

Sunday Screamer, January 9, 2022

Good evening, Westover Families. This is Mrs. Wilson with your Sunday Screamer.

“You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, “I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along”. Eleanor Roosevelt

Needless to say, last week was a rough one—for us all; students, parents, teachers, staff, and administrators. In this time of great uncertainty and transition, we share your frustrations as well as your questions and concerns. We recognize the last minute changes, delayed communications and staffing shortages have impacted many, and have created both stress and anxiety. We feel it, too. Amid it all, we remain committed to creating a space where children are safe, supported and loved. I encourage us to be kind and collaborative with one another as get through this challenging time—together.

While currently remaining in-person, know that we are continuing with our efforts to mitigate risk associated with the virus. We continue to:

- Enforce the mask mandate inside our building
- Promote ample spacing where possible; including reconfiguring classroom seating to increase distance between students
- Regularly and consistently implement cleaning practices aligned with the CDC; including wiping down high touch point areas like railings and door knobs
- Maintain hand sanitizing stations throughout the building and within classrooms and to provide time for hand-washing throughout the day
- Provide PPE for staff and students
- Offer weekly screening testing through CIAN; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends random asymptomatic COVID-19 testing because it detects and can limit the spread of the virus, even in the absence of visible symptoms. If you have not consented, you can do so here: [Fill out the consent form](#)
- Offer **rapid testing**; staff from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) determines that a COVID-19 rapid test should be administered when a student presents to a health room with potential COVID-19 symptoms

COMMUNITY MESSAGE

If you have not read the **January 7th** community message from MCPS you may review it here: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/publicinfo/community/school-year-2021-2022/Community-Update-20220107-final.html>

Please also see today's Community Message, **dated January 9th**, as it provides updates regarding the system's next steps:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/publicinfo/community/school-year-2021-2022/Community-Update-20220109-final.html>

AT-HOME COVID TESTING KIT DISTRIBUTION-FROM MCPS

Please see the **important letter** linked below regarding the distribution of At-Home COVID Testing Kits. Westover's distribution date is **TOMORROW, JANUARY 10TH**. Students will receive kits *via backpack*.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZJdVekF_NMmdv4XTcJ3aOtFID-7Hwmlr5X4IEZzz6bY/edit?usp=sharing

FREE, RAPID AT-HOME COVID-19 TEST KITS

Montgomery County will be distributing free, rapid at-home COVID-19 test kits starting this Monday 1/10 at selected library branches through Saturday 1/15; including the White Oak, Aspen Hill and Silver Spring branches. Limit two kits per person; kits will be available on a first come, first served basis until supplies run out. These tests are recommended for asymptomatic people. People showing symptoms of COVID-19 should NOT go to a library distribution site and should contact their health care provider or make an appointment for a [PCR test at one of the many locations providing testing throughout the community](#).

COVID TESTING REMINDERS

It is incredibly important that if your child has tested positive that you **contact the main office AND complete the MCPS form linked below**:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf14fCpohAJvMLG_9aqLLtFz-bGJJi7AMPg2BhU8eZkZ_FWLg/viewform

Please note that, per MCPS policy, students who tests positive for COVID, even if vaccinated and having no symptoms, must isolate for 10 days from the date of the positive test, or 10 days from the onset of symptoms, whichever is earlier.

Also, please note that if a child's sibling or parent (in-household family member) tests positive, quarantine is needed if the student is unable to fully isolate from the positive household member. Impacted students will be required to quarantine for 10 days; there is currently no option to shorten the 10-day quarantine period.

If your child has had a known exposure to a confirmed positive case and is vaccinated AND asymptomatic, they may attend school. If your child has had a known exposure to a confirmed positive case and is unvaccinated and/or symptomatic, please keep your child home and secure a test to confirm.

MAKE-UP PICTURE DAY

Due to the significant number of students who are currently absent or ill, *tomorrow's Make-Up Picture Day has been postponed*. We will inform you once a new date has been scheduled. We appreciate your flexibility.

EARLY RELEASE DAY

Wednesday, January 12th is scheduled as an early release day for students. Students will be dismissed at 1:20 pm.

STUDENT COUNCIL SPONSORED MITTEN DRIVE

Please donate new hats, scarves, mittens, and gloves in all sizes to those in need. Donated items will go to the Interfaith Works Clothing Center. The drive will run from through January 21st. Thanks for participating!

PTO SHOE DRIVE FUNDRAISER

We are continuing to collect shoes! We need more to help raise \$1000 to support Westover programs and staff. Please send in used and new shoes, any size, no holes or ripped soles. There is a collection box in the Westover lobby.

That's all for now.

Have a great night,

Mrs. Wilson and Ms. Young

Transportation Update

Good evening, Westover Families. It's me again, Mrs. Wilson, with an update regarding tomorrow's bus transportation.

The system continues to experience bus driver shortages that has impacted bus routes throughout the county. I received word that two such routes our in school community, for tomorrow, **Monday, January 10, 2022.**

6313

6321

Neither bus will pick up or drop off students. We apologize for the inconvenience and appreciate your understanding.

Thank you, Mrs. Wilson