Dear Washington Wildcat Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! I am excited to start the year in person with all our new and returning Washington Gifted Middle School families. We have completed the new painting inside and outside of our building, sidewalks have been revamped, the garden and landscaping look bright and inviting, and we ordered new picnic tables and umbrellas to continue outdoor lunch and classroom opportunities. Technology upgrades include new All in Ones in the computer lab, Newline interactive boards in every classroom along with new desktop computers. Six classrooms have been moved around to provide a more unified 5th and 6th grade hallway as well as a 7th and 8th grade area.

I invite all families to join us as we embrace Peoria Public Schools newly approved Strategic Plan. The District has a new Vision Statement, “A re-imagined education that ignites passion and empowers students to be responsible and successful” and we are ready to provide personalized learning, social-emotional support, and educational equity here at WGMS. The District is providing new curriculum for Social Studies (5th-8th), math (5th-7th), and ELA (6th-8th) and we are excited to freshen up our teaching methods.

WGMS has an amazing PTO, with Mrs. Emily Wilcox stepping into the President role. She and the Executive Board are always looking for parents to help with the many events we host here at WGMS. PTO meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 6:00.

One of the unique aspects of WGMS is the plethora of activities, clubs, athletics, and academic teams that are offered. Please encourage your child to try new things. Although the pandemic stymied many of our activities this past year, we found creative ways to host our concerts, athletic games, speech, and promotion ceremony.

All new WGMS students have been matched with a mentor buddy as part of our Bigs and Littles program. Your Little should have received a postcard from their Big in June. The Bigs and Littles program has been at WGMS for many years, and we look to enhance the mentorship between our new students and their Big.

Upcoming Information and Dates:

Returning students – as of now, returning students do not need to do any type of online registration. Please make sure you have updated Skyward with new phone numbers, emails, etc.

New students can register online at https://www.peoriapublicschools.org/Page/39219. There is also a one day Registration Hub at Peoria High School on July 28 from 9:00 – 6:00.

Wildcat Eve

Let’s start the year the Wildcat Way! Incoming 5th graders and new students, along with their Bigs, are invited to Wildcat Eve on Monday, August 16 from 6:00 – 7:00. Bigs will help their Littles set up lockers, tour the building, and socialize with classmates. While the 5th graders are setting up lockers and touring
with their Big, parents will be invited to socialize with other parents and meet with Ms. Hayes (counselor) and Mrs. Martin (principal) for a question/answer session. Students will bring all supplies and receive their locks to practice their combinations. Bigs and Littles will receive their free back to school spirit wear shirt at Wildcat Eve.

**Unpack Your Backpack/Locker Set Up**

Continuing in our Wildcat Way...6th, 7th, and 8th graders are invited to locker set up on Tuesday, August 17 from 1:00 – 2:00. Students will receive their locker assignments and locks and will be able to bring supplies, set up lockers, and see their classrooms on this day. Returning students will receive their free back to school spirit wear shirt at Unpack Your Backpack.

NOTE – no stickers of any kind are allowed on the outside or inside of lockers. Please use only scotch tape on the outside of lockers. No masking tape or duct tape is allowed on locker surfaces.

**Back to School Night/Open House**

In light of current COVID/Pandemic restrictions, we will postpone our annual picnic and potluck until a later date. We will host a social time and Open House on Thursday, August 26 from 6:00 – 7:00. More details to follow in our Back to School packet that will be issued on the first day of school.

**School Hours and Attendance**

The first day of school is Wednesday, August 18, 2021. Our school hours will be 8:20 – 2:50. We are waiting on guidelines from the CDC, IDPH, and ISBE regarding Back to School procedures, so we will share information as to how we enter and exit the building later this summer.

The WGMS dress code and school supply lists are posted on our website. Students may wear their new spirit wear shirt, along with proper uniform bottoms, on the first day of school.

The entire Washington Gifted Middle School staff looks forward to welcoming our families to the 2021-2022 school year. You play a vital role in the education of each of our students and we welcome your support. Please let me know if you have any questions as the school year unfolds.

Certain aspects of the 2021-2022 school year may be subject to change due to the effects of the Pandemic and COVID-19. Rest assured, if any changes happen, we will keep you informed and updated on those changes.

Regards,

*Mrs. Susan Martin*

Mrs. Susan Martin, Principal

[mailto:susan.martin@psd150.org](mailto:susan.martin@psd150.org)

August 16 – Wildcat Eve 6:00 – 7:00

August 17 – Unpack your Backpack/Locker set up for 6th/7th/8th graders 1:00 – 2:00

August 18 – First day of school 8:20 – 2:50

August 26 – Open House/Back to School 6:00 – 7:00