

# **Cranberry Station Elementary School**

## **August-September Newsletter – 2026**

[www.carrollk12.org/schools/elementary/cse](http://www.carrollk12.org/schools/elementary/cse)

Dear Cranberry Station Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! I hope everyone has been able to enjoy this summer with family and friends. We have been busy this summer preparing for the next school year. You may have noticed less construction vehicles and materials on site. We are very close to the grand opening of our addition. I would like to thank our Cranberry Station community for their understanding and flexibility over the past year.

With the end of construction we will return to our normal Parent Drop Off and Pick Up location. More information about Parent Drop Off and Pick Up is further in the newsletter.

This school year we have made some scheduling changes. First and second grades will have one teacher for the core content areas. This has been done in the past, and we will be returning to it. There have been some changes to our reading instructional time, and we feel that it would be most beneficial for our younger students to have this instructional model.

As you are preparing for this upcoming school year, I would like you to consider your back-to-school shopping list. While name brand metal water bottles are popular, they can be problematic. They are expensive and make a lot of noise when they fall. Plastic is a lightweight, more affordable option. When purchasing sweatshirts and other clothing, keep in mind- kids lose things! While we do our best to make sure students keep their belongings, it is not always possible. If you have seen our lost and found, you understand! Many expensive items went unclaimed last year. If you do choose to buy more expensive items, I highly suggest putting your child's name and grade on the tag.

Cranberry Station Elementary continues to be a School-Wide Title One school. We will continue to use Title I, Part A funds to provide additional support and services to students who may be at risk of failing to meet content and student performance standards. This past year we saw great academic growth with our students due to this additional support.

Please read through this newsletter because there is important information for new and returning families. In addition to our newsletters, we will use School Messenger to broadcast the latest information, news, events, etc. to you throughout the year. Be sure to update our school office with any changes to your email addresses and telephone numbers, so you receive voice and email messages.

### **Please join us in welcoming our newest staff members:**

Melissa Saboury- Assistant Principal  
Bethany Gingerich- Kindergarten  
Stephanie Gable- Second Grade  
Angela Salerno- Fourth Grade  
Jesse Harkins- Para pro (former SSA)  
Para pro- to be announced  
Para pro- to be announced

### **We extend best wishes to former staff members:**

Greg Raeder  
Kim Maclean-Blevins  
Erin Bowen  
Beth Rosario

Pat Reichert- will return to support sight words  
Katie Fong  
Lindsay Gehret  
Kathy Meade  
Becky Waldeck

**The following staff members have new assignments in our school this year:**

Nancy Franzese- PreK  
Shelby Bream- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade STEM  
Sydney Bauer (McDonald)- Health

As your principal, I look forward to working with you and your family to create a positive school experience for our students. I hope you enjoy these last days of summer, and I will see you soon!

Sincerely,  
Katie Finneran, Principal

**Dates to Remember**

**August 2026**

15 Homeroom assignments made visible in the Home Access Center (HAC)

27 Kindergarten Orientation 9-11 and PreK Orientation 9-10- Parents and students attend this information session specifically designed for Pre K and kindergarten families. **This is the only time Pre K and Kindergarten information will be presented.** Administration will be presenting information about School Security.

27 Back to School Night for Grades 1-5- 4:45- 6:30. This session is for parents of students grade 1-5 to learn about the upcoming school year.

28 Open House for Grade 1-5- 2:00-3:00- This is for students and parents to meet the teacher and see their new classroom.

31 First Day of School

**September 2026**

7 Schools/Offices Closed

18 Early Dismissal for students

**October 2026**

1 Title I event

1-2 Dental Clinic

14 Parent Teacher Conferences

15 Early Dismissal for students

16 Closed for students

17 Trunk or Treat- PTA

22 School Pictures

### **PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES (E.G., Cell Phones and Smart Watches)**

- ***Devices (Cell Phones and Smart Watches) must be silenced and stored out of sight (in their locker) upon entry to the school until exit from the school. This includes any watch that has more functions than telling time. It is highly recommended that elementary students do not bring their devices to school or on the school bus.***
- No portable electronic device shall be used to record, store, or transmit any type of image, sound or video except for approved projects with the express permission of school staff.
- Parents who need to make emergency contact with their child during the school day should contact the school's main office.
- We are not responsible for locating lost devices.
- Disciplinary action, as outlined in the CCPS student services manual, shall be taken when a student fails to follow the directions of a staff member regarding portable electronic devices or if reasonable belief exists that the student has violated the terms of the acceptable use procedures and guidelines or other school policy.

The complete policy and administrative regulations (JICJ) can be found at [carrollk12.org](http://carrollk12.org). Search terms: *board policies*.

### **Importance of Attendance**

Please make every attempt to ensure your child is in the building every day, prior to 9:15. The State of Maryland sets a satisfactory attendance standard of 9 days absent per year. Not many parents are aware of this standard, and I thought it was important to bring it to your attention.

While attendance is a priority, we also all know that kids do get sick. Please communicate with [cseattendance@carrollk12.org](mailto:cseattendance@carrollk12.org) and the classroom teacher the reason your child is absent.

Please consider the academic impact of a vacation during the school year. If a family trip is planned, please email the school requesting approval. Approval for this type of absence is granted based on each circumstance and the outcome will be communicated from the administration. Thank you for your understanding and proactive scheduling.

### **Food Deliveries**

We are unable to accommodate students receiving food delivery services such as Door Dash, Grub Hub, etc.

### **Birthday/Party Invitations and the PTA Directory**

Cranberry staff members do not distribute birthday invitations, and students will not be permitted to do so. Please use the PTA directory to find contact information for your child's classmates. Directory forms will be distributed early in the school year. If you would like to share your contact information, please complete the form, and return it in a timely manner.

### **Treats for the Class**

Due to the increase in food allergies and sensitivities that have serious health implications, parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are prohibited from sharing food. Please do not send food with your student to distribute to their

class. This includes any candy attached to Valentine's Day cards or other celebrations. If there is a need for food items it will be communicated by the teacher.

### **Student Arrival & Dismissal – First Day of School**

***Treat the first day of school like the remaining days: send your child and receive your child in the ordinary way your child will be transported this year. This helps establish daily routine starting with the very first day of school.***

### **Bus Riders: Reminders**

Please use the [Infofinder i](#) system to identify your student's bus number, stop location and pick up and drop off times. Until drivers and students get settled into the routines, please arrive 10 minutes prior to your posted time and be prepared to wait 10 minutes after your drop off time. It is so helpful for you to practice identifying stop locations and bus numbers with your student, especially the younger ones. On the first day of school, each student will be getting a bus band. This will be attached to their backpack and identifies their dismissal routine by number/name and color. Please do not remove this band, it is very helpful for students, staff, and drivers to ensure they have the correct students in the correct locations. With increased ridership, we encourage parents to also review bus rules and expectations and develop working relationships with the drivers. This includes monitoring your students while at the bus stop.

Students may ride only their assigned bus and must also board and exit the bus at their designated bus stop. Students may not ride another bus and may not board or exit at a different stop. These procedures create a dependable routine for your child and you. Plan now for your child's transportation on early dismissal days and for any day school closes early due to inclement weather. Having uncertainty or sudden changes often creates considerable stress for your child, so having dismissal arrangements and reviewing them prior allows the school staff to make sure your child smoothly and safely gets to where they need to be.

### **Parent Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures – Private Vehicles**

All families are encouraged to choose school bus transportation for arrival and departure from school. The school bus is dependable and ensures timely arrival to and from school and home. If you provide private transportation for your child, you must use the drop off/pick up procedures established for our school. School staff members are on-site at this area to coordinate safe travel for students. All must use the drop off/pick up area. The front entrance area is reserved for school buses. Drivers must proceed slowly and cautiously, remain in line, be alert for children and adults on foot and always follow the directions of school staff.

Parent drop-off and pick-up follow the same vehicle routing.

1. Enter our driveway.
2. Turn right into the main parking lot.
3. Follow the outside perimeter around the lot.
4. Stop at the double STOP signs.
5. When traffic is clear, cross over to the side lot. Pull ALL THE WAY forward along the curb.
6. Always remain in your vehicle.
7. Have your child ready to exit/enter the vehicle independently curbside only.
8. Continue through the side lot to exit the campus.

***Always yield to school buses and be a proper role model of patience, respect, and kindness.***

We will continue to use our number system. Each car rider family will receive a number on cardstock to display in your car. Numbers will be distributed at Back to School Night and Open House. If you are unable to pick up your number at either of those times, we will provide it to you on the first day of school. Even with the number system, you should always be prepared to present your photo id. If someone else is picking up your student, you must communicate this in writing to [cseattendance@carrollk12.org](mailto:cseattendance@carrollk12.org). *They will be required to show photo id.*

### **Dismissal changes**

You must provide a written note or email to the school with a parent/guardian signature in advance or on the morning of the change if your child will routinely ride the bus but be picked up privately on occasion. Submit requests for changes in pick-up before 2:00 PM. **Phone calls will not be accepted – we must have the change in writing.**

- Email: [CSEAttendance@carrollk12.org](mailto:CSEAttendance@carrollk12.org)
- Fax: 410-386-4444
- Note with parent/guardian signature to homeroom teacher

### **Bell Schedule:**

|             |      |                                                                           |
|-------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First bell  | 8:45 | Students may enter the building                                           |
| Second bell | 9:10 | News and announcements                                                    |
| Third bell  | 9:15 | Instruction officially begins (students arriving at/after 9:15 are tardy) |

### **Attendance Information**

Please have your child arrive to school on time every day, ready to hear news and announcements at 9:10.

***Instruction begins at 9:15 and it is in every child's best interest to be present from the first minute to the last. Arriving on time every day helps to establish and strengthen a good work ethic, too.***

Attendance is recorded as follows:

Any student who is not in homeroom by 9:15 AM will be marked tardy (late arrival). Students departing school prior to 3:45 PM will be marked tardy (early dismissal).

For a full day of school (9:15 AM - 3:45 PM)

- If a student attends less than 2 hours per day, he/she will be marked absent for the entire day
- If a student attends 2 or more hours, but less than 4 hours, he/she will be marked absent for ½ of day
- If a student attends school for 4 hours or more, he/she will be marked present for the entire day

For a modified school day (1:00 PM dismissal):

- If a student attends less than 2 hours, he/she will be marked absent for entire day
- If a student attends 2 hours or more, he/she will be marked present all day

### **Report Your Child's Absence Early**

- Voice: 410-386-4440 after 8:00 AM

- Email: [CSEAttendance@carrollk12.org](mailto:CSEAttendance@carrollk12.org)
- Fax: 410-386-4444

Please do not email an absence notice to your child's teachers as this may not reach the attendance desk for proper record keeping.

Families are required to notify the principal for approval of any extended, planned student absences from school. Teachers may provide some information and materials as make-up for your child upon return to the classroom and a timeline for completion. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of the absence nor assignments to be completed during the absence. Please consider these conditions carefully for any extended absences.

### **Home Access Center (HAC)**

Home Access Center (HAC) is used to inform parents of their child's homeroom assignments and is the site where parents/guardians can view assignment performance for students in grades 3, 4 and 5.

Click here to login. [Login \(carrollk12.org\)](http://carrollk12.org)

### **Medications and More**

- All medications must be brought to school by an adult, with a signed health care provider's order. Please do not send any medications to school with a student.
- Any controlled substances must be delivered by the parent/guardian directly to the school nurse to be counted together with the nurse.
- All other medications to be given during the school day will need both parent and health care provider signatures on a medication consent form.
- The following items are not considered to be medications and may be carried by the student in school: Non-medicated cough drops (please let the teacher know that your child has them), lip balm, hand sanitizer, and lotion without added medication.

### **Food Allergies**

Contact the nurse if your child has a food allergy. There are specific procedures that must be followed for students with identified food allergies, including the opportunity to be seated at a peanut/tree nut free table in the cafeteria.

### **Lunch Schedules\***

|                 |               |           |             |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| Prekindergarten | 10:45 – 11:15 | 3rd Grade | 12:15-12:45 |
| Kindergarten    | 11:00 – 11:30 | 4th Grade | 12:45-1:15  |
| 1st Grade       | 11:45– 12:15  | 5h Grade  | 1:15-1:45   |
| 2nd Grade       | 11:15 – 11:45 |           |             |

## **CONSENT AND RELEASE Permission to Photograph, Videotape or Audiotape**

Throughout the school year, the Carroll County Public School System frequently covers school activities and may use your child's photograph, video image, or voice for educational, informational, or public relations purposes, with or without identification by name.

If you do not wish to have your child's voice reproduced on tape or to have his/her image appear in such things as a video or a photograph, or on the school or school system website or social media, please notify the school principal in writing. It is assumed that parents and guardians' consent to their children being audiotaped, photographed, videotaped, or having their image placed on a school website or social media by the school system unless such notification is received.

There are also occasions when the media cover certain school events (such as when a government leader visits a school). If you do not wish to have your child's name or likeness published by the media, you should address your concerns directly to the school involved so that the media is so advised. Please be advised that the school system has no control over the media when they are covering activities such as sporting events and musical programs that are open to the public.

## **CONSENT AND RELEASE Use of Student Work on Websites or in Publications**

There may be times throughout the year when the Carroll County Public School System wishes to display student work on school websites, social media, or in publications. If you do not wish to have your child's art, poetry, writing, etc. appear on school websites, social media, or in publications, please notify the school principal in writing. It is assumed that parents and guardians consent to their child's work being displayed on school websites, social media, or in publications unless such notification is received.

## **Advanced Academics (formerly Gifted and Talented)**

The CCPS Advanced Academics Program (AA) is designed to meet the needs of highly able learners and maximize student achievement. AA teachers, in collaboration with classroom instructors, will continue to provide a continuum of interventions designed to meet the needs of AA participants. This may include in-class instruction, pullout groups, and/or resource development with classroom teachers. A Referral and Review Team will determine student eligibility for interventions. Indicators for participation include observational checklists, standardized test scores, work samples, and classroom performance. Although students are not formally identified until the beginning of third grade, AA teachers will continue to provide a range of services for grades K-5.

## **CCPS Prekindergarten**

The CCPS Prekindergarten Program is an intervention program for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Families who would qualify under the Free and Reduced Meal income guidelines, as well as children who are homeless or in foster care, are eligible for the prekindergarten program. All eligible children must be residents of Carroll County and four years old before on or before September 1, 2026. *We are currently at capacity for this school year.* **If you think you may qualify**, contact the school office (410-386-4440) to discuss other options.

Prekindergarten at our school is an all-day intervention program that follows our ordinary bell schedule.

### **Volunteer Training**

You must complete an online volunteer training session during the 2026-2027 school year. Volunteer status for past years have expired.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.carrollk12.org/admin/hr/volunteer/Pages/default.aspx>

### **Lost and Found Items**

We keep lost and found items in our school cafeteria throughout the school year. We donate unclaimed items to a local charity several times a year. ***Please help keep your child's belongings out of the lost and found by labeling all garments, lunchboxes, etc., with your child's first and last name.***

### **Food Services**

A variety of breakfast and lunch choices are available daily for your child to enjoy. All households should apply for meal benefits at [www.myschoolapps.com](http://www.myschoolapps.com). One application can be completed for the entire household when all members are listed. Parents may apply for benefits at any time during the school year. Eligibility for meal benefits may help families receive additional resources such as free internet service, and field trip fee waivers, so it is important to still apply if you meet eligibility guidelines.

Food choices offered to students include multiple entrees, fresh fruits and vegetables (purchased locally when available), whole grain breads and rolls, and flavored and unflavored milk. Although students select the foods that they want, they must take a minimum number of items for a breakfast and a lunch. At least one of their choices must be a fruit or vegetable. Menus are distributed or posted in each school and posted on the website. Meals are analyzed to meet federal nutritional requirements.

Cafeterias have computerized cash registers and the price for lunch this school year is \$2.50. Breakfast is available to all students free of charge due to our Title I status. Students enter their Personal Identification Number (PIN) and proceed to the cashier. Students who wish to purchase a second meal or snacks items not included in their meal use cash or money placed "on account." Parents can deposit money on account by sending cash or a check to school with their child or by using an online payment service at [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). Account money remains on your child's account until they graduate or leave CCPS.

Nutrition is an important part of children's health and well-being and provides the fuel to learn, making them more responsive to classroom instruction. CCPS is committed to promoting student wellness and assuring that our school meals meet federal nutrition standards. Visit the CCPS website to learn more about our School Health Council and our Wellness Policy.

### **Parents Right to Know Statement**

*The federal "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)" of 2015 requires all school systems to notify parents of their right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher and any paraprofessional providing services to the child. If you would like information regarding the certification and/or licensure qualifications of your child's teacher(s), please visit this [Maryland State Department of Education \(MSDE\) site](#) . If you are unable to access the link or need information regarding your child's paraprofessional(s), please submit a written request to the individual listed below:*

*Director of Human Resources  
Department of Human Resources  
Carroll County Public Schools  
125 North Court Street  
Westminster, Maryland 21157*

### **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board of Education of Carroll County is firmly committed to creating equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons by providing an environment that supports optimal academic achievement and productive work and is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, including access to school facilities, educational programs, and extracurricular activities.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157, (410) 751-3070.

### **ADA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT**

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services, programs or activities. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Communications Office at 410-751-3020 or [publicinfo@carrollk12.org](mailto:publicinfo@carrollk12.org), or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed.

Information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the Director of Facilities Management, (410) 751-3177, or the Communications Officer, (410) 751-3020, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157

### **Asbestos Notice**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) management plans for all buildings owned or leased by the Board of Education of Carroll County are available for review at the individual Carroll County school locations and at the Office of Plant Operations located at 191 Schaeffer Avenue, Westminster, MD 21157. Management plans are required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and depict the location, amount, condition, and response action projected for any asbestos-containing materials if any are located in the school building.