

**North Bethesda Middle School**  
**News and Notes**  
*June 7, 2020*

**Coming Up this Week**

**Daily Hepburn, Montello, and Friends 10:30 a.m.**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/18DBUcwtvaPxD1RW7ojHCVYNYKN4uHplAELRIkFzNsKY/edit>

**Mindful Mondays 9:45 a.m.**

**June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. Link to the prerecorded virtual NBMS 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Send Off and Awards Celebration available for viewing.**

Greetings North Bethesda Family:

In this week's News and Notes, you will read about follow up to the Student Forum, more information about item pick up, an informative Counseling Update, clarification on grading and reporting choices for high school credit-bearing classes, information about an at-home virtual STEM camp for rising 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders (due date to sign up is tomorrow, Monday, June 8, 2020, SSL and Media Center updates, and information about the 8<sup>th</sup> grade send off. Also, next week, once I have received the guidelines and details from the central office, I will be sharing information about summer school recovery and enrichment opportunities for North Bethesda Middle School.

Mrs. Turska and I would also like to use this opportunity to thank one of our parents, **Mr. Alain Boy**. He has been watering our planters for the last 2 ½ months, bringing 5-gallon jugs of water on his bike, 2 times a week. He is a great person and a great volunteer and he does everything with a smile and a great attitude.

## **STUDENT FORUM**

Many of you reached out to express appreciation for the work of Ms. Jasti-Currie, Ms. Conley, Ms. Jarosi, and Ms. McKibben for creating an opportunity for students to learn about and process the events surrounding the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd and the subsequent demonstrations. Over 200 students and

staff attended. This work will serve as a great springboard for continued conversation and educational opportunities on the issues of racial injustice and other incidents of injustice for the NBMS community.

Here is an example of staff feedback:

*I just wanted to reach out and say 'thank you' for the amazing work you did today. This type of injustice has been going on for far too long and I am glad it is finally being discussed in a way to help educate our students (and us teachers). Each breakout room was well executed and it made me happy to hear students speak up about what they see, especially on social media, and know that they can make a change. If the school is doing anything else to keep this conversation going, please let me know. I would love to be a part of this movement in any way possible. Finally, how will you be sharing today's presentation? I look forward to educating myself on some of the materials you included.*

Here is an example of the feedback we received from parents:

*I wanted to write to you to express my appreciation to the 6th grade World Studies teachers and counselors who put together and presented the Zoom program yesterday. I watched along with my kids and was very impressed with the content and was grateful to have some help on how to move my kids through this. I was impressed with some of the comments the students made and was happy that some misdirected comments were addressed in a respectful manner. Some white students were focused on the violence and looting and not on the fact that black and brown people are being oppressed and murdered. I wanted to reach out and hug Ms. Steimer and Ms. Jasti-Currie when they explained why we need to stay focused on the latter.*

*As we have discussed, my kids report that there are issues with racism, homophobia and transphobia at NB. I hope that NB continues to do the work to address these issues head on with zero tolerance. Please pass on my gratitude to all that made yesterday's program happen - it was really impactful.*

## **A MESSAGE FROM MS. CONLEY, MS. JASTI-CURRIE, MS. MCKIBBEN and MS. JAROSI**

Dear NB Students and Families,

*This week's Zoom forum on the events surrounding the tragic death of George Floyd and current national protests in our country was a remarkable event with over 200 members of our school community. We hosted three breakout sessions that addressed Historical Context, Ways to Speak Up (Teaching Tolerance), and Student Activism. Many students opened up to discuss their emotions, shared experiences, and most importantly show their support for one another.*

*We hopeful that all participants were inspired to take action in their own lives. We understand how difficult it is to process and even understand the racial issues in our country and recent events. It is uncomfortable and will take on-going and meaningful discussion, learning, and unlearning of the complex social systems and history at work. Together we can begin to move towards healing and understanding as a school and as a community.*

*The slides and resources from the presentation are attached to the News and Notes. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you need additional information or follow-up.*

*In Solidarity,*

*Ms. Conley, Ms. Jasti Currie, Ms. Jarosi, and Ms. McKibben*

### **STUDENT ITEM RETRIEVAL**

MCPS is coordinating a systemwide effort to provide families with opportunities to retrieve personal belongings from schools. In the coming days, we will share logistics and schedule of times based on student last names. Families can expect the following procedures to be followed:

- All student property will be pre-bagged and labeled. (Name, Grade, Activity, etc.)
  - All student belongings will have been bagged by classroom staff, administrators and central support staff members
- Yearbooks will be distributed at that time
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion certificates and other awards will be distributed at that time
- 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be able to pick up a high school course bulletin.
- There will be drive-up and walk-up options at each school.
- Families will be required to stay in their vehicle or the designated area for walkers throughout the process.

- Your child’s belongings will be delivered to your vehicle or to the designated area for walkers. (MCPS staff will be wearing personal protective equipment when delivering items.)
- Once you have retrieved the bagged property, we are asking that stakeholders please exit the campus immediately to avoid contact with others.
- The retrieval process will begin the week of June 15 and run through the week of June 29.

We have designed this process for retrieval of your child’s belongings in an effort to service our families, while decreasing the risks to our community.

### **REMINDER – SSL HOURS DUE JUNE 5**

All Student Service Learning (SSL) forms for service completed during the summer of 2019, first semester, and second semester are due by June 5, 2020, in order to be documented on the report cards. Students should email the forms directly to [Carla\\_A\\_Jurewicz@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Carla_A_Jurewicz@mcpsmd.org) by the June 5, 2020 deadline. SSL documentation for continued service through the summer of 2020 will be accepted in September 2020.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Send Off**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade team is planning a pre-recorded “**Send Off**” to recognize our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The link for the program will be released at 10:30 a.m. on June 12, 2020. The program will recognize all 8<sup>th</sup> graders for successful completion of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, our Presidential scholars, SSL Superintendent award recipients, students who received Honor Roll for 3 years and Straight As for 3 years, 8<sup>th</sup> grade special awards, and the Phoenix Award. There will be opening remarks from Dr. Smith, closing remarks from Mrs. Rudd, and a student keynote speaker. Finally, the program will include a farewell video from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. Certificates will be available for pickup when we have student item retrieval.

### **STEM OPPORTUNITY**

At-Home “Virtual” STEM Camp

**FOR Rising NB 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders:**

Are you interested in a free opportunity to keep your child engaged this summer in online STEM Learning?

MCPS is offering two (pending enrollment) **FREE** STEM Summer Camp Opportunities. Please follow [this link](#) for more information and to sign-up by **Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>**.

1. STEMming from the Earth – Explore the science and engineering innovations that help protect our Earth! Hands-on experiments, virtual field trips and guest speakers will show you how you can turn your interest in the environment into a career.

2. STEMming from Space – From the ancients to today, humans have always looked to the heavens to understand our place in the universe. Campers will engage in activities and competitions with space themes such as lunar distancer, balloon racer, and shuttle arm. A virtual field trip to Goddard Space Flight Center is planned.

## STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

Students can continue to engage in MCPS SSL opportunities during the summer, including select virtual/remote opportunities that follow the temporarily amended guidelines posted on the MCPS SSL webpage [www.mcps-ssl.org](http://www.mcps-ssl.org)

All SSL opportunities can be found on the Montgomery County Volunteer Center website ([www.montgomeryserves.org](http://www.montgomeryserves.org)) these opportunities will be tagged with the blue MCPS SSL banner and graduation cap icon. To learn more about the MCPS SSL program, please view our program overview at \ <https://bit.ly/SSLOverview2020>.

**After June 5, students should hold on to any SSL forms and turn them into their school's SSL coordinator in the fall.** SSL coordinators **will** accept any SSL forms that students were unable to turn in at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, as well as any SSL forms for service completed during the summer of 2020. If you have any questions, please email your school's SSL coordinator, [Carla\\_A\\_Jurewicz@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Carla_A_Jurewicz@mcpsmd.org) or the MCPS SSL office at [ssl@mcpsmd.org](mailto:ssl@mcpsmd.org).

## COUNSELING UPDATE

I had an important conversation with my almost seven-year-old last week. Just before bedtime we jumped in the car to drop off voting ballots to City Hall. She asked me why people vote. I found myself explaining how we want to elect people to run the country whose beliefs and ideals we agree with; we want to feel we are well spoken for and our needs and wants are represented.

“Can I vote?” she asked. I answered, “When you are 18 you can vote; but it wasn’t always like that. Women were not always able to vote. Black people were not always able to vote. Even today, there are places in this country where it is purposefully difficult for some people to vote.” She said, “You mean only white men could vote.”

When we got home, the news was on the television and she questioned what she was seeing. “People are fighting for their rights,” my husband responded.

Although everyone has the right to vote, not everyone’s rights are protected and defended in our society. Daily protests and riots in the aftermath of George Floyd’s death remind us of this.

Conversations about race need to start at a young age. Many of us hope our children learn “the right thing to do” by watching us, but all research on race shows that conversations need to be often and early. Children start to see and learn racism much younger than we like to believe.

I hope you are talking in your home, allowing your children the freedom to express their thoughts and feelings without judgement. It is going to take recurrent effort and continued conversation to sustain change in our country. With tweens and teens, chances are they are more aware of race, gender and class differences than you realize. We can’t hide our children from the world and it’s important that we discuss openly our thoughts and feelings about this time in history.

Ms. Jarosi, Ms. McKibben, Ms. Conley and Ms. Jasti-Currie hosted a Zoom Forum on June 3rd, for students to discuss the events surrounding the tragic death of George Floyd and current protests in our country. Three break-out rooms covered historical context, ways to speak up, and student activism. A link to the presentation will be up on the NB website soon.

Students in the forum expressed concern for family members and friends, fear of violence during protests, looting, and damage to local establishments. There was conversation around student experiences with racism and how to respond to racism. Strategies were shared for black students who want to be activists and white students who want to be helpful allies and spread awareness. Ms. Jarosi reminded students, “You always have a voice.” One student so poignantly said, “We have to stand up for each other because all we have is each other.”

Here are some resources to support your conversations at home:

- National Museum of African American History & Culture [Talking About Race](#)
- National Geographic [Talking to Kids About Race](#)
- NASP [Understanding Race and Privilege](#)
- Penn Graduate School of Education [Talking to children after racial incidents](#)
- [How to talk to your children about protests and racism](#)
- EmbraceRace.org [book list](#)

These are some free and low cost support groups, parenting classes and online resources in the community:

**Parent Academy How-To’s:** New topics each week to support technology use at home This week: [How to Sign into a Chromebook](#)

**JSSA Free Seminars:**

- **Stress Management Seminar - Beyond Sleep, Diet & Exercise-** Life is stressful at the best of times. This one hour webinar will offer attendees an in-depth look into the factors that impact the levels of stress in our lives. Attendees will also be given a wide range of tools and strategies designed to help people minimize and effectively manage it. June 8 @ 10:00 a.m.; June 10 @ 5:00 p.m. Free. [Register here.](#)

- **Support Group for Unemployed Adults During COVID-19-** Have you found yourself unemployed during the COVID-19 pandemic? Join our adult support group for those unemployed during the crisis. We will share resources, emotional support and learn problem solving techniques for issues related to unemployment. We will also talk about how to create structure in your day and adopt positive self-care habits. Resources for additional counseling will be discussed as well. Begins Monday, June 1 from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. Free. [Register here.](#)
- **Learning to be Social During Social Distancing for Teens and Young Adults-** A social support group to help teens and young adults learn new ways to increase socialization during social distancing. The group will go over (and in some cases participate in) different games, activities, and applications available to help in maintaining social interaction with family and friends during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meets every Tuesday. **For ages 13-17:** Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. **Ages 18+:** Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m. **Cost:** FREE [Register.](#)
- **Social Support Group for Kids Aged 10-12** -Join us for a new support group for kids ages 10-12 to talk about coping skills for strong feelings like anger, sadness, and boredom. Kids will play games and learn healthy coping strategies and social skills. Pajamas are welcome. Every Thursday from 4:00-4:30pm. Free. [Register here.](#)

**The Chesapeake Center** introduces new Summer Social Connections for middle and high school students. Groups are virtual and begin June 29th. These groups will help to build and strengthen social skills. [Middle School Info.](#) [High School Info.](#)

**Parent Child Journey** has a new **FREE Parent Support Group** - Mondays at 1:00pm. If you are feeling stressed and uncertain, you are not alone. Dr. Dan will facilitate parent-to-parent online group discussion starting May 4th. [Register here to join.](#)

The Treatment and Learning Centers NEW virtual therapy groups:

- [Emotional First-Aid for Healthcare Providers on the Frontline](#), join a clinical psychologist, specialized in traumatic stress, to learn effective coping strategies to bandage your emotional wounds and prevent them from becoming lifelong scars. Wednesdays, 4/29-6/17, from 4:00-5:00pm, FREE!

[Washington Behavioral Medicine Associates](#) has FREE and reduced services. Register at [hello@wbma.cc](mailto:hello@wbma.cc).

- 'Tween' Mindfulness with Art Support Group - ages 11-13, Mondays 4:00-4:45pm
- Teen Talk Space Support Group - ages 14-18, Tuesdays 2:00-2:45pm
- College Student Mindfulness Support Group, Fridays 2:00-2:45pm
- Parent Talk Support Group - Thursdays 9:00-9:45am

## MEDIA CENTER INFORMATION

In light of the deaths of George Floyd, Breona Taylor, & more, MCPS School Library Media Programs has created an Anti-Racism collection of resources that can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/simpantiracism> . \*Use your Outlook login to access. It is a great collection of articles, websites and books that address racism & were curated to help support our school community and address the current events happening in our nations.

### IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE

Please contact MaryBeth Turska at [MaryBeth\\_Turska@mcpsmd.org](mailto:MaryBeth_Turska@mcpsmd.org) if your 8<sup>th</sup> grade student will NOT attend Walter Johnson High School next year (Magnet program, private school, moving to another state or country) so that she knows not to send their records to WJ.

### GRADING AND REPORTING

MCPS sent out correspondence to families about selecting a grade for high school credit-bearing classes. This may have caused some confusion for families.

1. The need to select a grade option applies to **Semester 2 High School Credit Classes**. No Action needed for Full Year Classes (for example Spanish or French 1A).
2. Default grade is a **grade** in traditional system, **if it improves the students' overall GPA—otherwise a “P,” (pass) is assigned by central office.**
3. Most students/parents at North Bethesda **do not need to take action.**
4. Between **June 4, 2020 and June 12, 2020**, students can submit their choices for how to show Semester 2 grades on the report card.

The [help guide](#) may be useful to have ready to send back to families who have questions.

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Maryland's Largest School District

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
*Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The **Grading Options Tool** was developed to allow students to submit their preferences and to help them choose the best possible option for each course. Grade choice is only available for Semester 2 courses, not full-year courses or non-credit bearing courses. Please read this important message for more information on the process for selecting grading preferences: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/publicinfo/community/school-year-2019-2020/grading-reporting-update-20200604.html>

For the 4th Marking Period (MP4), students will earn marks of Pass (P) or Incomplete (I) instead of letter grades for each of their credit-bearing courses. Students, with the support of their parents/guardians, may choose to have the final Semester 2 grade shown as either a letter (ex. A, B, C, D, E) or as Pass/Incomplete (P/I). The **Grading Options Tool** was developed to allow students to submit their preferences and to help them choose the best possible option for each course. Grade choice is only available for Semester 2 courses, not full-year courses or non-credit bearing courses.

### **Submit Your Grading Choices (Instructions for Students)**

To submit your grade display choices for Semester 2,

1. Visit: <https://bit.ly/mcpsmd-grade-display-preference>
2. Use your MCPS Google username (ex., [student\\_id@mcpsmd.net](mailto:student_id@mcpsmd.net)) and your password to log in.
3. Select your choices. Use the Grade Calculator to help you pick the best possible option for each course. Click **Submit** when you are done.
4. After you submit your choices, an email confirmation will be sent to your MCPS Google account for your records.

### **Important Information**

5. Timeline → Between **June 4, 2020 and June 12, 2020**, students can submit their choices for how to show Semester 2 grades on the report card.
6. Daily Limits → Students can update their preferences multiple times throughout the window, but are limited to three attempts/submissions per day.
7. Course List → The tool will only show credit-bearing courses for students.
8. Default Choice → The default report card display choice will be “Letter” as long as the letter grade improves the overall GPA. Otherwise, “P” will be assigned.

If you have questions about the tool or need help, please refer to the [help guide](#).

Sincerely,

Montgomery County Public Schools

## MCPS INFORMATION

MCPS recommends that staff and parents check the MCPS Coronavirus website (see below) for up to date information. In order to obtain accurate and up to date information, if you have questions that are not answered on the website, MCPS is asking you to:

Call the ASK MCPS telephone center at 301-309-MCPS (6277)

Send an email to [ASKMCPS@mcpsmd.org](mailto:ASKMCPS@mcpsmd.org)

The staff are trained to answer your questions and have the accurate and up to date responses to your questions.

**MCPS Coronavirus Website** Montgomery County Public Schools is committed to the health and safety of our students and is working with DHHS and other county agencies to monitor the situation and develop a coordinated and comprehensive public health plan. MCPS will be prepared to implement public health recommendations as required. Updated information will be shared with the community and posted on this webpage as it becomes available. <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/coronavirus/> k this website daily as it has all MCPS communication about the situation.

## TECH SUPPORT

MCPS Community Tech Support Help – For the technical needs of any student or parent during remote learning. **Published number - 240-740-7022.** This number will be published on the COVID-19 Website.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me should you or your family need anything. Stay healthy and safe and have a good week!

Warmly,

[AnneMarie Kestner Smith, Ed.D.](#)

Principal North Bethesda Middle School

[North Bethesda Middle School Website](#)

Follow me on Twitter [@NBMSPrincipal](#)