

BCMS News You Can Use

September 30





Ballenger Creek Middle School

 Facebook

 @FCPS_BCMS

 5525 Ballenger Creek Pike, Fre...

 240-236-5700

 education.fcps.org/bcms/home



Message from the Administrative Team

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope that the first month of school started off well for you and your students. While we've had a few challenges (including adjusting to our new security vestibule and our new dismissal procedures), things have overall started out very positively thanks to you, your students, and our school staff. The highlight of the year (of course) has been getting to know your students, who I meet and interact with daily through both an educator and a parent lens. While working in middle schools for more than 20 years could qualify me as a bit of an expert when it comes to the 11-14 year-old age group, the

experience my wife Lynne and I have had navigating our two oldest (of three) children through middle school has proven to be at least as valuable.

I don't know about you, but my wife and I have found parenting middle schoolers to be exhilarating, frustrating, rewarding, hilarious, and humbling--sometimes in the same day or even the same hour! If your children are like our children, you often get the less-than-polished version of them at home. This is of course completely natural and normal--away from peers, adolescents feel more comfortable being vulnerable with you, those who love them most. For a variety of reasons, children tend to be the best versions of themselves when they're with us at school--and it shows what a great job you've done equipping them to be successful in the real world.

As you are working to prepare them for the future, have you noticed that your students resist your advice but listen to advice similar (or maybe even identical) to yours when it's given by another respected adult--maybe a coach, family friend, or teacher? This is pretty typical too, but that doesn't mean it isn't frustrating to us as parents. This reality makes it even more important for us to partner together as a home-school team. If you're seeing your student struggling academically, socially, or personally, please consider reaching out to us to help. We're in this together with you--and you and your children are absolutely worth our time. We see your child's tremendous potential and know that together we can collaborate to ensure that he or she is on the path leading to success. Feel free to contact us at any time and we will be more than happy to work with you to determine the right plan to help your child.

Take care and talk with you soon,

Jay Schill, Principal

Parent Teacher Conferences

We will hold Parent Teacher Conferences October 23- 25. Please look for more information about scheduling conference slots later this week via a Find Out First announcement. If you need an interpreter or a translator to attend your conferences please contact Lotoya Gee by this Wednesday October 2, 2019. She can be reached at lotoya.gee@fcps.org or via 240-236-5700

Calendar Reminders

Tues, Oct 8 ---2 Hour Early Dismissal for Students
Wed. Oct.9 ----Schools Closed
Wed. Oct. 16 -School Picture Day
Wed. Oct.23 --Parent Teacher Conferences, school starts 4 hours late
Thu. Oct.24 ---Parent Teacher Conferences, school starts 4 hours late
Fri. Oct.25 -----Parent Teacher Conferences, school dismisses 3.5 hours early
Tues. Oct.29 -Big Smiles Mobile Dentist visits BCMS
Thu. Nov.7 ----End of Term 1
Fri. Nov. 8 -----School Closed for Students

Families needing a sign language interpreter should contact Mrs. Gee at 240-236-5710 at least 10 days prior to the event.

Welcome to the BCMS Counseling Office

8th grade counselor – Rebecca Reese

rebecca.reese@fcps.org

240-236-5712

7th grade counselor – Johnny Webber

johnny.webber@fcps.org

240-236-5713

6th grade counselor – David Ledyard

david.ledyard@fcps.org

240-236-5711

Registrar – Lotoya Gee

lotoya.gee@fcps.org

240-236-5710

Please reach out to your grade level counselor with any questions or concerns regarding your student.

KLU

Here at BCMS, we offer an awesome group called Kids Like Us or KLU. We are now enrolling new participants in our 6th, 7th, and 8th grade groups, so we wanted to make sure everyone knows about it. Participation is a choice and requires permission from a parent or guardian.

- KLU is an award winning program for students who have someone close to them who is using alcohol or drugs in a harmful way, has the disease of addiction, or is in treatment or recovery.
- In order to respect family privacy, we do not need to know who the loved one is or what the situation is for a student to participate.
- KLU participation is private and confidential. That means that other students and staff are not told who is in KLU.
- KLU is engaging, positive, and fun. KLU helps kids do their best in school, make healthy choices, and prevent alcohol and drug problems.

If you would like more information, or to enroll a student, please contact your child's grade level counselor or the KLU program director, Julie Wood Merchant, at 301-600-3281.

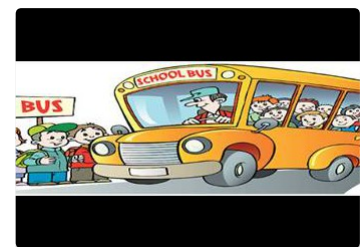
IB Program

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Urbana High School will be holding an informational meeting on October 2nd between 6:00 and 7:30 PM at the Urbana High School auditorium. All interested families are invited to attend to find out more.

Late Bus? Use the link below

Late Bus?

Did you know that FCPS has a transportation delay board. They can communicate with the public and schools when a bus is running 10 minutes or more late. The information may be accessed on the FCPS website at this link: <https://apps.fcps.org/transdelay/>



Attendance

Good attendance leads to success and boosts graduation. Our school goal is 96%.

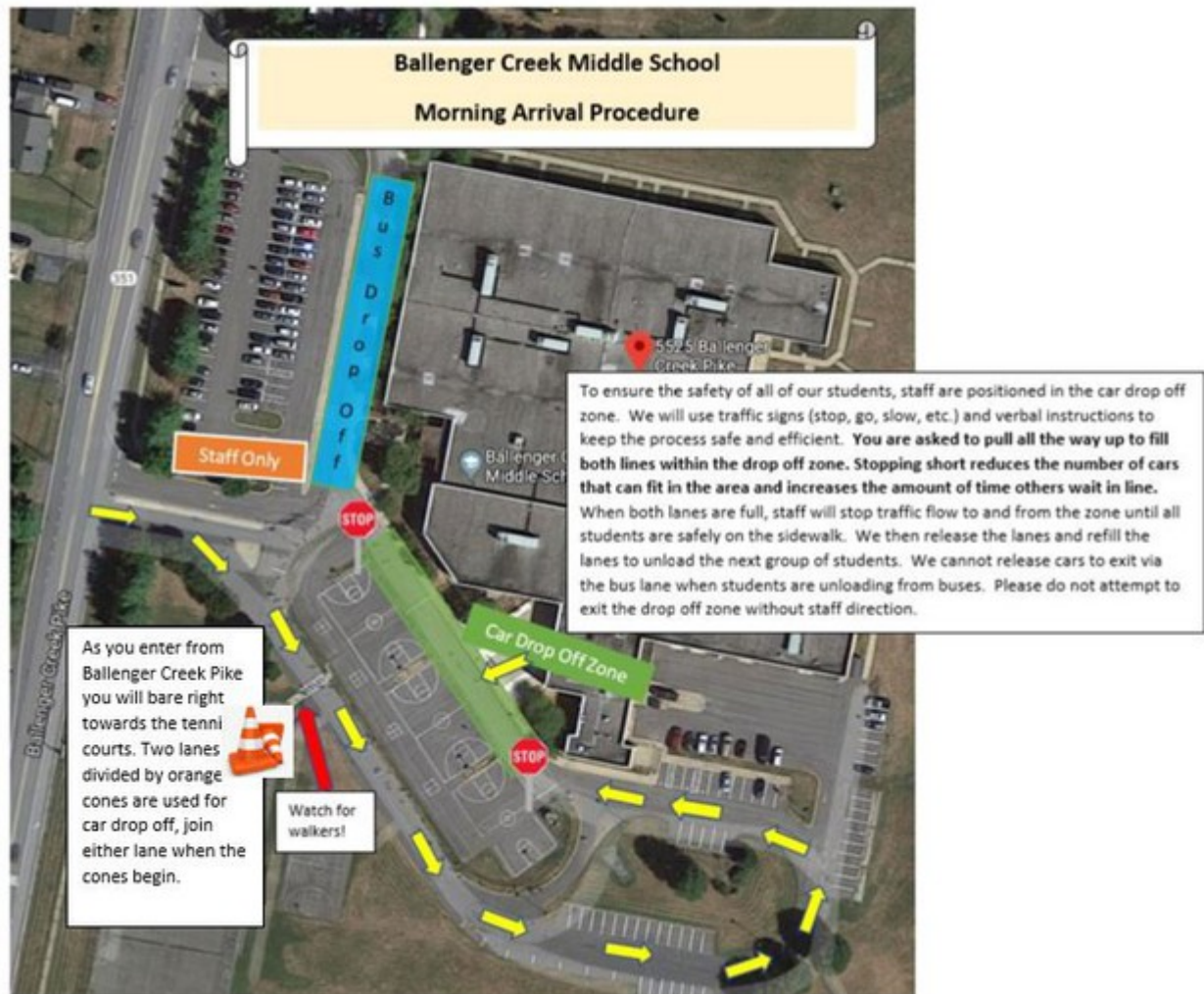
Please remember to alert the front office (BallengerCreek.MS@fcps.org) if your child is sick and to send a letter when the child returns. **Our goal is to have all students in school and on time.**

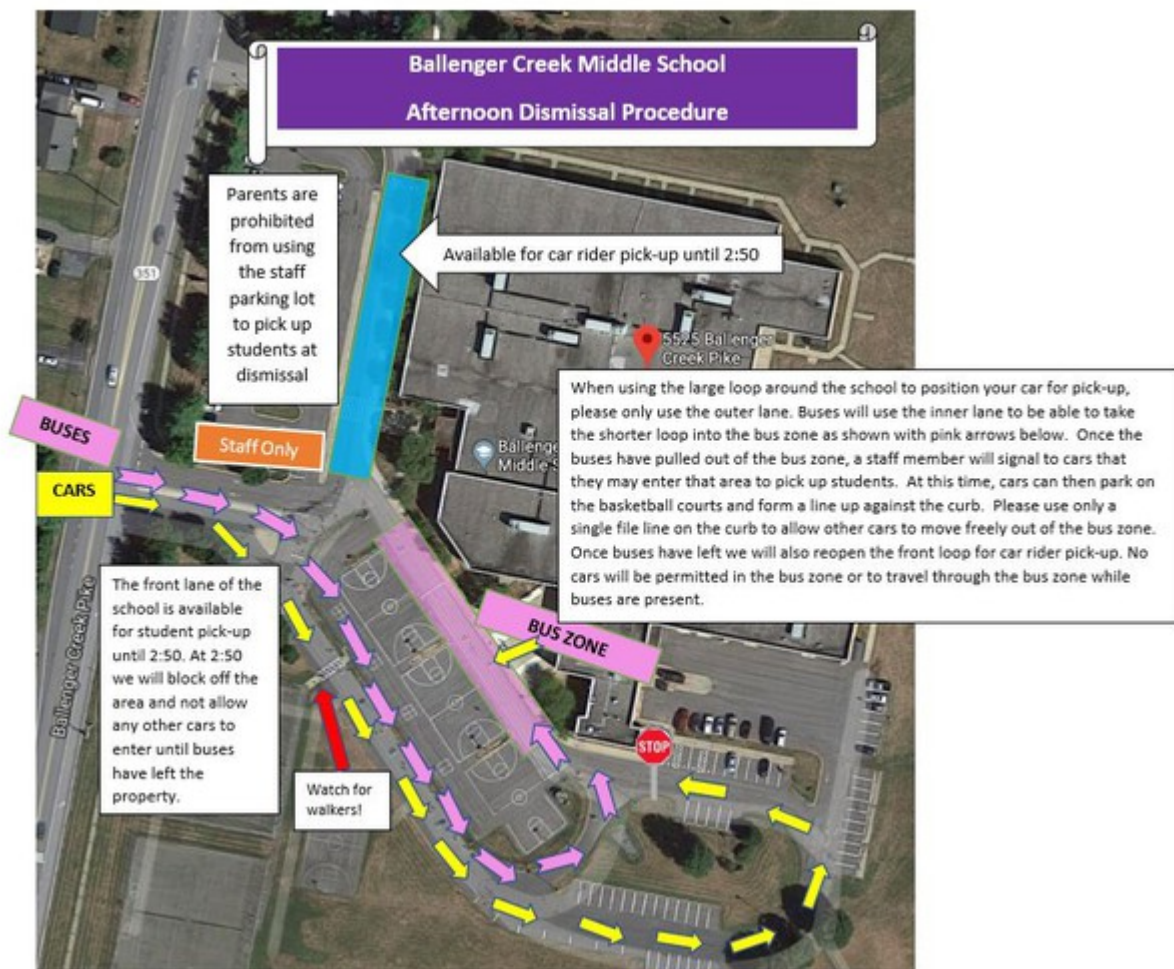
Attendance Totals for September 3- 27

Grade 6 96.62%

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Our morning arrival procedures will remain the same as last year but our afternoon procedures have changed. This year we will dismiss all students at 3:00 p.m. Please access the link below to view details and maps of the morning and afternoon procedures.





Grades- Schoology and HAC

Schoology/HAC

Ballenger Creek Middle encourages parents to please check daily grades only on Schoology. The Home Access Center (HAC) updates overnight, so in the afternoon there may be different grades on each system. Please utilize HAC for midterm and term grades only.

Below you will find instructions on how to create, log into, and use your Schoology account. Please note that each child has a unique parent access code provided on your Parent Access Letter (PAL) letter.

Sign Up as a Parent- <http://bit.ly/signupparent>

REGISTRASE COMO PADRES- <http://bit.ly/registrasepadres>

Don't forget to download the Schoology App on your mobile device.

Please also note that the Schoology Parent Access Code is also located on the registration tab within the Home Access Center (HAC).

Still having difficulty accessing HAC? Please contact our counseling office at 240-236-5710 for additional help.

Model United Nations Club

Mr. Schaller and Mrs. Montgomery would like to welcome all students who are interested in global politics and real-world issues. In Model UN club, students will be practicing public speaking and debate, while looking at the cultures of many different countries. Any interested students can stop by Mr. Schaller's and Mrs. Montgomery's room (Room 111 and 112) for a permission slip, as the club meets after-school on Tuesdays.

Community Liaison Corner

Hello Families!

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year. My name is Ms. Moss and I am the Community Liaison for BCMS. As we start the year, please save the date of November 12th for our BCMS Diversity Night. Plan to join us for a fun evening exploring the world without leaving Frederick. Don't miss the opportunity to learn about the different cultures that make us special.

If you are willing to host a table, sharing your culture or heritage, please complete the lower part of the flyer in this newsletter and return it to school or email it in by October 11, 2019. Feel free to call with any questions.

Also, please note the meal benefits from last school year expire on **October 16th**. If you have not filed a free and reduced meal form for this school year or received a letter from the state, your student(s) will be full price after this date. If you need any assistance with completing this form, please contact me.

Ms. Moss

Community Liaison

240-236-5773

Dottie.moss@fcps.org

Volunteers & Visitors

We welcome parent volunteers to our school! If you are interested in volunteering at BCMS please contact our Community Liaison, Dottie Moss at dottie.moss@fcps.org

According to State Law, a visitor must first report to the school office to get a visitor's pass. A form of identification is required to be scanned during your first visit at our school. All visitors during the school day must carry a visitor's pass. Students will not be permitted to have visitors during the school day except with the written authorization of an administrator. Visitors who fail to report to the office will be considered trespassers and will be reported to a Sheriff's Deputy.

Lunch & Food Deliveries

If you would like to have lunch with your student, please contact us 24 hours in advance so that we can accommodate your request. You may not share food with children who are not your own.

Food Deliveries

Students are prohibited from ordering food for delivery to the school. This includes contacting restaurants or using meal delivery apps or services.

Diversity Night

BCMS invites you to share your culture and traditions at our

Diversity Night

November 12, 2019

6:00pm to 7:30pm



Join our BCMS families, staff and community associations as we share our countries/cultures & traditions through displays, clothing, crafts, food and more. Don't miss the opportunity to learn about the different cultures that make us special! Plan to join us for a fun evening exploring the world without leaving Frederick!

If you are willing to host a table, please complete the information below and return to school by October 11, 2019.

Name_____Country/Culture_____

Email_____Phone_____

___Host a table display with:

___Display clothing/items of our culture

___Demonstrate an art, dance or craft

___Food sample(s) of country Please Note-Ingredients must be displayed

___Other_____

Ballenger Creek Middle School 1:1 General Information

Ballenger Creek Middle School is a 1:1 school. This means each student will be issued a chromebook for school and home use, upon completion of the 1:1 form and payment of the tech fee.

Each student will receive

- 1 Chromebook
- 1 Chromebook case
- 1 Charger



Students must submit the 1:1 form before they will receive a chromebook.

This year the 1:1 form is digital and will be submitted online. The form may be accessed at <https://frederickcounty.schoolcashonline.com/>

Tech fee for the year \$60.00

- Fee will cover first repair free of charge
- 2nd repair will cost \$30.00, and 3rd repair is \$60.00

If your family is experiencing a financial hardship please contact dottie.moss@fcps.org.

Students may choose to bring their own device.

Meet Mr. Dickison

This is my third year teaching English to speakers of other languages, and second year here at BCMS. I also taught English learners at Aurora Central High School, near Denver, Colorado. I love my job because I get to welcome new students to our school and get them practicing a new language using pictures, games, and conversations. I also help newcomers adjust to their new schedules as well as access content in their mainstream classes by providing translation and other supports. I work with many teachers building-wide to provide accommodations that ensure all English learners receive an equitable and meaningful education, in both instruction and assessment.

6th Grade News

The 6th grade team has been working to help our new 6th grade students acclimate to middle school! While the transition in this first month has not always been smooth, we have appreciated seeing our students help each other through words of encouragement and acts of service, including helping each other to find classes, picking up dropped materials, and working together to make our hallways safe during transitions between classes.

We would greatly appreciate donations of tissues boxes, especially as we enter the cold and flu season. Tissue boxes can be dropped off to the front office and will be shared among the 6th grade classrooms.

7th Grade Updates

The 7th Grade team would like to welcome in-coming students and parents. We would also like to welcome Mr. Collins, Mr. Velnoskey, Ms. Grackin and Mr. Katz who are joining us this year to the 7th grade team. We look forward to communicating with parents and having a great school year.

8th Grade Updates

Lifeskills:

Hello! My name is Mrs. Highfill and I am the 7th and 8th grade Life Skills teacher. This is my 3rd year at BCMS and I am looking forward to a wonderful year! Please remember that this course has a lab fee of \$16 and needs to be paid online as soon as possible. Also, if your student has not turned in their syllabus permission slip, please send those in. If you are unsure whether they have turned in the permission slip, please check their grade under the "syllabus" column. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me by email for any questions or concerns!

Thank you,

Mrs. Highfill

History Classes:

The students are working on the 13 colonies. Next week they will be learning the ways the colonists revolted. The classes will also be preparing for the benchmark

Science Classes:

Students have been learning how evidence demonstrates connections between organisms of the past and present. They have examined a variety of fossil evidence. Next week, they will take a county benchmark. Students have been provided a study guide in order to help them review.

Math classes:

Students have been learning about scientific notation and exponents. They will start their unit assessment on Friday (9/27/19).

ELA classes:

Students have been reading "Dirk the Protector" in merit classes. They will be finishing a review of narrative writing skills, reviewing the grading rubric for expectations, writing a narrative for "Dirk the Protector"

Honor classes: They will be finishing a review of narrative writing skills, reviewing the grading rubric for expectations, writing a narrative for " Monkey paw"

Spanish Classes:

Sp. 1: practicing numbers and learning to tell time.

Sp. 2: practice and learn direct and indirect object pronouns

News from Electives

The World is a Stage

General Elective Information: The electives team would like remind students to bring their Chromebook to elective classes. Please make sure your Chromebooks are charged as we are not allowing students to charge in our classes before lunch. Use of video games, streaming music and or videos, and listening to music in class is prohibited. The proper disciplinary steps will be taken if violated.

Music

Our first concert is coming to the BCMS stage very soon. In fact, mark you calendars for November 6th at 6:30 pm for our Veteran's Day concert. We would like show thanks to the veteran's and their families through music and a special presentation. If you would like to send in a picture for the presentation, please send name, years of service, last rank and branch with the picture to Mrs. Schmidt at windy.schmidt@fcps.org.

Language Arts News

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! The language arts department is looking forward to working with all of you. We have extremely high expectations for our BCMS students and expect that he/she will do his/her best in language arts class. Please refer to your student's language arts department letter for further information about the course. It reviews classroom expectations, supply needs, homework policy, makeup work policy, grading policy, and much more.

We would also like to welcome our new language arts teachers to BCMS: Andrew Velnoskey (7th) and Melvin Worthington (8th)!

Mr. Velnoskey writes:

I am excited to join the Ballenger Creek Middle School team and to be working with Ms. Grackin in 7th-grade language arts. I am a graduate of Walkersville High school and I have spent the last five years teaching at St. John Regional Catholic School. This year, I am excited to work with students to expand their reading and writing skills. Right now, we are working on understanding the various components of literature. We are working up to writing a fictional narrative independently. I'm looking forward to a great year!

-Andrew Velnoskey

Katie Zimmerman

BCMS Literacy Specialist

Language Arts Department Chair

(240) 236-5766

Katie.Zimmerman@fcps.org

Math News

The national middle school mathematics competition that builds problem solving skills and fosters achievement through four levels of fun, in-person "bee" style contests will be starting once again at BCMS. Meetings will be on Wednesdays from 3:07-4:15 pm. Students should see their math teacher for permission slips which should be turned in by October 1st. Contact Mr. Wolfe (christian.wolfe@fcps.org) for additional information.

7th Grade common core students will be finishing up with Unit 1 Rational Number Operations next week and begin working on unit 2 which involves solving problems by applying all operations of rational numbers.

7th Grade accelerated students finished up with Unit 1 this week and will begin unit 2 on Squares, Cubes & the Pythagorean Theorem.

Be sure to check Schoology on a regular basis and use posted class notes as a resource for homework and preparation for assessments.

Science Department News

Students learn science by acquiring knowledge and constructing explanations of natural phenomena. Then they test those explanations and communicate their findings both in oral and written forms.

Through this process, students develop a deep understanding of science that combines knowledge and facts with reasoning and critical thinking.

At every grade in middle school, students will complete four units of scientific study. For a detailed description of the entire middle school science curriculum, visit the FCPS Secondary Science site: http://education.fcps.org/sciencesec/ec_middle. Below are classroom updates from all three grade levels.

Grade 6

Sixth grade students are conducting a series of investigations to model molecular motion and particle positioning in solids, liquids, and gases. Additionally, they are examining how adding or removing thermal energy impacts these properties. For a full description of this NGSS standard go to:

https://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/default/files/evidence_statement/black_white/MS-PS1-4%20Evidence%20Statements%20June%202015%20asterisks.pdf

Grade 7

Seventh grade students are studying Chemistry and Matter. Explorations in this unit begin with students developing models to describe the atomic composition of simple molecules and extended structures. For a full description of this NGSS standard go to:

https://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/default/files/evidence_statement/black_white/MS-PS1-1%20Evidence%20Statements%20June%202015%20asterisks.pdf

Grade 8

Eighth grade students started the Biotic Diversity unit with the key question: How can evidence demonstrate connections between organisms of the past and present? Students are applying scientific ideas to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossil organisms to infer evolutionary relationships. For a full description of this NGSS standard go to:

https://www.nextgenscience.org/sites/default/files/evidence_statement/black_white/MS-LS4-2%20Evidence%20Statements%20June%202015%20asterisks.pdf

Social Studies News

The Social Studies Department has enjoyed getting to know your children over the last month and we are looking forward to working with each of them this school year! All grade levels will begin their first county benchmark assessment DBQ (document based question) in the coming weeks. These assessments are not recorded in the grade book, but serve as a pre-assessment of their historical analysis and writing skills, which we will develop throughout the school year. If you have any questions please contact your child's teacher.

8th grade is currently studying Early British Actions and the Boston Massacre. Students will begin their first county benchmark in October.

7th grade is currently completing the first county benchmark, which is looking at the Fall of Rome's impact on European society.

6th grade is currently teaching the Rise of Civilizations. Students are studying geography and how it impacted the development of early civilizations. Students will begin their first county benchmark next week.

Reflections Program

REFLECTIONS NATIONAL PTA ARTS AWARD PROGRAM CHAIR AND MEMBER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED


The Reflections Program is a National PTA arts awards program where students in grades Pre-K through 12th create and submit original material around a theme in any of 6 categories: dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography and visual arts. This year's theme is "Look Within."

The BCMS PTSA is looking for someone to be the program Chair and 3-4 member volunteers in order to bring this program to Ballenger Creek this year. Let's encourage and nourish all our young Artists!

Please contact Elaine Enoch at elainejyun@yahoo.com if you're interested, but please hurry. The first meeting was on Monday, September 23, 2019. Please see the Local Leaders Guide below for more information.



Reflections 19-20-local-leaders-guide (1).pdf

 [Download](#)
368.3 KB