GT Presentation in Media Center

6:00pm – Classroom Visit – please go directly to your child's homeroom class

6:20pm – Transition to Grade Level Presentation

- 4th – Media Center
- 5th – Cafeteria

6:30pm – Grade Level Presentations

Back-to-School Night Presentations will be focused on academics, instruction, and expectations. Questions about COVID protocols, classroom seating arrangements, Indoor/Outdoor Lunch, Recess, and Transportation will NOT be addressed during these sessions. Please contact Ms. Breon, Mr. Vanisko, or Mrs. Collora (COVID protocols) with any questions.

### **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.

## School Portraits – Memories that Last a Lifetime!

Our school photographer will be at WFES taking individual student photographs on Tuesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. **ALL** students will be photographed at that time, as these are the photos that will be published in our school yearbook. Photo envelopes will be sent home with all students on Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup>. If you wish to purchase photos, please send your payment envelope in by September 28<sup>th</sup>. **You may also make an online purchase by visiting [www.strawbridge.net](http://www.strawbridge.net) and entering code 101821.** Purchasing school pictures benefits our school, as it is a fundraiser. Take care of some upcoming holiday gift giving needs with school photos, and support our school at the same time!!!

## 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.

## Employment Opportunities at WFES

- **Close Adult Support** to some of our students with special needs. This position requires an application with an outside agency that staffs these positions in our schools. The pay is \$13.00 an hour. The position is for 6-hours each day, 9:15am - 3:45pm. Please contact Mr. Vanisko, Assistant Principal at [brian\\_vanisko@hcpss.org](mailto:brian_vanisko@hcpss.org) to let him know you are interested.
- **Lunch/Recess Monitor** - This position involves monitoring students during the lunch and recess periods, Monday - Friday. Lunch/Recess Monitors will be compensated at \$12.50/hour. Please contact Mr. Vanisko at [brian\\_vanisko@hcpss.org](mailto:brian_vanisko@hcpss.org) to let him know you are interested.

## 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

### News from our School Counselor

Check out [Elementary School Counselor Newsletter - Issue 1](#) for information and resources about student well-being. You can access this newsletter and past editions through my Canvas Course entitled, West Friendship Elementary School Counseling located on your child's Canvas dashboard. If I can be of assistance to you or your child(ren), I can be reached through email [leslie\\_schnebly@hcpss.org](mailto:leslie_schnebly@hcpss.org) or by phone 410-313-5512.

### A Word from our School Psychologist

September is **Suicide Prevention Month**. Social emotional well-being is essential as we transition into a new school year, which for many has presented new challenges, anxiety, and emotional distress. As we recognize these challenges, it is important that we continue to educate ourselves and empower our school communities to engage in prevention efforts. Below are resources for you to share with students, staff, and families.

#### Informational Resources:

- [National Suicide Prevention Week Resources](#) (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention)
  - [Self Care Strategies for Resilience](#)
  - [Simple Actions You Can Take To Help Prevent Suicide](#)
  - [2021 National Suicide Prevention Week Toolkit](#)
  - [Social Media Resources](#)
- [Promote National Suicide Prevention Month](#) (Suicide Prevention Lifeline)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
  - [Risks of Suicide](#)
  - [It's Okay to Talk About Suicide](#)
- [Extreme Risk Protection Order \(ERPO\) Informational Toolkit](#) (Maryland.gov)

#### Crisis Resources:

- Grassroots 24 Hour Crisis Hotline/ Mobile Crisis Team – 410-531-6677

- Text NAMI to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line.
- [The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.nationalsuicidepreventionlifeline.org/) - 1-800-273-8255

For additional information, visit the [HCPSS Mental Health and Wellness webpage](#).

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

Yes, school lunch and breakfasts 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.hcps.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@hcps.org>.

## PTA Information

### Fun PTA Event

WHAT: WFES B2S Block Party  
 WHO: All Students & their Families  
 WHEN: Friday, September 17, 2021  
 5:30P - 7:30P  
 WHERE: WFES Black Top Area

#### Description

The WFES PTA is proud to sponsor our very first BACK TO SCHOOL Block Party!

- Magician and Hypnotist Adam Stone - Be prepared to be amazed!
- Kona Food Truck
- Spirit Wear Sale
- Receive discounted prizes on Spirit Wear with a purchased membership to PTA.
- Win door prizes with multiple opportunities for additional raffle tickets
- Mission BBQ will be available for pre-order so families don't have to worry about dinner.

Be sure to visit PTA's new and redesigned webpage at <https://mywfespta.weebly.com/>

Since the party starts at 5:30 PM (dinner time), the PTA is offering families the convenience of pre-ordering boxed dinners for the event from Mission BBQ.

Families can order directly from our Member Hub store! <https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store>

#### Here are the details:

The FIRST WFES PTA Block Party is coming up soon! If you don't want to worry about dinner, we've made it easy for you! You can pre-order a boxed dinner with Mission BBQ right on our MemberHub store! Deadline is Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup>!

### 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](https://westfriendship.memberhub.com/store?category=Community%20Yard%20Sale) and see flyer for more details! (if needed, click on Community Yard Sale on the left menu).

## Community Information

### Girls on the Run

Registration for Girls on the Run is open! Girls on the Run is a program for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls which encourages girls of all abilities to recognize their individual strengths and celebrate connections with others. Trained coaches use physical activity and dynamic discussions to build social, emotional, and physical skills in every girl while encouraging healthy habits for life. We focus on confidence, friendship, and fun! You don't have to be a "runner" to be a part of our team. This fall we will be meeting at WFES on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 3:45-5:00 pm beginning September 21<sup>st</sup>. We'd love to have your daughter join us! Follow this link for registration and scholarship information. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!

<https://www.pinwheel.us/register/index/Fall2021GOTRRegistrationCentralMD>