



January 26, 2025  
North Bethesda Middle School  
News and Notes



Monday, January 27, 2025  
Tuesday January 28, 2025

Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
Thursday, January 30, 2025  
Friday, January 31, 2025

Regular Schedule Period 6 PT  
Regular Schedule Period 7 PT LAST DAY OF MP2  
Girls Basketball v. Pyle @ NBMS Boys away @ Pyle  
**NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS - GRADING and REPORTING DAY**  
Regular Schedule Period 1 PT  
Regular Schedule Period 2 PT

**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](mailto:Daniel_E_Werbeck@mcpsmd.org)  
Grade 7 [Katherine\\_B\\_Rudd@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Katherine_B_Rudd@mcpsmd.org)  
Grade 8 [tirza\\_carmichaelcollins@mcpsmd.org](mailto:tirza_carmichaelcollins@mcpsmd.org)  
Principal [Annemarie\\_e\\_smith@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Annemarie_e_smith@mcpsmd.org)

Greetings North Bethesda Families:

I hope everyone is enjoying the weekend. I am happy that the weather is warming up so hopefully, students will have a chance to get outside and run around during lunch next week. I wanted to inform you that starting January 27, I will be out on medical leave for shoulder surgery and recuperation. The recovery process is expected to be lengthy, and my doctor has advised that I remain out of work until after spring break. The plan for leadership shifts will be shared by Mr.

David Adams, Director, Office of School Support and Improvement as soon as possible. I am confident that because of our hardworking and committed administrative team, our highly skilled leadership team, and the amazing teachers and staff at NBMS, the school will thrive in my absence. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

I'm also excited to share that we received a thank you from the Manna Food Center for our donation of 731 pounds of food in November. This is another example of our school's commitment to service and generosity.

Last week Ms. Kaiser's, Ms. Grace's and Dr. Lorenz's classes were able to attend Finance Park, but unfortunately, the other 7th grade social studies classes were postponed because of the delays. We have rescheduled Ms. Lunsford's classes for March 5 and Mr. Lutchenkov's class and Ms. Guerinot's classes for March 6.

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

- Information for 8th grade parents regarding the End of Year Social for 8th Graders
- PTSA Enrichment Opportunities including an upcoming coding class and tennis classes
- The NBMS Media Center's Winter Book Fair
- Ms. Rice's Counseling Update on Safe Screening
- MCPS Meal Viewer - the new way to view breakfast and lunch menus
- Yearbook information (Early Bird discount price of \$35 if purchased before 2/28)
- Inclement Weather Information
- Opportunities for students including the Seventeenth National Essay Contest by the Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project, and an HBCU College Fair in February
- Other helpful information

## **8th GRADE SOCIAL**

A committee of parents has been meeting to plan the NBMS end of year 8th Grade Social party. The party will be at North Bethesda on Friday, May 30, 2024 from 6:30 - 9:00 PM. There will be a DJ, dinner, a photo booth, and a slide show featuring your kids and their NBMS buddies over the years :-)

Please start looking for photos of your child/children and their buddies from the last three years at NBMS! Because we hope to include every 8th grader, group photos with other current 8th graders or NBMS teacher(s) will be given preference in the slideshow. This also means that we won't be able to use every photo that you submit but we are committed to making sure that every child is included in this slideshow.

Photos of NBMS activities or photos taken at school or NBMS sporting events will also be given preference in the slideshow.

To help us streamline the process and ensure that the slideshow is the best it can be, please consider the following guidelines when submitting photos. Note that these are only guidelines, not hard-and-fast rules.

Please: IMPORTANT: —> Save each photo with a name that has the grade in which it was taken and the last name of your child and other children featured if you know their names. This will make it easier for us to sort the pictures for the slideshow. Unlabeled photos may be disregarded

Upload the photos to this

[Google drive folder](#) or email to [nbmsphotos2025@gmail.com](mailto:nbmsphotos2025@gmail.com).

- Please put your photos in the sub drive according to their first name.
- Limit your submission to 3 photos
- Make sure the photos are good quality. Generally if photos are 1MB or larger, they are fine for the slideshow.
- Upload the original photo whenever possible.
- No family vacation photos or photos with siblings please (unless your children are twin 8th graders like mine!)

**\*\*\*Submit all photos by April 15, 2025\*\*\***

Thank you in advance!

*Mara Kronenfeld and the 8th Grade Social Parent Organizing Committee*

## **FEE BASED PTSA ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **CODING CLASSES FOR 6th through 8th Grade Students**

#### **CODING CLASS**

**Spring NBMS Tennis Programs**

[Wednesday Intermediate/Beginner](#)

[Wednesday Varsity Futures Team](#)

[Thursdays Intermediate/Beginner](#)

[Thursdays Varsity Futures Team](#)

[Extended Season Per Diem Wednesday Classes](#)

### **NBMS WINTER BOOK FAIR**

**NBMS Winter Book Fair is coming up soon!**

Our NBMS Book fair is quickly approaching! The dates are February 10th-14th. We are excited for a great book fair! All funds raised from the Book Fair will go to buying new books for our NBMS

Library Media Center. The Book Fair will be open from 7:45am-3:00pm on Monday thru Thursday of that week. On Friday, February 14th, the Book Fair will be open from 7:45am-1:00pm.

Our Media Center staff, Ms. Woods & Ms. Kennedy, will be running the Book Fair, but would love some parent help assisting students and running the cash register. They will show each parent who helps with the cash register how to use it at the book fair.

The days & time slots that the Media Center staff need assistance are in the below Sign Up Genius. Thanks in advance for your help!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EAAAD2BAoF58-nbms>

## **DONATIONS NEEDED**

Please consider donating a three ring binder for students in need for the second semester. Donations can be given to Ms. Mary Beth Turska in the NBMS Counseling Office

## **MS. RICE'S COUNSELING UPDATE**

If you grew up in the eighties, you might remember the television commercial that started with an egg in a pan. "This is your brain," they said. Then they cracked the egg into the hot pan, it sizzled, "This is your brain on drugs." When Dr. Clifford Sussman was here for Coffee With the Counselors in November, he taught us about our brain on screens. I think some of our brains sizzle on screens, just like on drugs.

This is because screens, like alcohol, drugs, sugar, and other things, are pleasure transmitters. Game and app developers use different types of reinforcement to keep the user engaged. Kids game for the emotional experience, the thrill, the fun, the escape and the creativity. Being in an app can feel social as you can comment and converse on different topics. Young children, tweens and teens, in particular, have difficulty putting screens down because their prefrontal cortex isn't developed yet. This is the more advanced part of the brain, where the breaks are housed. Even if screens have positive attributes, too much of a good thing is often still too much.

Our goal as parents is to keep a balance of high and low dopamine activities for ourselves and our children. High dopamine activities are quick and have constant gratification, like gaming or scrolling. Low dopamine activities sustain more effort, like homework, exercise, reading a book, playing an instrument, snacking, or doing a puzzle. We want our children to be able to self-regulate their use of screens, but for many this is not possible and we need to step in with limit-setting and natural consequences to help build the ability. If we step too far and micromanage their use of screens it will backfire and lead to a lack of self-regulation.

So, what does limit setting look like?

- Limit setting involves structure- the more structure, the fewer power struggles.

- Limit setting involves managing environmental cues - seeing screens leads to anticipatory dopamine release. (This is akin to walking into a bar or hanging out with drinking buddies, you know that alcohol is coming and your body releases dopamine.)
  - Consider having high and low dopamine zones in your home (we never take screens into the bedroom and started keeping the chromebooks out of regular view)
  - Consider that your own use of screens is a cue to your child
- Limit setting involves delayed gratification
  - alternate high and low dopamine activities (i.e. separate screens from snack or meal time)
  - Have a daily time limit for screens for everyone in the family - one hour is a good place to start
- Limit setting involves logical and immediate consequences
  - avoid physical altercations or power struggles
  - Use a timer for screen time and when the timer goes off, the screen goes off; if it doesn't, start a new timer and double the amount of time on the new timer (what they went over on their screen time limit) and subtract it from their time the next day
  - Immediately reward your child when they turn off their screen on their own - consider a signature or a sticker on a card and when they have five signatures or stickers they choose a reward from a prize box, or an item from a favorite dessert or drink place
  - Consistency is key.
- I've also learned that bargaining is okay sometimes. If my child is watching a TV show and the timer goes off with two minutes left in the episode, as long as it's only two more minutes, I'll let her finish. Win-win!

There are pluses and minuses to screen time. Video games teach skills. Homework online can be a high dopamine activity. Addiction to screens is defined by how bad the problems you're having because of the screens are. If your child is failing classes, has psychiatric issues, or is significantly impaired in social, family, or educational settings, it's worth seeking professional help. Some red flags to be on the look-out for are: aggression when you turn screens off, lying combined with other red flags, stealing money to play/purchase games/apps, or suicidal threats.

Many children with ADHD, Autism, Anxiety, and Depression are at higher risk for developing gaming and screen time addictions. The screening negatively impacts mental health, but the mental health disorder also leads to screen/game use. Professional mental health counselors can help in these situations and usually will treat the gaming first to gain access to the other underlying issues.

For more information or support, check out these great websites from local clinicians:

[www.cliffordsusssmanmd.com](http://www.cliffordsusssmanmd.com)

[www.iparent101.com](http://www.iparent101.com)

[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 7:45-10:45am. 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:** January 27th - Your Job/My Job: Division of Responsibility in the Parent-Child Relationship; [register in advance for zoom link](#)
  - [Winter 2025 Journey beginning for Parents of Challenging Children](#) Preschool through Pre-adolescence - 10 Tuesday mornings, Jan 28-April 1 from 11:00am - 12:00pm with Dr. Dan, pay what you can
- [PEP: Nurturing the Nurturers: Prioritizing Parent Well-Being for Strong Families](#). a PEP Critical Topics in Parenting Webinar, January 29, 2025- 7:30-9:00pm, free
- Caring Matters: [Parenting While Grieving: Supporting a Child Grieving the Death of a Parent](#) - free 8-week online workshop series beginning Wednesday, February 19th
- Caring Matters: [Camp Erin Montgomery County](#) - free, weekend overnight camp for grieving children & teens, Friday, May 2nd @ 4:00 through Sunday, May 4th at 2:00pm at Bar-T Mountainside in Frederick. If you are interested, contact your child's counselor.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

### SEVENTEENTH NATIONAL ESSAY CONTEST BY KOREAN SPIRIT AND CULTURE PROMOTION PROJECT

The 17<sup>th</sup> National Essay Contest by Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project ("KSCPP"), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in the U.S.

The essay topic is based on the publication *Chung Hyo Ye, Tales of filial devotion, loyalty, respect and benevolence from the history and folklore of Korea*.

The contest is open to all middle and high school students, with separate competitions held for each group. Winners will receive their prizes in the form of a check (1st prize: \$500) or an e-gift card. The [attached flyer](#) has full details on how to enter, the submission deadline, and the results announcement date. We look forward to receiving entries from your school and would appreciate it if you circulate this flyer so that many students can take part.

### 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.

## **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](mailto: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.**

### **School Meal Viewer**

MealViewer, the new interactive menu platform for Montgomery County Public Schools breakfast and lunch menus. MealViewer will launch on Sunday, December 8, 2024. Portable document format

(PDF) menus will remain available through December 2024. Starting January 1, 2025, PDF menus will no longer be available.

Here is the NBMS MealViewer [link](https://schools.mealviewer.com/school/NorthBethesdaMS). <https://schools.mealviewer.com/school/NorthBethesdaMS>

Here is a [link](#) to the MCPS Division of Food and Nutritional Services where you can find more information in different languages.

## 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](http://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](http://www.MySchoolApps.com); this is the preferred application method.

Apply online NOW at [MySchoolApps.com](http://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.



## INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

MCPS Operating Status and Notifications: In the event of inclement weather, please refer to the MCPS color codes for operational decisions, including school closures, delayed openings, or early dismissals. The color codes are available in multiple languages

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/closings/>

Where to Find Winter Weather Information: For the latest updates on MCPS decision-making processes and communications during inclement weather, please visit the following resource:

[MCPS Winter Weather Preparedness.](#)

## 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](mailto: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 =&gt; <a href="https://mcpsmd.instructure.com/enroll/FC6DG7">https://mcpsmd.instructure.com/enroll/FC6DG7</a>. 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](mailto:Carla.A.Jurewicz@mcpsmd.net). Thank you!

## 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: **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](mailto: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](mailto:Jemi_J_Lui@mcpsmd.org).

Warmly,

[AnneMarie Kestner Smith, Ed.D.](#)

Principal

North Bethesda Middle School

[North Bethesda Middle School Website](#)