



NEWS FROM “THE MILL”

September 1-30, 2019

Watkins Mill High School
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<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/watkinsmillhs/>

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MESSAGE FROM MS. GODDARD, PRINCIPAL

The **2019-2020** school year is off to a great start! Students arrived with clear excitement of a new school year, eager to get their schedules, see their friends, and meet their teachers. I can attest that this has been one of the best opening weeks of school ever! Our staff was just as excited to welcome students back to school, and classes are off to a great start. As I have walked the halls and visited classes, I have been so impressed with how all of our students have started the year. There is a definite “buzz” in the air and palpable anticipation of a high school year ahead. GO RINES!!

As always, I would like to thank the hardworking parents of our [PTSA and Booster Club](#), for their fantastic support of our school. Parents, please show your support by becoming a member now! It’s very easy to become a member of both organizations, with one fee and one registration form. Registration form found [here](#).

Twitter and Snapchat is a great way to stay connected with all that is happening at the Mill. On the topic of technology, Watkins Mill HS is fully equipped with “wifi” for students, teachers, and guest access on their own devices. Simply find the “MCPS” for students or “MCPS Guest” for visitors wifi access account when you are here, and you will be connected. Students are still allowed to use their phones before school, between classes, at lunch, after-school, and in class at teacher discretion for learning activities.

On that note, I need to remind everyone that as students bring valuable electronic devices to school, we have had more incidents of items going missing. We are reminding all students to keep their valuables with them and secured in a locker at all times. While we will investigate and take action for any thefts, we also need students to avoid carelessness, leaving phones in bathrooms, on desks, charging, etc.

The WMHS staff remains committed to:

- A positive, safe school environment;
- Personalization of the educational experience and knowing our students well;
- A culture of high expectations;
- College and career readiness for all students;
- The [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#) education;
- High levels of student engagement, collaboration, innovation, and communication in the classroom;
- Supporting students’ social/emotional learning;
- Student/parent involvement, school pride, and engagement that permeates the entire community.
- Fun! Enjoyable, memorable, exciting high school years.

To that end, we continue to strongly encourage our students to take the most challenging courses possible, particularly in the [IB Programme](#). In addition, course offerings in Advanced-Placement (AP), Honors, Pre-IB, the arts, world languages, engineering/technology, physical education/health, and multiple [career academies](#) remain available for enrollment this fall. Students and parents can contact their [counselor](#) to make any scheduling adjustments for the upcoming year.

I am also thrilled to be in our 7th year of operating the [School-Based Wellness Center](#), in partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services. All students have access to a wide range of medical and social/emotional services matched to their individual needs. These services are complemented by a multitude of positive youth development programs, student groups, and mental health services. Wellness Center programs and services will be offered exclusively to Watkins Mill students and will be available to the entire student body. To access these services, parents must complete a Wellness Center registration form, which is available [here](#).

Another primary goal is to ensure a **positive, safe learning environment** for all students and staff. The grade-level administrators visited classrooms and spoke to students during the first week of school. The administrators discussed expectations for student behavior, keys to success, and the [MCPS Student Code of Conduct](#). They will also be covering other policies and procedures, such as policies about dress code, electronic devices, and the attendance policy.

Please note that the school administration will not tolerate any forms of **bullying**, harassment, or intimidation, whether physical, verbal, or online. All incidents of bullying or harassment should be reported to a staff member, counselor, or administrator, and immediate action will be taken. I would like to draw your attention to the Bullying, Harassment [form](#) which parents and students can use to submit a formal bullying complaint. The form should be turned in to the main office, counselor, or administrator, and an investigation will be conducted immediately. For more information on our bullying policies, click [here](#).

We are very excited about our **fall sports season**, and we are anticipating great things from all of our teams. We promote sportsmanship and tenacity while competing against other high schools. We need your help in getting off to a winning start by getting involved and packing the stands! Don't forget, you can also have dinner at our concession stand, sponsored by the Booster Club. Please plan to come out and support the Wolverines at an athletic contest this year. We hope the entire community comes out to support our student athletes! The complete schedule can be found here: <http://www.watkinsmillathletics.com>.

Please note that **SEASON ATHLETIC PASSES** can be purchased at the financial office during normal business hours (7:30-3:30). Prices are as follows:

Fall Adult = \$30
Fall Student = \$18
Winter Adult = \$40
Winter Student = \$24
Year Adult = \$70
Year Student - \$40

SAVE THE DATES: Please be sure to join us for **Back to School Night** (7:00 pm) on **September 5**. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to see firsthand the great things that are happening at school and meet your child's teachers.

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Back To School Night | September 5, at 7:00 pm |
| Underclass Picture Day | September 9, 10 (English Classes) |
| Family Food Market | September 14, at 8:00 am |
| No School (Rosh Hashanah) | September 30 |
| Homecoming Game | October 4 |
| Early Release Day – (K-12) | October 4 |
| Homecoming Dance | October 5 |
| No School (Yom Kippur | October 9 |
| Homework Free Weekend | October 11-13 |
| End of First Marking Period | November 8 |
| Early Release Day- (K-12) | November 8, 11, and 12 |

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please note that the attendance policy remains in place for all high school students in Montgomery County Public Schools. It is imperative that students attend class every day, in order to receive the best possible education and opportunities for success. [Click here!](#)

Students who accumulate more than 5 unexcused absences in a marking period risk losing credits for that semester course, that will modify their current grade. Teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators will work together to keep parents and students informed, and in extreme cases will collaborate to develop and implement attendance contracts. However, students with serious attendance issues will lose credit for the entire semester of that course.

FREE AND REDUCED MEALS

ONLINE FARMS APPS ARE LIVE AND IS NOW OPEN for parents to complete and submit the 2019-2020 Online application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals! www.MySchoolApps.com

Did you know that if you are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch your college applications will be free and your SAT/ACT registration fees? Apply online at www.myschoolapps.com and get a response in the mail within two weeks.

Households **must apply every year** to determine if they are eligible for the FARMS program. Federal income guidelines change each year, and it is likely that most household situations change each year. **If a completed FARMS application is not APPROVED by Friday, September 27, students who were eligible for free or reduced meals last year will revert to full paid.** Even if students do not plan to eat school lunch, completing this application may open up access to scholarships and other financial supports. For more information, please click [here](#).

Family Food Market: Watkins Mill High School will be hosting another Family Food Market on Saturday, September 14th at 8:00 a.m. Please come to school and shop for food items at NO COST! All you need is your own grocery bags to carry the food. Please note, if the food truck arrives early, we will open the doors early. Great SSL opportunity too.

School Photos: All underclassmen should be prepared to take student photos on September 9 and 10. These photos will be used for purposes of portrait packages, yearbook, and a required photo ID.

COMMUNICATIONS

We have several communication strategies that will be used for routine and emergency communications. For example, an automatic phone calling system, Connect-Ed, is used to send telephone calls from Watkins Mill with important information about school events and/or emergencies, and when students are absent. An active telephone number and email address are essential to maintain these communications. Please be sure to update emergency communication sheets.

The myMCPS Parent Portal is the home-to-school communication system for schools to share information regarding grades, attendance, scheduling, and more. The myMCPS Parent Portal is available for teachers, parents, and students in grades 6 through 12! Parent letter with information on how to create a myMCPS Parent Portal account and link it to your student(s) will be sent out soon. Click [here](#) to view information on our MCPS website on myMCPS Parent Portal.

Also, please be sure to follow us on [Twitter](#), yet another vehicle for important communications, updates, and glimpses into daily activities and classroom instruction. A summary of steps that all parents should do are listed found below:

- Sign up to follow us on [Twitter](#)
- Sign up to follow us on [Snapchat](#)
- Bookmark our [website](#) and check our regularly
- Return the emergency contact sheets sent home the first day of school
- Notify the school of changes to email addresses and cell phone numbers
- Read this monthly newsletter
- Sign up for MCPS [Quick Notes](#)
- Sign up for [MCPS Alerts](#)

Thank you for your support of WMHS and our school community. Our students deserve our very best each day and I am here to see that through. If we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to email or call.

A full staff directory can be found here:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/watkinsmillhs/staff/directory.aspx>

The 2019-2020 school year is off to a great start! We are looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,
Carol Goddard, Principal

NEWS FROM COUNSELING & THE COLLEGE/CAREER CENTER: COLLEGE NIGHT FOR SENIORS & PARENTS AT WATKINS MILL Seniors and their parents are invited to join us on Thursday, September 5th at 6:00 pm in the Media Center for **an informative meeting** before Back-to-School Night. **Mrs. Heald from the College and Career Center** will explain the College Application Process at Watkins Mill including the request of official transcripts, teacher recommendations and counselor recommendations for students planning to attend both two year and 4 year colleges.

COLLEGE VISITS AT THE MILL BEGIN IN MID-SEPTEMBER Throughout the fall, college admissions representatives make appointments to visit & recruit Watkins Mill juniors & seniors. These meetings are usually held in the College/Career Center. A list of colleges that have already made appointments can be accessed on Family Connection, <https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection/auth/login/?hsid=wmhs> Juniors/Seniors can login by entering their six digit MCPS ID as both their username and their password.

Once on the site, click on the “Colleges” tab and then click the “Colleges Home” link and scroll down to College Visits. Colleges are frequently added so please check weekly.

In order to attend a visit, students must first click “sign me up” on Family Connection, print out the confirmation page, and obtain teacher approval from the teacher whose class you will be missing. This signed confirmation page is the student’s pass to attend.

PSAT This year, the PSAT will be administered on **Wednesday, October 16th** at all Montgomery County High Schools. Students in grade 10 will take a practice PSAT at no cost. For juniors who take the official PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test), the fee is \$15. The PSAT is a practice test for the SAT Reasoning Test. It is administered only once during the school year and consists of one reading, one writing and language, and one math section totaling 2 hours and 45 minutes.

Registration for juniors will take place in early October. Juniors who do not sign up to take the official PSAT/NMSQT will take a practice ACT at no cost. There will be more announcements to remind students about this opportunity as we get closer to this date.

Kate Heald College/Career Coordinator 301-284-4432

NOTE FROM OUR PTSA VICE PRESIDENT - PAMELA SMITH: Welcome back to school! We are looking forward to a great year. I want to thank all of the staff, students and families who became PTSA members last year. Because of you, we were able to provide breakfast for the staff three mornings throughout the year, grant some teacher mini-grants, organize a bus for seniors and families who did not want to drive to graduation, hold four community meetings, provide emails with regular updates of news and events from the school, provide two seniors with scholarship money for college and more. When you join the PTSA, your membership fees and donations make sure that we are able to help our school community. Of course, everyone in the PTSA volunteers his or her time, and we always could use more help. Thank you to everyone who volunteered time last year! Joining the PTSA and volunteering at the school are a couple of the ways that you can show your children and the staff at the school that your child's education is important to you.

Have YOU joined the PTSA yet for the 2019-2029 school year? Our membership dues remain the same. Staff \$10 Students \$5 Parents/Guardians \$15 Families \$30

You can join at Back-to-School Night on September 5th or fill out a form from the website and send a check with the form to the school c/o the WMHS PTSA

And remember, your PTSA membership is a joint membership with the Booster Club! By joining, you can take an active role in your child's education and support our school. For seniors to be eligible for PTSA scholarships at the end of the year, they must be members of the PTSA.

Do you want to learn more about what's happening at WMHS and the PTSA? Be on the lookout for information regarding our first meeting which will be held the media center. Find out everything you need to know about life at Watkins Mill!

See you at Back to School Night!

Pamela Smith
PTSA Vice President



Students and Parents! Show some school spirit and support your community with a 2019-2020 Watkins Mill High School Yearbook!

Yearbooks can be purchased online at: jostensyearbooks.com

Cost: \$65.00 now through September 27, 2019.

Questions about how to order? Contact Ellen Stahly at

[Ellen S Stahly@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Ellen_S_Stahly@mcpsmd.org)



Parents of Seniors: Looking for a creative way to tell your student, “I love you and I’m proud of you”?

Place a recognition ad in the yearbook!

It’s easy to create a recognition ad. Just head on over to jostensyearbooks.com and complete the online form! Just like the yearbook, your message will be a permanent memory. Early bird deadline is 11/29/19. Payment plans are available for both yearbook and ads.

Questions about how to complete your recognition ad? Contact Ellen Stahly at [Ellen S Stahly@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Ellen_S_Stahly@mcpsmd.org)

Ms. Tiffany Shaw ACES Academic Coach Room E107

ACES (Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success) is now approaching its 7th year at Watkins Mill High School and is looking forward to the 2019-2020 school year! The ACES program is a collaborative effort between Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Montgomery College (MC), and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG). There is an ACES Academic Coach, Ms. Tiffany Shaw, at Watkins Mill High School working with qualified 11th and 12th grade students to provide individualized support while completing high school and navigating through the college entrance process. ACES assists students with getting into the college of their choice and if they choose to attend Montgomery College and transition to earn a four-year degree through the Universities at Shady Grove, continuous support will be provided. Postcards have been mailed to current students in the 10th grade with information on how to apply. The application is open from September 3 - December 20. To apply visit: acesmontgomery.org

If you have any questions, please contact:

Ms. Tiffany Shaw ACES Academic Coach Room E107 Monday-Thursday during lunch and after school tiffany.shaw@montgomerycollege.edu (MC e-mail)

tiffany_shaw@mcpsmd.org (MCPS Email) 301-284-4424 (Direct Office) 240-495-5584 (Work Cell)