



December 8, 2024
North Bethesda Middle School
News and Notes



MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2024

REGULAR SCHEDULE PERIOD 2 PHOENIX TIME

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024

REGULAR SCHEDULE PERIOD 3 PHOENIX TIME

PTSA MEETING ON ZOOM 7 PM (MORE DETAILS BELOW)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024

[SEL HOMEROOM SCHEDULE](#)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2024

REGULAR SCHEDULE PERIOD 4 PHOENIX TIME

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2024

REGULAR SCHEDULE PERIOD 5 PHOENIX TIME

GINGERBREAD WARS 5:30 - 7:00 PM NBMS CAFETERIA

UPCOMING DATE: TUESDAY, 12/17/2024 WINTER CONCERT AT @ WJ 6:30 – 9:00 P.M.

6:30 – 7:30 CHORUS

8:00 - 9:00 INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Reminder: Parents, please drop off students in the drop off loop (entrance on Bradmoor Drive – note: Johnson Drive is for buses only). Also, at dismissal – please do not stop to wait for your child on Bradmoor by the NBMS sign. This blocks people’s access to line up for the drop off loop and in turn causes people to block Bradmoor Drive for people who are passing through.

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:

Thank you to the PTSA and the parent and staff volunteers who came out to support our 6th grade social Friday night. The students had a wonderful time. These types of activities are so important in building community for our students and we couldn't do it without the parents and caregivers who volunteer their time!

In this week's News and Notes, you will find information about the following topics:

- Winter Holiday Pop Up Market to support NBMS CARES
- MODEL UN Candy Cane Fundraiser
- PTSA Meeting Zoom information 7-9 PM 12/10/2024
- Yearbook information (special discount price of \$30 if purchased before 12/31)
- Opportunities for charitable donations (Socks of Love, SGA Feminine Hygiene Product Drive, NBMS CARES gift card donations)
- Opportunities to volunteer - National History Day Judging and Chaperone for the 7th Grade field trip to Finance Park and helping with the SGA sponsored Gingerbread Wars on Friday, December 13, 2024.
- Ms. Rice's Counseling Update on Signs of Suicide including a recording of our Coffee with the Counselor's presentation to parents on this important topic.
- Opportunities for students including an HBCU College Fair in February and the Integirls Math Competition.
- Other helpful information

WINTER HOLIDAY POP UP MARKET

JOIN US AT THE NBMS HOLIDAY MARKET!



You're Invited! Holiday Pop-Up Market at NBMS on December 14th!

Mark your calendars for the NBMS Holiday Pop-Up Market on Saturday, December 14th, from 2:00 to 6:00 PM in the North Bethesda Middle School cafeteria!

What to Expect:

Over 20 small businesses and community vendors in an indoor venue

- A wide variety of products, including hand-made candles, ornaments, artisanal foods, accessories, bath products, bags, clothing, vintage, and more!

Why Attend:

- Support local businesses and find unique holiday gifts.
- Proceeds from vendor fees go directly to the NBMS Cares program, which helps families in need.
- Any staff who come by and stroll through the market will be automatically entered into a raffle for some amazing prizes donated by the small businesses!

There are a few remaining vendor spots open, so if you or someone you know owns a small business and would like to participate, please reach out to Sarada Jasti Currie (Sarada_D_Jasticurrie@mcpsmd.org) ASAP for more information.

This is a wonderful chance to celebrate the season, support a great cause, and enjoy holiday shopping. Hope to see you there!

MODEL UN FUNDRAISER

The Model UN Club is hosting its annual Candy Cane Gram sale this week! Students can celebrate the winter season and spread some cheer by sending their friends, teachers, or favorite NBMS staff members a candy cane greeting! Each Gram costs just \$1 (or 6 for \$5!), and all proceeds go toward helping the Model UN Club represent NBMS at Model UN Conferences. Students can buy Candy Cane Grams outside the cafeteria during lunch on Wednesday (12/11), Thursday (12/12), and Friday (12/13). Then, the elves of the Model UN Club will hand deliver the candy grams during Phoenix Time on Thursday, December 19th.

For more information, contact Mrs. Steimer – Natacha_D_Steimer@mcpsmd.org

PTSA Meeting 12/10/2024 7PM on Zoom

Please join the PTSA for their December meeting. Bonnie Zucker, Ph.D., an NBMS parent, psychologist, writer, and anxiety expert will be presenting.

Here is the Zoom Link for the meeting

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/83480369881?pwd=cWRPY3NyMENqTGZ0Y2x6Z05WQzBFdz09>

Meeting ID: 834 8036 9881

Passcode: 289810

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,83480369881# US (Washington DC)

+16469313860,,83480369881# US

YEARBOOKS FOR SALE!

NMBS yearbook sales have begun! If you would like to order a yearbook this year, please use this link to place your order <https://yearbookforever.com/>

Enter "North Bethesda Middle School" in the search bar and it will take you to the order page. The pricing for a yearbook is as follows: **Special Discount: \$30 (now until 12/31)**; Early Bird Discount: \$35 (1/1 until 2/28); Regular Price: \$40 (3/1 onwards). Yearbook orders will only be done online this year. There are a LIMITED AMOUNT of yearbooks. **Please get your order ASAP to reserve your copy!**

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lui at Jemi_J_Lui@mcpsmd.org.

SUBMIT PHOTOS FOR YEARBOOK!!

Do you have photos you would like to submit for the yearbook? Have you taken pictures of events this year? We hope your answer is YES! The Yearbook Club is looking for students and families to contribute pictures for the '24-'25 yearbook. They can be classes, clubs, student life, community events, SSL, concerts, sporting events, etc. You can submit photos via the Yearbook Snap app (the app icon is orange!), or the Community Upload website

<https://snap.yearbookforever.com/snap/index.html#/upload/1-23J-32823>

The access code is: phoenix (no caps or spaces).

If you have any questions or run into any problems with submissions, please contact Ms. Lui at Jemi_J_Lui@mcpsmd.org.

MS. RICE'S COUNSELING UPDATE

SOS, the phrase used to begin a message requesting assistance when loss of life or property is imminent.

SOS, the acronym for Signs of Suicide, an evidence-based youth suicide prevention program we use with middle and high schoolers in Montgomery County.

Either way you look at it, SOS is a cry for help. If someone is thinking about suicide, it doesn't mean they want to die, it means they want to solve the problem of intense emotional pain and hopelessness they are experiencing, and they need help.

The SOS program in Montgomery County teaches students to differentiate between normal development and what may be a more serious mental health issue, such as depression. Students are taught to ACT - Acknowledge, Care, Tell, if they have concerns about a friend.

Students learn to *acknowledge* warning signs such as: anger, big changes in behavior, hopelessness, sleeping more or less, drinking or drug use, overwhelming pain, or talking about suicide. Students are encouraged to show they *care* by practicing active listening and using simple phrases to show support. Students are then encouraged to reach out and *tell* a trusted adult about their concerns. We work with students to think of trusted adults they can turn to in and out of school in times of distress. We emphasize the importance of NOT keeping secrets in these situations and that a friend mad at them is worth it, if it saves a friend's life.

As parents, you are often the trusted adult, but you may also need to ACT when you see changes in your own child. You don't need to be an expert or have all the answers; you are human and this is often an uncomfortable topic. If your child comes to you with concerns:

- *Listen* to your child's concerns and encourage them to seek help
- *Contact* their friend's parents/guardians directly and share your child's concerns
- Contact school mental health staff/administrator so they can support the child/family
- If you are concerned about a child's immediate safety, call 911 or 988
- *Reassure* your child they did the right thing by telling you

There are many ways we can prevent suicide. We can build protective factors, like connection and participation in activities, build coping skills, like exercise, journaling, and listening to music, and most importantly, we can keep talking about mental health. Ask open-ended questions, don't rush to solve problems, and make sure your child knows you are available. Remember that asking about suicide will not put the idea in someone's head. What's most important is that we receive the SOS message for help and seek support for those in need.

Coffee With the Counselors this past Friday focused on [SOS Parent Education](#). The presentation is [linked here](#) for your to review, or watch for the first time. If you would like to learn more about the SOS program and watch the video clips we show our students, check out the [SOS Parent Page](#). Your school counselor is here to support you along with many of these other local and state organizations.

Montgomery County Crisis Center -1301 Piccard Drive, Rockville 240-777-4000

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline - dial 988

Crisis Text Line - text ACT to 741741

Webinars, Seminars, Announcements, and things...

- Are you interested in being an NBMS Career Day Speaker? We are always looking to bring new and exciting careers on board. This year's Career Day will be Thursday, April 3rd, from 7:45-10:45 am. If you're interested in being a part of greatness, complete this [Speaker Information Form](#) and we will be in touch.
- [Parent Child Journey](#) with Dr. Shapiro & colleagues
 - **Free Parent Support Group EVERY Monday at 1:00pm:** December 9 -Redefining Success; [register in advance for zoom link](#)

- [MCPS Parent Academy](#) - The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families facilitated by Franklin Covey - December 11th from 6:00 - 7:00 pm

NBMS CARES

Please consider supporting the NBMS Care initiative to support families in need during the holiday season NBMS would welcome donations of gift cards for Giant, Safeway and or Target to support our families in need during the holiday season and beyond.

SOCKS OF LOVE

Join the Student Advisory Council and Walter Johnson High School in the 'Socks of Love' drive! We're collecting men's wool socks for Bethesda Cares. Starting next Monday, drop off your donation outside Mrs. Afram's office, D116, on Mondays and Tuesdays—you might even get a treat! Thank you! Flyer linked [here](#).

SGA FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCT DRIVE

The NBMS student government association has become aware of the limited supply of feminine hygiene products in the restrooms. To solve this issue, the SGA proposes a fundraiser for feminine hygiene products. All NBMS students, parents, or staff can donate the products through the main office or counseling where they will be evenly distributed to all female restrooms and the gender neutral bathrooms. Your donations would be greatly appreciated by the female community of NBMS.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

SGA SPONSORED GINGERBREAD WARS

SGA's 1st. Gingerbread Wars will be held on Friday, December 13th, in the cafeteria from 5 - 6:30 PM. Invite a friend if you like, because teams of two are allowed. Admission is \$10 per person.

The SGA will provide the gingerbread kit and some decorations, but feel free to bring extra materials. NO PEANUTS are allowed!

Students: If you want to help, please complete the [Gingerbread Wars Volunteer Form](#) form. We need up to 10 Volunteers so be 1 of the first people to sign up. Participant sign-ups and payments are due by December 2nd. Payment of \$10 per participant can be made in person to Mrs. Robin Krakower (School Financial Specialist), whose room is at the front in the Main Office.

Sign-ups are on a first-come, first-serve basis since we only have 50 slots. If you sign up and don't pay by December 2nd, another student will take your spot. Please complete this form if you would like to participate in the competition. [Gingerbread Wars Participant Form](#).

We also need parent volunteers so please fill out this form for parents. UPDATED LINK [Gingerbread Wars Parent Volunteer Form](#).

Seventh Grade Finance Park Field Trip Parent Chaperones Needed

Dear NBMS Parents - We NEED YOU!

One of the exciting experiences your student will have as a Grade 7 student is participating in a financial literacy program through their Social Studies class. All Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Grade 7 students will participate in the Junior Achievement financial literacy curriculum with a culminating simulation with a field trip to Finance Park. Finance Park is an exciting event provided by Junior Achievement, an international leader in financial literacy education. **Grade 7 students from North Bethesda Middle School will be attending Finance Park on one of the following dates:**

- 1/22/2025 - Ms. Lunsford's Periods 1, 2, 3, 5, 7
- 1/23/2025 - Mr. Lutchenkov's Periods 2, 3, 5, 7; Dr. Lorenz's Pd 5; ARS students
- 1/24/2025 - Ms. Kaiser's Periods 1, 5, 7; AND Ms. Grace's Period 7

As part of the Finance Park curriculum, students will learn about saving and investing, types of credit, creating a budget, wages and taxes, and the role of insurance. Students will also complete a career interest inventory and learn about programs of study available at their local high school as well as at the Thomas Edison High School of Technology.

After approximately three weeks of financial literacy instruction taught in their social studies class, students will travel to the MCPS Finance Park facility located at the Thomas Edison High School of Technology in Wheaton for a simulation experience. At Finance Park, students will work in small groups to establish a budget based on an adult life scenario they have been given. They must research and shop at different "stores" for essential living expenses such as groceries, housing, medical insurance, and transportation while remaining within their budget. Here's [a link to a video](#) about how the simulation works.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Visit <https://www.myja.org/caregivers/montgomery> to volunteer. You can volunteer for the date your child goes, or any of the days NBMS is going !

The success of the Finance Park program is dependent on the active participation of parent and community volunteers. If you have ever paid a bill or used a credit card, you have what it takes to be a Finance Park volunteer! We hope you will consider being a Finance Park volunteer on one or more of the days our students will be engaged in the budget simulation. **The total time commitment is about 5.5 hours. You will drive your own vehicle to Finance Park in Wheaton and arrive by 8:30 AM for a 1 hour training, and then help run the simulation until around 2 PM. You will bring your own lunch.** During the simulation, students are in small groups. You will help guide students through different phases of the day, which simulate real-world budgeting decisions, spending research, and bill payment.

The program is mostly scripted, and you will be given a book with questions and prompts to guide conversations. You can also talk about your experiences—careers, hobbies, how you budget, etc. Generally these conversations don't last more than 10 minutes at any time.

If you have any questions, please contact Eric Kling, NBMS Social Studies Content Specialist at: Eric_J_Kling@mcpsmd.org

National History Day – County Competition Judges needed!

Community members, and aspiring historians, we need you! MCPS is looking for community members 18+ to judge student projects at the National History Day County Competition on March 8, 2025!

The National History Day (NHD) program was started in 1974 as a “science fair” for history, giving students a chance to become real historians. This year, students participating in NHD nationwide are researching topics based on the theme, “Turning Points in History.”

At the contest, students present their research in one of five categories: exhibits, performances, documentaries, websites, or papers. Judges evaluate entries based on historical quality and effectiveness of presentation. The evaluation of projects utilizes a national rubric and all judges will be trained prior to the event via a Zoom session.

History Day judging is a one day commitment from 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM on Saturday, March 8, 2025. This timeframe includes an orientation to the judging process, the evaluation of students’ research and presentation, and time to draft comments. Judges have a profound impact by providing an opportunity for students to discuss their work and receive feedback from an outside resource. Volunteers also have a tremendous amount of fun in the process.

Here is a [flyer](#) and [community letter](#) for more information.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

HBCU COLLEGE FAIR

The 17th annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) College Fair will be held on Friday, February 14, 2025, from 6:00–8:30 p.m.

The in-person event will take place at The Universities at Shady Grove for students in Grades 8–12 and their families to meet with representatives from over 50 historically black colleges and universities.

The HBCU College Fair will include the following:

- On-the-spot scholarship opportunities for Grade 12 students;
- Workshops on financial aid assistance, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), scholarship opportunities, presentations from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, an overview of HBCUs, and how to find your best-fit HBCU;
- A panel discussion on college life with representatives from the Montgomery County National Pan-Hellenic Council Fraternities and Sororities. During the fair, students and parents can interact with college admission representatives and attend workshops, including a separate workshop and activities for middle school students
- Registration for the college fair will open on Friday, December 13, 2024, and can be found on the HBCU Fair website. We strongly encourage school counselors and College and Career Information Coordinators (CCICs) to attend the fair.

- This event is an excellent opportunity for school staff to meet with HBCU admissions representatives and learn more about HBCUs. We will also provide FAFSA completion support for any Grade 12 student and their caregivers seeking assistance, which is scheduled to open in December 2024.

Representatives from the Maryland Higher Education Commission, Educational Opportunity Center, and Montgomery College's financial aid outreach office will be onsite to help. Please encourage administrators and staff to attend or volunteer to help with this event. Staff at all grade levels are welcome to volunteer. The volunteer registration information is located on the HBCU Fair website.

INTEGIRLS MATH COMPETITION

The D.C. chapter of INTEGIRLS is hosting a **beginner-friendly, in-person math competition Saturday, December 14th from 9 am - 4 pm** at the Bioscience Education Center at Montgomery College Germantown Campus! Our mission at INTEGIRLS is to encourage girls and non-binaries in STEM fields through math competitions and events. This year, we will have math competition rounds (individual and team), an estimathon, a speaker event, awards ceremony, provided lunch, and lots of fun STEM activities. Teams of up to 4 students will be able to connect with and enjoy math with other girls and non-binaries around the DMV. There will be a lot of prizes and fun swag for all participants.

Register [here](#) directly or go to the INTEGIRLS D.C. website (dc.integirls.org) to learn more about the competition.

Thank you for your time, and please let me know if you have any questions at all!

Isha

isha@integirls.org

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. or send an excuse note by email.

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

It may be necessary to periodically 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 Schoolbucks 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.

STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Updated online versions of *A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities*, the *Student Code of Conduct in MCPS*, *Guidelines for Respecting Religious Diversity* and *Guidelines for Student Gender Identity* are available on the [MCPS website](#).

STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING (SSL)

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


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 wonderful Thanksgiving break!

Warmly,

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

Principal

North Bethesda Middle School

[North Bethesda Middle School Website](#)