

# The WKMS Back Pocket

**August 2022**

**Be Your Best & Anything Is Possible!**

## Calendar

Aug 24	Board of Education Meeting
Sept 5	School Closed - Labor Day
Sept 8	Literacy Day
Sept 11	Patriot Day & Anniversary of 9/11
Sept 14	Board of Education Meeting
Sept 16	2 Hour Early Dismissal - Midterm
Sept 21	Pappy Lorenzen Cross Country Event
Sept 23	3.5 Hour Early Dismissal - Fair Day
Sept 26	School Closed - Rosh Hashana
Sept 27	Picture Day
Sept 27	Interims Issued
Sept 28	Archery Practice
Sept 28	Board of Education Meeting
Oct 5	School Closed - Yom Kippur
Oct 10	Discoverer's Day
Oct 12	4 Hour Late Opening - Parent Conferences
Oct 13	4 Hour Late Opening - Parent Conferences
Oct 14	3.5 Hour Early Dismissal - Parent Conferences

## Did You Know?

Mr. Hinson, Assistant Principal, has accepted a new position with the FCPS Organizational Development Department. In his new position, Mr. Hinson will be developing and implementing plans for teacher improvement and advancement. Through teacher recruitment, professional development, and leadership coaching, he will ensure that all FCPS students receive the best instruction possible. We are excited about the impact Mr. Hinson will have throughout the school system. His last day at WKMS will be on September 19, 2022. Please join me in wishing Mr. Hinson the best of luck as he moves on to this new opportunity. At the same time, we are very happy to announce that Ms. Lindstrom will be serving as the Acting Assistant Principal. Ms. Lindstrom has not only been a teacher-leader at WKMS and within our school community for several years, but also, she has previous experience as a school administrator. We are very excited to have Ms. Lindstrom as a member of our administrative team. Please join me in welcoming her into this new position.

## Find Us On the Web

Internet: [WKMS Website](#)

[Student and Family Handbook](#)

Facebook: Windsor Knolls Middle School FCPS

Twitter: @FCPSWKMS



## Instructional Specialists

### Math

Hello and welcome to math in the new year! I am Heather Wurster, the math specialist. My job is to ensure that students are being challenged and supported academically in mathematics. I work closely with all our teachers to review student data for math interventions and math classroom opportunities. Together we work to utilize grouping strategies, independent practice, and computer adaptive programs to support personalized learning. To better assist us in understanding student progress, comprehension, and ability to demonstrate mastery independently we have a new district wide universal testing platform, iReady, that students will be assessed on three times per year in math and reading. Additionally, all students will be using the digital math platform ALEKS on a regular basis to build their independent mastery of content, everyone will have digital access to support materials online with our textbooks series that came home, Go Math, and all students will be able to use Schoology again this year to support their learning. Please remind your student to charge their Chromebook and bring their wired earbuds daily. The math teachers are excited to be working with your students this year and look forward to developing their understanding and appreciation of math. If you have any questions about the curriculum, digital access, or how best to help support your student at home please do not hesitate to contact me at [Heather.Wurster@fcps.org](mailto:Heather.Wurster@fcps.org). I am happy to answer questions via email or set up Google Meets to better facilitate our discussions. We are so very excited to begin seeing your students everyday in person and look forward to a great school year.

### Media Specialist

Greetings from Mrs. Holliday and the WKMS Learning Commons/Library Media Center. I am beyond ecstatic to be able to begin working with your children for the 6th year at this school. Windsor Knolls is a gem and we are gearing up to prepare our scholars for another year of fun learning (not an oxymoron)! So if you are new to WKMS, students come to the LMC with their classes to learn about digital citizenship here and/or to be supported in their classwork and projects. Teachers and I plan and co-teach lessons where we discuss and practice how to research using our Database/Search Apps, write, create citations, and avoid plagiarism.

Students also come to the LMC with a pass from their teacher beginning Thursday, August 25th to check out books, do homework, get tutoring, read, study, etc. Students can check out books at anytime except during class exchanges or put books on hold to be delivered to their classes. (I also support our User Support Tech. Specialist with log ins/passwords.)

Our book fair will be coming in October. Stay tuned to Find out First, the next newsletter, and the social media platforms listed below. Please encourage your child to read for a minimum of 20 minutes daily to support their learning and ask them questions about what they are reading. Why? Because reading helps boost memory, develops strong analytical skills,

## Counselors' Corner

Welcome back! We're so excited to be back in the building and work with your children! Please meet the members of our department below:

- [Mrs. Koshar](#) - 6th Grade Counselor
- [Mrs. Travis](#) - 7th Grade Counselor
- [Mrs. Meyer](#) - 7th Grade Counselor
- [Mr. Migliorini](#) - Behavior Specialist
- [Danielle Scarbrough](#) - Registrar

Be sure to check out our [WKMS Counseling](#) website for lots of useful resources. You can also click on your student's grade level office door to be taken to your counselor's virtual office. Click on items in the office to explore helpful strategies and information!

### IN NEED OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES?

Please contact the counseling office at 240-236-4958 if we can help your child with any needed materials.

### DO YOU KNOW ABOUT 988?

Anyone experiencing a mental health crisis has a new way to reach out for help in the U.S. Simply call or text the numbers 9-8-8. This is an easily remembered number with 24/7 access that connects people who are suicidal or in any other mental health crisis to a trained mental health professional.

### GOT HOMEWORK?

Each month, we try to focus on a resource that we hope provides parents with strategies to support your child. Check out these [Top 10 Homework Tips](#) to help students get off to a good start!

### BACK TO SCHOOL LOGISTICS

As we begin this school year, it is crucial for our registrar to have the most current information on your child. Please review the following to make sure that WKMS has all needed information. Thank you! *Additional changes in phone numbers or email address:* Please contact Ms. Scarbrough, as soon as possible at [Danielle.scarbrough@fcps.org](mailto:Danielle.scarbrough@fcps.org) if you need to update your phone number and/or email address. *Change in residence or mailing address:* You will need to supply Windsor Knolls with an updated proof of resi-

## Instructional Specialists

enhances learning capacity, expands vocabulary, increases verbal, intelligence, improves concentration and empathy. Students can check out books online via our digital reading platform called Sora and should log their time reading on Beanstack to participate in schoolwide reading challenges. Beanstack is like a Fitbit for reading.

Feel free to call or email if you have any questions. To stay updated and to possibly see your child on social media... please follow me on platforms that we use by connecting to the following handles - **Instagram: WKMSLibrary** and **Twitter WKMS Library.Media**. We are catching students reading! #caughtreading #FCPSreads

### Literacy Specialist

Greetings from the English Language Arts Department! We are so very excited to welcome your students back into the building this year. Students have been working diligently through the first quarter ELA priority standards, and students recently completed the Performance Series Reading Assessment in their Language Arts classes. Students in Mrs. Buckner's Read180 classes have been reviewing the expectations of independent reading and software rotations, and her students recently completed the Reading Inventory. Teachers will be sharing assessment results with their students once all testing is completed. Mid-term is on Friday, September 16, and the ELA department is anticipating a fabulous beginning of the school year. Please reach out to your student's ELA teacher or to the WKMS Literacy Specialist, [Ginny Hines](#), with any questions or concerns.

### Advanced Academic Specialist

Hello! My name is Lori Saylor and I am the Advanced Academic/Enrichment Specialist at Windsor Knolls. This is my 25th year at Windsor Knolls! I hope that your child is having a wonderful start to the school year. It has been great to see them reconnecting with friends and teachers.

As the teacher specialist, I work closely with classroom teachers and the other specialists in our building to co-plan and teach lessons for students who are identified as Gifted and Talented (GT) and Highly Able Learner (HAL) as well as students who have demonstrated the ability to quickly master the topic being taught. It is our goal to promote deep understanding, offer extensions, and enrich the FCPS curriculum. This may take the form of flexibly grouping students within classes to work on more challenging assignments, using higher level questioning techniques, reading higher level texts, and offering extension assignments

I look forward to working with all WKMS students this school year. Thank you for your support and if you have any questions please feel free to contact me at [Lori.saylor@fcps.org](mailto:Lori.saylor@fcps.org).

## Dress Code

The basic rule of thumb at WKMS regarding the dress code is that students should always "Dress for Success." With that said, WKMS follows the [FCPS Policy for Dress Code](#) with the goal of balancing students' First Amendment rights while maintaining a safe and welcoming school environment. In short, students are:

- Restricted from wearing clothing that is unduly revealing.
- Prohibited from wearing clothing that promote illegal or violent conduct or that promote drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco.
- Prohibited from wearing clothing that contains obscene, libelous, offensive, or vulgar words or images.
- Prohibited from wearing clothing containing derogatory language or images that demean another based on that person's race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or ability.
- Prohibited from wearing head gear such as hats and hoodies while inside the school building with an exception for those students who wear head gear specific to a genuine and sincerely held religious beliefs.

School administrators may grant other exceptions to the dress code based on a specific disability and/or health reason. Exceptions may also be made for celebrations such as School Spirit Days.

Dress  
for  
Success

## School Safety & Security

Our primary responsibility is to ensure that all WKMS students learn in a safe and secure environment. Our staff has been trained in specific protocols in order to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and then recover from any type of situation in and/or near our school. This week, our students reviewed important safety protocols with their teachers. While these conversations may be unsettling, they are unfortunately necessary.

Depending on the situation a school might implement:

- **HOLD!** In the classroom or area. Clear the halls.
- **SECURE!** Get inside. Lock outside doors.
- **LOCKDOWN!** Locks, lights, out of sight.
- **EVACUATE!** Exit the building and report to a designated area.
- **SHELTER!** Remain in the building in a designated area.

In the event that there would be an active assailant in WKMS, we would use the Avoid, Deny, Defend protocol.

- **Avoid** – rapidly move away from the danger.
- **Deny** – Barricade the classroom/area entrance, move to the “safe area of the room”, identify secondary exits in order to Avoid.
- **Defend** – identify non-traditional weapons to defend while continuing to find opportunities to Avoid and Deny.

Again, we will continue to teach, reinforce, and practice these protocols with our students. With that said, prevention should be our first strategy for preventing a crisis. Our building is locked and secure. Any visitors to the building should enter through the main entrance. To report safety concerns, escalate your issue according to the following:

1. Contact the school's administration, counselor, or SRO.
2. Contact FCPS at the Central Office at 301-696-6806. or at [security.team@fcps.org](mailto:security.team@fcps.org).
3. Report anonymously to [P3 Campus](#) online.
4. Contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency. at their non-emergency number listed below:
  - Mt. Airy Police Department: 301-703-1375
  - Frederick County Sheriff's Office: 301-600-2071
  - Maryland State Police: 301-600-4150

FCPS investigates all reported threats. We remind the community: If you *See Something, Say Something*, and when it comes to social media, please Report It, Don't Repeat It.

Please be sure to talk to your child about school safety and click here for information about [School Security & Emergency Management](#).

## Traffic Safety & Updates

### Traffic Safety

Many of you are aware the traffic in and around our campus becomes very congested at arrival time in the morning and at dismissal time in the afternoon. Our goal is to get everyone in and out of our parking lot as safely and efficiently as possible. In the morning, the entrance to the school and onto Windsor Rd. is at its most congested between 7:45 - 8:00am. If you want to avoid traffic, please feel free to drop your student off at 7:30am. Our building is open at this time. Normally, our afternoon traffic is considerably more congested than in the morning. We all need to be as safe and patient as possible. Parents who are picking their student up from school at 3:00pm should line-up along the sidewalk. Please do not pick-up child up along Windsor Rd. Please also do not park in the parking lot and have your student meet you at your car. We had several “near misses” during the first two days of school. We're hopeful that dismissal will be safer and more efficient as we develop better traffic patterns.

### Transportation Update

If your student rides the school bus, please know that our drivers and assistants are skilled, friendly, and compassionate. They take the utmost care in transporting students safely to and from school each day. During the first few weeks, some adjustments to bus routes may be made. Additionally, please be patient with bus arrivals in the afternoon. Dismissal is slower at the start of the school year due to students becoming familiar with bus assignments. In the case of morning or afternoon bus delays, the Transportation Department will share them online. Be sure to check this [page](#) for the latest updates on bus status.

It's our collective responsibility to ensure that our students and families arrive to and depart from school safely. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

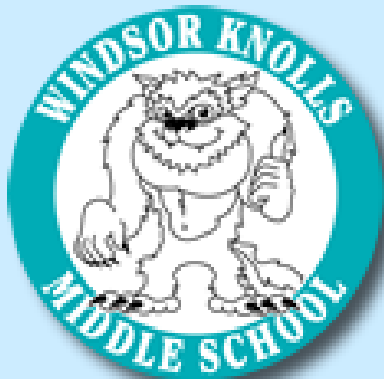


## Attendance Procedures

Regular attendance at school is a very important factor in a student's success. Therefore, all students are required to attend school everyday. However, it is understandable that students may be absent from school for a variety of reasons. Students are allowed 5 unexcused absences a term. After the 5<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence, the student may fail the term, regardless of their grades. Students are only allowed 10 parent notes for sickness. After the 10<sup>th</sup> note, student absences must be accompanied by a doctor's note or the absence will be considered unexcused. It is important that you request a doctor or dentist note to excuse the lateness or absence when you have visited the doctor. When students return to WKMS from an absence:

- They must bring, or email [wkms.attendance@fcps.org](mailto:wkms.attendance@fcps.org) a note from a parent or guardian within two days. The note should contain the student's name, date(s) of absence, reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent/guardian. The note will be presented to the first period teacher at the beginning of the day.
- They may make-up work following excused absences. Students who were absent from school have the responsibility to request make-up work when they return to school; this includes students who were away on vacation. Students will have one day for each day that they were absent to make up the work. Make-up work will receive full credit. Students should request make-up work within three (3) days of their return to school. Part of life is meeting reasonable deadlines, whether it is getting to work or school on time or completing assigned tasks such as school assignments. If it's possible, we encourage students to follow along with their classes and assignments through Schoology. Again, if possible, this is a good practice so students do not fall too far behind. If accessing Schoology is not possible for whatever reason, Students must make necessary arrangements with the teacher for submission of work. Students who are absent for three days or more may call the school to request make-up work. Teachers need at least 24-hours notice to prepare the work.

Please see the FCPS Policy on [Student Attendance](#) for more information.



## Technology at WKMS

### Schoology

Schoology is the learning management system used by FCPS. This is the platform students will log in to each day to navigate to their course pages, find instructional materials, and access course information. It is critical that both students and parents become familiar/comfortable using Schoology. Teachers will communicate with parents/students through messaging in Schoology, email, and/or phone. Parent Access Letters for Schoology along with student schedules were provided to students on the first day of school. Please use the letter to create a Schoology parent account. Your child's letter contains unique login information for you to use for the setup process. For more information about Schoology, for both students and parents, please visit the FCPS Schoology page at [Schoology Information](#). To review more in depth information regarding your child's academic progress, please access Schoology using your child's credentials.



### Chromebooks

All WKMS students have been issued an FCPS Chromebook. Students may also choose to BYOD. If this is the case, they will still be provided an FCPS device as all local and state assessments must be completed on a system-issued Chromebook. The local and state assessment platforms will not support students' personal devices. Please visit the [Technology Infrastructure](#) webpage for more information.

## Cell Phones at WKMS

OFF  
&  
AWAY

Many of the negative situations that occur in school begin and/or are exacerbated through digital means, especially text messaging and social media. Important interpersonal skills are being lost, and our society has become more disconnected as our screen time has increased. Furthermore, our students have lost a significant amount of focused instructional time because they are distracted by their cell phones. With that said the principals of all FCPS middle schools worked together this summer to develop a consistent policy across all 13 schools. Cell phones and ear buds/ headphones must be "Off and Away" throughout the instructional day (8:00am—3:00pm) at WKMS. This includes during lunch and recess. The only time a cell phone may be used during the instructional day is when it is being used for instructional purposes and while under the direction/supervision of the teacher. If using a cell phone for an instructional reason, students may not use it to text, call, access any form of streaming service, and/or access social media. Students will have access to a phone in the front office if they need to call a parent/guardian. Likewise, if a parent/guardian needs to get a message to a student, they should call the school at 240-236-5000. The message will be delivered to the student during lunchtime or at the end of the school day. There will be consequences for students who do not abide by this expectation:

1. Student will be given a warning and their parent will be contacted.
2. Student will need to turn the phone into the Front Office. It will be returned to them at the end of the day.
3. Student will need to turn the phone into the Front Office. A parent/guardian will need to pick-up the phone from school.

Please see the [FCPS Policy for Electronic Devices](#) for more information.

OFF  
&  
AWAY

## Health and Wellness

Do you know what your child is doing on the Internet? With advances in computer technology, even very young children know how to hit the information highway running --- leaving them open to dangers of the Internet such as cyberbullying, exploitation and abuse.

- Does your family have a set of rules or an agreement for appropriate Internet use?
- Do your kids know to ask permission before submitting personal information online?
- Do you use your children's Internet experiences as an opportunity to discuss inappropriate content, trust and responsibility?
- Do you make Internet use a family activity by guiding your kids to good sites and teaching them how to perform safe web searches?
- Have you taught your kids not to believe everything they read online, and to verify online information with an adult?
- Does your child surf the Internet at the Public networks? Are you familiar with their acceptable use policy and level of security?
- Is your computer placed in a well-used public area of your home, such as the kitchen or family room?
- If your child has his/her own web site, have you checked it to make sure it doesn't contain personal information that could identify him/her?
- Have you talked to your kids about responsible online behavior? Do they understand the penalties associated with illegal activities such as stealing from web sites, downloading pirated software, making online threats, cyberbullying, and sexting?

Again, do you know what your child is doing on the Internet?