

WILLIAM WIRT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Rhonda Simley, Principal | rhonda.simley@pgcps.org
6200 Tuckerman Street | Riverdale, MD 20737 | 301-985-1720 | www.pgcps.org/williamwirt

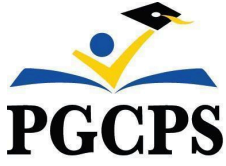


August 16, 2024

As the last few weeks of summer draw close, I welcome you to the 2024 – 2025 School Year with great excitement! There are only two weeks between us and the commencement of a new year, where we eagerly await the arrival of new families and the return of our esteemed scholars on Monday, August 26th. As we prepare to enter our new state-of-the-art school building, the excitement and anticipation of this transition can be felt for miles and miles. This new space offers incredible opportunities for learning and growth, and we are excited to share it with you. As we step into this new chapter, we must take pride in our beautiful new environment. There is still some work to be done to complete the final phase of this project. I request your patience and support as the contractors work diligently to finish the construction. By working together with building services, we can ensure that our school remains a clean, safe, and welcoming place for everyone.

- I am also pleased to share that we have expanded our instructional offerings by adding STEAM classes to our signature program. These classes will provide our students with hands-on learning experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills essential for success today. We are excited about the new opportunities this program will bring our students and its positive impact on their educational journey. Safety will remain our top priority as we begin a new school year! Students will still be **encouraged** to use clear book bags, which is not **mandatory**! Thanks to this proactive approach, we have promptly dealt with any safety protocol breaches. We will continue to offer families in need clear book bags on a first-come, first-serve basis free of charge. It is essential to our safety to see what is coming in and out of the building. I still cannot believe it's been nine years since I arrived at William Wirt Middle School, and while the road hasn't always been smooth, it has been worth the travel! I am incredibly proud of the work that we have done and remain humbled to serve as the principal of William Wirt.

Parents play a vital role in the academic success of our students; therefore, school/parent communication is crucial. All we need is your active participation. Please inquire with the main office about how you can get involved. Families must remain connected with the school through their grade-level administrators, professional school counselors, and classroom teachers utilizing various platforms. We will post regular updates to our [school website](#), [class dojo app](#), and school messenger. Please click on the links to sign up. With the new Synergy platform, we ask that you ensure that your phone number, email address, and mailing address are updated and correct by the school. If you have a Twitter account, please follow William Wirt Middle School at [@wwmsjags_pgcps](#) and [@wwmsjags_pgcps](#) on Instagram for school-related updates. We take great pride in showcasing the great work of our students and staff. Please continue to check our school's website frequently for more information. All teachers and staff will use Classroom Dojo daily to communicate with parents and track student behavior. All parents must accept the Class Dojo invitations from teachers. This platform allows parents to communicate with their children's teachers and monitor their children's behavior. Additionally, parents will receive examples such as pictures of classroom instruction, the instructional focus, and various activities.



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Our entire team is committed to ensuring that your child is part of a nurturing, safe, and positive learning environment. Although we have lost some staff members to resignations, retirements, and promotions, I have met and hired some AMAZING staff members who I know will help us increase student achievement. The staff assembled this school year has the experience, instructional capability, and willingness to help your child achieve academic excellence and social-emotional wellness.



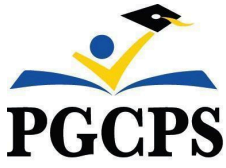
To prepare for the school year, you will find all the information below to begin the school year successfully.

Arrival & Dismissal:

- The instructional day for students will be 8:30 am to 3:10 pm. Adult supervision on school property does not exist before 8:00 am, so students should arrive no earlier than 8:15 am.
- Upon entering the building at 8:15 am, all 6th, 7th-grade, & 8th-grade students will enter the building through the main doors and go to the multipurpose room until we dismiss for Mod 1 at 8:15 am. Through our Universal Breakfast Program, **all students can eat breakfast for free.**
- Afternoon Dismissal begins at 3:05 p.m.; therefore, students will not be released for early dismissal after 2:45 p.m. All students must be picked up from school no later than 3:30 p.m.
- Visitors are encouraged to make an appointment before visiting the building. Appointments can be made by contacting the front office at 301-985-1720. At the time of visit, please adhere to the following guidelines:
 - Bring a government-issued photo ID.
 - Adhere to the temporary parking spots designated

Uniforms:

- William Wirt is a uniform school, so students are required to wear uniforms daily.
- Please [click on the link](#) to see the colors worn by students in grades 6-8 and what is considered allowable.
- Students will wear khaki or navy blue bottoms (pants, knee-length skirts, or knee-length shorts) and a solid polo-style/collared shirt in the following colors that correlate with their grade level.
 - 6th Grade: light blue
 - 7th Grade: goldenrod/gold
 - 8th Grade: black
- Shoes can be any color or style of tennis shoe; no open-toe shoes are allowed.
- Students can wear solid-colored cardigans, sweaters, and sweatshirts that align with their grade level.
 - **Students will not be allowed to wear hooded sweatshirts throughout the building.**



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School Supplies:

- To support our needy families, we have purchased additional school supplies to distribute on a first-come, first-served basis. Supply pick-up will occur on **Friday, August 23rd, during our New Student Welcome Party from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
- This year, Chromebooks will be kept at school. Students will have access to them in each of their core classes. Teachers will have mobile carts available, and **Chromebooks will be fully charged and ready to use daily.**
- **Students needing to pay for damaged devices can pay using the PGCPS Myschoolbucks [Technology link](#).**

School Meals:

- Meals will be **free** for all students for school years 24-25. Breakfast and lunch will be offered in all schools.

School Lunch Accounts:

- Students will receive **6-digit PINs**, remaining with them until they graduate high school.

Immunization:

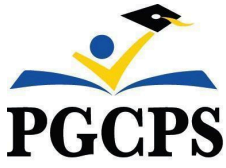
- **No Shots? No School.** Do you need shots for school? For health and safety, please ensure your student is current on all vaccines the state requires before the beginning of this school year!
- Prince George's County provides immunizations to residents: Here is a [link to free clinics](#) available through Prince George's County. Clinics are designed to support students and families who are underinsured or uninsured. Head to a free immunization clinic in school wellness centers to get up-to-date with vaccinations. Appointments are required.

Registration:

- Due to the construction of our new state of the art school, we will temporarily have designated time slots for **student registration**. Parents please choose between the following time slots to register your child. Appointments are strongly encouraged. Appointments can be made by contacting the front office at 301-985-1720. We will revisit the logistics of registration as construction progress is made.
 - Morning Registration 9:30 - 12:00
 - Afternoon Registration 1:00 - 3:00

Bus Route:

- Transportation assignments may be viewed in ParentVUE. Also, lookout for postcards with route information in the mail the week of Aug. 19. Your student must have been registered for school by Wednesday, August 7, to secure school bus transportation for the start of the 2024-25 school year. Families who registered late or have not received a bus assignment can use [InfoFinder](#) by entering their home address to view bus routes and stops nearest to their home.
- Middle and high school students residing two miles or more from their assigned school are eligible for transportation.
- School Finder – [Use this tool](#) to help find programs and school assignments for a particular address.



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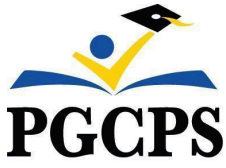
- [Transportation FAQs](#)
- Need help? [Transportation Resolution System](#)

Parking/Construction:

- As we continue with ongoing construction, we ask for your flexibility and patience with traffic around the school. Please plan for possible delays and follow any posted signs or directions from staff to ensure everyone's safety. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated as we work to improve our school environment.

Some final reminders:

- Attendance mandates will be shared with families throughout the school year. Synergy is an electronic student information system that Prince George's County Public Schools uses to record attendance, grades, assignments, report cards, discipline incidents, and other information about your child. The Family Portal is an application that allows parents to view their student information as it is added in real time. If you do not have an email account, you must create one. A free email account can be created at gmail.com. In addition to using this email to log in to Family Portal, PGCPS may contact you about important announcements such as school closures.
- School attendance plays a significant part in student academic success. Too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school, making it harder to learn how to read and master foundational reading and math skills. Building good habits in school helps children learn early that going to school on time every day is essential. Students not in their classroom seats by 8:30 a.m. will be marked tardy.
- Daily attendance will be closely monitored. Last school year, over 37% of our students were chronically absent. Students who miss more than one day per month are at risk of not meeting the State attendance requirement and will be recommended to our Truancy Reduction Program for family support. To ensure students arrive on time daily, encourage them to set a regular bedtime and morning routine. Be sure to lay out uniforms and backpacks the night before. Avoid scheduling dental and medical appointments or extended trips during school days. Make backup plans for getting your child to school if something comes up. The County attendance procedure will be fully implemented. Students who miss more than one day per month are at risk of not meeting the State attendance requirement and may be retained at the end of the year. <https://www.pgcps.org/offices/ograc/administrative-procedures/students--5000/ap-5113---student-attendance-absence-and-truancy>
- In ParentVUE, you can see your child's schedule, grades, transportation information, attendance, etc. A ParentVUE account is also needed to enroll in PGCPS. [Activate or create](#) your account today! All returning students are expected to retrieve their schedules in Synergy. Schedules will be available through the Synergy Portal beginning August 21, 2024. Printed schedules will be available for those who are unable to access Synergy on the first day of school. **For all new students, in-person schedule distributions will occur on Orientation Day, August 23, 2024.**



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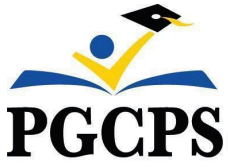
Date	Event	Time
August 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Student 1/2 Day Orientation (All 6th graders & new to WW 7th graders) 	8:30 am - 11:10 am
August 23, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Party for new and returning WW Families only. Meet administrators, staff, and community partners and receive free giveaways and knowledge about navigating the middle school model. 	11:00 am - 2:00 pm*
August 21-25, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Immunization Clinics at Bladensburg High School. Additional information will be provided on our school website and communicated through the school messenger system. 	TBD
August 26, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Day of School 	Arrival: 8:30 am Dismissal 3:10 pm
September 2, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor Day- Schools & Offices Closed 	N/A
September 16, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof. Development Day - No Students 	N/A
September 19, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Back to School Night Additional information will be provided on our school website and communicated through the school messenger system. 	5:30 pm – 8:00 pm
September 27, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Planning - 3hr. Early Dismissal 	Students are dismissed at 12:10 pm

***School supply pick-up for those in need during Welcome Party**

Please know that my staff and I will show up every day prepared professionally to educate and empower your children. Let’s work together to make this another fantastic school year! I cannot **thank you** enough for your trust and patience with my leadership and team, and I look forward to partnering with you and your child for a successful year ahead! Enjoy the remainder of your summer.

We look forward to seeing everyone on the first day of school, August 26, 2024.

Sincerely,
Rhonda Simley
Principal, William Wirt MS



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