



September 1, 2024
North Bethesda Middle School
News and Notes



NORTH BETHESDA MIDDLE SCHOOL UPCOMING EVENTS

September 2nd Labor Day – Schools and Offices Closed

September 3rd Regular Schedule Period 1 Phoenix Time

Outdoor Environmental Education Parent/Caregiver Information Session 7-9 on Zoom

September 4th Regular Schedule Period 2 Phoenix Time

September 5th Regular Schedule Period 3 Phoenix Time

September 6th Regular Schedule Period 4 Phoenix Time

Coming UP:

September 9th Outdoor Environmental Education Chaperone Information Meeting at NBMS

September 12th Coffee with the Counselors on Zoom 9 AM (more details to come next week)

September 12th – Directory Information Due

September 16th – All information should be updated in ParentVue or if there is an address change, please submit your yellow information form distributed to students this past week.

September 23rd – PTSA Sponsored Skate Night (more details below)

Parents, please drop off students in the drop off loop (**entrance on Bradmoor Drive –**

note: Johnson Drive is for buses only)

2024-2025 SCHOOL HOURS: 8:15 – 3:00 p.m.

[Bell Schedules 2024-2025](#)

[MCPS CALENDAR](#)

Click [here](#) for a map of the school!

[Link to Dr. Smith's summer mailing](#)

[Bus Route Link](#) – scroll down to North Bethesda Middle School for the most up to date bus routes. If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Transportation Bethesda Bus Depot at **240-740-6580**.

[Administrators](#)

Grade 6 Daniel_E_Werbeck@mcpsmd.org

Grade 7 Katherine_B_Rudd@mcpsmd.org

Grade 8 tirza_carmichaelcollins@mcpsmd.org

Principal Annemarie_e_smith@mcpsmd.org

Greetings North Bethesda Families:

We had a fantastic first week at school. In addition, to daily homerooms and students and teachers getting to know one another, we had our first fire drill, and it went very well. Several neighbors approached and commented they had never seen such a quiet fire drill!

Our students are adjusting to the expectation to have their phones off and away all day. Please continue to reiterate the expectation. Students will begin our regular schedule with Phoenix Time starting on Tuesday.

Thank you for your patience and grace as we finalize schedules and while the Department of Transportation adjusts routes.

Thank you to all who came out to a wonderful Back to School Night last Thursday. Please find linked [here](#) any information you may wish to revisit or that you missed.

In this week's News and Notes, you will find information about

- **PTSA Information about the upcoming Skate Night at Cabin John Ice Rink.**
- **Cafeteria Fees – details on how to prepay and monitor your child's account and how to apply for Free and Reduced Meals**
- **Information on the upcoming 6th Grade Outdoor Environmental Education Parent Meeting on Zoom**
- **Information on how to sign up to be Courtyard Hero.**
- **Information on Chromebook distribution dates and the importance of keeping them charged.**
- **Emergency Forms:** Instructions on updating and returning the yellow emergency forms.
- **Directory Information:** Instructions for opting out of the school directory.
- **Ms. Rice's Counseling Update on getting organized!**
- **Testing Information - MAP Testing Schedule:** Dates and details for the MAP-R and MAP-M assessments.
- **Other helpful information**

PTSA

The NBMS PTSA is excited to invite you to the NBMS Skate Night at Cabin John Ice Rink on Saturday, September 28. Doors open at 6:30pm, and the event ends at 8pm. The cost is discounted from the regular price to \$11 per skater and includes entry and skate rentals. Tickets are free for students of families with a paid PTSA membership. All skaters must reserve a ticket in the online [Membership Toolkit Store](#) before **Monday, September 23** so that we can accurately inform the rink of our numbers, otherwise you will be asked to pay full price to the rink at the door. Please consult with a counselor if the cost is a hardship for your family.

JOIN the NBMS PTSA!

The PTSA supports NBMS any way we can. We fund or supplement the participation of our students in different enrichment activities like the Spelling Bee competition, the U.N. team, and our teacher-led after-school clubs. Together, we also support the NBMS administration team by organizing inclusive social activities to make sure our students feel part of a strong and caring community.

But to accomplish all our goals, we need your help!

Please volunteer your time, share your ideas with us, and pay your membership fees, as we are funded entirely through direct donations.

Joining is easy and you can click [here](#) to register and join us or verify your household information and renew your membership.

In the coming weeks we will share a full calendar of our meetings and events for the year.

We will share details to meet in person in the NBMS media center (and Zoom info for those joining us online). In our first PTSA meeting, we will focus on introducing ourselves, sharing our priorities as a PTSA, and on the approval of our annual PTSA budget. The budget will be shared the week prior, and if you have questions on the budget, please submit them to our treasurer at treasurer@nbmsptsa.org.

CAFETERIA FEES

Now that a full week of school has passed, it may be necessary to review the cafeteria balance and funding source on your student's account to check for accuracy and for appropriate monetary funds. As a reminder, a traditional school lunch is \$2.80, but students have the option to purchase additional a la carte items for additional purchase. We find it appropriate for you to review with your child expectations and norms around cafeteria spending, and to support them in establishing boundaries and budgeting accordingly. We do not want any surprises for you and your child in terms of their daily spending. Prepay and check your child's account at www.myschoolbucks.com This service is optional—schools will continue to accept checks and cash for meals in the cafeteria.

Support Call the Schoolbooks toll-free customer support center at 1-855-832-5226 for assistance with enrollment or questions about your account. MySchoolBucks support staff are available Monday to Friday, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. eastern standard time.

FREE and REDUCED MEALS

Students in Maryland who qualify for reduced-price meals will not be charged for meals.

Applications: Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) applications have been updated for the new school year and are now available online at www.MySchoolApps.com; this is the preferred application method.

Apply online NOW at MySchoolApps.com (Translations available) Click [here](#) for an English video tutorial. Click [here](#) for a Spanish video tutorial.

- **Federal eligibility guidelines change each school year; therefore, a new application must be submitted each school year.** All students in the family should be listed on one household application. A notice will be mailed home to each student if you are approved for meal benefits or do not qualify for meal benefits. Please keep this important document for your records and use throughout the school year. Families may apply for meal benefits at any time during the school year.
- Households that are unable to apply online should contact their school or the Division of Food and Nutrition Services at 240-740-7400. If you would like a paper application, please contact the main office.

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Greetings 6th Grade Families,

We are so excited that our preparations for our Outdoor Education program have begun. We have two information meetings coming up in September.

- PARENT INFORMATION NIGHT - Tuesday, September 3 from 7-8:15 on Zoom*
- PARENT CHAPERONE MEETING - Monday, September 9 at 7:00 at NBMS

This is one of the most memorable events in 6th grade! We hope that your child is able to attend and you as well if you are willing to be a chaperone!

***Zoom Information** Please click the link below to join the webinar on 9/3/2024 at 7PM:

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/87283407452?pwd=BjIAn7WtBDbXbWrtEEbW3kMLlCqXws.1>

Passcode: 188503

Ms. Olivia Simoncic Olivia_C_Simoncic@mcpsmd.org

Outdoor Ed Coordinator

COURTYARD HEROES

At North Bethesda Middle School, we like to provide our students with another space to eat lunch. Our beautiful main courtyard is the ideal space! Unfortunately, we do not have the staffing to provide supervision, so we are seeking volunteers to supervise the courtyard! Please consider

signing up! We appreciate it. ***If you signed up before, please double check, there was a technology glitch that wiped out some sign ups.***

[Courtyard Heroes Sign Up](#)

Thank you for your consideration.

CHROMEBOOKS

Chromebooks will be distributed to 6th grade students and new students through English classes by Friday, September 6th. Students will keep their Chromebooks and bring them home each night. Please remind your child to charge their Chromebooks nightly.

YELLOW EMERGENCY FORMS

Your child will be bringing home yellow emergency forms on Monday. Please review and make any updates in ParentVUE. **You do not need to return the yellow emergency form UNLESS you have had a change of address.** Only school staff can enter changes of address. Please update by September 16th. Thank you.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Schools provide directory information for public listings such as honor roll, awards, and other notices in the newspaper or on the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) website. A student's name, address, and telephone number may also be released to organizations of any combination of parents/guardians, teachers, and students at this school. **Unless you tell them not to**, schools can release the information without your prior consent.

If you do not want your school to release your directory information, complete the form linked [HERE](#) and **return to school by September 12, 2024**. Additional copies of this notice can be found on the [MCPS website](#), and are available in Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Amharic, and Portuguese. **This form must be completed every year.** Your school will assume you agree to the release of the directory information, unless this form is **returned by Thursday, September 12th**. **If you want to continue to keep your child's information available, you "DO NOT" need to complete this form.**

If you need to change your decision later, just contact your school directly. If you enroll after September 12, 2024, you can complete this form at the time of enrollment.

REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS

The MAP Growth Assessment is a diagnostic assessment designed to inform instruction, recovery, and intervention and account for learning loss, as well as determine the present performance levels of students on literacy and math standards. North Bethesda will administer the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. **This year we will be administering MAP-R and MAP-M through English and Math classes. We will follow a 7-period day schedule which can be found [here](#).** (see below for specific testing dates). schedule. Here is a [link](#) to the NWEA family toolkit site to learn more about MAP.

Students who miss or need additional time to complete their test will be notified by either their math or English teacher with make-up dates and times. A student may be pulled from classes to complete this required assessment.

This test will not affect grades.

Outlined below is the testing schedule for the Fall administration of the MAP diagnostic tests for North Bethesda Middle School:

Assessment	Testing Dates/Times	Purpose
MAP-R Growth Assessment – Reading 6+	9/9-9/10	Diagnostic Assessment for reading for students in grades 6-8
MAP-M Growth Assessment – Math 6+	9/11-9/12	Diagnostic Assessment for math for students in grades 6-8

Below you will find tips for your child for preparing for the test:

Prior To Test Day	On Test Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your child’s Chromebook is charged and ready for testing. • Encourage your student to get plenty of rest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure your child brings their Chromebook and charger to school

MS. RICE’S COUNSELING UPDATE

Hello.

Welcome back to school! If you’re a veteran NBMS parent you may have read this before, but it’s always good to have a refresher. Setting up for success in a new school year means getting organized. For some of us this comes naturally, and for others we need a little help. If you’re new to middle school, it always helps to get some ideas from those who’ve done it before because seven classes are a big jump. I’ve been doing it for seventeen years and here is my advice!

- **Ways to use your agenda book!** Every NBMS student received a sturdy academic agenda book/planner.
 - Write down assignments during class, open it to check what they need to do for homework when they get home, and check things off once they are complete.
 - Note upcoming quizzes and tests on the date they will occur and make notes to study for the three to four nights leading up to the quiz or test.
 - Consider jotting down a name and phone number for someone in each class in case there are questions about an assignment.
- **Ways to organize your papers!**

- One option is a large 2-3” binder with dividers labeled in class order.
- Another option is two smaller binders with dividers labeled for morning classes and afternoon classes (half in each binder)
- Some students prefer an accordion file folder where each section is a different class, and they can jam their papers inside in a rush to get to their next class.
- Others like the binders with zippers and an arm strap because they can easily house their Chromebook as well, a perk for navigating the hallways handsfree.
- Inside any binder it’s nice to have a pencil case stocked with pencils. Students always need pencils!
- **Minimize locker visits to maximize getting to class on time!**
 - Talk to your child about how often they stop at their locker. Ideally, they should only be visiting their lockers four times a day.
 - Upon arrival at school
 - Before lunch
 - After lunch
 - At the end of the day to pack up and go home
 - If a class is far away around the lunch hour, many teachers are cool with students dropping off their books early - just ask!
 - Even though you shouldn’t be there all day, But use the locker, and lock it! If the lock is an issue, practice opening a lock at home, or stay after school one day to get the hang of it. Your belongings should be safe while you’re at school.
- **Create a homework routine and space at home.**
 - The space should have good lighting and a comfortable seat (but not the couch or bed) with a Wi-Fi signal, an electrical outlet for charging, paper, pencils, calculator, a water bottle, etc.
 - Make sure the TV isn’t visible and phones and other distractions are out of sight.
 - Have a set time that is “homework time.” For some it’s best done right after school, for others after some outdoors or down time.
 - Make a rule that homework gets done the day it is assigned and is turned in virtually or put back in the binder/folder and backpack as soon as it is finished. This reduces missing things due to procrastination or distraction.
- **Using ParentVue and StudentVue:**
 - Check together with your student at least once a week (more is preferable). This allows you to see if there are missing assignments and get caught up before too much time passes and see if there are assessments that your child might want to retake.
 - Use the combined calendar to view upcoming assessments and assignments.

These tips are just tips because every individual is unique. If your student already has a great organizational system and it’s working, you may not want to mess with things. If you’re just starting out in middle school or things aren’t going so swimmingly this year, or maybe last year needs an upgrade, try some of these tips out. Remember you can also reach out if none of these things work and your child is just an organizational disaster. Hopefully, that won’t be the case!

Happy School Year!
Ms. Rice

Webinars, Seminars, Announcements, and things...

- [Parent Child Journey](#) with Dr. Shapiro & colleagues
 - **Free Parent Support Group EVERY Monday at 1:00pm:** *September 9th - Supporting Your Child's Social Success. Helping too much, helping too little;* [register in advance for zoom link](#)
- Parent Encouragement Program (PEP)
 - [When to Set Limits and When to Let Go](#) - a webinar for parents of preschoolers through teens, Thursday, September 26th, from 8:00-9:00pm, \$25.

HELPFUL RESOURCES and Information

ATTENDANCE

Our attendance secretary is Maria Stefanias. The best way to reach her for questions or updates about attendance is to send her an email at Maria_Stefanias@mcpsmd.org

TO REPORT AN ABSENCE

Call the Attendance Line at 240-740-2101 by 9 a.m.

Upon return to school, send a note to the main office: include student's full name, grade, dates, and reason for absence. You can use this [Attendance Note](#) template for Absences, Tardies, or Early Dismissals. **MCPS requires a doctor's note for absences of 5 days or more.** For an absence of 3 days or longer, homework may be requested by calling the Counseling Office at 240-740-2110.

Teachers enter attendance for each period into Synergy, the attendance system. **All class absences generate an automated call/email to parents. If you believe there is an error, please contact the teacher and the attendance office.**

BUSES

Link to webpage with most up to date schedules. Scroll down on the webpage and select North Bethesda Middle School. Please remember students must ride their assigned bus. If they need to ride another bus on a particular day, please send a note to your child's grade level administrator as soon as possible and definitely by noon on the day the child is riding a different bus. They will sign indicating approval if there is room on that bus.

[Bus Route Link](#)

[Letter from the Department of Transportation](#)

If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Transportation Bethesda Bus Depot at **240-740-6580**.

The Code of Conduct and Student Rights and Responsibilities will be shared next week. We are awaiting the system sharing the final publications for the 2024-2025 school year.

To report Bullying and Harassment, please use this [Bullying and Harassment Form](#)
STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING (SSL)

[NBMS Student Service Learning \(SSL\) Website](#)

Student Service Learning (SSL) Verification forms from the summer are due to Ms. Jurewicz by **September 27, 2024**. Students may turn in completely filled-out hard copy SSL Verification forms to the NBMS Counseling Office or email a picture of the completely filled-out SSL Verification form to Ms. Jurewicz. You can reach Ms. Jurewicz via email at Carla.A.Jurewicz@mcpsmd.net. Students should keep an electronic copy or hard copy of their SSL Verification form(s). Incomplete SSL Verification forms will NOT be processed.

Resources:

[SSL Information and FAQ flyer](#); [hard copies are available in the Counseling Office](#)

For SSL forms, guidelines, resources, and much more click on the MCPS SSL Hub

=> <https://bit.ly/SSLHubMCPS>

All students should check their SSL hours quarterly, [step-by-step directions for checking SSL hours](#)

=> <https://bit.ly/SSLonVUE>

Students, please check your StudentID@mcpsmd.net Gmail account daily for SSL emails (and of course other important emails)

	<p>Make sure to join the NBMS SSL MyMCPS Classroom.</p> <p>To join, click on the NBMS SSL MyMCPS Classroom link => https://mcpsmd.instructure.com/enroll/FC6DG7. Please share this link with students, family, and friends.</p>
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If you have any questions, after reviewing the SSL information above, please send an email to Carla.A.Jurewicz@mcpsmd.net. Thank you!

Have a great week!

Warmly,

AnneMarie Kestner Smith, Ed.D. (She, Her, Hers)

Principal

North Bethesda Middle School

[North Bethesda Middle School Website](#)