

North Bethesda Middle School

February 16, 2025

News and Notes

Daniel E. Werbeck, Acting Principal

<i>Monday, February 17, 2025</i>	<i>Holiday</i>
<i>Tuesday, February 18, 2025</i>	<i>Regular Bell Schedule - PT 5</i>
<i>Wednesday, February 19, 2025</i>	<i>Regular Bell Schedule - PT 6</i>
<i>Thursday, February 20, 2025</i>	<i>Regular Bell Schedule; - PT 7</i>
<i>Friday, February 21, 2025</i>	<i>Regular Bell Schedule - PT 1</i>

In this week's *News and Notes*, you'll find details on the following topics:

- Upcoming 7th grade trip to Finance Park
- March Madness @ WJ - 3/14/25
- WJ Spring Hockey
- WJ Bake Sale
- Ms. Rice's Counseling Update - Talking With Your Teen About Pornography
- 8th Grade End-of-Year Social Information
- PTSA Enrichment Opportunities, including an upcoming coding class and tennis lessons
- PTSA [Meeting Recording \(2/11/25\)](#)
- MCPS Meal Viewer – a new tool for viewing breakfast and lunch menus
- Yearbook Information – Early Bird discount price of \$35 if purchased before 2/28
- Inclement Weather Information
- Student Opportunities, including the Seventeenth National Essay Contest by the Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project and an upcoming HBCU College Fair in February
- Other Helpful Information

We appreciate your continued support and engagement!

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 Hyle_L_Daley@mcpsmd.org

Grade 7 Katherine_B_Rudd@mcpsmd.org

Grade 8 tirza_carmichaelcollins@mcpsmd.org

Principal Annemarie_e_smith@mcpsmd.org

Finance Park Trip

Dear NBMS Parents - We NEED YOU for Finance Park!

One of the exciting experiences Grade 7 students have is participating in the Junior Achievement financial literacy curriculum with a culminating simulation with a field trip to Finance Park.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS are STILL NEEDED for our trip on Thursday, March 6th with Mr. Lutchenkov's class! You don't have to be a parent of Mr. Lutchenkov's students to volunteer – anyone is welcome to help!

Please Visit <https://www.myja.org/caregivers/montgomery> to volunteer.

NBMS March Madness

Hey NB Families, Do you know what's right around the corner?

March Madness Basketball at WJ is coming soon on **Friday, March 14 at 7pm!!**

It's time for the NB kids to get their 5 person teams together and complete a [Team Registration Form](#). Also each individual player needs to turn in a [Family Waiver Form](#). Forms can be printed from the links or picked up in the main office and should be turned in to the main office by **Friday, March 7**. Teams will compete for prizes and glory! And parents will have a chance to win a free week of WJ basketball camp during the halftime half court shot contest.

It's free to play, but there is a \$5 entrance fee for all players and spectators, Get your tickets in the [PTSA online store](#) in advance. We cannot accept cash at the door.

Parents, we need your help to make this event a success, so please [sign up](#) for a volunteer spot. Also, parent volunteers enter for free, so get your volunteer spot now;) Let's keep this tradition going and give our kids a chance to make meaningful memories!

WJ Spring Hockey

If you know any rising WJ 9th graders that are interested in playing WJ Spring hockey, please tell them to email wjhockeyclub@gmail.com. Spring Hockey is open to all 8th -12th graders. Registration typically begins early March and games begin in April. Minimum 9 regular season games, Playoffs (at least 4 teams). The league will play Monday-Friday after school. Games will generally begin at 3:45 PM or later. Each team will play at least one game per week. No body contact (strongly enforced).

WJ Used Book Sale Information

Please see below for an opportunity to purchase used books coming up at Walter Johnson High School

****BOOK SALE DATES ****

- Saturday, March 1: 9 am - 4 pm
- Sunday, March 2: 9 am - 3 pm

Email: WJUsedBookSale@gmail.com with any questions. Thank you for your support!
Used Book Sale Committee

Mental Health Forum

Please see the following link about a **family forum on Mental Health and Substance Use Prevention** that takes place on Saturday, March 1, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 pm at Gaithersburg High School. Please see the link below for more information.

[Family Forum on Mental Health & Substance Use](#)

Ms. Rice's Counseling Update

Back in December, a New York Times article declared that it was time to talk about pornography, with teenagers. As an Adolescent Mental Health counselor I was intrigued and read the article. Did you know that the average American first views pornography at age 12? Let that sink in, and, in a 2023 survey of adolescents by Common Sense Media, nearly 75% of all teenagers have seen pornography.

Experts say that the use of online pornography is so commonplace it's impossible to prevent. We were all teenagers once upon a time. Perhaps you remember your first encounter with pornography. I remember when my best friend and I would pull out my dad's hidden stash of Playboy magazines and flip through the images. That was sexualized nudity. Today's online pornography is different; it is explicit and unrealistic, most likely misleading about sexual relations, and therefore, possibly harmful. The same survey from Common Sense said that of those who watched pornography, whether intentionally or by accident, more than half reported seeing violence.

Even if people in pornographic movies appear to like what they are doing, they might not really enjoy it, or they might be in pain. To a younger consumer with no real-life sexual experience, this might not be so obvious and there is concern among experts in the field that viewing pornography without this knowledge might cause issues in sexuality and relationships. In the real world there is consent and there is trust, two things we should teach our children about, but that aren't so obvious in the online porn of today.

Today's adolescents are spending more time online, so while fewer high school students are having sex, there is a higher likelihood of middle and high school students stumbling upon and consuming online pornography. The article made the case for me, it would be a good idea for me to teach my child about pornography before someone else does. Don't worry - it's just a common myth that talking about something taboo will prompt its use.

So, how do you talk to your teen about pornography? Here are tips from my own attempt at talking to my 6th grader.

- Assess your child's reaction to the word pornography.
 - Is it disgust, excitement, disinterest, curiosity, or something else?
- Make your child feel safe with whatever their response is to build trust
- Share your view of porn and why - adolescents want clear explanations to help them understand things; just like toddlers they want to know WHY
 - If your child is up for it, talk through some of the details and point out problems, expectations, your hopes and values for how sexual relationships should be
- Explain the difference between a real, loving, mutually respectful relationship and the dynamics, including violence, often depicted in pornography

My conversation didn't last more than two minutes, disgust and disinterest were immediately expressed. I validated my child's feelings and shared my own as well. I opened the door for her to talk to me when and if she does come across pornography. As a middle school counselor I sometimes think I know too much, because I know kids are showing each other porn at sleep-overs and can get past all sorts of content blockers. So, perhaps I jumped the gun on the conversation, but I don't regret it. As a parent, my goal is to help my child become a conscious consumer, have an internal filter, and feel guided. Life will give you the opportunities to do this, seize them, and remember it's okay if you don't have all the answers.

Webinars, Seminars, Announcements, and things...

- [Parent Child Journey](#) with Dr. Shapiro & colleagues
 - **Free Parent Support Group EVERY Monday at 1:00pm:** February 17th -Book Club: Declarative Language Handbook by Linda Murphy: *Using a Thoughtful Language Style to Help Kids with Social Learning Challenges Feel Competent, Connected, and Understood*; [register in advance for zoom link](#)
 - [Winter 2025 Journey beginning for Parents of Challenging Children](#)
- PEP Webinars
 - [Tackling Technology: Setting Limits With Your Children](#), Wednesday, February 26th, 8:00-9:00 pm, \$25
- Georgetown Psychology Parent Education Series: Executive Function Coaching: A Lifeline for ADHD Students & Their Parents, February 27th from 12:00-1:00pm; [reserve a virtual seat](#)
- 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.
- APL's annual **Girl Power STEM event!** Saturday, March 1st, from 2:00-5:00 pm in the Johns Hopkins University APL South Campus Building 201 - a STEM expo designed for elementary and middle school students to explore careers in STEM- demos, activities, and workshops from APL staff and community organizations. [All attendees must be registered.](#)

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.

- 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](#)

A Message from the PTSA Enrichment Coordinator

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm excited to share that another round of enrichment classes kicks off next week! Spaces are limited, so be sure to sign up soon. The link below provides full details, including class descriptions, schedules, costs, and registration information.

[NBMS Debate Club](#)

[NBMS Typing Club](#)

[NBMS Bulls and Bears](#)

Best,

Ray Azarm

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

SEVENTEENTH NATIONAL ESSAY CONTEST BY KOREAN SPIRIT AND CULTURE PROMOTION PROJECT

The 17th 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

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 the 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

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 This service is optional—schools will continue to accept checks and cash for meals in the cafeteria.

Support Call the School Bucks 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.

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 Gmail account daily for SSL emails (and of course other important emails)

Make sure to join the NBMS SSL MyMCPS Classroom.

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.

If you have any questions, after reviewing the SSL information above, please send an email to Carla.A.Jurewicz@mcpsmd.net. Thank you!

YEARBOOKS FOR SALE!

NBMS 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.

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

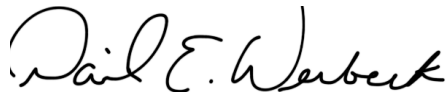
<https://snap.yearbookforever.com/snap/index.html#/upload/1-23J-32823>

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.

Have a great week!

Sincerely,



Mr. Daniel E. Werbeck

Acting Principal

North Bethesda Middle School