

Start of School Letter - August 31, 2020



Dear Panther Families,

I know that this year the start of school brings both excitement and anxiety as we all work together to find ways to navigate our new normal.

All summer the leadership team at Paint Branch High School has worked hard in order to plan for a robust and rigorous online teaching and learning experience. We would all prefer to be back in school with the students, but until we can do that safely we are committed to providing our students the best online experience possible.

I know many of you want to know how your children will get into a live zoom class on Monday. [Please watch this video so you can see step-by-step instructions.](#)

I want to give you a sense of the scale of work that we have been engaged in as we prepare for the start of school.

- To date we have given out 879 devices to our students (and plan to identify additional dates to provide devices to any students who did not attend the original distribution days)
- We had 436 students and 389 parents attend virtual meet and greets to learn about the expectations for the start of school
- This week 398 incoming 9th graders in the class of 2024 attended a virtual 9th grade orientation. The link to the virtual orientation site is [HERE](#).

Please share with your children the following expectations:

- Be ready for school and logged into the computer by 8:45 AM for their first class.
- Please remind your children to be on-time for class as they would be in the building.
- Make sure your students are ready to engage with their teacher and with their peers by having their cameras on. We can't be together in one place yet... but we can see each other and interact.
- For the first day of class, students need something to write with, something to write on, and a computer to log into the classes.
- Students should be ready to learn and engage on day 1.

Critical information you need in preparation for the first day of online school:

- Fall meal service will begin on Monday, Aug. 31. You can find the list of sites and [FARMS application here](#).

- Review this [helpful parent checklist](#) and also sign up to attend a [parent and/or student webinar](#).
- A series of [technology webinars for parents](#) have been scheduled to help parents learn about the new parent portal (ParentVUE) and other digital tools their children will be using this fall (myMCPS Classroom, Kami, Zoom). Webinars will be recorded and posted on the MCPS website.
- Student Logins: Passwords will NOT be changed for the start of the year. Students can continue to use their passwords from last year.

Attendance in the Virtual Setting

All attendance will be recorded in the new student information system and will be visible to parents through the parent portal. In addition, ConnectEd calls and other parent outreach will occur regularly to inform parents if their child has not attended. Parents/guardians must submit a note, phone call, or email to the attendance secretary if a student will be absent for a full or partial school day. All absences for which no documentation is received will be listed as unexcused. We will share more information with you in the coming days regarding the process for ensuring that your child's attendance is correctly reported and recorded. For this first week of school we ask you to stress to your child the importance of attendance.

Parent Guide to Virtual Classroom Recordings

Recording live instruction is critical to ensure students have the access and opportunity to learn. We know there have been many questions from parents about recording in virtual classrooms. To address these questions, we have created a guide to understanding recordings. The guide includes information about privacy, security and more. **The full document [can be viewed here](#).**

The Schedule for Paint Branch High School

This schedule follows the MCPS approved guidelines and allows us to provide daily live instruction. In addition, there is time in the schedule to address the social emotional needs of students as we transition back to school.

Every Wednesday students will have the opportunity to drop in on any of their teachers. There are content specific drop in times for Wednesday so that students can get help or ask questions. Teachers will share the Zoom links for their classes and for the drop in Wednesday sessions in their Canvas classrooms.

Time	A	B	NA	A	B
8:15-9:00	Teacher Planning				
8:45-9:00	Student Preparation (Organize Materials for the day, log into Canvas, Zoom)				
9:00-10:00	Period 1	Period 5		Period 1	Period 5
10:00-10:15	Break				
10:15-11:15	Period 2	Period 6		Period 2	Period 6
11:15-12:30	Lunch				
12:30-1:30	Period 3	Period 7		Period 3	Period 7
1:30-1:40	Break				
1:40-2:40	Period 4	Period 8		Period 4	Period 8
2:40-2:45	Break				
2:45-3:15	Focused Student Intervention	Teacher Collaborative Planning	Case Management, Department Meeting, Collaborative Problem Solving	Focused Student Intervention	Teacher Collaborative Planning
3:15-3:30	Student Closure (Organize assignments and plan for self-paced work)				

Time	Wednesday	
8:15-9:00	Teacher Planning	
8:45-9:00		
9:00-10:00	Professional Learning	
10:00-10:05		
10:05-10:35	Math	PE/Health
10:40-11:10	English	Social Studies
11:15-12:30	Lunch	
12:30-1:00	Science	WL/FACS
1:05-1:35	Case Management	Electives
1:40-3:30	Student Independent Work (Organize assignments and plan for self-paced work)	

On Monday we will have the PB Student Help Center open starting at 8:15 AM. Any students who need help can join the Zoom link below. This room will be open from 8:15 AM - 2:00 PM. Students will be put into breakout rooms so that they can get help from our school counselors.

Topic: PB Student Help Center

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/91952252711?pwd=MEIYeTF0OTRnV3NXeGVUQzh6UzJ3QT09>

Meeting ID: 919 5225 2711

Passcode: panthers

Thank you for your warm welcome to the Paint Branch High School community. Our administrative team is excited for the start of the 2020-2021 school year.

Afie_A_Mirshah-nayar@mcpsmd.org - Principal
Ricardo_Hernandez@mcpsmd.org - 12th Grade Administrator
Micah_E_Wiggins@mcpsmd.org - 11th Grade Administrator
Dollye_V_McClain@mcpsmd.org - 10th Grade Administrator
Antasio_D_Holley@mcpsmd.org - 9 Grade Administrator
Eric_Gerber@mcpsmd.org - Dean of Students

For any questions related to course selections and scheduling please contact your child's counselor. All staff emails can be found on our [Staff Directory](#).

9th – 12th GRADE

A – Cad	Adriane Whipple
Cae - Fah	Katana Riddick
Fai - Jom	Johahn Oliphant
Jon - Merca	Andrea Elliott
Mercb - No	Darlene Jackson
Np – Sav	Dwayne Jackson
Saw - Sj/AVID	Felicia Kimmel
Sk – Z	Becky Long
ACES Program	Terre Thomas
School Psychologist	Niccole Dorsey
College/Career Info Coordinator	Latasha Kelly
Pupil Personnel Worker	Robyn Hart
CRCMC	Deeva Khatiwada/Emily Carson

We have planned and are prepared for online teaching and learning, but we fully expect to have to adjust to some glitches in technology. I would like to ask you to practice patience in the first few days of school.

Dr. Mirshah
PROUD Principal, Paint Branch High School