



NORTH BETHESDA MIDDLE SCHOOL

HOME OF THE PHOENIX!

“Our school provides an environment where all students thrive emotionally, academically, and socially”



Office of the Principal

August 2, 2022

NBMS Vision:

We envision a learning environment where individual differences are valued, and every student achieves personal growth and academic success. Strong positive relationships between staff and students are nurtured so that every student has room to take intellectual risks, think broadly, self-advocate, and support their community.

NBMS Mission:

Our school provides an environment where all students thrive emotionally, academically, and socially.

Dear NBMS Families:

On behalf of the North Bethesda Middle School faculty and staff, I welcome you to the 2022-2023 school year. Our building service team, led by Ms. Beverly Prather, has been working tirelessly to prepare the building and grounds for our return to school on Monday, August 29, 2022. My heartfelt appreciation goes out to this team as we could not operate daily without them.

Dr. Monifa McKnight, MCPS Superintendent of Schools, has shared system priorities for the 2022-2023 school year. MCPS is committed to:

- rebuilding trust
- providing equitable teaching and learning for our students
- caring for the well-being of our community

The NBMS leadership team’s priorities and the school’s mission and vision align with the system’s priorities. We are committed to this work as we strive to provide students with the world-class educational experience they deserve.

At NBMS, we value strong collaborative relationships with our community. We aspire to inspire all North Bethesda families to be actively engaged in our school and their child’s individual academic performance and social development. Last year, as we returned to five-day a week in-person learning, we were supported in countless ways by our parent and caregiver community as they engaged in their child(ren)’s learning. To continue and enhance this valuable engagement, we have several forms of communication:

Weekly News and Notes: Each week, on Sunday, I send a weekly email containing the NBMS News and Notes through Connect-Ed along with a brief phone message sharing highlights for the week. The News and Notes includes timely information about school activities and initiatives, system updates, information about extracurricular activities and athletics, PTA information and helpful counseling updates. These publications will also be available on our website.

Global Announcements: Announcements are published daily on MyMCPS Canvas classroom. Dr. Smith, grade level administrators, and/or students read highlights of these announcements over the P.A. each morning.

ConnectEd Calls: In addition to the Sunday message, if it is determined that parents and guardians need information immediately, the school will send a Connect Ed call and/or email out to the community.

School Website: The site includes information on Grade Level Teams, Counseling, Athletics, Media Center, and Curriculum Information. Please take a moment to explore our website at <https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/northbethesdams/>

ParentVUE and myMCPS classroom: This platform allows parents to view grades, access teacher resources, and receive important information from teachers. If you do not already have an account, you will need to sign up for an account to access the information relevant to your child's education. To login into ParentVUE and access resources, click this link: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/tech-info-support.aspx>

Please update your "Student Emergency Information" by September 9th, 2022.

PTSA

SAVE THE DATE! The NBMS PTSA will host a Back-to-School Picnic for incoming 6th graders, all students who are new to NBMS, and their families, **Thursday, August 25th, 2022 from 6-8 PM outdoors at NBMS.** More details to come.

Also, this is a great time to join the NBMS PTSA listserv. Lots of helpful information is shared on this listserv. To join the PTSA listserv follow these instructions for joining a Google Group and search for "North Bethesda Middle School PTSA"

OR

Just send a message to listserv@nbmsptsa.org with the name and grade of your student,

OR

click on the following link

<https://groups.google.com/g/north-bethesda-middle-school-ptsa-listserve>

PTSA Website: <https://www.nbms-ptsa.org/>

Twitter: @NBMS principal Social media is not just for kids! Twitter is a great way to receive quick reminders about school events, hear of exciting classroom experiences, and see pictures of key events.

Additional Information

Bus Routes/Student Drop-off/Safety Reminders:

Bus Routes as of 7.15.2022 (I will send an update closer to the first day of school should any routes change)

[Parent Letter from the Department of Transportation](#) (English and Spanish)

[Arrival Routes](#)

[Departure Routes](#)

Our regular school hours for the 2022-2023 school year are 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. We cannot provide supervision for students prior to 7:45 a.m. nor after 3:10 p.m. Students riding school buses are encouraged to do so beginning Monday, August 29th. Students will become familiar with the bus stops and route numbers. Please refer to the bus route list on our website and in this packet for the locations and times of pick-up. School bus routes are identified by their route number, which are displayed in the window.

Parents should be aware that road construction, poor weather conditions, and accidents are real traffic stoppers in the NBMS area, so buses may be legitimately delayed when picking up students in the morning. School buses experience the same traffic delays as the rest of us, sometimes even more so, and bus drivers tend to be more cautious than the average commuter. Additionally, buses may run slower the first two weeks of school, as the drivers are still adjusting to new routes.

There is considerable traffic each day as buses arrive and parents drop off and pick up students. In the interest of safety, we ask parents to drop off and pick up students in the designated Student Drop-Off area in front of the school building. Please drop your students off on the curbside of the car. ***Please do not use the Johnson Drive entrance as that is for buses and staff.***

We realize it may be time-consuming to wait in line, but in bypassing the stream of cars and dropping off a student in the middle of the traffic circle or parking lot, a student would need to walk between cars, creating a dangerous situation. If you need additional time when dropping off children, please move along to the far part of the circle so others may exit.

If a student would like to ride a different bus to go home with a friend, send the student with a note that includes the full name, bus route number, telephone number, and parent signature. Your student will have to get signed approval from one of our security assistants, Mr. Andre Gaines, or Mr. Roger Taylor. The bus driver will collect the note from your student when boarding the bus. ***Please be aware that some buses may be too full to take additional students.*** The Bethesda Depot Transportation Cluster Manager (TCM), Mr. Randolph Mussotte, advises us of buses that cannot take additional passengers due to capacity. Questions regarding bus transportation should be addressed to the Bethesda Depot of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation. Phone: 240-740-6580 or E-Mail: Randolph_Mussotte@mcpsmd.org.

Please assist us in providing the safest environment possible for all our students. If your child rides a bicycle or skateboard to and from school, please remind your child to wear a helmet and walk or carry the "vehicle" onto school property. Bicycle racks are in the front of the building. Students may store skateboards and scooters under the stairway in the front lobby upon arrival.

Extracurricular Activities (ECA)

Philosophy: The extracurricular Activities (ECA) Program is an integral part of the total education process for middle school students. After school activities provide students with the opportunity to explore new areas of interest, cultivate and enhance existing skills, and grow both socially and cognitively in a safe and supportive environment. Although these activities take place after the school day, all our goals, rules and expectations remain the same.

Staff supervise school-sponsored classes and clubs, intramurals, and athletics throughout the school year. These NO FEE classes are open to all students. Information about clubs will be communicated to students in the global announcements during the month of September.

CONTACT: Ms. Katherine B. Rudd, After School Activities Coordinator for questions regarding the ECA Programs at [Katherine B. Rudd](#).

[Ms. Hailey Beckett](#), Intramural Coordinator

Enrichment Academies: These are fee based extracurricular activities that run three sessions during the school year. A copy of the flyer is attached and linked [here](#).

Interscholastic Sports: Grade 7 and Grade 8 students may try out for the boys' and girls' interscholastic softball team and cross-country. Registration for middle school athletics will be conducted through the [ParentVUE Portal](#). Registration will open on August 15, 2022, at 12:00 noon. The ParentVUE online registration portal incorporates all required paper forms and documents into an internet-based platform that parents/guardians/caregivers can access using a secure ParentVUE Portal login. Parents/guardians/caregivers are also able to scan and upload their student's physical, as part of the registration process. A physical [\(SR-8\)](#) is needed in order to try out.

[This link](#) provides information and resources. If you have any questions, please contact our athletic directors, Ms. Emily Valonis at [Emily A Valonis@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Emily_A_Valonis@mcpsmd.org) and/or Mr. Ben Leffler at [Arthur B Leffler@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Arthur_B_Leffler@mcpsmd.org)

Cafeteria:

NEW: Students in Maryland who qualify for reduced-price meals will not be charged for meals!

MEAL PRICES

- Breakfast: Regular Price (All Levels): \$1.30; Reduced Price (All Levels): No Cost
- Lunch: \$2.80 (Middle and High); Reduced Price (All Levels): No Cost

Students may qualify for free or reduced-price meals based on household size and income. They may also qualify if they are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA), or Medicaid benefits. Families may apply for meal benefits by completing an Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals for the current school year. **Beginning school year 2022-2023, students who qualify for reduced-price meals will not be charged that cost - meaning that reduced-price students will eat for free!**

Apply online NOW at [MySchoolApps.com](https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/parents/food-and-nutrition/) (Translations available) Click [here](#) for an English video tutorial. Click [here](#) for a Spanish video tutorial.

Federal eligibility guidelines change each school year; therefore, a new application must be submitted each school year. All students in the family should be listed on one household application. A notice will be mailed home to each student if you are approved for meal benefits or do not qualify for meal benefits. Please keep this important document for your records and use throughout the school year. Families may apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year.

Households that are unable to apply online should contact their school or the Division of Food and Nutrition Services at 240-740-7400.

Please click [here](#) to apply online.

Read more about Food and Nutritional Services here:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/>

Chromebooks and School Supplies

At the end of the 2021-2022 school year, the district provided individual schools the opportunity to decide whether to maintain the 1:1 Chromebook device model or to move to a classroom cart model where students would not have their own device to take to and from school.

As a leadership team, we revisited the topic. We decided to go back to assigning individual students Chromebooks. We will be providing additional guidelines to cultivate student responsibility in caring for the devices and to mitigate damage to the devices.

As you may recall, rising 7th and 8th graders returned their Chromebooks for inventory and cleaning. We will be reissuing Chromebooks to students during the first two weeks of school. If your child has their MCPS issued Chromebook case, please have them hold on to the case. If they do not, I have added this item to our supply list and/or the school will supply students in need with a case.

Here is a link to the [School Supply List](#) for 2022-2023.

If you have any financial concerns regarding school supplies, please reach out to your child's counselor and we can help ensure that your student has everything they need.

School Cash Online

Montgomery County Public Schools has transitioned to a new online payment system called SchoolCash Online as its preferred method of payment for all school-related fees.

SchoolCash Online helps parents/guardians and community members pay school-related fees safely, quickly, and easily. *(Please note that the new payment system is NOT related to school cafeteria accounts)*

SchoolCash Online will help increase efficiency and security at schools by making payments directly into schools' bank accounts and eliminating the need for teachers to handle money. In addition, once registered, you will be immediately informed about school activities!

Powered by KEV Group, SchoolCash Online is the industry leader in the management of school fees. The new system puts all of the school-related fees online for purchase so users can make purchases online using a credit card or e-check. A processing fee will be included on all items available for purchase, regardless of the type of payment used on SchoolCash Online or at the school.

Parents/guardians can register now at - <https://mcpsmd.schoolcashionline.com/>

Staffing Changes

This year we had several retirements, reduction in staffing, and some staff have relocated to new areas. We are thankful to these staff for serving NBMS over the years with dedication and commitment. We wish them the best in their new ventures. We welcome and are excited to have hired talented and experienced staff for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Mariella Cacho – Algebra/Geometry
- Erlene Germain - Technology
- Clara Johnson - Fine Arts
- Mark Karver - Special Education, Grade 6
- Christine Ye Ji Lee - English
- Leslie Karbeling - 6th Grade Counselor
- Rachel Lunsford - Social Studies
- Julie Mendelson - 7th Grade Counselor
- Lillian Reina – Math 6
- Olivia Stentz - Fine Arts
- David Yeom - 7th and 8th Grade Counselor

School Calendar

The [MCPS calendar](#) with all scheduled school holidays and early release days will be clearly posted on our website and is attached to this packet.

Student Agenda Books

Although there are many policies, procedures, and regulations in MCPS, we have included the most relevant ones in the Student Handbook/agenda book. Teachers will facilitate discussions with students about the handbook's contents. A copy will be posted on our school website. This required book will be distributed to all students at no cost on the first day of school. For a lost handbook, there is a \$5.00 replacement cost.

Protocol for Resolving Matters of Concern

- If you have a concern about a class, please contact the teacher **FIRST**.
- If the issue is unresolved at that level, please then contact the department content specialist.
- The next level of support is to contact the grade-level administrator.
- If issues are not resolved at any of these levels, then contact the principal at 240-740-2100.
- To schedule a parent conference with your student's team, for class schedule issues, or other counseling matters, please contact the **counseling department, 240-740-2110**.
- For matters involving your child unrelated to teachers, counselors, or specific classes, please contact the grade-level administrator.
- If the issue cannot be resolved at that level, please contact the principal.

Content	Content Specialist
Arts/PE/Health/Tech. Ed.	Ms. Emily Valonis
English	Mr. Matthew Ghaman
World Languages	Ms. Kristy Myers
Math	Ms. Amy Watkins
Science	Ms. Katherine Connolly
Social Studies	Mr. Eric Kling
Special Education	Ms. Leigh Mayfield

MAIN NUMBERS

Main Office	240-740-2100	Counseling Office	240-740-2110
Main Office Fax	301-571-3881	Counseling Fax	301-571-7752
Attendance Office	240-740-2101	Cafeteria Manager	240-740-2104
Health Room	240-740-2102	Media Center	240-740-2098

PRINCIPAL: DR. ANNEMARIE KESTNER SMITH			
GRADE	TEAM LEADER	COUNSELOR	ADMINISTRATOR
6	Ms. Jennifer Byrd	A - O (Ms. Karbeling) P - Z (Ms. Sadara)	Ms. Powell
7	Ms. Rachel Lazarick-Ward	A - Q (Ms. Mendelson) R - Z (Mr. Yeom)	Mr. Werbeck
8	Mr. Benjamin Leffler	A - O (Ms. Rice) P - Z (Mr. Yeom)	Ms. Rudd
Resource Counselor	Ms. Jennifer Sadara		

To contact all other staff, please email individually, or call 240-740-2100 to leave a brief message. Teachers may take up to 48 hours to respond. Email addresses may be found on the NBMS website:

<https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/northbethesdams/staff/directory/#Principal>

MCPS VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

Maryland State law requires that to attend preschool programs or schools, students must receive vaccinations on a schedule determined by the Center for Disease Control. Students may be exempted from these requirements if a healthcare provider states that the vaccinations are medically contraindicated, or for religious objections. **Maryland State law requires that families provide proof of vaccinations within 20 days of the first day of school, which is Monday, August 29, 2022.**

PLEASE NOTE: Incoming Grade 7 students need to provide documentation of one Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap) and one dose of Meningococcal (MCV4).

IMPORTANT DATES:

Grade 6 and New Student Orientation Day: Thursday, August 25, 8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. This event is for incoming sixth grade students only or recently enrolled 7th or 8th grade students. Recently enrolled 7th and 8th graders new to NBMS will have the opportunity to attend an

information session and receive a tour of the school. Please reach out to your child's counselor if your child plans on attending.

Orientation will provide new students with an opportunity to walk the building, meet their teachers, and most importantly, students will have the opportunity to practice opening lockers (there will be a bank of lockers for students to try – students will receive their lockers during opening week.) Students who are unable to attend will participate in orientation and team building activities the first week of school. Transportation will be provided to and from school for our students who would normally ride a school bus.

Returning 7th and 8th grade students will receive schedules on the first day of school and should not attend orientation.

First Day of School: Monday, August 29, 2022. Our doors open for students at 7:45 a.m. and dismissal is promptly at 3:00 p.m.

- 6th Grade students should enter by the cafeteria entrance.
- 7th Grade students should enter by the music entrance at the top of the bus loop.
- 8th Grade students should enter by the main entrance.

Back-To-School-Night (BTSN): - Thursday, September 1, 2022, we will be hosting an in-person BTSN. More details to come soon; however, we begin the evening with specialized meetings (Family Life curriculum overview and meetings for parents/guardians of special education and English Language Learner (ELL) beginning at 5:45 p.m. The school-wide event begins at 6:35 p.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m. Parking will be limited so you may wish to consider carpooling or parking at Wyngate Elementary and walking over to NBMS.

Monday, September 19, 2022: Students who have not provided documentation of required vaccinations ***must be excluded*** from school until such documentation is provided.

Thank you for your past and future support. North Bethesda Middle School is a special place, and I am humbled and honored to be the principal. Mother Teresa said, “None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we all can do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful.” Through collaboration and doing small things with great love, we will continue to nurture a school climate where excellence in teaching and learning is a daily reality for every student and our students feel cared for and safe.

Sincerely,



AnneMarie Kestner Smith, Ed.D.
Principal

AKS:kmb
Attachments