



Tilden Middle School

6300 Tilden Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Main Office: (240) 740-6700
Fax: (301) 230-7622
Counseling Office: (240) 740-6710
Counseling Fax: (301) 230-2292

August 4 , 2022

Dear Tilden Families,

I certainly hope this letter finds you and your family in good health and enjoying the remaining days of summer. Being appointed as principal at Tilden Middle School (TMS) is a dream come true for me. I am fortunate to be a part of the Timberwolf community that strives to foster a warm, safe, and welcoming environment for all. I look forward to working together to build upon the legacy of excellence that exists at TMS! The school's leadership team has worked collaboratively this summer to plan for the safe return of our students, staff, and community. On behalf of the staff and faculty, I am excited to welcome all of our students and families back for the 2022-2023 school year!

To begin, I am always excited to welcome the new members of our Tilden community. Let's begin with the dedicated and hardworking administrative team. I am excited to have **Stephen Katzel**, 6th grade administrator and the new assistant principal along with **Caroline Olán**, 8th grade administrator and the new assistant school administrator join **Aisha Rooke**, 7th grade administrator and assistant principal to complete the administrative team at TMS! Mr. Katzel was an ASA at Tilden last year and has served at Robert Frost MS for four years in a variety of leadership roles. Last year, Ms. Olán led the World Languages and Arts department as a content specialist and was at Gaithersburg MS for six years in numerous roles including leadership roles.

I am pleased to welcome the following new, very talented staff members to the Tilden family.

- Cindy Ha – Main Office Secretary
- Petros Lee – English Teacher
- Diana Barrera – Building Service Worker
- Jorinna Tran – Counseling
- Jackie McKibben – Resource, Counseling
- Darryl McDuffie – Parent Pupil Worker
- Talia Mason – World Language Teacher
- Eva Wolny Lifshitz – ESOL/HBS Teacher

In my stance as a listening leader committed to learning about TMS and its community, I held Principal's Meet and Greet on four different occasions, both in-person and via zoom, inside and outside the school building. The warm welcome that everyone has extended to me has touched my heart. Visibility in the community both inside and outside Tilden MS will be a non-negotiable priority for me. Hence, I will be hosting community conversations once every

marking period throughout the school year in addition to the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) general meetings. I will work with my team to ensure that the information about these events is communicated to families in a timely manner. I will continue to send you important school information and updates through the bi-monthly community newsletter. All of the links, along with the newsletter, will also be posted on our [school website](#).

Part of what makes Tilden such a great place for our students is the active, engaged parents who provide support to our school. I am so pleased to work in partnership with our PTSA and am very excited that **Julie Merberg** will continue to serve as Tilden's PTSA president for the school year. We rely on your talents, your time, and your financial support, as part of the fabric that makes Tilden successful. We have a very active PTSA and Volunteers Group who are invested in the success of our students and staff. My priority this year is to collaborate with my staff and PTSA to create more opportunities for school and community events. We need your support! I am making a special appeal for all of our parents to **JOIN** the PTSA and volunteer your time and talents at Tilden. Please follow [this link](#) to join the PTSA for the 2022-2023 school year.

Please review some important information to help you and your student prepare for the weeks ahead.

- **Important dates:**
 - 8/15/22 New Student Mini Orientation (9:00 am and 1:00 pm)
 - 8/25/22 6th - 8th Grade Orientations, 8:15 am - 12:00 pm
 - 8/25/22 PTSA Back-to-School Picnic, at 5:30 pm (All are welcome!)
 - 8/29/22 First Day of School (1st period begins at 8:15 am)
 - 9/1/21 In-Person and Virtual Back-to-School Night, at 6:00 pm
- **Student Schedules:** Counselors have been working diligently to finalize schedules for the first day of school. Students will be able to view their schedule for the 2022-23 school year on **Thursday, August 25, 2022**.
- **Student Orientation:** This year, all three grade levels will be invited to join us for School Orientation on **Thursday, August 25, 2022**. Students will arrive at 8:15 am and be dismissed at 12:00 pm. Students do NOT need to bring anything to the orientation. Transportation will be provided for all students. School bus schedules for orientation will follow a normal morning pick-up schedule and will return students home on a three-hour early dismissal schedule. [MCPS Transportation website](#)
- **Chromebooks:** Students at Tilden have 1 on 1 access to a chromebook. All incoming 7th and 8th grade students should have a device and charger. The rising 6th graders and students new to Tilden will receive their chromebook on the first day of school when they will be provided with their pickup time. Students are responsible for the proper use and maintenance of the assigned chromebook throughout their middle school career at TMS.
- **Cell Phones and headphones** - Cell phones and headphones (airpods) are expected to be off and put away during the school day (from the beginning of the first period until dismissal). Cell phones and headphones (airpods) are not allowed during lunch.

Students are strongly encouraged to keep their phones in their lockers during the school day. Tilden MS is not responsible for any lost or stolen cell phones and/or headphones (airpods). The leadership team at Tilden will be reviewing the new MCPS guidelines about cell phone and headphones when we meet this month. I will share with all stakeholders as soon as we have a final decision.

- **Daily Protocols:** Students will be attending school every week, all five days, seven periods per day. The school bus schedule is posted on our website on the Back-to-School Information Page under Quick Links. School hours are 8:15 am - 3:00 pm. Students will have access to their lockers during the first week of school. We will show them how to use them. Student schedules will be available through Synergy. Synergy tutorials are also available on our website. Parents will be able to enter updates into Synergy. We will post videos explaining student processes and protocols on our website shortly. Materials students will need every day:
 - Charged Chromebook
 - Binder
 - Pen and paper
 - Reusable water bottle
 - PE uniform: <https://tildenspiritwear2022.itemorder.com/shop/home/> (the link closes on 9/4)
- **Back-to-School Night:** This year, we will provide parents the opportunity to join us in-person for Back-to-School Night on **Thursday, September 1**. Teacher videos and information will be posted on our school website. In keeping with the CDC and state guidelines for safety regarding the pandemic, safety measures will be in place to ensure everyone's safety. Parking and traffic is a huge concern and we are working closely with the PTSA and community partners to ensure safety for all. As specifics get finalized, I will share additional information with you in a timely manner.

I thank you in advance for your continued support of Tilden Middle School. We look forward to welcoming our families back to school and we look forward to partnering with you for a very successful 2022-23 school year.

Sincerely,

Sapna Hopkins
Principal
@PrincipalTilden

SH:kp