



Leonardtwn Middle School

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August 11, 2023

Dear Leonardtown Middle School Families,

Welcome back to school! This letter is serving as your first informational communication for the 2023-2024 school year. The faculty and staff of Leonardtown Middle are recharged and ready for a successful school year.

Your student's final schedule for the 2023-2024 school year will be available on the Home Access Center (HAC) beginning **Friday, August 18th at approximately 5:00 p.m.** It will also be available for students on the first day of school, which will be Wednesday, August 23rd. **No schedule changes will be made at this time since we are still addressing schedule conflicts.** Our team has worked diligently to use all available data sources, as well as county-established criteria to determine appropriate classes for all students. Please be aware that we **do not** have the flexibility to change student schedules for reasons such as a child wanting a different unified arts class, a specific teacher, or a team change, and therefore will generally not be able to make these changes, if requested. Additionally, requests for consideration/reconsideration to be placed in accelerated classes will not be honored after September 15th. On the 18th, please review your child's schedule for errors. If you need assistance accessing HAC please do not hesitate to contact us. Schedules, as well as grades, attendance, and important information specific to your child are available to you via this valuable resource.

Sixth grade students will have an opportunity to walk through their schedule at a **6th Grade ONLY Open House on Monday, August 21st from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** Also, on the morning of August 21st, we will host 7th graders from 9:00-10:00 a.m.; and 8th graders from 10:15-11:15 a.m. During Open House, you will have the opportunity to meet your child's teachers and get a quick overview of their classroom expectations and procedures. Please be cognizant of your allotted time as we have limited parking lot space and many things being hosted at the site. Note as well that this is not a time for one-on-one parent/teacher conferencing. You may certainly schedule one through the grade level counselor for a later date.

During Open House, you will have the opportunity to join our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for a modest fee of \$8.00. Being a PTA member is an avenue to be involved in our school. A special "thank you" goes out to the PTA for supporting the staff and students at Leonardtown Middle School. Though not mandatory, PE uniforms can be purchased online at [Ink Deli](#) for \$15 a piece (shirts and shorts). The school nurse will also be on site if you need to speak with her or drop off medication. If you are in need of any school supplies, we encourage you to contact your child's counselor so that we are able to help ensure that this will be a successful year for your child.

Again, this school year, **bus passes will not be issued except in cases of emergencies.** A sleepover, play date, or ride to football practice is not an emergency and a bus pass **will not** be issued in those instances. Please make arrangements now to have a "back-up plan" in place should something arise during the year where you would need alternative transportation for your child. We ask that you update your child's registration card with this information, as necessary.

Our school supply list is posted on our [website](#) and should be available at local retailers. Students are welcome to use totes, or string bags for their supplies and books, but it must be able to fit on the side of, or under, a student desk. For the safety of all students in our classrooms, we encourage students to leave their backpacks in their lockers. Students will be given opportunities to visit their lockers throughout the day.

Our student drop-off procedure will work as it did last school year. Parents dropping off students will enter the parking lot off Medley's Neck Road and make an immediate left then loop around to the curb by the cafeteria entrance where a staff member will be present to monitor students as they walk into the school. **Please note that this parking lot is one-way only.** Parents wishing to park and walk in with students may do so by entering through the main entrance of the school. All visitors must sign in, show identification and obtain a visitor's badge from the main office personnel. **Students may not walk through the parking lot without a parent and are not to be dropped off at school prior to 6:55 a.m.** We do not have staff on duty prior to that time to supervise students. It is imperative that you follow this request, as it is made to guarantee student supervision and safety. No cars are permitted in the bus loop once buses begin to arrive. **For pick-up in the afternoon, you must contact the school by 1:00**

p.m. if you need us to get a message to your child that they will be picked up. Students who are to be picked up will be called to the cafeteria prior to dismissal. A staff member will be present in the cafeteria and one outside to check parent identification and sign out students. We will not be holding the buses to retrieve students if this request is not followed. Cars are not permitted in the bus loop after 1:30 p.m., so please do not park in front of the main entrance to pick up your child. If you are using the north parking lot for student pick-up please circle around and exit through the same entrance (as is the case for drop offs).

Once again, this year, [the SMCPs Student Handbook and Code of Conduct](http://www.smcps.org/ss/student-handbooks) will be available via the SMCPs website, <http://www.smcps.org/ss/student-handbooks>. We will review this carefully with the students, but I also ask that you review the document at home as well. You can expect the administrative team to follow all disciplinary policies and procedures as outlined in the handbook. Please note the **SMCPs Dress Code** which is also outlined in the handbook and noted on our website. This helps you plan as you begin to prepare for your child's return to school. All students are required to adhere to our school's dress code. I ask that you take the time to review this policy carefully with your student prior to the start of school to avoid any dress code issues.

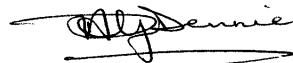
I would also like you to note the St. Mary's County Public Schools **Cell Phone Policy**. Please note that students are not permitted to use their cell phones during the school day. A phone specifically for student use is available in the main office. I ask that you take the time to review this policy carefully with your student prior to the start of school to avoid any cell phone issues. This policy will be reviewed with all students during the first days of school, and it will be strictly enforced. Essentially, phones must be out of sight and off from the first bell to the last bell of the day. Please refrain from texting or calling your child during the school day as the consequence for breaking the rule regarding cell phones will still be in effect for your child regardless of who initiated the contact. If electronic items are lost or stolen, the school **will not be held responsible** so please discuss with your child their plan of how and where they intend to store their electronics if they bring them to school.

Please note that **attendance** at school is mandatory. Absences from school due to family vacations, sporting events/training, oversleeping, or missing the bus are not excused or acceptable. I need all parents and students to make a commitment to be at school every day. If a student is absent, he/she is not here to learn and that will have a direct impact on grades and achievement. It is essential that a parent or guardian report all absences. The easiest way to do this is to visit the LMS website and report the absence electronically. Failure to report an absence will automatically create an unexcused absence for the student. If a student has an unexcused absence, the teachers are not required to provide make-up work which in turn impacts grades and achievement.

We strongly encourage students to either bring a lunch to school or to obtain one from our cafeteria. We prefer parents not bring lunches to students during the school day. Our office is a very busy place and is simply not staffed to accommodate parents routinely requesting deliveries to students. Also, it is not appropriate to have a birthday celebration during the school day. Group pizza, balloons, and cakes, for example, should be provided to celebrate or recognize a student after the school day. Please remember, if you are coming into the building you need to have your identification with you.

The administration, faculty and staff of LMS are looking forward to a wonderful school year with you. Please take time to view and bookmark our website (<http://schools.smcps.org/lms/>) which will be one of your best options for accessing information about our school. As always, this year is going to be GREAT!!!

Respectfully,



Dr. Deborah A. Dennie
Principal
LMS Jaguars