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Weekly Wissahickon 08-07-2020

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Fri, Aug 7, 2020 at 10:41 AM

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Message from CEO

Dear Families,

At this point in the summer, your children are hopefully well on their way through their summer work. If this is not the case, please don't delay in getting started now. This time right before school starts is important for getting students back into learning habits.

I have a couple of important announcements to share this week:

- We are delaying the start of school until Tuesday, September 8th to allow for safe, socially-distanced, outdoor, in person conferences on September 1st-3rd. After we share who your child's homeroom teacher is, we will send out the link to sign up for a conference slot.
- Work on our remote schedule continues and will be shared with you next week. We are sharing it with staff first so we can answer their questions before it goes out more broadly. In the meantime, the school day will be much more like a regular in-person school day. It will begin at 8:30 with Zoom meetings with homeroom teachers. The day will include a minimum of three hours of live learning on Zoom (synchronous) as well as work time off of Zoom as well (asynchronous).
- Right now, we are **tentatively** planning to invite kindergarten and first grade students into the building to start a hybrid (partly in person at school and partly remote) model of education on Thursday, December 3rd. These students would likely learn from home on Monday and attend in person from Tuesday-Friday. Our plan would then be to add additional grades gradually as we show that we are safely adhering to a successful health and safety plan in school. Actually starting the hybrid model on that date will be based on what is happening with the virus locally, on the guidance we receive from PDE and the CDC, and on our ability to properly staff the model.

Thank you for your patience and trust as we continue to make and share plans for the fall.

Take care,

***NEW* Updates**

Staffing Shifts and Hiring Updates

We are excited to share some internal staffing shifts and new hire news with you all! Niema Golphin has moved into a newly created position on the Shared Services team. She now serves as the Director of School Culture. In this role, Niema is supervising the Deans of Culture at each site, guiding the training and coaching of each site's Culture team, and helping lead culture planning for the return to school. She is also eager to bring meditation to both staff and students. We are incredibly fortunate to have Thomas Randall moving into the lead Dean of Culture position at Fernhill after having served as the Assistant Dean of Culture for over a year, and Chamaine Pugh-Edwards moving into the Assistant Dean of Culture position after 2 years as an Assistant Teacher.

We are also pleased to share that Amber Brown will be joining the Learning Specialist team, replacing Gail Schroder. Amber recently graduated from Arcadia University. She completed her special education student teaching placement at the Awbury Campus from January-March, so she is already familiar with Wissahickon and our model. Please join us in welcoming her to the team!

We also want to introduce Sherraine Senior, a 2nd grade teacher at Awbury, who will be shifting her focus this year and working to provide additional remote learning and reading support to our youngest students from both campuses, which we know they will need and benefit from in this virtual model.

We are making good progress in our search for a Clerical Assistant, a maternity leave sub for MS Science, and an Assistant Teacher and we look forward to sharing more hiring news with you as we fill those positions.

High School Application Updates

As middle school families continue to prepare for high school applications, we encourage you to continue to visit our High School Matters page on the Wissahickon Website (under Family Resources [here](#)). Application deadlines will be posted as well as any updated information. We are waiting on updates in regards to changes in application criteria for certain schools (e.g., PSSA scores) and will continue to notify you immediately as we receive that information. Please continue to reach out to Ms. Aitiya, a.hobson@wissahickoncharter.org (Fernhill) and Ms. Abby, a.beljean@wissahickoncharter.org (Awbury) for any questions or concerns.

Important Reminders

Summer Reading & Math

Students can complete the paper packets by hand, and if you need access to them or any of the websites online, **you can find everything [HERE](#)**, including helpful videos that walk you & students through the work.

We'll be grading summer assignments for completion, not getting everything "right". We hope to see each individual student showing effort and engagement with this work and practicing skills. This means completing the packets to the best of their ability. It could also mean talking about the reading & math assignments with family & friends (we know sometimes people learn best together!), and writing down specific questions for parts of assignments if they don't understand.

Summer iPad & Chromebook information and guidelines LINKED HERE <very important if you borrowed a WCS device>

If any issues come up with your device, please email helpis@wissahickoncharter.org ASAP. Don't wait till the end of summer.

Additional resources

- Please click [here](#) for a list of sites providing summer meals for students this summer.
- Look [here](#) for updated information about the Covid-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program.
- Check [here](#) for financial support and eligibility requirements through the PA Department of Human Services.
- During the summer, feel free to reach out to [Ms. Rebecca](#) for any additional support as needed.

Follow Wissahickon Charter on Social Media

Follow WCS on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for important school updates and to see student learning and fun in action! And don't be shy- we love it when you like, comment, and share our posts!



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