



Newsletter #4 October 15, 2021

PRINCIPAL'S ANNOUNCEMENT

We are quickly approaching the end of the first marking period on November 8th; our students are working hard, enjoying school and also still getting used to the routines, mores and norms associated with daily full time school at BMS. This past Wednesday, while our students enjoyed an early dismissal; the BMS staff worked collaboratively to plan, design and revise new learning opportunities for our building-wide social-emotional learning initiatives. Our teachers, paras, and administrators prioritized life skills, competencies and concepts directly relating to the present and emergent needs of our students. We believe that the combination of the emotional literacy learning opportunities delivered through the RULER program and the self-empowering life skills found in the Overcoming Obstacles units, will best meet the social emotional learning needs of our students at this time. The aim of this teacher-lead, student-centered work is to embed key life skills that lead to increased self-efficacy, confidence and independence for our students. Our teachers and staff are an amazing and outstanding team of talented and professional educators; I am so incredibly proud and excited to be part of this team and this work! (additional information included below)

BMS HAS SCHOOL SPIRIT!

The BMS Spirit & Leadership Council planned some upcoming initiatives:

- **SPIRIT DAY:** Honor Breast Cancer Awareness Month: All students and staff should wear Pink on Friday, Oct 22nd.
- **SPIRIT DAY:** Crazy Hair Day! Friday, Oct. 29th
- **SPIRIT DAY:** Pajama Day! Monday, Nov. 1st

SPOTLIGHT: OUTDOOR RECESS IN WINTER

One of many challenges to operating our school in the pandemic is providing a safe space for our students to eat lunch with 3 feet of social distance coupled with a daily outdoor recess/mask break. To meet this goal, half of our students go outside for a recess/mask break while the other half eats in the cafeteria; the two groups switch places halfway through the lunch period. Important to point out are the rapidly cooling outdoor temperatures and weather conditions associated with winter in New England.

There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes: BMS brings all students outside for a daily recess/mask break throughout the entire school year. In general, we do not go outside when the temperature goes below freezing (below 32 degrees fahrenheit; below 0 degrees celsius) or when it's raining steadily.

Please make sure your child is properly dressed and prepared to go outside in cold temperatures for recess in winter. Since we live in New England, we know it's generally quite cold outside through the winter months, which is why we recommend winter hats, gloves, winter coats, scarfs, etc. to keep warm and comfortable when we go outside for daily recess. Last year our students successfully accomplished this goal without the use of hallway lockers; this year all students have been assigned a full-size hallway locker so storage space is no longer a factor. Did I mention that we go outside for recess all year? Thanks for your help parents/guardians!

Thank you for making sure your child is prepared for mandatory daily outdoor recess/mask break in winter!



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING UPDATE (SEL)

What we're presenting and focusing on in October/November:

In 6th grade: Good Habits

- Being ready to learn: Growth Mindset
- Getting organized
- Managing my time
- Taking tests
- Learning styles

In 7th Grade: Independence & Communication

- Group work
- Organization and study habits
- Learning how you learn best
- Taking tests

In 8th grade: Trusting my voice

- Organization and study skills review
- Writing reports; taking notes independently
- Managing increased demands/more independence and workload

FREE MATH TUTORING AVAILABLE GRADES 6, 7, 8

- **Look for the new email update each week; this weekly email contains the fresh links for the week's math extra help sessions!**
- **The session links are not included in this newsletter, sorry!**
- **Google forms will reopen every Friday afternoon at 3:15 to sign up for the following week.**

We are excited to introduce our new district middle school tutoring program, which is designed for students who are in need of support in the Math 6, Math 7, or Math 8 courses; this program is free for all interested students in these courses. Students will receive help on the current grade-level curriculum. They may bring

questions on homework or classwork. Tutors will work with a maximum of 5 students per session on current course content.

- Support available for grade-level math courses Math 6, Math 7, and Math 8; not available for above grade level courses;
- Parents/guardians need to provide transportation to/from in-person sessions.
- Tutoring will not take place on the afternoons of early dismissal days, professional development days, or vacation days based on the district calendar.
- Sessions will not occur on days when there are school closures or delays.

SPECIAL NOTE: Math extra help sessions have been filling quickly; we have turned away requests due to enrollment limits. We are also experiencing no-shows. Two no-shows may result in exclusion from this program. Please make certain that you sign up for a maximum of 1 session per week and provide the math tutor with 24 hours minimum advance notice if you need to cancel a session so there is opportunity to fill the empty seat with a student in need of math extra help.

***NEW* EVEN MORE FREE MATH EXTRA HELP! (all math course levels!)**

Your favorite high school math tutors are back and we are eager to help! The National Math Honor Society members are offering math extra help again this year. The sessions will be virtual via google meet. Sign up using [this link](#) and a tutor will contact you with the meeting information. Don't forget to bookmark this form so you can find it easily every time you need to sign up.

Did you know? Student Cell Phone Expectations

- Reminder: Students should keep their cell phones in their lockers during school hours.
- Students may use the main office phone if they need to call home.
- No Cell Between the Bells 8:30-3:15

Scenes from BMS

BMS Art Collective Hallway Installation; October, 2021



Chorus class with Master Voice Teacher Susan Marnell



Strings with Maestro Anderson



Students engaged in learning with Ms. Carroll



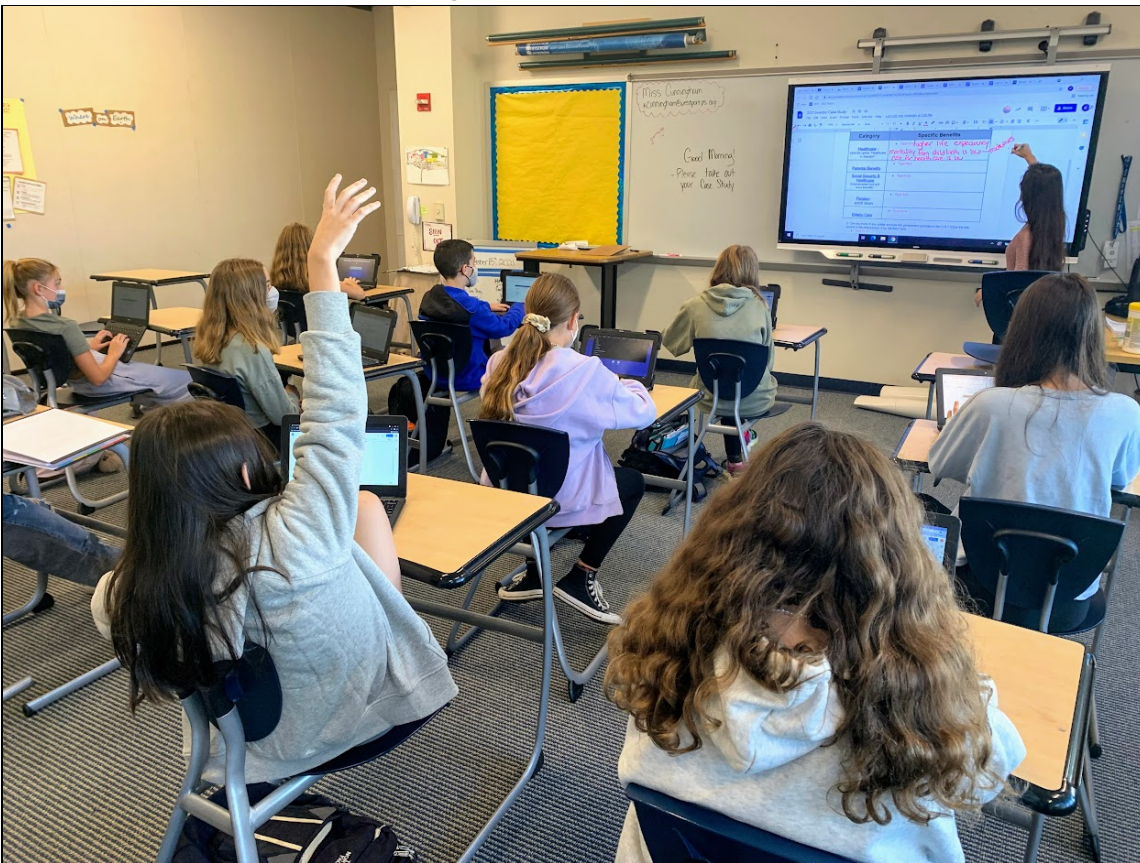
Pod life before homeroom



Lunch in the 8th grade



Grade 7 Social Studies with Ms. Cunningham



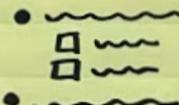
High stakes! Math test in the 7th grade



Getting excited about science with Ms. Carusi in 7th grade



EFFECTIVE NOTE-TAKING STRATEGIES

- Boxes + Bullets 

* Summarize + paraphrase Key details

- Abbreviations + Symbols

- Graphic Organizers

Venn Diagram

T-chart

Word Web

Flow Chart

- Annotate

✓ highlight / underline key words / detail

✓ Circle / Box Key ideas

✓ * star Key details / CI

✓ Mark up the margins!

→ Questions, thoughts, vocab, connections

- Color Code

- Animations

Socratic Seminar

GUIDELINES

- ▶ Talk to each other
 - ↳ NOT one person OR the teacher
- ▶ Refer to EVIDENCE to support your ideas
 - ↳ Explain + Elaborate
- ▶ Ask QUESTIONS
 - ↳ To keep the discussion going
 - ↳ To clarify
- ▶ Take Turns Talking
 - ↳ Bring others into the discussion
 - "Nick - do you agree with Kensey about...?"
 - ↳ Be aware of your air time
- ▶ Be RESPECTFUL of ALL ideas
 - ↳ Respectfully Disagree
 - ↳ Use the sentence starters provided!

What does

ACTIVE LISTENING

look like?

▶ Looking @ the person speaking

▶ Responding to what others have said

↳ "I agree w/___ b/c...."

* use the sentence starters!

↳ "I see what you mean when you say...., however I feel..."

▶ Gestures / Body Language

↳ Nodding your head

↳ Sitting up + facing the person speaking

▶ Limit Distractions

↳ only have relevant materials out.

▶ Take Notes!

Analyzing Sources - an ANNOTATION STRATEGY:

Summarize - Summarize the source
in one to two sentences
✓ What is the source about?

Contextualize - Put it in history's place!
✓ Location / Place
✓ Time

Infer - Draw conclusions using prior
Knowledge
✓ Circle
✓ Star
✓ use symbols
✓ highlight
} annotate!
Mark up
the source

Monitor - Develop
Questions
✓ What info is missing or
what do you need to know
more about?
✓ Who is represented + who is not?
What / whose perspective is this
source from?
✓ Bias?

Report Cards 6th, 7th, & 8th Grades

This school year is divided into four marking periods of approximately nine weeks each. Report Cards are available online through the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#).

- If a student has any accountability, i.e. outstanding library books, lost textbooks, etc., Parent Portal access to the report card may be denied until the issue is resolved.
- Any student who has received a grade of Incomplete should meet with their teacher, attend extra help sessions; teachers will help students devise a plan for completing missing assignments or assessments. An Incomplete becomes a Failure if the student does not make up the work or tests

scheduled. Interim Progress Reports (IPRs) are not generated since all parents have access to the PowerSchool GradeBook feature through the Parent Portal. Parents will receive an email alerting parents it is mid-marking period and prompting them to check their child's grades online. Parents who have questions or concerns about their child's grades should contact the teacher first.

- Report Cards Viewable after 4:00 pm: November 12, January 28, April 12, June 14

Student Daily Attendance

Please leave a message on the BMS Attendance HotLine before 9 am at 203-341-1599.

BMS Teaching Team Leaders

Each of BMS's 9 teaching teams (3/grade level) have an official team leader. The team leader helps to coordinate the operations of the teaching team and is available to communicate with parents on a variety of issues. If you are in need of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our team leaders; they are happy to assist you navigate the issue at hand (email is 1st letter of first name with last name @westportps.org; ex. aharvey@westportps.org)

1. Grade 6 Green Team April Harvey: 203-341-1557
2. Grade 6 Purple Team Liz Smith: 203-341-2482
3. Grade 6 Red Team Michael LaTorre: 203-341-2477
4. Grade 7 Green Team Emily Elterich: 203-341-1538
5. Grade 7 Purple Team Kristina Rodriguez: 203-341-1528
6. Grade 7 Red Team Andrew Zold: 203-341-1544
7. Grade 8 Green Team Caroline Davis: 203-341-1595
8. Grade 8 Purple Team Courtney Ruggiero: 203-341-1519
9. Grade 8 Red Team Colleen Rondon: 203-341-1587

BMS School Counselors and Accessing Support

Students, parents and guardians can access our school counselors for support and assistance; each school counselor stays with their grade-level for all 3 years of middle school. Here are the 3 BMS school counselors and their grade-level designation during the 2021-2022 school year:

- Grade 6 school counselor: Sara Harding 203-341-2467 sharding@westportps.org
- Grade 7 School Counselor Jessica Rabine 203-341-2462 jrabine@westportps.org
- Grade 8 school counselor: Georgia Orlando 203-341-2494 gorlando@westportps.org

School Lunch Cashless & Touchless Payment System

Please refer to this document from our food service provider Chartwells: [School Lunch Account Setup/Payment](#)

BMS Health Office Reminders

When to Keep Your Child Home:

- fever over 100;
- any Covid-19 symptoms
- an undiagnosed rash;
- vomited in the past 24 hours; • more than one episode of diarrhea; • copious yellow/green mucus discharge from nose;
- a severe earache, with or without fever;
- a severe sore throat with symptoms indicating possible strep throat; • conjunctivitis (pink eye) with discharge;
- an active infestation of head lice; • a communicable illness;
- an undiagnosed skin wound, sore or lesion that appears infected (is red, swollen or draining fluid).

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 18th-22nd

<i>DAY/DATE</i>	<i>SCHEDULE</i>
Monday, 10/18/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Tuesday, 10/19/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Wednesday, 10/20/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Thursday, 10/21/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Friday, 10/22/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 25th-OCTOBER 29th

<i>DAY/DATE</i>	<i>SCHEDULE</i>
Monday, 10/25/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Tuesday, 10/26/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Wednesday, 10/27/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Thursday, 10/28/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)
Friday, 10/29/21	Full School Day (8:30am-3:15pm)

VISIT THE BMS STUDENT NEWSPAPER [URSUS.NEWS](https://www.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. [LINK TO URSUS](#)

VISIT THE AMAZING 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

- [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 lol](#)
- [Schoology](#)
- [PowerSchool](#)

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](#)

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!