



September 8, 2024
North Bethesda Middle School
News and Notes



NORTH BETHESDA MIDDLE SCHOOL UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 9 MAP R Special Schedule No PT

September 9th Outdoor Environmental Education Chaperone Information Meeting at NBMS 7pM
Cafeteria – more information below

Tuesday, September 10 MAP R Special Schedule No PT

Wednesday, September 11 MAP M Special Schedule No PT

Thursday, September 12 MAP M Special Schedule No PT

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

Friday, September 13 Regular Schedule Period 5 Phoenix Time

MAP TESTING THROUGH ENGLISH CLASSES and MATH
classes this week [MAP SCHEDULE](#)

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 the first week of school.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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](#)

To report Bullying and Harassment, please use this [Bullying and Harassment Form](#)

[Bus Route Links](#) – 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.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Extracurricular activities and Activity Bus Routes

[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:

Students are really getting used to the routines and our sixth graders are finding their way around our large building with ease! It's wonderful to see them making new friends and feeling confident navigating middle school! This coming week some extra curricular activities are starting and the activity buses will run Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. See above for a link to our website with information about extra curricular activities and activity bus routes.

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

- **PTSA Information about the upcoming Skate Night at Cabin John Ice Rink and how to volunteer and support other PTSA sponsored events.**
- **Testing Information - MAP Testing Schedule:** Dates and details for the MAP-R and MAP-M assessments. Please make sure your student's Chromebook is fully charged and they bring their charger to school!
- **Information on the upcoming 6th Grade Outdoor Environmental Education Parent chaperone meeting**
- **Information on Culture of Respect Lessons** being implemented through social studies classes this week.
- **Information about the upcoming Coffee with the Counselors**
- **Ms. Rice's Counseling Update** on the benefits of our new cell phone policy.
- **Cafeteria Fees – details on how to prepay and monitor your child's account and how to apply for Free and Reduced Meals**
- **Information on how to sign up to be Courtyard Hero.**
- **Other helpful information**

A MESSAGE FROM the PTSA

Dear NB Families,

We have some really great social events on the calendar for the kids (and parents) this year, but they won't happen without your help. We'd like to get planning teams in place before October 1 to avoid unnecessary space cancelation fees. Please take a look at our signup for [social event planning teams](#) and commit now to making the fun happen for our NBMS kids. They LOVE these events, and it's also fun for parents who plan them and volunteer at these events.

Let's make some joyful middle school memories with our kids this year:)

Thanks for considering,

Holly Balshem

SKATE NIGHT

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 8 p.m.

Tickets are free for students of families with a paid PTSA membership. Please get your student ticket by login into our website at www.nbmsptsa.org, or opening your Membership Toolkit app on your phone, and reserve your kid's free ticket under My Account and Upcoming Events Tickets. There you can also get discounted tickets for siblings and the rest of family members for \$11 per skater. Tickets include entry and skate rentals.

Non PTSA members can visit our online Store on our website [here](#) and get tickets there.

All skaters must reserve a ticket 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 reach out to a counselor if your kid wants to come but the cost is a hardship for your family.

PTSA FEE BASED ACTIVITIES

We're excited to announce that the PTSA is offering two fantastic after-school clubs this season: Debate Club and Finance Club, both run by our trusted vendor partner, Spark Business Academy.

These clubs will begin in less than two weeks, and we encourage you to explore the details, including dates and costs, by following the link provided [here](#).

- [Debate Club Registration](#)
- [Finance Club Registration](#)

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out. We look forward to seeing our students take advantage of these enriching opportunities!

Thanks,
Ray Azarm
VP, Student Enrichment
North Bethesda Middle School PTSA

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Outdoor Education 2024 is just around the corner. If you missed the meeting last week, here is a [link](#) to the recording of the parent information session held last week for outdoor environmental education and click [here](#) to review the shared slides. You can watch the webinar and find out everything you need to know about Outdoor Education.

For those parents interested in being a chaperone there will be a chaperone meeting this coming Monday, September 9 at 7pm in the NBMS cafeteria.

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

CULTURE OF RESPECT LESSONS

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to ensuring our students are equipped with the information needed to be able to promote a positive school culture and ensure the physical, social, and emotional safety for all students. This year’s annual student training module, *MCPS Student Expectation Lessons*, has two parts, and both are required learning experiences. Part one is the updated edition of the annual “Culture of Respect.” We must take an active role to ensure students are informed and able to recognize signs of bullying/cyberbullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), hate-bias incidents, hazing, intimidation, student gender norms, and how to use the Speak Up Protocol. Part two ensures that students are aware of key information in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Student Rights and Responsibilities and MCPS Code

of Conduct documents. This training educates students on their expectations for creating a learning environment where everyone feels welcome, safe, and knows the various ways to report alleged/concerning incidents.

The *MCPS Student Expectation Lessons* have been developed for students in Grades 6–12. The training should take approximately two 45-minute classes to complete and will be accessible to all students via their myMCPS Classroom homepage at the start of the school year. Students are expected to complete the training by September 27, 2024. Students will earn three Student Service Learning hours to complete the training. At North Bethesda, we are allowing students to complete the training modules during their Social Studies classes On Monday, September 9, and finish on September 10th.

The objectives of the training module are for students to know and be able to:

- Review collective responsibilities in promoting a positive school culture and ensuring the physical, social, and emotional safety for all students in alignment with the MCPS *Be Well 365* initiatives.
- Define bullying, cyberbullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), hate-bias, hazing, intimidation, and student gender norms.
- Recognize signs of hazing, bullying, and harassment, including sexual harassment/assault.
- Identify reporting procedures to inform school administration of potential concerns and incidents.
- Analyze different scenarios and discuss possible consequences according to the MCPS Student Code of Conduct.
- Discuss how students can address the situation and report it.

If you have any questions or concerns about the topics that will be covered, please contact me, or your child's school counselor.

Estimados padres/guardianes:

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) se compromete a asegurar que nuestros estudiantes estén equipados con la información necesaria para poder reconocer las señales de acoso/ciberacoso, acoso (incluyendo el acoso sexual), incidentes de odio-prejuicios, ritos de iniciación, intimidación y normas de género de los estudiantes. Una lección de preparación en línea para los estudiantes, titulada "*Cultura de Respeto*", ha sido desarrollada para los estudiantes de los Grados 6 al 12. Esta lección de preparación en línea se basa en el módulo para estudiantes del año pasado y proporciona información esencial que ayudará a los estudiantes a reconocer mejor los signos de conductas inapropiadas, incluyendo las diversas formas de reportar incidentes presuntos o preocupantes. La capacitación incluye un cuestionario para los estudiantes que proporcionará datos valiosos a los líderes escolares para evaluar la cultura y el clima actual de respeto en sus escuelas y determinar los posibles pasos siguientes para planificar mejoras. Los estudiantes obtendrán dos horas de Aprendizaje de Servicio Estudiantil por completar la capacitación.

Los objetivos del módulo de preparación son que los estudiantes sepan y sean capaces de:

- Revisar las responsabilidades colectivas en la promoción de una cultura escolar positiva y asegurar la seguridad física, social y emocional de todos los estudiantes en consonancia con la iniciativa *Be Well 365 (Estar Bien 365)* de MCPS.
- Definir el acoso/intimidación (bullying), el ciberacoso, el acoso (incluido el acoso sexual), el odio-prejuicios, los ritos de iniciación, la intimidación y las normas de género de los estudiantes.
- Reconocer los signos de ritos de iniciación, acoso y hostigamiento, incluido el acoso/agresión sexual.
- Identificar los procedimientos para reportar a la administración escolar posibles preocupaciones e incidentes.
- Analizar los diferentes escenarios y discutir las posibles consecuencias de acuerdo con el Código de Conducta de los Estudiantes de MCPS.
- Completar un cuestionario de comentarios, que incluye una actividad para ayudar a la administración escolar a determinar el nivel de preocupación en cada una de las áreas abordadas en el módulo de capacitación.

La capacitación tomará aproximadamente 30 minutos para ser completada y estará accesible a todos los estudiantes a través de su página inicial de MyMCPS Classroom a partir del 2 de octubre de 2023. Se pide a los estudiantes que completen la capacitación antes del 1 de diciembre de 2023.

Si tienen alguna pregunta o inquietud sobre los temas que se tratarán, comuníquese conmigo o con el consejero escolar de su hijo.

COFFEE WITH THE COUNSELORS

Coffee with the Counselors: September 12th at 9:00 AM on Zoom

The North Bethesda Middle School Counseling Department warmly invites you to join us for “Coffee with the Counselors,” a special presentation designed to give you insight into our school counseling program and services at NBMS. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to learn about the support we have in place for students and to hear more about the counselor’s role in middle school. We look forward to seeing you there!

Topic: Coffee with the Counselors 9.12.2024

Time: Sep 12, 2024, 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/87196618618?pwd=72t9Y8a5fgRFV97eXb11KY09RDLiPb.1>

Meeting ID: 871 9661 8618

Passcode: NBMS

Find your local number: <https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/kebtvpxQ9b>

REQUIRED VACCINES

If your child needs vaccines, please check the attachment for free vaccination clinics.

MS. RICE'S COUNSELING UPDATE

It's been two weeks now that students have been adhering to the new cell phone policy at North Bethesda. Phones should be off and away during school hours, including lunch. Life used to be like this, pre-pandemic. For many of us, this is a throwback to our own youth before cell phones were even a thing. I know many of my colleagues find it refreshing, but some of you may feel like you're missing a limb or something. Believe it or not, that's a phantom feeling, and so is the safety many believe having a phone on at all times provides.

In this newsletter I really want to address safety. I know that is on some of your minds now that you can't reach your children all day long. Our goal is to provide psychological safety.

We have protocols in place for physical safety. We can support your child when they feel the urge to reach out to you. We are geared up to care for your child when they are not with you.

- We have counselors who support students when they are feeling anxious or sad, struggling with friends, need help with a teacher, and so much more.
- We have a Health Room with a full-time Health Tech and a Nurse on duty if your child isn't feeling well, or forgot their medicine, or wasn't prepared for their monthly visitor.
- We have a phone in the Main Office students can use to reach their parents if they forgot something at home, including the pickup plan.
- We practice emergency drills and reunification should there be a fire, weather related situation, or an unfortunate tragedy.

The new cell phone policy really targets the other types of safety - psychosocial safety and psychological safety. We want school to feel like a place where students can take risks, speak up, disagree, ask questions, challenge beliefs, and truly learn. If someone makes a mistake, it won't be recorded for all to see, it will be a thing of the past the next day and something they laugh about down the road. Research has shown that adolescents are more anxious and depressed and less engaged than in previous generations and smart phones were introduced right when those numbers started rising.

The new policy here at NBMS really made a change in the lunchroom since that is the only place students were allowed to use their phones last year. In just two weeks, we already see things moving in the right direction. A year ago, if I'd walked around the lunchroom, I would have caught kids playing video games while munching on a sandwich or texting pictures to friends. Today, I saw students engaged in games of Uno and Connect4, chatting with friends, and laughing. A year ago, I might have seen some phones in the air videoing a fight or someone whose outfit they found displeasurable. Within seconds these videos would go viral and then hundreds of students would be talking about it, texting about it (although not allowed) in class. And it wouldn't go away because after school people would still be talking. I've stood in the back of a classroom when a teacher is teaching and seen how

many students are distracted by a buzz in their pocket or the lure of a game on their Chromebook. Our teachers are working to reduce screen time in class this year too, to increase engagement in learning. We want to increase face to face time here at school and decrease the ability for a bad moment to follow one around for days.

I find it revitalizing that I send my children to school, and I don't have to worry about them for 7 ½ hours. It allows me to be better at my job. If something is wrong, the school will call me. If I need to change the pickup plan, I can reach my child at 3:00, or I can ask the school to deliver a message. Encourage your child to make their plans with you in advance and ask for support from a school employee rather than sneaking their phone during the school day. We are here to support and help.

Oh, and pay attention to their demeanor when they get home once they've had a snack of course! Are they happier, chattier, or more engaged in life? Do they have more to tell you about their day than they did in the past? Are they less connected to the phone when they get home too?

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.**

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.

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.

[Courtyard Heroes Sign Up](#)

Thank you for your consideration.

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.

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.

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.

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](#)