

Christa McAuliffe Elementary

McAuliffe Monthly



September 4, 2026

September 2026

Hello Parents,

What a wonderful first week of school! It has been a joy to welcome our students back to Christa McAuliffe Elementary and to reconnect with so many of our families. The excitement, energy, and smiles throughout the building have made for a fantastic start to the school year. We are looking forward to a great year of learning, growth, and community together.

As we begin the year, I would like to share that families can expect to receive two newsletters each month from me. At the beginning of each month, you will receive The McAuliffe Monthly, which includes updates from the principal, specialists, and school counselor. Mid-month, you will receive a second newsletter featuring principal-only updates. I encourage all families to take a few moments to read this important communication so you can stay informed about everything taking place at McAuliffe.

September is shaping up to be a busy and exciting month filled with opportunities for students and families to connect and engage with our school community. Some upcoming events to note include our Welcome Back Assembly (9/4), Curriculum Night (9/10), and Bingo Night (9/24). We hope to see you at these great events!

This week's update is filled with important information related to the month of September. Included are the following updates:

- Student Charges
- Curriculum Night
- Bingo Night
- Parent Student Handbook
- Challenger Chase Fun Run
- Fun Run Incentives
- YMCA Before/After School Care
- School Communication: Parent Square
- McAuliffe Fun (Spirit Wear and Community Events)
- Parent Request: Update Emergency Contact Information
- Cultural Assembly Participation Form
- September Dates

Thank you in advance for your partnership and support as we begin this new school year. Here's to a wonderful September and an amazing year ahead at Christa McAuliffe Elementary!

Take care,

Brady Howden
Principal
Christa McAuliffe Elementary

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Student Charges

To help with the cost of school supplies, families are asked to contribute \$5/student in grades K-2 and \$10/student in grades 3-5 and Quest. Your contribution will help defray the costs of paper (grades K-5), pay for recorders (grades 2/3 Quest and 3), and supply planners (grades 4-5 and Quest). Families can contribute by paying online by Friday, September 11th at the payment link included below.

Donation Directions:

Click on the following payment link: wa-lakewashington-lite.intouchrecepting.com/default

- School: McAuliffe
- I want to donate to: \$5 or \$10 Supply Donations
- Student Name: Your child's name

Curriculum Night

An important date for parents is Curriculum Night on Thursday, September 10th. Curriculum Night will begin held in teacher classrooms according to the schedule below.

Curriculum Night Schedule:

- Curriculum Night for 2/3 Quest and Grades 1-2 will be from 6:00pm-6:45pm
- Curriculum Night for 4/5 Quest and Grades 3-5 will be from 7:00pm-7:45pm

Free Childcare:

One of the greatest factors in a student's success is a strong home-school partnership. As a result, we will be offering free childcare for students in grades K-5 so that every parent/guardian can attend Curriculum Night. We have limited space available, so we encourage you to register your child(ren) so that you can take advantage of this opportunity.

[Childcare Registration for McAuliffe's Curriculum Night – Fill out form](#)

Bingo Night: Thursday, September 24th

Families are invited to join us at our PTSA's annual Bingo Night on Thursday, September 24th from 5:30pm-7:30pm. This is a **free** event for all families that will include treats, cash prizes for Bingo, and free raffle prizes for students throughout the evening. Teachers will be leading the fun as they call Bingo Numbers. I hope you will join us at this great community event!

Parent Student Handbook

We are asking that all families review the McAuliffe Parent Student Handbook with their students so that parents/students are aware of school and district policies/procedures. Once you have read the handbook (link below), please fill out the Forms survey (below) indicating you have read the handbook. Only one Forms survey is needed per family. Handbooks should be read and reviewed by Friday, September 19th.

- [Forms Survey](#) – survey link indicating you have read the handbook
- [Handbook](#) – link to location on our school website

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Challenger Chase Fun Run: Friday, October 2nd

The Fun Run is our PTSA's one and only fundraiser of the year. Donations to our PTSA will be used to pay for supplies, reduce the cost of field trips, fund clubs (ASB, Choir, etc.), provide assembly opportunities, and much more. Included below is a graphic outlining how your contributions support our school and PTSA. Fun Run envelopes will be sent home with students on Friday, September 18th. We appreciate your support of this important fundraiser.

The Fun Run will take place on Friday, October 2nd at 2:35pm, with students running around the exterior of our school campus. The Fun Run Prize Assembly will take place on Thursday, October 15th at 2:30pm in the gym/commons. This is an exciting assembly where we award prizes, reveal the total amount donated, and douse teachers in the famous "Pitch Burst". Parents are invited to join us at both of these great events.



Christa McAuliffe PTSA

Accomplishments for 2025-2026

★ GRANTS PROVIDED TO CHRISTA MCAULIFFE ELEMENTARY ★

Teacher Expense Support	\$8,900	Supplemental Math Resources	\$11,000
Scholastic News & Time for Kids	\$3,188	Emergency Preparedness	\$500
Teacher Stipends	\$16,875	On/Off-Campus Activities Grant	\$12,400
Accelerated Reading/STARS Program	\$6,282	Production Room Paper & Supplies	\$5,000
Mystery Science	\$1,695	Staff Appreciation Events	\$1,700
Outdoor Education Grant	\$3,444	Library Shelving	\$190
Star-Ticket-Drawing Prizes	\$2,900	March Madness Books	\$800
Playground Upkeep	\$600	Running Club	\$230
Assemblies	\$3,342	Water for Portable Classrooms	\$900
Chart Paper	\$700	Mystery Science License	\$1,325

★ TOTAL GRANTS: \$81,971 ★

Wow!

FUN RUN CONTRIBUTIONS:

WE RAISED AN UNBELIEVABLE

\$121,985!

Thank you for your generosity McAuliffe Community. You are truly amazing!

★ PTSA EVENTS, PROGRAMS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- Back to Business
- Kindergarten Playdate
- New Family Welcome Dinner
- Welcome Back and Special Education Coffee
- BINGO Night
- Challenger Chase Fun Run & Prize Assembly
- Chess Club
- Fall Coat and Shoe Drive
- Giving Tree Drive
- Used Book Bazaar
- STEM Fair
- Assemblies
- Spelling Bee
- Popcorn Days
- Good Vibes Neon Disco
- Reflections
- Before/After School Enrichment Classes
- Wear Blue for Kindness
- Art Walk
- Art Start
- Square One Art
- Teacher Appreciation Events
- E-Prep Classroom Restock
- Talent Show
- School Play
- Block Party
- Math Club
- Yearbook
- 5th Grade Promotion
- Student Directory
- Math Challenge
- Sunshine Fund Scholarships
- Sustainability/Earth Month
- School Toolbox

⚙️ YOUR PTSA BEHIND THE SCENES

- McAuliffe PTSA website
- E-blast email newsletter
- Bulletin Boards
- Sponsors, donations, prizes, shirts
- Special Education
- DEI
- Monthly Meetings
- Membership
- Treasurer Reports
- Monthly Art Lessons
- Pantry Packs
- Volunteer Coordination
- Nominating Committee
- Financial audits
- ...and more!

★ ★ ≥ Thanks for another wonderful year McAuliffe! ≤ ★ ★

Fun Run Incentives:

There are many incentives offered by our PTSA for student participation in the Fun Run, which are included below. The PTSA will be offering an after school "Movie Magic" party as an incentive for students who raise \$200 or more (\$500 maximum per family). This event will take place on Friday, November 13th from 6:00pm – 8:00pm (movie to be determined).

Incentives offered this year:

- All students will receive a free Fun Run t-shirt and treat
- Classes with the highest participation will earn a donut party
- All students will be entered in daily prize drawings the week of October 5 - 9
- Students who raise the most money at each grade level will receive a prize
- Students who raise the most money in the school (matching and non-matching) will receive a prize
- Students who raise \$100 or more will be entered into a drawing for the Pitch Burst

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- Students who raise \$200 or more will be able to attend "Movie Magic" (family maximum of \$500)
- If we earn \$100,000 or more as a school, we will have an all-school "Foam Party" in June
- All students will be entered into random drawings for other prizes and school experiences

Thank you in advance for your support of our school and PTSA!

YMCA Before/After School Care

McAuliffe will be hosting the YMCA Before/After School Care program on site this year. Parents can sign up for this program and/or ask questions at:

- [School Enrichment | YMCA of Greater Seattle \(seattleyymca.org\)](https://seattleyymca.org)

School Communication: ParentSquare

Lake Washington School District will continue using the communication platform "ParentSquare". This platform provides options for families for how they want to receive information (email, text, and/or app notifications). Communication within this platform will automatically be translated into the home language indicated on your student's profile. Parents can select their communication preferences by creating an account at the link below.

- [Parent Square Account Creation](#)

McAuliffe Fun (Spirit Wear and Community Events)

Spirit Wear: [McAuliffe Spirit Wear](#)

Families can show their McAuliffe spirit by ordering items from our "McAuliffe Store" at the link provided above. Included are t-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, and other McAuliffe-themed items. Our store offers a variety of brands, colors, and styles for families to choose from.

McAuliffe at the Seattle Kraken: [McAuliffe Kraken Tickets](#)

McAuliffe families are invited to join in a night of fun at the Seattle Kraken. Discounted tickets are available for five Seattle Kraken games at the link provided above.

Parent Request: Update Emergency Contact Information

As part of our goal to keep every student safe in all situations, we need parents to re-check and/or update your student's emergency contact information in Skyward. It is important that you provide contact information for a neighbor or local (Sammamish) person if your student needs to be picked up promptly. Please know that parents will always be contacted first and do not need to be listed in the emergency contacts. Parents may add up to 5 emergency contacts per student and are asked to make this change in Skyward (Family Access page) by Friday, September 25th.

Cultural Assembly Participation Form

Each year McAuliffe Elementary highlights the celebrations and events special to our students and families. As part of this work, students are invited to participate in the planning and/or leading of our cultural events. **Attached** is a form that parents can submit to the office if they would like their child to be considered to support these efforts.

Please submit this form **to the school office by 9/11** if your child would like to be considered to help in this area, with your student marking "1" for their first choice and "2" for their second choice. Students will be selected based upon representation of the holiday and need (number of students), with priority given to students in grades 4 – 5.

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September Dates:

Included below are the many events and activities taking place over the course of the month of September. Please take a moment to read through and update your calendar accordingly.

- No School (Labor Day): September 7
- Kindergarten Staggered Start: September 3 and 4
- PTSA Welcome Back Coffee: September 9 (9:30am)
- Kindergarten First Day (all students): September 8
- Grades 1 – 5 Curriculum Night: September 10
- Special Education Coffee: September 14 (9:30am)
- PTSA General Membership Meeting: September 14 (6:00pm – 7:30pm)
- Fifth Grade Outdoor Education Trip: September 16 – 18
- PTSA Bingo Event: September 24 (5:30pm – 7:30pm)

LRC Hello and welcome to the library! Each class visits the library once per week to be taught a lesson that focuses on one of the LWSd library standards (Reading Engagement, Information Skills, and Media Literacy). For this first month of school, most classes will focus on reviewing or learning the library guidelines and procedures. Fourth and fifth grade students will also be introduced to our school reading competition, The Amazing Reading Challenge! In addition to being available for book checkout and lessons during the school day, the library is often open both before and after school for families to visit. Take a peek at our library website to see the library hours and learn other details about the goings-on in our McAuliffe library. [Library - Christa McAuliffe Elementary](#). Feel free to reach out with any questions about the library or the library program.
Julie jumartin@lwsd.org

PE Welcome back! I hope you had a fun and relaxing summer! In September we will be reviewing rules/expectations and working on teamwork/cooperation for 3-5 graders while the K-2 will work on spatial awareness, safety, and teamwork in PE. All students are graded on EFFORT NOT SKILL. In addition, wearing a good rubber soled tennis shoes is a requirement! Knowing your child's PE days is helpful. Thanks for your support. In addition, 2026 Fall Running Club will be starting Wednesday, September 23rd, 8:30 am. Our Fall session is for grades 1-5 only. Kindergartners will be invited to join in the Spring. I will be sending out signup information on ParentSquare next week. Thanks so much! Stacie Strong sstrong@lwsd.org

MUSIC HAPPENS [Come be a Culture Bearer: Help Us with our Cultural Assemblies and Events!](#)

As a part of our school's ongoing efforts in Equity and Cultural Responsiveness, McAuliffe offers opportunities to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders to sign up to help present various celebrations throughout the school year. These students are given a form with the holidays and can indicate their top two (2) choices to represent. Students and staff undergo much preparation behind-the-scenes to present their celebrations and that is where you come in! Please sign up to be a Culture Bearer! Culture Bearer parent volunteers will help students with their research, presentation formatting, and the bulletin boards for each cultural celebration. While doing so, you can help ensure that your culture is represented authentically. To sign up for Culture Bearing, please email Mrs. Johns and make sure you have cleared the background check to volunteer. Thank you in advance for helping us with our Equity work! ~Mrs. Johns, cjohns@lwsd.org



SEPTEMBER 2026

1-2	Grades 1-5, no Kindergarten
3-4	First day of Kindergarten, staggered
3	5th Grade Camp Chaperone Meeting, 6:00-7:00pm
4	Welcome Back Assembly Grades 1-5, 2:50pm
7	No School—Labor Day
8	First Day of School All Kindergarten
8	Welcome Back Assembly Kindergarten, 12:50pm
9	PTSA Welcome Back Coffee, 9:30am
10	Curriculum Night, see schedule
11	Make-up Pictures
14	SPED Coffee, 9:30am, PTSA GMM 6:00-7:30pm
16-18	5th Grade Camp
21-25	Walk to School Week
23	Running Club Starts 8:30-9:10am
24	PTSA BINGO, 5:30-7:30pm

OCTOBER 2026

2	Fun Run, 2:35pm
9	MVP Day #1, Popcorn Day
12	PTSA Board Meeting, 2:15-3:45pm
12-13	Talent Show Auditions
12-23	PTSA Coat & Shoe Drive Week
15	Fun Run Prize Assembly, 2:30pm
16	No School—LEAP Day
21	Unity Day, Wear Orange
22	Fall Holiday Celebration, 9:40am
29	Grades 1-3 Spelling Bee 6:00-9:00pm
30	Halloween Parade, 10:05-10:35am

COUNSELOR CORNER Hello McAuliffe families, and welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! I hope your summer was filled with fun, relaxation, laughter, and family time. It's hard to believe we are back at it already! September is filled with welcomes, introductions, and new routines to learn. I will be meeting with all our new students in grades 1 – 5 in our new student small groups, spending time in kindergarten to help support our youngest learners and reviewing with students what my role is as their school counselor and how I will support, listen, and encourage all. I have attached my beginning of year letter to introduce/refamiliarize you with the counseling program here at school as well as included a checklist for you to fill out if you wish to contact me or need family support this school year. I've attached some tips about managing separation fears that may come up during these first weeks of school. Again, welcome and I'm looking forward to a wonderful year, and please reach out if you have any questions!

Kindly, Lisa Daniel, McAuliffe School Counselor
<https://mcauliffe.lwsd.org/about-us/counselor-page>