

BCMS News You Can Use

December 2019




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

Hi everyone.

I hope you and your families are well. If your family is like mine, you're just coming back to reality after Thanksgiving break and you can't believe how close winter break is--only 14 more school days after today! It will be an intense three weeks for many reasons, a few of which I mention here:

- There is a lot of student learning that needs to take place between now and December 20th, which is mid-term (and the homework that comes with that learning).

- As families, we are also now in the thick of winter sports practices and other activities in which our students are involved (dance, instrument practice, scouts, and faith groups are a few that come to mind).
- As parents, we're most likely preparing for the impending winter break and upcoming holiday, which may involve travel and gift-giving...and stress.
- As people--adults or children--any personal losses--for instance, the death of loved ones (recent or not so recent) or parental separations--can create increased emotions this time of year.

My advice to us all is to be patient with our students and with the adults in our lives and to keep communication lines open. We are certainly here to help you and your children any way that we can. If you think we can assist, please feel free to reach out to your student's grade level counselor, teachers, or our administrative team.

As always, I wish you and your families the very best.

Sincerely,
Jay Schill
Principal

Calendar Reminders

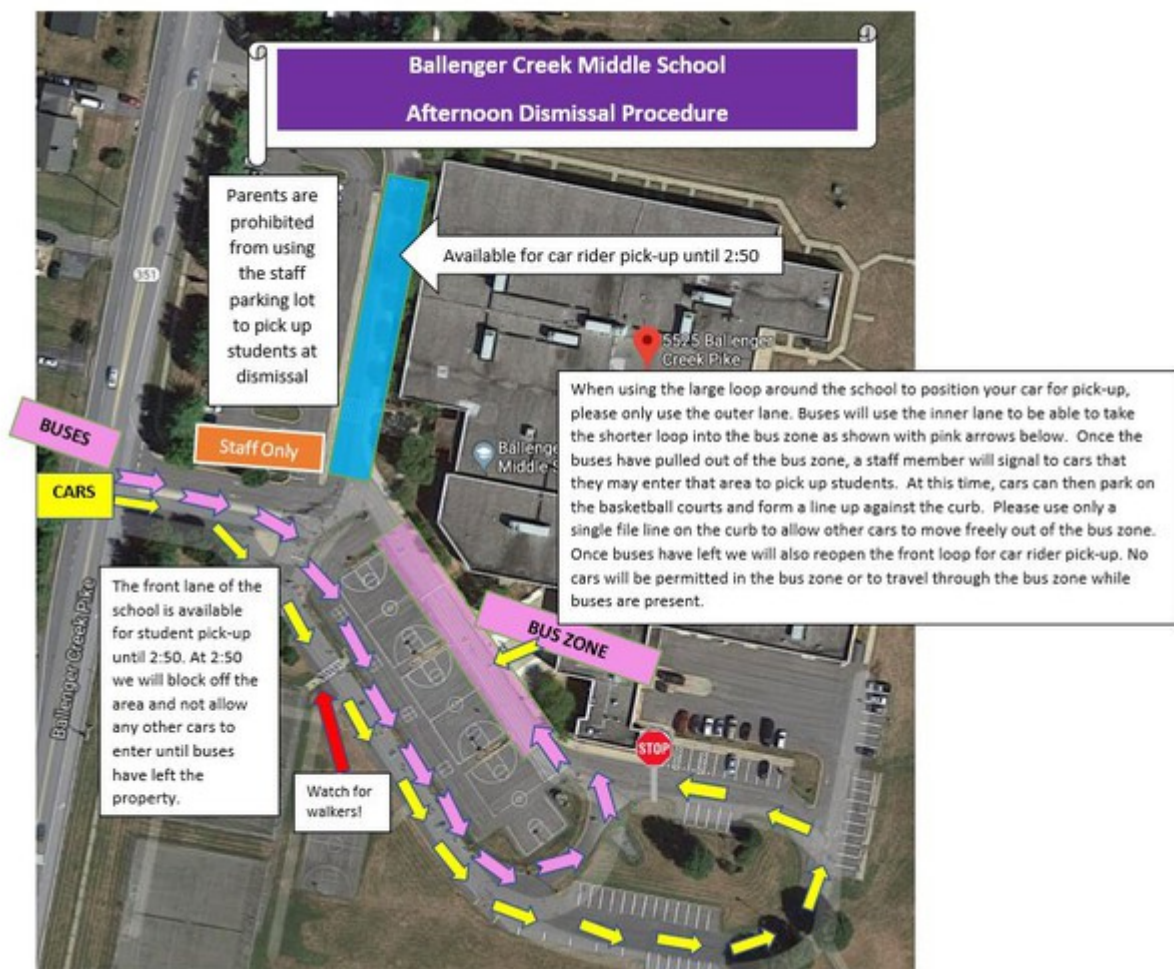
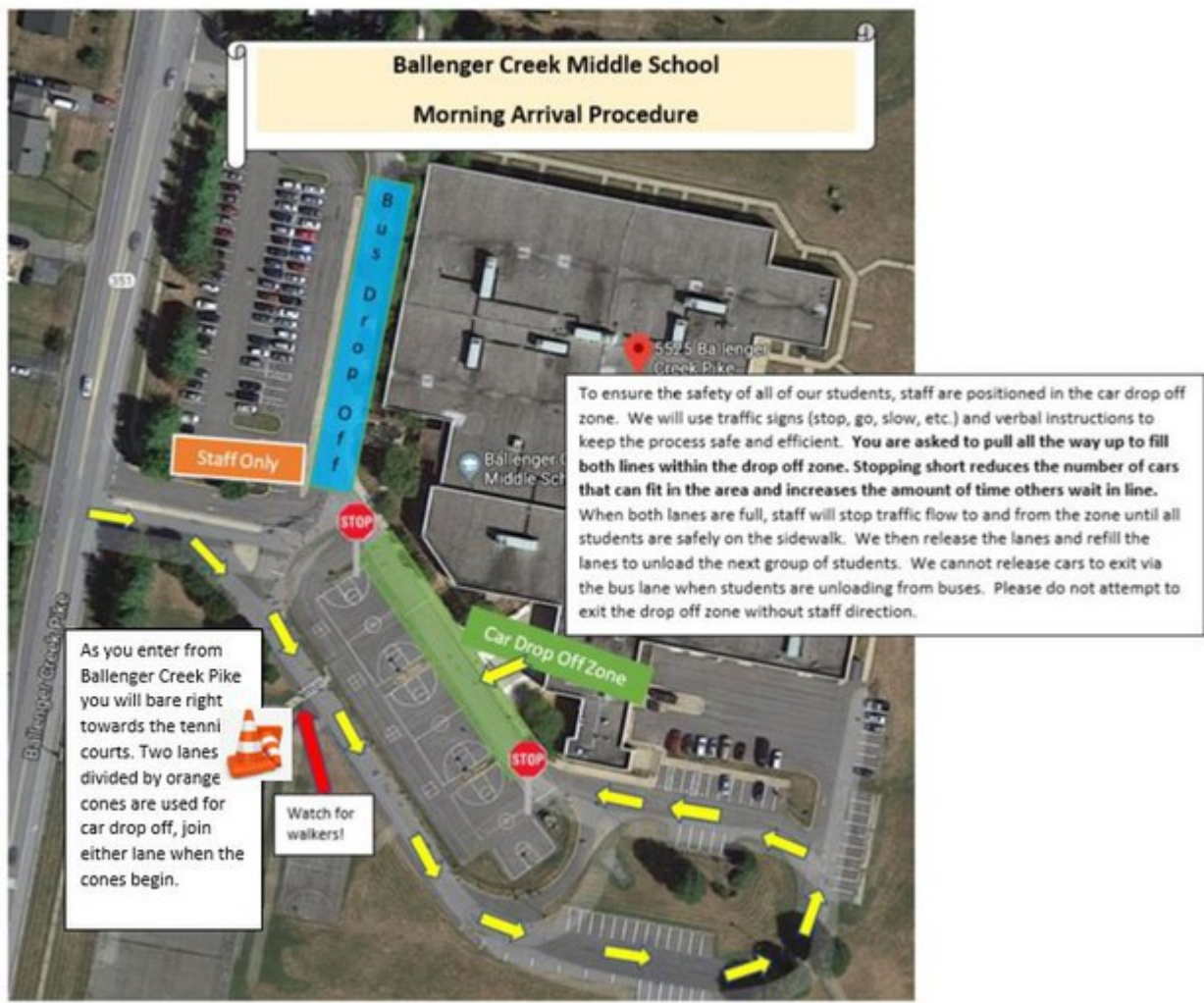
Wed. Dec. 11-----Band and Orchestra Concert 6 pm
 Thu. Dec. 12-----BCMS Art Club Roy Roger's Night
 4:00pm – 6:00pm Students Painting Windows
 4:00pm – 7:00pm *Purchases Support Art Club*
 Thu. Dec. 12-----Choir Concert 6 pm
 Thu. Dec. 19----- THS Benefit Concert at THS 7 pm
 Fri. Dec.20-----Mid-Term, 2 Hour Early Dismissal for Students
 Mon. Dec 23 to
 Wed. Jan. 1----- Winter Break
 Thu. Jan. 2----- Schools open
 Tue. Jan. 7-----Instrumental Feeder Concert at THS 7 pm
 Mon. Jan.20-----Schools and Offices Closed
 Tues. Jan. 28-----End of Term 2
 Wed. Jan. 29-----Schools 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.

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.



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.

On **Friday, December 13th**, a speaker from the Maryland Scholars Speakers Bureau (Maryland Business Roundtable for Education) will be coming in to present to our **8th grade** students during their American Studies classes.

On **Wednesday, December 18th and Thursday, December 19th**, Ms. Reese, will be presenting information about high school to our **8th grade** students during their science classes. Please be on the lookout for important dates pertaining to high school registration coming out soon!

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 and Online Grades

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 Nov. 1 to Nov 26

Grade 6--- 96.23%

Grade 7--- 95.59%

Grade 8--- 95.56%

Grades- Schoology and 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.

Community Liaison Corner

Hello Families!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Diversity Night, as well as to those who attended. What a fun evening we had discovering some of the cultures here at BCMS!

Please watch for a Sign-Up Genius coming soon from the PTSA, as we work together to support some of our BCMS families this holiday season.

Did you know, one of the easiest ways you can help BCMS is to join the PTSA? For membership, please use the link provided, complete the form and submit the \$10 fee. That easily, you have helped!

<https://fcps.ezcommunicator.net/edu/Frederick/GetFile.aspx?DocId=11658contact> Please contact Tracy McElroy at tamcelroy@comcast.net with any questions or for more information on the PTSA.

Ms. Moss

Community Liaison

240-236-5773

dottie.moss@fcps.org

Welcome Volunteers!

To simplify volunteering in schools, FCPS has created a standardized Volunteer Regulation of important information for all county schools. Yearly, anyone wanting to volunteer must review this regulation and sign a confidentiality form. For your convenience, this regulation is on our BCMS website. Please view this regulation prior to volunteering & sign the confidentiality form when you arrive to volunteer the first time. Additionally, we will register all volunteers as such in our Raptor security system, enabling us to maintain accurate volunteer hours. To save you time when you arrive to volunteer the first time, we have created a means to pre-enroll you as a volunteer in this system. If you will be volunteering (think ahead to field trips, science outdoor school, help with cooking etc..) please complete open the link below to complete the form and drop it by the school to the attention of Mrs. Moss. As always, thank you for volunteering. Your help is always appreciated.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gNp0TFMAwNm5smQ6_TgDfO5AoyCmPpBdBd2jrBlpetA/edit?usp=sharing

Lunch

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 Delivery

We have had an increase in students having food delivered from fast food restaurants and families bringing students food from these places during the school day. We will no longer permit this. The office is an incredibly busy place during the school day and can no longer coordinate delivery of these orders on a daily basis. In the event a student forgets a lunch at home, it must be brought to school in a student lunchbox or brown bag.

In addition, students may not carry around food to share with friends on special occasions, such as a box of donuts on one's birthday. FCPS Regulation No. 400-82 states that for health and safety reasons, parents/visitors are only permitted to bring in food that is intended for consumption by

their individual student. Students are only permitted to bring in food for their own personal consumption.

Grade Level News and Updates

All Grade Levels

We thank and recognize our students who are going above and beyond to help keep our hallways safe for all! Many of our students are walking on the right side of the hallway, visiting lockers during posted times, and helping peers when needed.

We want to remind our students that running and play fighting in the hallways is unacceptable. To keep our hallways a safe place, we need students to remember that it is a shared space. Running and play fighting affects every student in the hallway, and will lead to consequences on the PBIS behavior flow chart.

We also want to remind all students that earbuds, cell phones, hoods, and hats should be off and out of sight during school hours. Earbuds should only be out when they are being used for academic purposes.

Grade 6 News

We invite you to get to know your 6th grade content teachers! Click on the names below to visit their teacher web page.

- [Rose Branzell](#) – Language Arts
- [Paige Gehrke](#) – Language Arts
- [Chenoa Zais](#) – Math
- Christian Wolfe – Math (PAGE COMING SOON!)
- Ashleigh Rill-Wolfenden – Social Studies (PAGE COMING SOON!)
- [Michele Evans](#) – Social Studies
- Matthew Merson – Science (PAGE COMING SOON!)
- Brittany Roos – Science (PAGE COMING SOON!)
- [Elton Haydel](#) – Lab 21
- [Maya Massey](#) – Food Science

Grade 8 News

8th grade message that coincides with the upcoming holiday is to be kind and thankful. The 8th grade team wants to thank all the parents and guardians for their continue support. It takes a team to educate children. Thanks for being part of our team. We wish you a great holiday.

Eighth grade spotlights **Mr. Moffatt and Ms. Wright** our two Social Studies teachers:

Mr. Moffatt:

My name is Andy Moffatt and I'm originally from Burlington, Vermont. I have been married for 21 years and I have three daughters. My oldest daughter Bella is sixteen, Alyssa is nine and Andi is seven. We decided to name our last child Andi regardless if it was a boy or girl. I have earned my bachelor's in Education General Studies from The University of North Carolina focusing in Middle Grades Social Studies. I taught the last four years at Columbia Academy Middle School in Columbia and Wake Forest Middle School in North Carolina. Before becoming a Middle School Teacher, I served proudly in the United States Navy where I worked in Anti-terrorism and base security. I have a passion for history and a love for teaching middle school students. My goals are not to just teach history to the students, it's to be a positive role model, prepare them for high school and teach them to be productive members of society. I look forward to working with your children during the 2019/20 school year.

Ms. Wright:

Hello,

I'm Ms. Wright one of the 8th grade history teachers this year! I have recently moved to Frederick and I'm excited I get to experience the four seasons again! I say this because for the past two years, I lived and taught at a middle school in South Carolina. Although it hardly got below 40 degrees (which was nice sometimes), I realized that I missed having the fall and winter seasons. Especially since I try get out on the slopes during the winter! I used to live in Michigan and I learned from an early age how to snowboard and that is a passion of mine.

Clubs Running for 8th grade

- Guys with ties will be starting November 20th. Students were invited through teacher recommendations
- Art club- They will meet Tuesdays
- Geography Club

Hints for students:

- Charge chrome books every night
- Check schoology for grades and missing work
- Sign up for tutoring in classes
- Come to classes prepared with supplies and materials
- Go to all classes on time

Hints for Parents

- Check with your child their grades and missing assignments on schoology
- Limit time on devices prior to bedtime
- Help prepare the night before for their next day at school

Model United Nations Club

Mr. Schaller and Mrs. Montgomery would like to continue 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.

News from Electives

The World is a Stage

Come on out to the Music Department's Winter Concerts. Our Instrumental Concert will be on December 11th at 6 pm with a snow date of January 18th. The Choir concert is will be held on December 12th at 6 pm with a snow date of January 17th. Both concerts will be held at BCMS, and are free.

We want to thank everyone who came out to the Veteran's Day Concert. We had an exciting turn out to support the community. Thank you for all that you have done for our country!

The Spring play interest meeting is December 17th from 3:15 PM to 4 PM. Students who are interested in acting and or tech must attend the meeting. Auditions will be held on January 7th, 8th, and 9th from 3:30 PM to 5 PM. Se make sure to sign-up for an audition slot on Ms. Jones' Choir room door by December 6th.

The Music Department will be hosting fundraiser to help offset costs for our department including equipment security and the end of the year trip. The fundraiser will run from Tuesday, November 26th to December 31st. All orders and collected money will be due at the same time and turned into the music teacher.

Language Arts News

6th grade

We are proud of our students for their focus on their informational benchmark! Only two benchmark assessments left this school year! We will be moving into book clubs for the rest of November, December, and the beginning of January. Please know that your student will be reading their book in school, but if they are missing multiple days of school then they can check-out a book from Mrs. Branzell or Ms. Gehrke to stay caught up on their reading at home.

Reading/Writing Workshop

Students have been hard at work! 6th graders are learning about teenagers around the world who are fighting for human rights. 7th and 8th graders have been studying dystopian literature. Additionally, students are working on reading comprehension, writing, spelling, and word usage on the READ 180 software. At home, we strongly encourage our students to read novels, magazines, and graphic novels.

Math Department Updates

Studies have shown that it is more effective to practice math for a short amount of time on a daily basis versus cramming for that upcoming assessment last minute. Over the break or whenever your child has some free time, the math department would like to recommend that your child practice some math skills each day. Websites such as www.studyisland.com, www.quizizz.com, www.gimkit.com, and www.khanacademy.com are wonderful resources to help with retention and fluency of their math skills as well as helping with current standards being taught in your child's math class. Your child should also be accessing Schoology on a daily basis. Most teachers post copies of homework, classwork assignments and additional online resources for each unit of study.

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 content updates from all three grade levels

Grade 6

Sixth grade students have moved into the *Water* unit. The first questions students explore is: "How does water cycle through Earth's systems?" One core idea is that water continually cycles among land, ocean, and atmosphere via the water cycle. Additionally, global movements of water and its changes in form are propelled by sunlight and gravity.

Key vocabulary and concepts: transpiration, evaporation, condensation, precipitation, crystallization, runoff, gravity

For a full description of this NGSS standard go to: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/ms-ess2-4-earths-systems>

Grade 7

Seventh grade students have moved into *Flow of Energy*. This unit will allow students to experiment with various forms of energy flowing through mechanical, electrical, and magnetic systems. Students start off by exploring the mathematical and graphical relationship between mass, speed, and the associated transfer that occurs between potential energy and kinetic energy in a closed system.

Key vocabulary and concepts: - The kinetic energy doubles as the mass of the object doubles.
- The kinetic energy halves as the mass of the object halves.
- The kinetic energy decreases by a factor of four as the speed of the object is cut in half.
- The relationship between kinetic energy and speed as a nonlinear (square) proportional relationship.

For a full description of this NGSS standard go to: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/ms-ps3-1-energy>.

Grade 8

Eighth grade students started the *Inheritance* unit with the key question: "What makes me who I am?" Students will explore and develop models to show that variations of inherited traits between parent and offspring arise from genetic differences that result from the subset of chromosomes (and therefore genes) inherited.

Key vocabulary and concepts: DNA, genes, chromosomes, alleles, heterozygous, homozygous, offspring, traits, mitosis, meiosis, Punnett squares

For a full description of this NGSS standard go to: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/pe/ms-ls3-2-heredity-inheritance-and-variation-traits>

Social Studies News

6th grade history will be holding its annual Day at the Egyptian Museum event. All parents, guardians and family members are invited to attend. The museum will be held Thursday December 5 during periods 2 & 4 and Friday December 6 during periods 1, 3, & 5. If you have any questions please contact your child's teacher. We will begin unit 3 Ancient India after the conclusion of our museum!

7th grade history will have a quiz on Africa next week, please study! They will be starting their next unit on Medieval Asia after the break.

8th grade history will be starting their unit on the Early Republic and practicing writing skills when we return from break.

Please have your child check grades for missing work, mid-term is December 20th. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your child's history teacher!

Enrichment News & Resources

- It is time to start thinking about the FCPS Science and Engineering Fair. This year's fair will be held at Tuscarora High School on March 17 & 18. For general information, please visit the [Science Fair website](#) or talk to your science teacher.
- [Moving beyond, "How was your day?"](#)
- [Helping your gifted child succeed](#)
- Parent involvement is as important during the middle school years as it was in elementary school. The most important way to be involved is to emphasize the importance of education and take an

active interest in what your child is doing in school. To succeed in school, your child needs your support.

Tips for Success:

- Encourage your child to challenge him or herself by working up to his or her ability in all classes.
- Recognize study habits as an important part of academic achievement. Your child will need to learn to organize his/ her materials, and write down and complete homework assignments independently
- Encourage your child to take advantage of opportunities to explore interests. Well-rounded students are the happiest students.

Borrowed from the [2019-2020 FCPS Middle School Course Guide](#)

Keeping You Informed

Inclement Weather?

Here is how to Check School Status:

English: <https://fcps.ezcommunicator.net/edu/Frederick/GetFile.aspx?DocId=5581>

Spanish:

<https://fcps.ezcommunicator.net/edu/Frederick/GetFile.aspx?DocId=7817>

Chromebook – All grade levels

Please remind your student to charge their Chromebook at night! BYOD students should consistently bring their charger to school in case they need to charge. If your student is noticing any charging or other issues with their school-issued Chromebook, they should visit the media center (with teacher permission and a hall pass) to complete a tech services request.

