

BMS/CMS 2020-2021

Newsletter #1 Week of June 8-June 12, 2020



UPDATE: Your children, our dear students, have been extraordinary during our opening week of orientation at the combined and hybridized middle schools. Students arrived exceptionally well prepared regarding health, hygiene, safety and learning. From our point of view based on initial observations, our school community has joined together to make this complex schooling system work in the best interest of our students and teachers. Please continue to adhere to social distancing guidelines and safe social health practices while outside of school so we can continue to welcome students into our school building.

For our distance learning model students, the middle schools successfully hosted live and virtual orientations where students had the opportunity to meet their core teachers and review course syllabi. This was followed by an online technology training tailored for our distance learning students. For our hybrid model students, the middle schools welcomed students into school for 2 days of orientation this week, which included review of course syllabi, safety and health protocols while attending in the school building and small group tours for our 6th graders and new students. The middle schools achieved the goal of orienting all students, no matter the instructional model, to the 2020-2021 school year. That being said, we are keenly aware that some students missed portions of orientation and will need access to the information. Here, gaps in understanding and outstanding questions can be addressed through timely communications between students, teachers and school counselors, and parents and administrators as needed.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14th-18th

DAY/DATE	SCHEDULE ROTATION	COHORT
Monday, 9/14	A DAY	Cohort A (A through K Students)
Tuesday, 9/15	B DAY	Cohort B (L through Z Students)
Wednesday, 9/16	C DAY	Distance Learning for all students following the Wednesday time schedule; the school day ends for all students at 12:30 p.m.
Thursday, 9/17	D DAY	Cohort A (A through K Students)
Friday, 9/18	E DAY	Cohort B (L through Z Students)

Next week, September 14th-18th marks the beginning of instruction, both live in school and streamed home. This duality represents a substantial change to our practice. We thank you in advance for your patience and support as we continue to acquire and deploy live streaming devices and audio systems, trouble-shoot and address streaming sound and video quality, and train our teachers in using these new technologies and platforms. In the next coming weeks, our goal is to be live streaming from the majority of our instructional spaces; in the interim, teachers will post assignments and activities where there may be gaps in our current capabilities.

Distance Learning Student Orientation



BMS Hybridized Cafeteria



Special Note on Student Pickup

1. For early pickup from school, please send your child into school with a signed note indicating the time of the early pickup and reason.
2. Students are to bring this note to the main office when they arrive in the morning; the main office will provide the student with a pass for early dismissal.
3. When you arrive at BMS to pick up your child, please use the main entrance intercom to alert the main office that you have arrived to pick up your child.
4. The main office staff will escort the student to the door; students should never exit the building without first notifying the main office.

Safe School Climate Policy

The Safe School Climate Policy states that each and every school community member should be treated with dignity, should have the opportunity to learn, work, interact, and socialize in physically, emotionally and intellectually safe respectful and positive school environments as well as the opportunity to experience high quality relationships. We work together with staff, students and community members to promote conditions designed to create, maintain, and nurture a positive school climate. The Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy states that we are responsible for creating and maintaining an educational environment that is physically, emotionally and intellectually safe and thus free from bullying, teen dating violence, harassment and discrimination. In accordance with state law and the Board's Safe School Climate Plan, the Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education. We will be reviewing all of this information in school with all students attending CMS/BMS. Please review these policies and discuss them with your children.

LINKS:

- [Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy](#)
- [Safe School Climate Plan](#)
- [Westport Guiding Principles](#)

VISIT THE BMS NEWSPAPER URSUS.NEWS

Comments on articles are encouraged, and if you have a letter to the editor or an op-ed, we'd be glad to consider publishing your thoughts.

Mental Health Resources (CLICK THIS LINK)

This will take you to a list of mental health resources to help you and your family cope with the stress and uncertainty related to COVID-19. Please keep in mind that our school mental health staff, including school

psychologists, a social worker, and counselors, are available from 8:00 am-3:00 pm while schools are closed. Feel free to contact them by email if you have questions about how to support your child. If your child is in crisis and you need more immediate assistance, please see the crisis intervention resources listed below. For more information, you can also contact Dr. Valerie Babich, Coordinator of Psychological Services at vbabich@westportps.org.

VISIT THE BMS LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER SITE

So many amazing titles! Please visit the [BMS LMC website](#) for more details. We have the ebooks and audiobooks available in Sora.

AWESOME ONLINE RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

- [PARENT & STUDENTS: DISTANCE LEARNING AND HYBRID TECH HELP](#)
- [VIDEO: STUDENT ACCESS TO LIVE STREAM INSTRUCTION](#)
- [How to Access Your Live stream Class from Home During Hybrid or Long Distance Learning](#)
- [CMS/BMS DAILY SCHEDULE ROTATION CALENDAR 2020-2021](#)
- [Westport: Reopening Our Schools Information and Resources for Families](#)
- [BMS Students Online Learning Resources Organized by Subject Area](#)
- [Parent Tutorial \(video\): Basics on Using Schoology and PowerSchool \(for parents\)](#)
- [BMS Library Media Center Presents: READING FROM HOME \(for students and parents\)](#)
- [Schoology: Calendar Tips \(for students\)](#)
- [Schoology: How to View All of Your Courses \(for students\)](#)
- [BMS Homepage](#)
- [Schoology](#)
- [PowerSchool](#)
- [CMS/BMS HYBRID & DISTANCE LEARNING MODELS FOR 2020-2021: ORIENTATIONS, GUIDANCE, INSTRUCTION, HEALTH AND SAFETY, AND MEETINGS](#)

PARENT TECH HELP

Please contact the parenthelpdesk@westportps.org or 203-341-1214 for technical issues with accessing district resources or district supplied Chromebooks.

Here are helpful directions for student Chromebooks: [Connecting at Home](#) and [Printing at Home](#)

PRIOR NEWSLETTERS AND KEY COMMUNICATIONS

- [CMS/BMS HYBRID & DISTANCE LEARNING MODELS FOR 2020-2021: ORIENTATIONS, GUIDANCE, INSTRUCTION, HEALTH AND SAFETY, AND MEETINGS](#)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SUPPORT

Many of our Bedford families have been seeking ways to reach out and help members of our community who experience food insecurity. Here are three ways you can help support our community and Homes with Hope Westport:

1. Drop off non-perishable food and/or toiletry donations as usual at the center, but with no contact. Families can leave the food/toiletries at the door. Link to needed items: [Food/Toiletry List](#)
2. Send food/toiletries via Amazon and have it delivered to the center. [Food/Toiletry List](#)
3. Donate funds via the "donate" link on their website. <https://www.hwhct.org/>

Acts of compassion and kindness may help reduce stress, boost immune systems, and help reduce negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, and depression. Furthermore, reaching out and helping others may also increase one's sense of self esteem and emotional wellbeing. Thank you for supporting our community!