

MWES Newsletter - Week of 10/12/2020

A Note From Our Administrators

Dear Manor Woods Families,

As we continue to keep our pulse on distance learning and how our students are doing at home, we have heard this week has been difficult when considering the workload, especially for our younger students. First and foremost, I would like to encourage you to always reach out to the MWES administrative team. We are all learning how to navigate virtual learning and we understand the frustrations with technology, pace, and workload. We want to hear directly from you. Our wonderful PTA has created Facebook pages in order for families to connect and build community. **The administrative team is NOT on Facebook** and therefore we do not know your frustrations or hear your compliments. I would like to encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher, support teacher, or the administrative team if you are unclear about the expectations or feel that virtual learning is overwhelming your child or family.

During this unprecedented time, I would also like to encourage you to give yourself and your children the grace that is needed to conquer virtual learning. We are all learning in an extremely different way. We realize that while learning virtually, the children are in front of a computer for most of the school day and that asynchronous tasks can be daunting. They are not learning in a typical or familiar fashion. Students and teachers learned a new environment quickly, without the "general ease" into the daily structure of school that we typically experience in September. Students miss interacting with their friends and the structure and familiarity of school in a brick and mortar environment. Change is difficult, and it is so important that we understand and embrace the feelings and emotions that coincide with the change process.

Virtual learning consists of both synchronous and asynchronous instruction that is designed to mirror the amount and type of instruction they would

receive during a typical school day/week in a brick and mortar environment. Each day, the children are taught directly by their teachers in synchronous learning sessions. This is face-to-face time on Google Meet and beginning next week, teachers will be adding small reading groups. Synchronous learning is direct instruction. Asynchronous learning takes place when the teacher is not directly teaching the children. In a classroom, we may call this "seatwork". It is follow-up work that is presented to children as a continuation of the lesson or to practice a skill. This is NOT homework. We would like for families to understand that children are not being assigned any homework. There are only "asynchronous" tasks that your student is asked to complete. During a typical school day, children work independently on these tasks. If your child is struggling with a particular task, please don't hesitate to let your child's teacher know, or have your child visit his/her teacher during their synchronous support time for more guidance.

In closing, the administrative team wants to ensure we are doing the best for our students and families, and we want to work directly with those who need additional assistance. Our staff is working tirelessly to learn ways to engage your children in this environment and decrease the barriers of technology. We ask that you continue to give us grace as we strive to meet the expectations of the school system, learn new ways to teach in a virtual environment, and meet the individual needs of your children.

Again, please feel free to email or give us a call. If you call the school and the phone is not answered, please leave a message and we will call you as soon as we are able. We want to be as transparent as possible and support you and your children!

Thank you,

Carol DeBord

Jennifer Zinn

New Information

Schedule Adjustments for Scheduled Early Dismissal Days

The HCPSS 2020-2021 calendar includes four scheduled 3-hour early dismissal days:

- Friday, October 16, 2020
- Friday, November 6, 2020
- Monday, November 23, 2020
- Tuesday, November 24, 2020

The virtual schedules have been adjusted for these scheduled early dismissal days to provide students with synchronous learning for each class. Additionally, both full- and half-day PreK classes will meet on these days using a modified schedule.

Early dismissal day revised schedules for all [elementary](#), [middle](#), and [high](#) school grades are provided on the [2020-2021 School Year](#) website.

School Meals Changes

A stopgap U.S. government funding bill signed into law last Thursday, which includes almost \$8 billion in nutrition assistance, allows USDA to extend the meal waivers, previously due to expire at the end of December, through the end of the 2020-2021 school year. Thus, HCPSS will be able to provide meals at no cost to any HCPSS student, and all children 18 and under, through the entire school year, assuming continued availability of USDA funding.

[Beginning Monday, October 12](#), HCPSS will add a snack and dinner to each weekday meal, in addition to breakfast and lunch already being served. Additionally, weekend meals will be included with meals provided on Fridays, and in pre-ordered meals picked up on Thursdays.

HCPSS also has adjusted the pre-order process. Meals for multiple days need to be pre-ordered at least two days in advance for pickup on Mondays and Thursdays. Pre-order meal pickups will be offered only on those two days, to enable Food and Nutrition Services to improve service and efficiency while balancing staffing and food resources.

[Full details on HCPSS student meal offerings](#) can be found online.

Family Survey for Second Semester Planning

HCPSS staff are currently evaluating possibilities for in-person instructional options for the second semester, which begins February 1, 2021.

Early next week, we will distribute a short survey to all HCPSS families to gather data on whether families intend to send their student(s) back to school or continue fully virtual learning through the end of the current school year. No decision has been made regarding the learning format for the second semester. The data from this form will facilitate planning and is not a commitment for the second semester. This information will assist the Board and HCPSS leadership during discussions about possible models for the second semester.

Families will have the opportunity to formally select a learning option following the Board's deliberation and final decision on second semester plans.

Maryland Family Network Presents Virtual Parent Cafés

Partnering with Parents to Help Keep Families Strong!

A parent in a recent Virtual Parent Café said: “Parent Cafés help me talk about things I need to talk about and realize I’m not alone.”

Maryland Family Network is providing Virtual Parent Cafés for parents of children birth through age five.

Virtual Parent Cafés are a free, safe space for parents to have meaningful conversations with other parents. The structured conversations give parents an opportunity to talk together about things that matter to them. They’re a great way to help us stay connected and keep our families strong during these difficult times.

Advanced registration is required – just click on the link for the Cafe you want to attend!

[Bilingual Virtual Parent Café 10/13 6 pm – 8 pm \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Virtual Parent Café on 10/28 2 pm – 4 pm \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Virtual Parent Cafe 11/10 6 pm – 8 pm \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Virtual Parent Cafe 11/17 6 pm – 8 pm \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Please contact Brenda Badger, bbadger@marylandfamilynetwork.org with any questions you may have.

Good news!!! Canvas Calendar Update

Students can now view up to 20 calendars within Canvas! There are a variety of views of the calendar (month, week, and agenda). Students and families should explore the best setting for them. Learn more about the [Canvas Calendar](#).

Dreambox Information for Grades 3-5

[Dreambox PDF](#)

HCPSS Educational Partnerships

We are happy to share the release of the [HCPSS Educational Partnerships 2019-2020 Annual Report](#). Each school's partners are listed, as well as system wide (at-large) and curricular and program office partnerships.

We encourage you to share the Annual Report on your website/social media, school newsletter, etc. Sample text is below:

Website/Newsletter

“Together” is the theme of the just released [HCPSS Educational Partnerships 2019-2020 Annual Report](#). Each school’s partners are listed, as well as system wide (at-large) and curricular and program office partnerships. In the report, you will see examples of how partners help care for students and staff.

Social Media

The [HCPSS Educational Partnerships 2019-2020 Annual Report](#) has just been released. View the report for a complete list of partners and examples of how partners help care for students and staff.

Please contact Mary Schiller or Priscilla Reaver at partnerships@hcpss.org if you need additional information.

Thank you for your support!

From the Desk of Ms. Heinlein

Hello students & parents. Please visit my Canvas Course, *Manor Woods Elementary School Counseling*, located on your child's Canvas Dashboard to schedule an appointment or lunch bunch, learn about handling emotions/strong feelings, being mindful & much more. I look forward to hearing from you!

Important Reminders from Past Newsletters

[click here](#)

After School Activities

Step Up for Down Syndrome Virtual Walk on October 10th

[Click Here to Register or Donate](#)

Sign up for Club STEM After School

Mondays, for 6 classes November 2, 4:30-5:30pm, at Kiwanis-Wallas Hall (located at 3300 Norberts Way in Ellicott City; not far from Manor Woods ES). Or receive supplies and instruction needed to attend virtually on your own schedule from your own home.

[RP3344.101 - Manor Woods ES students](#)

To register, please use the hyperlink provided above, or call our Registration hotline at 410-313-7275 (open 8am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday).

Maryland Arts Institute of Racial Justice

As institutions move toward Racial Equity, it is necessary to examine and reconcile the past, understand the present, and create change for the future. [The Maryland Arts Institute of Racial Justice](#) has two types of offerings to explore racial justice together as the Maryland Arts sector. Registration is FREE.

Lunchtime Book Club

Connect with members of Maryland's arts sector to build shared language and understandings about racial justice through guided discussions and sharing. This event occurs on select Tuesdays at noon.

For dates, times, and registration, visit the [book club registration page](#).

Community News

Please visit the HCPSS website [Community News and Programs page](#) for upcoming events and programs sponsored by non-profit organizations.