

Back Pocket

April 2022

Calendar

Apr 7 – Report Cards Issued
Apr 8 – WKMS Spirit Day: Wear Camouflage
Apr 11 – Reading MCAP Assessment
Apr 12 – Reading MCAP Assessment
Apr 11 – Kickball Club
Apr 13 – 8th Grade Fieldtrip to Washington, DC
Apr 13 – PTSA Meeting (6:30pm)
Apr 15 – School Closed
Apr 18 – School Closed
Apr 19 – School Closed
Apr 20 – School Closed
Apr 21 – School Closed
Apr 22 – School Closed
Apr 25 – School Re-Opens
Apr 26 – Math MCAP Assessment
Apr 27 – Math MCAP Assessment
Apr 29 – WKMS Spirit Day: Wear Your Favorite Hat
May 2 – 7th Grade Fieldtrip to Baltimore Zoo
May 6 – Mid-Term & 2 Hour Early Dismissal for Students

Principal's Message

March was a tremendous month at Windsor Knolls Middle School with our students and staff achieving and performing at extremely high levels embodying our mantra of “Be Your Best!”

It's difficult to even put into words the amazing show that Mrs. Martinez-Trawick and our students performed the first weekend in March. In front of a packed house for three shows, our cast and crew performed Moana Jr. with all the skill, expertise, and passion of future actors and stage hands. I don't think it was lost on anyone that it had been since 2019 that our kids were able to perform in-person. It was a very special weekend for sure. Kudos to all of our staff and students who contributed to such an entertaining musical.

Throughout the month, Mr. Skopek's band and orchestra students attended their adjudication festivals. Each grade level band performed quite well. The 8th-grade band received superior ratings from all 3 adjudicators and only missed a perfect overall score by 2 points. The 6th grade and 7th grade bands also performed at high levels. Both ensembles also received superior ratings from all adjudicators and missed a totally perfect score by only 1 point. The WKMS orchestra also performed quite well earning a superior rating from each of the judges. Well done to Mr. Skopek and all of our musicians.

The WKMS Math Counts Team participated in the county meet in January advancing twelve of our over forty mathletes to the Regional competition in February. Of those competitors, three mathletes advanced to the State competition at the which was held last evening. We should have the results of the State competition in the upcoming days. No matter the outcome, we are very proud of all of our mathletes, but happier yet that so many students are enjoying math beyond the classroom as WKMS boasts the largest team in Frederick County. Congratulations to Mrs. Gallagher, Mrs. Wurster, and all of our mathletes.

The WKMS Archery Team competed in the MD State NASP Bullseye Tournament in Westminster, MD on March 18th and 19th. Students from all over the state in grades 4 - 12 competed. Students were ranked by elementary, middle and high school levels. Of the 60 students on our team, 55 competed, and 10 of them were among the top scorers in the State shooting at 10 meter and 15 meter distances. Congratulations to Mrs. Conlon, Mr. Burkey, Mrs. Donohue and all of our archers who participated in this competition.

Lastly, several students from Mrs. Lindstrom's Life Skills and Mrs. Clark's Tech Ed classes performed exceedingly well in the recent FCPS Tech Fair. We had several students recognized for their achievements in a variety of categories such as "All Wound Up", "Hunger Games" and "Cupcake Challenge".

I would be remiss if I did not also share briefly on the events that have occurred in the FCPS community last month. As most of you are aware, the actions of a few students have caused significant safety concerns and disruptions within some of our schools. My heart goes out to the students, staff, and families who have been impacted by the negative, dangerous, and hateful actions of a small portion of our community. We will not tolerate dangerous, offensive, and hateful actions or speech. As a WKMS community, our primary responsibility and obligation is to ensure that our students have a safe and welcoming school in which they can focus on learning. Our staff has reaffirmed our pledge to work for a school community that is safe and welcoming to all students. While our staff works diligently to create this environment, we must also be open to our students and families. If you see or hear of behaviors or actions contrary to this commitment, you are encouraged to speak with any staff member. If you would like to speak with someone, please know that we are here for you. If you become aware of a threat or potential safety concern after school hours, please never hesitate to contact the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. Lastly, please be sure to monitor your student's cell phone should they have one and their social media if they have an on-line presence. Unfortunately, many of the issues we confront at school originate from and are compounded by social media.

If you have any suggestions on helping to create a safer and more welcoming school environment, please contact me at brian.vasquenza@fcps.org. Otherwise, I want to commend our students for their behavior and their achievement in and out of the classroom and am excited about a successful 4th term!

Be Your Best,
Brian

State Assessments and Accountability

Students are participating in state assessments this spring! Their performance on these assessments, along with other school data, will assist schools in planning educational programs for students.

While Spring 2020 and Spring 2021 brought a hiatus from state assessments, federal accountability requirements are now upon us again for Spring 2022. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will be publicly reporting each schools' Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability data. This reporting affects all FCPS schools and includes individual score reports for students in grades 3-8, as well as high school students.

Specific to high school students, the Maryland Blueprint for education is one driver of new assessment requirements. It is important that students and families are informed. For the remaining school year, students enrolled in Algebra I, English 10, Government, or Biology must have taken the test in order to graduate. But next school year, requirements for these assessments change. Algebra I and English 10 will become College and Career Readiness (CCR) requirements, while Biology and Government will become end-of-course assessments that count toward 20% of a student's final course grade. The shift in use of the Biology and Government scores comes from the MSDE.

Please watch for further communications from your child's school regarding assessments your child may have to take. To learn more about the Maryland Blueprint visit <https://www.fcps.org/blueprint>.

Team News and Updates

Each month, WKMS grade level teams will provide updates on curriculum standards, assessments, and upcoming events. In addition to Schoology, this information will hopefully keep parents abreast of important school and classroom information.

- [6th Grade](#)
- [7th Grade](#)
- [8th Grade](#)

Counselors' Corner

We are committed to making sure that our students and families are aware of the many resources available if your child is struggling with a mental health challenge. Please check out this [RESOURCES](#) link on the WKMS Counseling website for support services as well as information on the Mental Health Association's walk-in clinic in downtown Frederick.

- **Camp Jamie - Teen Grief Camp**
Frederick Health Hospice is sponsoring a one day camp on April 2, 2022, at the Thorpewood Retreat Center in Thurmont, MD, for grieving teens to come together to talk about their feelings and learn coping skills for dealing with death. There is no fee but registration is due by *March 15*. For more information or to register, please contact 240-566-3030 or go to FrederickHealthHospice.org/CampJamie
- **HOW WE ARE SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS IN THIS NEW STAGE**
To help students feel as comfortable as possible when visiting our office, please note that our guidance staff is committed to demonstrating respect for each student's personal decision regarding wearing a mask. We have signs to let students know that we are happy to wear a mask if they prefer.
- **WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR CHILD SAYS 'I DON'T CARE'**
Please check out this [link](#) to an article with information and strategies to help with unmotivated students.

Media Center

As we move into 4th term, be on the lookout for book title suggestions that FCPS media specialists and FCPL comprised for avoiding the summer slide. Remember that reading helps to improve concentration, boost memory, expands empathy, reduces stress and assists with building vocabulary. As we work together on literacy goals, please ask your child questions related to what they are reading. Continue to encourage your children to read at least 20 minutes every day and to record the time they are reading on Bean-stack. Our 8th graders are currently heading up the grade level competition in the Readers are Leaders schoolwide reading challenge. Another overdue notice will be given to students and payment obligations will be coming home the last week of school.

I'm so happy to report that students are enjoying the comfortable new furniture!

Advanced Academics

Hurry you have until April 6th to apply for the GEMS program! Students wishing to participate in a challenging and engaging science and STEM program this summer should look into the Gains in the Education of Mathematics and

Science program at Ft. Detrick. (GEMS program). This program lets local students get a look at cutting-edge world class science projects at the US Army Medical Research and Development Command right in our community. Follow the [link](#) to start your registration. The deadline for applications is April 6. Please let me know if I can help you with your registration.

More enrichment opportunities.....

The Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth is a great place to get exposure to accelerated courses for students looking for a challenge this summer. Look at the attached link and contact Mrs. Saylor or your school counselor about obtaining the needed test scores and achievement data for this very prestigious program.

<https://cty.jhu.edu/programs/summer/courses>

Upcoming Enrichment Micro-field trips- Be on the lookout for permission slips!

- May 18th – Mrs. Saylor, Mrs. Rhoades and Mrs. Clarke will be taking interested 7th grade students to the Towson Sci Tec Center to investigate how pollution moves throughout the food chain. Be looking for this permission slip in science classes. Space is limited to 25 students. The cost of this trip is 15.00.
- May 25th – Mrs. Saylor, Mr. Trumper and Mr. Underwood will be taking a group of interested 8th grade students to the Civil War Medical Museum and to the Monocacy Battlefield/Bates Farm to learn more about local history during the Civil War era. Permission slips will be given in 8th grade social studies classes in mid-April. Space is limited to 35. There will be a small fee to cover for this trip. Have a wonderful spring break!

ELA Department

Greetings from the English Language Arts Department! Fourth term is officially underway, and students are working diligently on the last quarter ELA standards in English Language Arts classes. The midterm date for term four is Friday, May 6th. The next administration of the Reading Performance Series assessment will take place the week of May 23rd in ELA classes. Students in Mrs. Buckner's Read180 classes are continuing their work in small group, independent reading, and software rotations. Read180 students will take their final Reading Inventory assessment during the week of May 16th. Please remember to encourage your students to access Wolverine Time (offered Monday-Thursday) for ELA support after school hours. The meeting link and specific times can be found on the WKMS website. As always, please reach out to your student's ELA teacher, Read180 teacher, or to the WKMS Literacy Specialist, Ginny Hines, with any questions or concerns.

Math Department

The MathCounts club is happy to share some exciting news! Our club participated in the county meet in January advancing twelve of our over forty mathletes to the Regional competition in February. Of those competitors we are advancing three mathletes to the State competition at the end of March. We are so proud of all of our mathletes but happier yet that so many students are enjoying math beyond the classroom. We have the largest chapter in Frederick County and are always looking for new members to join in our fun each week to see math in a different way. Reach out to Mrs. Gallagher or Mrs. Wurster if you are interested in joining us each week.

As we are starting the last term of this school year, parents can see their student's math progress this year easily in a simple pie chart using our self-paced, individualized, interactive math platform - ALEKS. Every student has a personal account that tracks their progress on grade level standards. Our goal, as shared with students at the beginning of the year, was to work towards completing their pie. Parents can see students' progress by having their child log into their school Google account, go to FCPS Bookmarks, select Clever Portal, click the red McGraw Hill badge, then click the rainbow ALEKS pie icon to see how much progress your student has made thus far this year. Students are given time daily in ELT to work towards completing their ALEKS pathway as well as it being accessible outside of school hours. [Click here if you want to see the directions](#) on how to access or if you have questions about the tool please reach out to Mrs. Wurster at heather.wurster@fcps.org.

Should your student want or need additional math support there are several options for math tutoring. During school students can request tutoring during ELT time with their math teacher, four days a week after school we have [Wolverine Time](#) (available for math and language arts), and [Tutor Me](#) is available through Clever for all curriculums twenty-four hours a day. Reach out if you have any questions or concerns with math to Mrs. Wurster at heather.wurster@fcps.org.