JULY 20, 2026

ISSUE NO. 4

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TERRIER TIDBITS

SMALL BITS OF BIG NEWS AT WILLIAM BYRD MIDDLE SCHOOL



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

BY PRINCIPAL KATIE HUTCHISON

As we march toward a new school year, excitement is building here at William Byrd Middle School! Our incredible custodial team has just completed a top-to-bottom cleaning of the building, making sure everything is fresh, organized, and ready to welcome back our students and staff.

With classrooms now open, our dedicated teachers have begun setting up learning spaces that are both engaging and supportive. Alongside them, our specialists are working hard to ensure we're meeting the needs of the whole student—academically, socially, and emotionally.

At WBMS, safety is always our top priority. Through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), we maintain consistent, school-wide expectations that foster a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment for all. This unified approach helps us guide students toward becoming effective **communicators**, **collaborative** teammates, **critical thinkers**, and responsible **citizens**.

Everything we do is centered around one goal: preparing every student to be **Opportunity Ready**—ready for the challenges ahead and the opportunities that await. We can't wait to see everyone soon and begin another great year together!

MEET OUR SPECIALISTS

AS WE BEGIN THIS EXCITING NEW SCHOOL YEAR, WE WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO INTRODUCE OUR COORDINATORS AND SHARE HOW WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS.

We are fortunate to have an exceptional team of dedicated professionals committed to supporting every student's success. Whether your child has an IEP, 504 Plan, ELL services, or a Reading Plan, our specialists are here to provide individualized support for both academic and behavioral needs. We're proud to partner with you in ensuring every student thrives.

- **Mrs. Melissa Vaughan, *Special Education Coordinator*** – Mrs. Vaughan leads our Special Education department with a strong focus on supporting our case managers, students, and families. She also collaborates closely with our School Psychologist on Child Study and Evaluation processes. If you have questions about your child's IEP or the special education process, we encourage you to reach out to your child's case manager first. For additional support or clarification, Mrs. Vaughan is always happy to help.
- **Mrs. Sarah Skeen, *504 Coordinator*** – Mrs. Skeen joins us as our new 504 Coordinator, who will support students with 504 plans throughout this school year. If you have any questions regarding your child's 504 plan, please don't hesitate to contact Mrs. Skeen or a member of our administrative team. We're here to ensure your child continues to receive the support they need.
- **Mrs. Carol Adkins, *ELL Teacher*** – Mrs. Adkins supports our English Language Learners through a combination of direct instruction in her resource classes and by partnering with teachers in general education classrooms. She is a valuable resource for addressing student needs and connecting families with additional support services. Mrs. Adkins is dedicated to helping our ELL students and families thrive both in and out of the classroom.
- **Mrs. Annette Gilmore, *Reading Specialist*** – Mrs. Gilmore provides valuable reading support to both our students and English teachers, helping to strengthen literacy across all grade levels. New this year is the implementation of Reading Plans for students identified as needing additional support. These plans are designed to ensure every student has the tools they need to successfully access and engage with the curriculum.
- **Mrs. Lindsay Divers, *Math Specialist*** – While she's no stranger to WBMS, we're excited to welcome Mrs. Divers in her new role as the Math Specialist for Roanoke County. This year, she'll be providing valuable math support to both our students and Math Department several times a week, helping to strengthen instruction and student success in mathematics.

Whether your child receives support through an IEP, 504 Plan, ELL Plan, or Reading Plan, our team is here to help every step of the way. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our dedicated coordinators are committed to helping students grow as effective **communicators**, **collaborative** learners, **critical thinkers**, and responsible **citizens**—ensuring every student is prepared and **Opportunity Ready** for the future.

We're looking forward to an exciting school year!

Terrier Strong. Future Ready.



MRS. VAUGHAN



MRS. SKEEN



MRS. ADKINS



MRS. GILMORE



MRS. DIVERS

SCHOOL SAFETY & OUR SRO

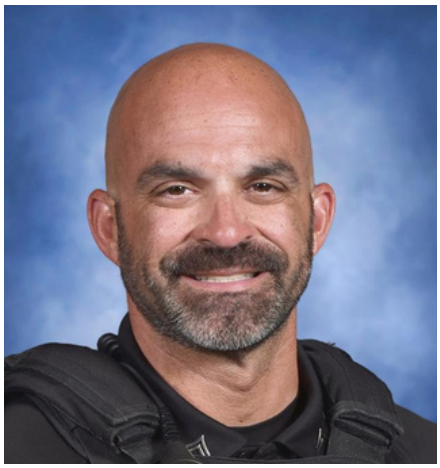
AS WE BEGIN THIS EXCITING NEW SCHOOL YEAR, WE WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO REMIND EVERYONE ABOUT SCHOOL SAFETY AND INTRODUCE OUR SRO

One of the core pillars of the **Terrier Way** is ***Be Safe***. From the very first day, our students are taught the importance of making safe choices—whether they're in the classroom, hallways, cafeteria, or representing WBMS at off-campus events.

As part of our safety focus, students are encouraged to **See Something, Hear Something, Say Something**. We want every student to feel empowered to report unsafe behavior or concerns to a trusted staff member right away. This proactive approach ensures that any potential issues, even rumors, are addressed promptly and thoroughly.

It's important to help students understand that speaking up is not "snitching"—this is a common misconception in middle school. Our priority is always the safety and well-being of every student, and we'd much rather look into a situation that turns out to be minor than miss the opportunity to prevent something serious.

Please encourage your child to speak with their grade-level administrator or school counselor if they ever have concerns related to safety. Together, we can maintain a secure and supportive learning environment for all.



DEPUTY MULLINS

- **Deputy Joe Mullins, *School Resource Officer (SRO)*** – Deputy Mullins, a proud member of the Roanoke County Sheriff's Department, plays a vital role in keeping our school community safe. His dedication to our students, staff, and families is evident each day—whether he's directing morning traffic, monitoring hallways, serving lunch in the cafeteria, or connecting with students throughout the building. Beyond his role in uniform, Deputy Mullins is deeply involved in school life. He serves as an Assistant Football Coach for WBMS and co-sponsors our Terrier Safety Squad—a student-led club focused on promoting safety across campus. Through his partnership with the Help Save the Next Girl Foundation, Deputy Mullins has also helped bring valuable self-defense class opportunities to both students and staff. We're incredibly grateful for Deputy Mullins' commitment to creating a safe, supportive, and connected environment at William Byrd Middle School.

As you prepare your student for the upcoming school year, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns regarding school safety. No matter the situation, our goal is to help every student grow as an effective **communicator**, **collaborator**, **critical thinker**, and responsible **citizen**—fully prepared to be **Opportunity Ready**!

Please don't hesitate to reach out—we're looking forward to a phenomenal school year!

Terrier Strong. Future Ready.

"SEE SOMETHING, HEAR SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING"

MTSS AT WBMS

AS WE BEGIN THIS EXCITING NEW SCHOOL YEAR, WE WANT TO TAKE A MOMENT TO REVIEW OUR MTSS INITIATIVE

MTSS at WBMS
Our MTSS framework is built upon the strong foundation established through PBIS. Over the past several years, we have created school-wide systems focused on positive relationships, clear expectations, data-based decision making, and student success. These practices will continue.

As we move to MTSS, we are expanding our focus beyond behavior to ensure we address the whole child.

Our MTSS process will focus on:

- **Identifying Needs Early**
  - Using academic, behavioral, attendance, and social-emotional data to identify students who may need additional support.
- **Matching Supports to Student Needs**
  - Providing interventions based on specific student concerns rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach.
- **Monitoring Progress**
  - Reviewing data regularly to determine whether interventions are working and making adjustments when needed.
- **Collaborating as a Team**
  - Ensuring teachers, counselors, interventionists, specialists, administrators, students, and families work together to support student success.

What Does This Mean for Teachers?
Teachers remain the most important component of a successful MTSS framework.

Teachers will:

- Continue teaching and reinforcing The Terrier Way.
- Provide high-quality Tier 1 instruction and classroom supports.
- Monitor student progress through academic, behavioral, and attendance data.
- Implement classroom interventions when concerns arise.
- Document interventions and communication with families.
- Collaborate with MTSS teams to identify and support students.
- Participate in data discussions and problem-solving meetings.

The goal is not to create more work but to create a more coordinated system that helps us support students earlier and more effectively.

Our Commitment
At WBMS, MTSS is not a program—it is the way we support students.

By working together, using data effectively, and maintaining high expectations while providing appropriate supports, we can ensure every student is:

- Terrier Strong.
- Future Ready.

On the next page is the WBMS Matrix with school-wide expectations we use every day to teach positive behavioral expectations throughout various settings of the school.

The Terrier Way Expectations

All Settings	Expect Respect	Classroom	Technology	Bathroom	Hallway	Cafeteria	Locker Room	Bus
Be Safe								
Remove hats and hoods when inside the building	Talk: Report to an adult immediately	Keep personal items out of walkways	Keep all login information private	Report unsafe behaviors and conditions	Walk quietly and calmly on the right-hand side	Stay seated at all times	Walk at all times	Stay seated at all times
Keep body and belongings within personal space		Ask teacher for permission to use E-hallpass, along with the physical pass, before exiting the classroom				Walk at all times		Keep walkway clear at all times
Share concerns with a trusted adult			Visit only websites related to your school work	Wash and dry your hands	Keep your hands to yourself		Follow all posted rules	Wait for bus to stop before attempting to enter or exit
Only bring water in a sealable, spillproof container		Keep doors closed				Use inside voices		
Be Respectful								
Use language that is kind and helpful	Stop: Interrupt and model respect, rather than watch or join in disrespecting other in real life or online	Accept feedback and redirection from staff	Use computer only when directed by teacher	Respect the privacy of others	Help others when needed	Wait your turn in line	Respect the privacy of others	Follow all posted rules
Use inside voices		If an adult or peer is talking, demonstrate active listening skills						
Be an active listener			Respect the privacy of others	Use bathroom and promptly return to class	Keep ALL technology in backpack	Only touch your own food	Help others when needed	
Accept people's differences and treat everyone with kindness			Remove all headphones or earbuds with audio capabilities and store them in backpack	Keep ALL technology in backpack	Remain quiet and refrain from looking in classroom windows	Keep ALL technology in backpack	Keep ALL technology in backpack	
Keep ALL technology, including cell phones, in backpack		Wait patiently for assistance from adults						
Be Responsible								
Clean up after yourself	Walk: Invite people who are being disrespected to join you or move away (upstanding)	Attend class daily and arrive on time	Have laptop charged or plugged in	Conserve supplies by using only what you need	Walk directly to destination	Throw away all your trash	Always secure your belongings in your locker	Know and be ready for your morning and afternoon bus stop
Be prepared		Participate in class and complete classwork	Check Canvas and StudentVue regularly	Use designated restroom				Remember your bus number
Follow the dress code					Use designated hallway and stairwell	Take all of your belongings when you are dismissed	Use your time wisely	
Take care of all school property		Use 5 or less bathroom or water fountain passes per class each 9 weeks	Use school computer and email only for school purposes	Place used supplies in the appropriate container				Take all of your belongings when you exit the bus
Use fidgets quietly, safely, and without distracting yourself or others to support learning								

REMINDER:
RCPS POLICY 6.42A



FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS, FROM ARRIVAL TO DISMISSAL AT 3:25 PM, ALL CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES, INCLUDING HEADPHONES AND EARBUDS, MUST BE OFF OR ON AIRPLANE MODE AND PLACED IN THE STUDENT'S BOOKBAG. CELL PHONES SHOULD **NOT** BE ON THEIR PERSON, WHICH INCLUDES THEIR POCKETS.

Should I get my child a cell phone? Here are some great resources to help you decide:
https://www.rcps.us/departments/counseling-student-records/wait-until-8

UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD

July

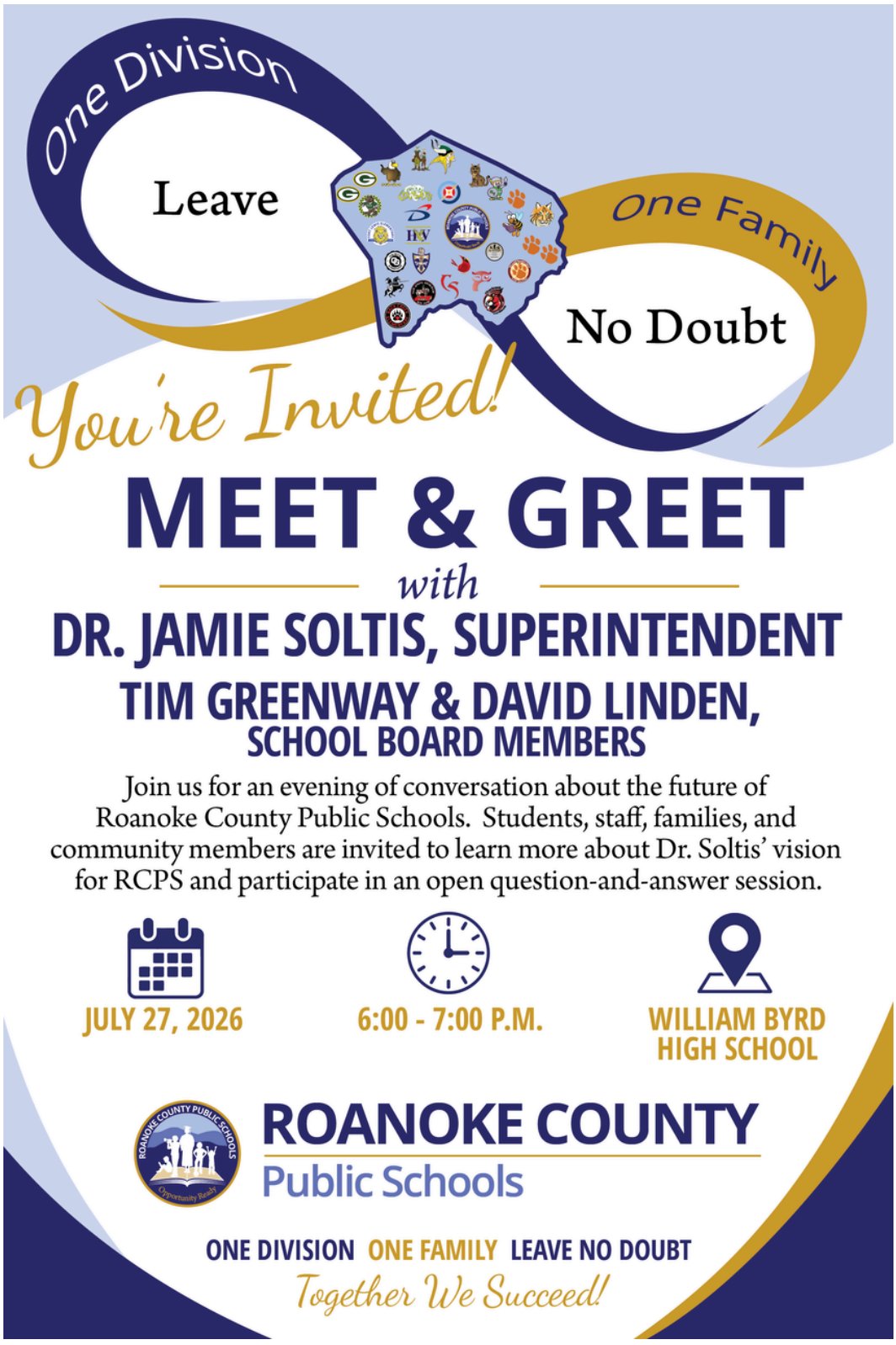
- **July 1-31:** Summer Break
- **July 17:** Annual Verification Forms (ANVER) will be available in ParentVue
- **July 27:** Community Meet & Greet with Dr. Soltis, Mr. Greenway, and Mr. Linden
  - 6:00-7:00 PM
  - WBHS Auditorium
- **July 31:** Schedules will be available in ParentVue/StudentVue
  - **Note:** There is not a specific time, but they will be posted by the evening. ANVER forms must be submitted before you or your child can view their schedule.
  - **The deadline for changes to course requests will be July 31.**
    - Please note that schedule change requests will be placed on hold from August 1 through August 28, except for level changes (e.g., Advanced to General Education) and changes required to implement a student's IEP or 504 Plan. This temporary pause allows us time to balance class sizes, finalize schedules, and ensure adequate space is available for newly enrolled students.
    - Beginning August 31, changes from one course to another will be made under the following circumstances only:
      - Failure of a course that is a prerequisite for a scheduled course or a graduation requirement (high school only);
      - Human or computer error;
      - Grouping adjustments and/or balancing of class sizes;
      - Recommendation of Child Study,504 or IEP Committee;
      - Acceptance or removal from an Apprenticeship (high school only)
    - 8th Grade Students: Elective choices are not guaranteed unless it is a high school credit course (Spanish, French, Latin, World History, or Earth Science). Every effort is made to give students their top elective choices, but schedule constraints do not always make it possible. The deadline to drop a high school credit class will be September 14.

August

- **August 3-12:** Teacher Work Days
- **August 10:**
  - New 7th & 8Th Grade Orientation -- 1:30-2:30 PM
  - 6th Grade Orientation -- 3:00-4:30 PM
  - Open House for All Students -- 4:30-6:00 PM
- **August 13:** First Day of School

UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD



UPCOMING DATES

A GLANCE AT THE MONTH AHEAD

JULY 17

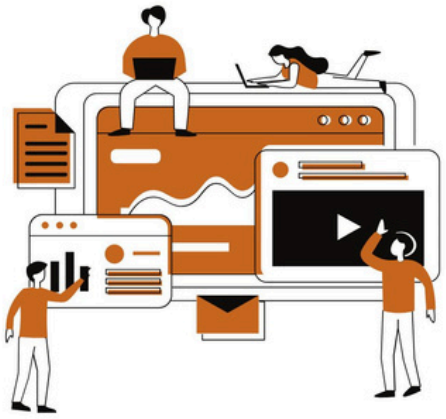
ANVER (Annual Verification) forms will be available in ParentVue. Be sure to update your student's information! You must complete ANVER before you are able to view your child's schedule in ParentVue and StudentVue on July 31.

DEADLINE IS AUGUST 7

Questions? Contact jrhodes@rcps.us

Schedules will be available in ParentVue and StudentVue

JULY 31



REMINDERS

The deadline for changes to course requests will be July 31.

- Except for level changes (e.g., Advanced to General Education) and changes required to implement a student's IEP or 504 Plan, schedule change requests will be placed on hold from August 1 through August 28 to allow us time to balance class sizes, finalize schedules, and ensure adequate space is available for newly enrolled students.

All schedules received prior to the start of school are subject to change due to the balancing of classes following student enrollments or withdrawals.

8TH GRADERS

Elective choices are not guaranteed unless it is a high school credit course (Spanish, French, Latin, World History, or Earth Science). Every effort is made to give students their top elective choices, but schedule constraints do not always make it possible. The deadline to drop a high school credit class will be September 14.

VDH Vaccination Clinics



July 28 4:00-6:00 PM @ Cave Spring MS
July 29 4:00-6:00 PM @ William Byrd MS
July 30 4:00-6:00 PM @ Northside MS

Students under 18 must be accompanied by their parent/guardian. Please bring your insurance card.

FALL SPORTS START DATES

Cross Country: July 23 (mgantzhorn@rcps.us)
Football: July 27 (caunderwood@rcps.us)

- **Note:** This is a change from the original schedule.

Volleyball: July 29 (sbrady@rcps.us)
Cheer: July 30 (smcculloch@rcps.us)

Contact the head coach for more details.