

Office Hours:

Main Office

8:45-4:15

Attendance

8:45-4:15

Counseling

8:45-4:00

Contact us:

Attendance

676-6460, option 1

Athletics

676-6460, option 2

Student Services

676-6460, option 3

Main Office

676-6460, option 4

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FROM THE WILDCATS' DEN.....

Signs of Spring..

Sunday, I was out walking the dogs and was delighted to see a solid sign of spring. Native Trilliums were up in abundance, poking their liliated heads through the forest floor. I'm always encouraged when the trilliums arrive; it usually means that warmer, drier weather is coming... It also proves that six months of rain and yuck has produced something positive and beautiful.



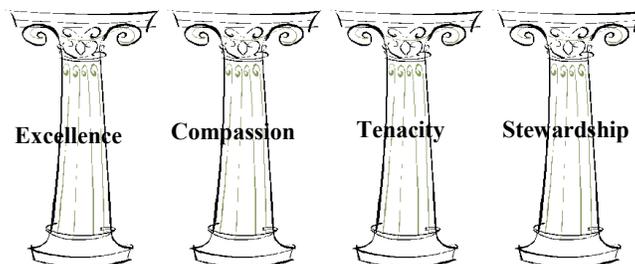
This time of the school year is also a reminder that the fast-paced conclusion to a year of learning is quickly approaching. Spring sports have begun, 5th grade visitations start, 8th graders have registered for high school classes, state testing has commenced, etc. etc. etc. It's the beginning to a busy time of year.

Other than the August "Back to School" edition, this month's newsletter has a slew of information that is critical for families and those attempting to keep up with a middle school student. As we start to get a peek at the end of the year, it's a good time to communicate how much I appreciate the efforts of our students, parents, teachers, and staff who have all made such positive contributions to a terrific year here on Halleck Street.

The Bellingham Promise states "Together we learn more than alone." That certainly is true of our collective experiences here at Whatcom Middle School. Which makes me think of trilliums; I rarely see them alone.

Wishing you good learning (and spring time beauty)

Jeff



Cooking with Common Threads

Happy Spring!

We're delighted to be back in the garden! Students are cultivating and planting garden beds with peas, lettuce, broccoli, radishes, and much more! Come celebrate school gardens at Common Threads' **4th annual Dirt Fest on Wednesday, April 18th**: Join the Common Threads team for a community-wide garden party at Parkview Elementary 2:30 - 4pm. PLUS, dine out at Goat Mountain Pizza 11am - 2pm & 5 - 8pm. For more info, please contact me: anna@commonthreadsfarm.org.

Best wishes,
Anna

Upcoming Dates



4/12-13 FPS State Competition
4/17 PTSA Meeting, 7:00 pm in Library
4/26 12:00 dismissal
4/27 No School
5/7 & 11 Chuckanut Team Law Days
5/10 8th grade to Hovander for Civil War Education Event
5/14-15 Puma Team to Environmental Site
5/16-18 Edventure Team to Environ. Site

[Check the WMS Calendar for updated events.](#)

From the Counseling Office...

I hope everyone had a relaxing break in spite of the rain (I was half-jokingly referring to it as our second Winter Break). And here we are at one of the busiest and most exciting times of the year! We're trying to stay present THIS year while working on all things "next year" like 5th grade visits, 8th grade celebration, summer break, and last but not least, scheduling! It's a complex puzzle fitting 700 kids into 24 classrooms.

Each of our students has unique needs and balancing any single individual's needs with those of their peers is a daunting task. We have a lot of conversations with kids and parents about trying to make sure everyone gets their needs, but not necessarily their wants, met. When your kids come home telling you they really want a specific teacher next year, one of the best things you can do for them is talk about how they're going to respond if they don't get what they want, how they're going to make the best of the situation, what they can learn regardless of whether or not it's who they wanted (hint: it's not always academic!), etc. I have had many conversations with kids (and parents!) over the years about how they REALLY did not want a specific teacher, got them anyway, then wound up learning a lot AND loving them. We're always striving to help the kids develop the skills they're going to need, not just in middle school, but throughout their lives; learning to make the best of a situation that isn't their first choice is one of them! As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact one of us!

Molly, Beth & Lisa

After-School Dinner Program Free for All Students 18 and Under

Bellingham Public Schools currently offers free hot dinner to all children 18 and under in the community. These meals are offered daily Mondays through Thursdays through June 6, 2018. Dinner is served from 5 to 6 p.m. at Shuksan Middle School, located at 2717 Alderwood Avenue (at the corner of Northwest and Alderwood).

Please note: Accompanying adults are charged \$4. All meals must be eaten onsite in the Shuksan cafeteria and to go options are not available. Dinner will not be served on the following Thursdays that are middle school early dismissal days: Oct. 19, Nov. 2, 9, & 22 (Wed.), Dec. 7, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 8, April 26.

8th Grade Families

The 8th Grade Celebration Committee is accepting photos for the slide show. Please submit photos (2-3 would be great) of your 8th grader for the 8th grade celebration in June. Please send in any photos you would like to include by May 10th.

You may email photos to leannedurfee79@gmail.com or click on this link <https://photos.app.goo.gl/yIAhCrFBwruCDPw72> and easily add photos at your convenience. Label them with your child's name if possible. Contact Leanne Durfee at leannedurfee79@gmail.com if you have any questions.

A Message from Student Health Services

Spring is here! In just a few short months, students will be ready for a much anticipated summer break. Please continue to check your child's head monthly at home for head lice as this is the most effective way to identify if your child has them. This is especially important just before returning to school in the fall. Allow enough time to treat before school starts.

What you can do:

- Check your child about once a month for signs of lice or nits in the hair.

- Teach not to share hats, scarves, or other hair items and to avoid head-to-head contact.

- Long hair can be braided or pulled back to reduce accidentally brushing against others.

- If you find head lice or are notified that your child is suspected of having them, do not panic. They do not carry disease and there are effective ways to get rid of this pest.

If head lice are suspected on a student school staff will:

- We call parents/guardians of the student to inform them and discuss treatment options.

- The student will be reminded not to share hair items or have head to head contact.

- The student can go home as usual at the end of the day, to be treated that evening and can return to school the next day if they have been treated. Students will not need to be absent any days from school in most cases.

For communication purposes, if a classroom has two or more students with infestations, other parents at the same grade level will be notified that head lice has been an identified at school. Identities are never disclosed in this notification.

If your family is having difficulty getting rid of head lice, or cost of treatment is a problem, please contact your school nurse for help and support. For more information on how to treat, please visit the Health Information page on our website under the Families tab. More information about head lice and treatment can also be found at www.cdc.gov/lice.

Annual Spring State Assessments

Testing began on April 9 and closes on May 25th. Please contact your student's teachers for specific testing dates and more information about the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

As with any day of important learning, a good night's sleep and a healthy breakfast are an essential part of every school day. We recommend parents and guardians talk to their child about their learning and school day and keep things in perspective (and not overemphasize the test).



PRESENTS

**LGBTQ Youth Safety and Resiliency Training
For Fairhaven Middle School Parents, Teachers,
Staff and Volunteers**

Monday, April 16th from 6:30-8:00pm

Fairhaven Middle School Library

This Training Will Help You:

- Explore ways to best support LGBTQ youth
- Gain confidence with the language and complexities of LGBTQ identities
- Identify resources and support for LGBTQ youth and yourself

Interested in this event but unable to attend?
There are resources still available for you! Contact
Page at page@nwys.org for more information.



Summer Scholarship Opportunities

Dance • Music • Technology
Debate • Leadership • Science
Art • Drama • and more

Apply for a Summer
Enrichment Scholarship
from Assistance League® of Bellingham
**See your counselor for more
information.**

**Applications due by
March 28, 2018**

WMS Extracurricular Activities

Below is a listing of clubs that are currently happening at Whatcom.

Please email the advisor for more information.



Also found online at <http://whatcom.bellinghamschools.org/athletics-activities/extracurricular-activities/>

Activity	Advisor	Day & Time/Location
Dungeons and Dragons Club	Matt Tremaine Matthew.tremaine@bellinghamschools.org	Thursday @ 8:15 am Library & Art Room
TSA = Technology Students Association = STEM projects and leadership skills	Kristen Schlegel Kristen.schlegel@bellinghamschools.org	Tues or Wed -whichever is a B day for the week Room S1
Photo-Journalism Club	Lee Krancus Leland.krancus@bellinghamschools.org	Tues. week 1 & Thurs. week 2 and alternating every other Room 102 @ 3:50 – 5:15 pm
Drone Club	Grace Meloy Grace.meloy@bellinghamschools.org	Wed. @ 8:15 am Room 203
Leadership	Shelby Ziels Erica.Ziels@bellinghamschools.org	Thurs. @ 8:15 am Room 19
ASB = Associated Student Body	Beth Schille-O'Connor Elizabeth.schille-oconnor@bellinghamschools.org	Every other Friday @ 8:15 am Counseling Office Conference Room
Improv Club	WWU Theater Students	TBA in Spring of 2018
Math Club	Ned Hannah Phillip.hannah@bellinghamschools.org	Fridays at 8:15 am Rm. 219
Bike Club	Jeff Coulter Jeffrey.coulter@bellinghamschools.org	Friday 8:00 am Bike Shop
QSA = Gay, Straight Alliance Discuss issues and plan activities related to diversity.	Darilyn Sigel, Patrisia Kulaas, Mark Heimer Darilyn.sigel@bellinghamschools.org Patrisia.kulaas@bellinghamschools.org Mark.heimer@bellinghamschools.org	Friday 8:30 am Library

WMS Hours 2017-18

8:30 – Common's doors open for breakfast
8:45 – Offices open
9:00 – Students in the Commons may now go to their lockers
9:10 – Warning bell – students need to make their way to class
9:15 – Late bell – students not seated before the bell are late

Regular lunch schedule:

6th grade 11:17—11:47
8th grade 11:47—12:17
7th grade 12:17—12:47

3:45 - Dismissal bell – students leave campus unless they are in a classroom with a teacher or participating in a school sponsored activity

4:00 – Counseling office closes

4:15 – Doors are locked – Main Off. and Attendance Off. closes

Early Dismissal 12:00 day ELECTIVES:

Periods 1,2,3

7th grade 9:15—10:10
8th grade 11:05—12:00

Periods 4,5,6

8th grade 9:15-10:10
7th grade 10:10-11:05
6th grade 11:05-12:00

Early Dismissal 12:00 GRAB N GO LUNCHES:

8th grade 11:45 lunch
6th grade 11:50 lunch
7th grade 11:55 lunch

"Grab & Go" Lunches:

To maximize the shortened instructional time on 12:00 pm Early Dismissal Days, school lunches will be a "Grab and Go" sack lunch. Students wishing to have a school lunch on early dismissal mornings will be dismissed from class a few minutes early so they can go "grab" their lunch and return to their classroom. Students may not eat their lunch at that time or on the bus; it is really a 'grab and go.'

Click here for [Monthly Lunch Menus](#)

School Lunch

If you feel that you qualify for free or reduced meals for your child, please complete the application form in the Family Handbook and return it to your child's school.

Families may fill out the Free and Reduced meal application online. Applications can be accessed through Family Access with a log-in and password. Paper applications will still be accepted. One application per family.

A new application must be filled out each year. If your family qualified at the close of last year, your child may continue to receive free or reduced meals for the first 30 days of school or until the new application is processed.

Families that did not participate in free or reduced meals last year and are completing an application this year, must pay the full price for meals until the application has been entered into the computer system. A determination letter is sent to all families who apply and will be processed within 10 meal service days after receipt of the application.

Students receiving free or reduced meals are not treated differently or singled out from those paying full price. All students have PIN numbers and account balances show on the computer.

Middle School Breakfast...\$1.75
Middle School Lunch.....\$3.00
Adults.....\$4.00



Harvest of the Month Family Lunch

The April Harvest of the Month will be and will be served on Wednesday, April 25th in school cafeterias.

It's a great day to try our school lunch! Families are welcome to join their students for lunch. Please remember to sign in at the office and get your visitor sticker before meeting your child at their appropriate lunch time.

Cost for adults is \$4.00.

A Message from Food Services

Bellingham Public Schools has changed its online payment system for school meals from **E~Funds** to **MyPaymentsPlus**. If your child eats school meals (reduced price or full price) and you want to use online payments, visit bellingsham-schools.org/foodonlinepayment and follow the steps to create an account in the new system. Meal account balances from last school year will be automatically uploaded to your new meal account in MyPaymentsPlus.

Online payments eliminate the need to send checks to school or worry about lost or forgotten lunch money. Non-cash transactions also speed up serving lines in the cafeteria and increase the time to eat. With the new system, you can prepay into student meal accounts using a check, credit card or debit card, check your student's current account balance, monitor the items your student purchases in the cafeteria and create settings to receive email notifications when the account reaches a low balance or to automatically replenish the account when it is low.

With this system, you can also download the MyPaymentsPlus App (available for iPhone, Android, iPad & PC) to view account balances, make payments, etc. App available at www.mypaymentsplus.com.

NOTE: There is a processing fee of \$1.95 for check, debit or credit card transactions in the new system.

Questions? Email BPS.MealPayments@bellingshamschools.org or call 360-676-6540.

Consider Becoming a Volunteer with Bellingham Public Schools

All volunteers, including parents, guardians and grandparents who plan to volunteer in classrooms and on field trips, are required to complete an online application prior to starting their service.

The application can be found on the volunteer page under the "Families" tab on the district's homepage or click here: <https://bellingshamschoolsvolunteers.hrmlplus.net/Home.aspx>.

- The application requires all volunteers to upload photo identification to be processed through the Washington State Patrol check (WATCH) system. If you are having difficulty with uploading, school secretaries can scan a copy of your ID and send to the volunteer coordinator for uploading.
- It takes on average one week to process and be approved so please plan accordingly.
- If you require assistance with the application or require access to a computer, please contact the volunteer coordinator at 360-647-6848 or email Jennifer.Gaer@bellingshamschools.org
<<mailto:Jennifer.Gaer@bellingshamschools.org>>

Safe Schools Anonymous Reporting

Bellingham Public Schools is now using Safe Schools Alert to allow students to anonymously report safety concerns including bullying, harassment, intimidation and more.

Students may report anonymously via:

Web: bellingshamschools.org/safe

Text or phone call: 844-310-9560

Email: 1491@alert1.us

The safety of our students is a top priority. If you have questions about Safe Schools Alert or safety in our schools, contact the Director of School Safety and Emergency Management, Jonah Stinson at 360-676-6470 ext. 6533 or bellingshamschools.org/emergency.

676-6460, option 7

Enter the 4 digit extension number of the staff you wish to leave a message for.

2017-18 WMS STAFF EXTENSION LIST

Name	Phone	Position	Room #	Name	Phone	Position	Room #
Coulter, Jeff	4300	Principal	Main Office	Sherwood, Penny	4344	6th LA/SS	114
Buswell, Ann	4361	Asst. Principal	Main Office	Sigel, Darilyn	4380	Librarian	Library
Adams, Meri Kate	4320	Read 180	B20	Stoner, Sam	4313	7th Science	B13
Aldrich, Jennifer	4318	6th LA/SS	B18	Swanson, David	4332	8th LA/SS	102
Barker, Jason	4386	7th LA/SS	216	Tremaine, Matt	4311	7th Math/SS	B11
Brown, Nicole	4322	6th Math/Sci	B22	Walsh, James	4342	6th Special Ed	112
Buys, Sonia	4309	Bridges	B9	Wertz, Chad	4390	8th Science	220
Cassidy, Brian	4381	Special Ed	211	Ziels, Shelby	4319	6th LA/SS	B19
Chambers, Tiffany	4319	6th LA/SS	B19	Zeller, Sarah	4377	Special Ed	202
Chung, Fred	4383	7th Math/SS	213	Zurcher, Jim	4371	8th LA/SS	201
Claire, Therese	4346	6th Math/Sci	116	Secretaries			
Ferrier, Dana	4318	6th LA/SS	B18	Erickson, Linda	4356	Attend. Sec.	Main Office
Foote, Molly	4353	Counselor	Couns. Off.	Howell, Nancy	4351	Regist/Couns.	Couns. Off.
Gfroerer, Nadine	4314	7th LA/SS	B14	Behee, Pam	4348	Curr/Athl. Sec.	Workroom
Hannah, Ned	4389	8th Math	219	Walton, Aileen	4355	Princ. Sec.	Main Office
Heimer, Mark	4374	Art	204	Paraeducators			
Holmes, Randy	4384	Tech Tosa	Library	Adamson, Marilyn	4334	Bridges	104
Holtorf, Amy	4326	Spanish	Port. A	Gunn, Amber		Student Sup.	
Jones, David	4392	Orchestra	M2	James, Deborah	4380	Library Asst.	Library
Kenagy, Matt	4391	Band	M1	McEachern, Erin	4309	Bridges	B9
Kirkland, Mishon	4321	6th Math/Sci	B21	Rabener-Justice, Linda		Student Sup.	
Kish-Kirkman, Melanie	4387	7th LA/SS	217	Reid, Carol	4334	Bridges	104
Knickrehm, Robert	4345	6th Math/Sci	115	Steensland, Liz		Student Sup.	
Krancus, Leland	4331	8th Math	101	Custodians			
Kulaas, Patrisia	4315	7th LA/SS	B15	Booth, Ken	4341	Head Cust.	
Makela De Rosales, Carol	4326	Spanish	Port. B	Bliznyuk, Anna	4341	Custodian	
Marsee, Bobby	4385	7th Science	215	Hammett, Jim	4341	Custodian	
McReynolds, Lisa	4353	Counselor	Couns. Off.	Tarasenko, Laurel	4341	Custodian	
Meese, Josh	4304	PE	Gym	Cafeteria			
Meloy, Grace	4373	8th LA/SS	203	Baldovinos, Veronica	4301	Cook	
Morton, Lisa	4334	Bridges	104	Finnigan, Lora	4301	Cook	
Nuckles-Flinn, Karen	4314	7th LA/SS	B14	Kimmel, Marjorie	4301	Lead Cook	
Ostlund, David	4333	8th LA/SS	103	Pelto-Fishbeck, Beth	4301	Cook	
Owens, Michael	4347	6th LA/SS	117	Itinerant			
Petronella, Ashley	4396	Technology	S1	Brice, Jenny	4382	OT	212
Pitalo, Julee	4308	PE	Gym	Deburgo, Juliana	4382	SLP	212
Runyan, Megan	4308	PE	Gym	Fransen, Lori	201-9178	Nurse	Couns. Off.
Russell, Kristy	4366	8th Science	136	Perrin, Cory	4354	Psychologist	Couns. Off.
Schille-O'Connor, Beth	4352	Counselor	Couns. Off.	Spitzer, Sarah	4349	ELL	Couns. Off.
Schlegel, Kristen	4396	Technology	S1				

**Email addresses for staff are as follows:
 Firstname.lastname@bellingshamschools.org**

***Note: Email information is not considered confidential.
 (Staff list is subject to change at any time)***

Middle School Interscholastic Athletics 2017-18

Students attending middle schools in Bellingham Public Schools will have the opportunity to participate in a quality athletic program. Turn-in deadlines are set to ensure viability of the program. Please see the list below for all our middle school offerings. **Important –Registration must be turned in by each deadline to ensure appropriate coaching ratios.*

2017-18 Athletic Fees

Athletic Fee	\$0
ASB Fee	\$10



6th Grade Sports Offerings

Fall **August 28 Deadline**
 Begins Sept 5

Track
Boys and Girls Soccer

Pre-Winter **Oct. 30 Deadline**
 Begins Nov 6

Floor Exercise & Dance

Winter **Jan. 22 Deadline**
 Begins Jan 29

Wrestling

Spring **March 26 Deadline**
 Begins Apr 9

Cross Country



7th and 8th Grade Sports Offerings

Fall **August 28 Deadline**
 Begins Sept 5

Track
Boys and Girls Soccer

Pre-Winter **Oct. 30 Deadline**
 Begins Nov 6

Boys Basketball
Floor Exercise & Dance

Winter **Jan. 22 Deadline**
 Begins Jan 29

Wrestling
Girls Volleyball

Spring **March 26 Deadline**
 Begins Apr 9

Girls Basketball
Football
Cross Country

Middle School Practices and Game Schedules

Practices for each middle school sport will be held on a Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs., & Fri. schedule and will run from 4-5:30 p.m. Practices and games will not be held on early release days and non-student days. Coaches will hand out game schedules for each sport the first week of practice. [You may also check school web pages for game schedules after the individual sport season begins.](#)

Track practices will be at Battersby Field. Boys and Girls Soccer Teams will alternate practice locations between Battersby and Broadway Park.

Please see next page for more athletic information.

Middle School Athletics, FAQ's

Q. How do I register my student for Middle School Sports?

A. We have a new online activities and athletics registration form within Skyward Family Access. Use your Family Access login/password to complete the form. If you need assistance with your log in, please contact your student's school registrar.

Important:

- After completing the online registration, your student will need to be cleared for each sports season at their school's office before they can participate in any sport.
- A CURRENT sports physical exam, which cannot expire during the sport season, is required for the student to participate in athletics.

Q. What fees and paperwork must I complete and turn in by each season's deadline in order to be eligible to play?

A. In order to participate in middle school athletics, the following items must be on file by the turn in deadline for each sports season:

1. Physical: Each student must have a current physical on file before participating in practice. Have your doctor complete the required form in the sports packet available at your middle school. A physical is good for 24 months.
2. Activities & Athletics Registration has been completed by parent or guardian.
4. ASB Fee of \$10: This once a year fee makes students eligible to participate in school clubs and sports.

Q. What else is required for participation?

A. In addition to the above requirements, students participating in middle school athletics are expected to be in good academic and behavioral standing and attend all practices, games, and meets. Your coach will review these expectations with you.

Q. Why all the emphasis on deadlines?

A. Our goal is to offer a quality, safe program for students. Participation numbers determine how many coaches can be hired and impacts transportation arrangements, so adequate lead time is necessary to ensure we can process the registration and fees. Also, you are required to participate in a specific number of practices in order to safely play in games or meets. Having all your paperwork and fees turned in on time allows you to participate.

Q. What if I change my mind?

A. If you try a sport and decide it is not for you, have your parent contact your school's office and your coach as soon as possible.

Q. How long are practices?

A. Practices are currently 1.5 hours (90 minutes) a day for 5 days a week.

Q. If practice is before school, will showers and towels be available?

A. All middle schools have showers available. Students will need to provide their own towels.

Q. If practice is before school, will there be transportation?

A. Transportation for practices will not be provided. Transportation to games will be provided.

Whatcom Middle School PTSA

2017-18 WMS OFFICERS

President	Jim Ostendorff	360-305-7234	ostendorff@hotmail.com
Vice President	Heather Shepherd	360-920-6417	heather@saalawoffice.com
Secretary	Laura Neal	701-240-0339	lauraoct8@hotmail.com
Co-Treasurer	Emi Curnow	360-527-2291	curnow4@gmail.com
Co-Treasurer	Lerin Swiackey	206-660-9541	Lerinr@gmail.com

To find out more about your WMS PTSA please check out our website under the "For Parents" tab on the school website or <http://www.whatcomptsa.org/> or find us on Facebook: Whatcom Middle School PTSA. General membership meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Membership is \$10 for individuals, \$18 per couple and \$25 for a patron. Please see next page for more details and a membership form.

Your participation is critical to supporting student learning and activities, such as curriculum enrichment, scholarships, staff appreciation, 8th Grade Celebration, and field trips.

Whatcom Middle School PTSA Membership 2017-18

We encourage you to join and support your WMS PTSA! Membership dues and fundraising enable our PTSA to provide needed resources that support student learning and activities, such as curriculum enrichment, scholarships, staff appreciation, 8th Grade Celebration, and field trips. While membership is required for voting it is not a requirement to attend meetings.

Annual parent/guardian membership is \$10 individual, \$18 couple, or \$25 patron. **All students are honorary members.** You are not required to attend meetings (unless you want to) and we will never pester you to volunteer (unless you want us to!).

Meetings are the third Tuesday of each month, except December and June.

Please complete the information below. Please make checks payable to WMS PTSA

Primary Member: _____ (circle one)
First Name Please Print Clearly Last Name \$10/Single
Spouse/Partner: _____ \$25/Patron
First Name Please Print Clearly Last Name \$18/Couple
Phone: _____
Address: _____ ZIP _____
E-Mail (s): _____

Please provide your students' info for our class database.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

COMMUNICATION

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is held in early Fall and provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to get acquainted. This is a night when general information will be provided about the curriculum, course content and special activities planned for the year.

Bulletin

The daily bulletin is read each morning over the intercom system. This is how we communicate upcoming school and sports information to our student body. The daily bulletin is also posted on the WMS web site daily.

Email

Staff email addresses can be found on the Whatcom Middle School web page at: <http://whatcom.bellinghamschools.org/>
If you know the name of the person you wish to reach emails are as follows: firstname.lastname@bellinghamschools.org

Info Finder I (Bus schedules)

Your student's bus routes can be found via the district website or online at www.infofinderi.com

Newsletter

WMS creates a monthly newsletter with information about current and upcoming school activities. The newsletter is posted on our school website by (approx) the 15th of each month. A link and email message is sent to anyone signed up to receive emails on our SchoolMessenger system.

Phone Calls For Staff

Calls for teachers go directly to their voice mail. Please dial 676-6460, when prompted choose option 7 then enter the 4 digit extension number of the person you wish to leave a message for.

Phone Calls For Students

Reminders and/or information regarding appointments and after-school activities should be given at home whenever possible. The office staff will deliver messages only in the event of an emergency. Non-emergency messages, especially those relating to after school activities are given to students at 3:30 pm when they are paged to come to the office. We appreciate your cooperation in limiting messages to students throughout the day.

SchoolMessenger

SchoolMessenger is a quick alert messaging service that the Bellingham School District and its schools use for emergencies, weather-related closures/delays, attendance and general communications such as important school announcements and for other general e-news. If you were previously signed up at the elementary school, you do not need to sign up again for middle school.

Skylert

Skylert is a feature in Skyward Family Access that enables you to control which notifications to receive and how you want to receive them. [Click here for step by step instructions to update phone numbers, email addresses and set your preferences.](#)

Skyward Family Access

An online program where you can track your student's assignments, grades, lunch choices, attendance and more. A link to Skyward Family Access can be found on the WMS website.

Tandem Calendar

You can view our school and district wide calendar at: <http://bellinghamschools.org> or on our website at <http://whatcom.bellinghamschools.org/> You can filter to see just the events for Whatcom Middle School or a number of our district wide schools or all district events.

Website

Our school website can be found at: <http://whatcom.bellinghamschools.org/> This is a great site to check for school events and activities. The tabs across the top of the page allow you access to athletic information, parent information and student information as well. You can also access the Tandem Calendar on our website.

Frequently Asked Questions...

Where can I find a copy of the student handbook?

The student handbook is accessible to all students at school on the S-drive and is also accessible from home through our school website under [Students](#). The handbook is a valuable resource containing information about scheduling, activities, transportation, behavior, cafeteria, athletics, etc.

How will Parents be informed of school events?

In middle school, students begin to take more responsibility for themselves. The majority of information for students is read over the PA system each morning (our daily bulletin). It is the student's responsibility to listen and respond. For example: when it's time to sign up for a specific sport, students will be instructed to do so. We also post our daily bulletin on our website the evening before we read it, for parents to view. Our monthly newsletter also includes school and PTSA information and is posted on our website by (approx.) the 15th of each month. Those who do not have access to the Internet can obtain a hard copy from the main office after the 15th of each month. Teachers will also keep parents updated on classroom assignments through their own classroom email lists. Be sure to sign up with your student's teacher if they make that available to you. You will also receive SchoolMessenger phone calls/emails when we want to draw your attention to a particular upcoming school event or situation. Please be sure to keep your contact information up to date.

Can my student have a cell phone at school?

We accept no responsibility for portable electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods, cameras, laptops etc. lost or stolen on school property. Students who choose to carry such devices do so at their own risk. Portable electronic devices may not be displayed or used on school property during school hours 9:15 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Students who do not follow these expectations will have their items confiscated. A parent or guardian will need to come and claim the item from the main office.

What do I do if my student will not be at school today?

When your student is absent from school please call the attendance line each day at 676-6460 option 1. Please leave a message on the voicemail letting attendance know your student's name, reason for absence and whether or not you are "excusing them." Students will also need to bring a parent/guardian signed note to the attendance window on the day that they return to school.

How do I get homework for my student if they are absent?

The best way for students to get makeup work is to email teachers directly. Teacher emails can be found on the school website and on Skyward Family Access. Homework, when available, may be emailed to you or hard copies may be picked up in the homework holder located in the main office (back table) between 3:45-4:15pm.

My student is going to be late—what should I do?

When students are late arriving to school – please send a note with them. Upon their arrival, students must report to the attendance window with a parent/guardian signed note. Students without notes will have until the following morning to bring one. Lack of a note will result in an unexcused tardy, which will result in a demerit.

I have to pull my student out of school early—what do I do?

When students need to leave school early – **please send a signed note with them on the day they need to leave early.** Students take the note to the attendance window first thing in the morning in exchange for a "permission to leave" slip. This slip is shown to the teacher and your student leaves the premises at your specified time to meet you outside at your prearranged location. You do not need to come in.

If you do not send a note with your student before school, you will need to come in to the attendance window to check your student out. Please allow yourself plenty of time as (depending on the day - assemblies, P.E. class, etc.) it may take longer to locate your student. If your student is returning to school on the same day, they need to check back in at the attendance window upon arrival.

What if my student wants to go home during the school day?

Students should not call from the classroom or their cell phones for attendance or health issues. Students need to come to the Attendance Office to call home to talk to a parent/guardian. Parent/Guardians must come to the main office to meet their student.

Where can I park when I come to Whatcom?

The school has very limited parking. You may park on "D" street, "F" street or on Irving street. Please DO NOT PARK or DRIVE IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL. The road in front of the school is CLOSED M-F when the road closed sign and orange cones are up! This area is used as a playground and walkway area for students during the school day and during after school

sports. If you are picking up your student after school, please pre-arrange a specific location with them, where they can be picked up (usually the back of the school or a block over). When the road closed sign is up and the orange cones are out – this means do not enter. Parking for disabled persons is located in the lot behind the school which provides easy access to the entrance designated for the disabled. This entrance is on the F St. side of the building and is to the left of the F St. doors. There is a long ramp down to the door leading into the basement. All floors are accessible from the elevator.

I need to drop something off for my student—where do I go?

Deliveries for students may be dropped off in the main office on the table to the right of the entry. It is the student's responsibility to check the table for his/her items. If a student is not aware a delivery is coming, office workers, when available, will deliver to classrooms or students will be called out of the classroom to come get their delivery at a convenient time.

NOTE: Birthday or special occasion flowers and balloons will not be delivered to students during the school day. We encourage parents to give flowers/balloons at home rather than at school. Please know that balloons are not permitted on school buses.

What and where are counseling and student services?

The counseling and student services offices are located across the hall from the main office. Counselors are available to support students in their academic and social/emotional development. They provide classroom, small-group, and individual guidance on a variety of topics. Counselors are also available for consultation with parents. For an appointment with one of our counselors, please contact the Counseling Secretary/Registrar or one of the counselors directly. The Counseling Secretary/Registrar is available to answer questions regarding registration and withdrawal, student records, scheduling, and parent connect.

What if my child is being bullied or harassed?

We encourage students to speak up if they are being bullied, and we encourage you to notify us if your child shares that he/she is being picked on or bullied here at school, so that we can take action. Students receive training about bullying and harassment every year. Students who are being bullied have a variety of options here at school:

- Stand up for themselves by using their words to tell bullies to stop
- Let teachers know
- Let school counselors know
- Talk with assistant principal or principal

What if my child is bullying or harassing someone else?

We take bullying and harassment very seriously and have a hierarchy of responses here at school. The usual progression of discipline (depending on the severity of the bullying/harassment) looks like this:

- Warning and problem-solving with assistant principal and/or counselor
- Before or After school detention
- Saturday school
- Suspension – short term
- Suspension – long term
- Expulsion – In cases of extremely severe and ongoing harassment of another student(s)

How does my child get school lunch or breakfast?

Students can deposit money into their lunch accounts and use it whenever they choose. Account numbers will be the same as the number they had in 5th grade. It is a good idea to memorize their number as they are required to use it each time. To avoid line ups in the cafeteria we ask that payments to lunch accounts be paid directly to the cafeteria in the mornings. Parents may also make online payments to their child's account at www.mypaymentsplus.com

Do I need to fill out a free/reduced lunch application each year?