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# School Talk

## WEEKLY UPDATE!

September 3, 2021

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#### Keep in Touch

MPSA's **Back-to-School Night (BTSN)** is this upcoming **Thursday, September 9** at **6PM**. It is virtual so you can attend from the comfort of your own home – no child care needed! This is a wonderful opportunity to hear from your child(ren)'s teacher(s) and learn about classroom procedure, curriculum and other class-centric happenings! More details on how to access BTSN will be sent out this week.

#### What a Great Week!

***What a great start to the school year we had this week!*** It was a joy to see all the faces of our friends, both old and new, and to once again be able to see and hear MPSA bustling with the sounds of learning coming from every classroom.

Thank you to the families who respected all the protocols we put into place to help keep the staff and students safe. We appreciate your cooperation and feel confident that, with your support, we can provide your children with a positive learning experience.

A reminder that no parents should attempt to enter the building with their children – we are aiming to keep the presence of adults to staff and approved visitors for better tracking for health safety. We know that some of you have concerns about your child making it to the right classroom, especially our new students, but please rest assured that we have staff members stationed at the entrance and in every hallway to help guide any children who may need assistance.

Don't forget that this year there is free lunch and breakfast for ALL students in APS, so if your child would like to eat breakfast or lunch, they are welcome to partake. We offer breakfast to all students, even those who arrive after 8:50AM as they can "grab-and-go" with their breakfast and eat it in class.

Things are being done a little differently this year, but your children are amazing and resilient and have been completely cooperative in following all the safety mitigations we have in place. Masks are being worn properly (with the occasional reminder needed here and there) and handwashing is happening aplenty.

We are looking forward to seeing how the rest of the year unfolds and do so with optimism and good spirits. As always, do not hesitate to e-mail us if you have any questions or concerns.

Have a wonderful long weekend!

Sincerely,

Catharina Genove, Principal

### **Please Read: Important Attendance & Dismissal Information**

**School begins at 9AM** so if your child arrives afterwards, they will be marked as an unexcused tardy if they were not on a late bus or have a valid excuse. **Car riders and walkers who arrive after 9AM need to go to Door #1 and check in at the main office.** View the Virginia code on attendance here.

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/22.1-254/>

If your child is going to be absent or tardy, please call the MPSA Attendance line at **703-228-2037** or e-mail [montessori.attendance@apsva.us](mailto:montessori.attendance@apsva.us). You may also fill out this form online:

<https://montessori.apsva.us/about-us/attendance/>. All these attendance lines are monitored by several staff members to ensure no notice is missed, so please use them rather than e-mail specific office staff to guarantee receipt. Please call us before **9:30AM** to avoid a robocall.

**Dismissal:** If you are going to make a change to how your child is dismissed for the day, please **call the school** – do not e-mail – to inform us. **703-228-8871**. Please try to call us **before 3PM** so that we may inform everyone of the change in a timely manner. We ask that parents who want to pick up their children early **please do so by 3:15PM** as to not run into school dismissal time and so you do not get caught in the bus and car rider line traffic.

### iPad Distribution

In the interest of best practices for our students and the health and safety of our staff, all students will be sent home an iPad for the 2021-22 school year. In the unfortunate event we have students quarantined, we would like to minimize the disruption to learning by providing a resource for synchronous/asynchronous learning. Students at MPSA who do not already have an iPad will receive theirs according to this timeline (subject to change):

- **Pre-K devices** will be distributed for use by the second 9 weeks of school to give our ITC time to work with the students on how to use their device appropriately.
- **Kindergarten** devices should go home starting 9/29, giving them a few days to practice before the weekend.

### Extended Day Pick Up Procedure

Since parents are not allowed into the building this year to retrieve their children, we will have a staff member waiting in the vestibule of Door #1 (main entrance) by 5PM to check out your child. We are asking parents who will be coming to school **before 5PM** to pick up their children from Extended Day to **please e-mail** the Extended Day supervisor, Leslie Elgendi-Whiteside ([leslie.elgendi@apsva.us](mailto:leslie.elgendi@apsva.us)) or send in a note with your child so that we will have someone there to meet you. We are working with APS to find a more convenient way to facilitate dismissal and will update you if/when those procedures are in place. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

### Reminder: Annual Online Verification Process

The **APS Annual Online Verification Process (AOVP)** opened on August 23. All families should sign into ParentVue and complete the process as soon as possible. The purpose of this process is to ensure that we have all the latest and up-to-date information for your child. This includes emergency contact information, dismissal information and other important pieces we need to keep our students safe. Please check that we have the correct phone numbers and e-mails listed as this system is where we turn to when we need to contact families.

**Note:** We have noticed that some families are omitting listing phone numbers. If you do indeed have a phone (or a secondary phone number) we highly encourage you to list them as this is our resource for contacting you if there is an emergency with your child.

### MPSA Music Notes

**All Returning Lower and Upper Elementary Students:** Please bring your labeled music bags back to school. Leave them outside Ms. Shakespeare's classroom.



**Upper Elementary Students:** Register now for Band and Orchestra. Registration ends September 10<sup>th</sup>. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch may rent instruments from the school for a minimal fee.

String players (violin, viola, cello) and percussion players (snare drum and bells) will always be masked and maintain 3-foot distancing during instruction. Wind players (flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone and baritone) will be provided bell covers for their instruments from the county and must use them in order to play during indoor class time. While indoors, players will be at least 3 ft apart and only lower their mask while playing and then cover immediately after. When conditions outdoors allow, some wind instruction will take place outdoors for additional safety. Wind instrument students will be responsible for the bell cover and wash it each week and bring it to lessons. Students who lose the bell cover will have to purchase a new one and only be allowed to pretend to play during indoor class time. These guidelines follow NAFME, VMEA guidelines as well as additional from APS.

**Band** sign up with **Mr. Glasner:** <https://forms.gle/hqcJfc5VvjJsc1sy7>

**Orchestra** sign up with **Mr. Kamenski:** <https://forms.gle/rKAHvGcdjnc6UCTc8>

### **Update: Volunteer/Partner Applications Process**

The volunteer process has been updated and you should now be prompted to upload your proof of Covid-19 vaccine when you apply. If you have already applied and need to upload your vaccine card, please reopen the link (found here <https://www.apsva.us/volunteers-partnerships/volunteer-application-form/application-process/>) on the same device you used to originally apply and you should be prompted to complete your form. If it does not work for you, please contact Kia Haynes at [kia.stevensonhaynes@apsva.us](mailto:kia.stevensonhaynes@apsva.us).

Please remember that having your application approved does not grant instant access to the school. All volunteers will need to be approved by an administrator before being allowed to enter the building.

### **APS en Español**

APS has started a new Facebook page for our Spanish speaking communities. Please share this page, [Escuelas Públicas de Arlington](https://www.facebook.com/APSenEspanol/), with any families you believe would find it useful.  
<https://www.facebook.com/APSenEspanol/>

### Upcoming Dates

Monday, September 6 - **Labor Day** (NO SCHOOL/Offices closed)

Tuesday, September 7 - **Rosh Hashanah** (NO SCHOOL/Offices closed)

Wednesday, September 8 - **Children return to school**

Thursday, September 9 - **Back-to-School Night, 6PM**

Thursday, September 16 – **Yom Kippur** (NO SCHOOL/Offices closed)

Wednesday, September 29 – **Early Release, 1:26PM**

Wednesday, October 6 – **School Picture Day** (Individual Portraits)

### Keep in Touch

MPSA on APS: <https://montessori.apsva.us/>

MPSA on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>

MPSA Library on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/MPSA\\_Library](https://twitter.com/MPSA_Library)

Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>

Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>

Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>