

Winchester High School Parent Faculty Association Newsletter January 18, 2022

To ensure continued delivery of the WHSPFA Communications, please set-up our [email address](#) as a contact/safe sender.



PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear WHS Families,

WHS is an amazingly caring community and we continue to say **THANK YOU** to everyone for hanging in there!

Please continue to encourage your kiddos ~ we know that everyone is weary! They are doing great! Please remind and encourage them that wearing these (blasted) masks (yes-up over their nose) helps to protect not only themselves but the teacher who may have an

unvaccinated toddler at home, or the student sitting next them in math class who may have an elderly grandparent

living with them, or one of the kids in their study hall who may have a hidden underlying health issue. We're all in this together...cue the music!



Please see below for all covid protocols and testing opportunities at WHS. Also, there will be a live **COVID-19 WEBINAR: OPEN TO ALL WINCHESTER RESIDENTS:**

The Winchester Health Department Director Jennifer Murphy and the Winchester Public School Nurse Leader Jennifer Markham are teaming up to share the most current COVID-19 information and guidelines and answer your questions.

When: Thursday Jan 20th at 5 PM

[Register in advance here](#)

[Submit questions in advance here](#)

*Flyer & More info below

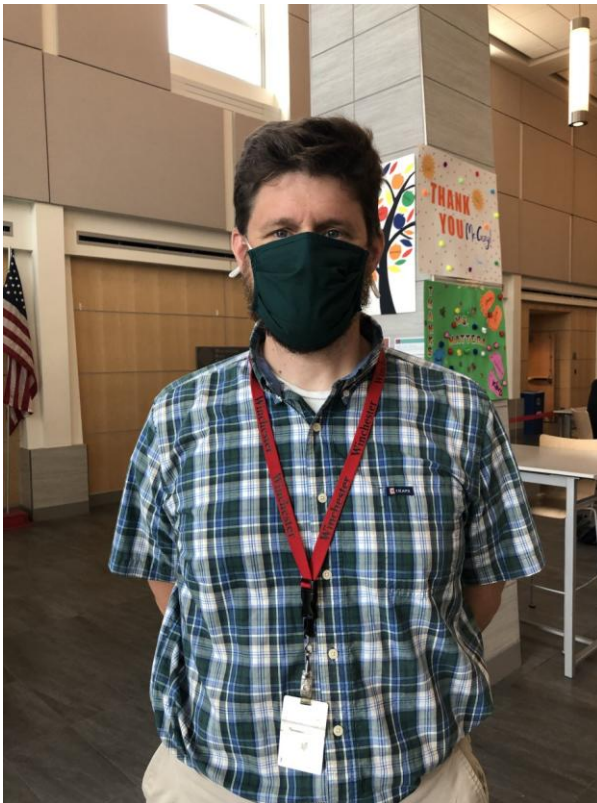
Best,
Abbie DiMatteo & Brenda Mandile, Co-Chairs

PS~ On behalf of all WHS families, the PFA sent our AWESOME school nurses flowers to brighten their day.

PPS~ Please send any pics or updates for all winter sports to:
whspfnewsletter@gmail.com it would be great to include all teams!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

THE MASKED WHS STAFFER Week #19!



1. What high school did you go to? **Marianapolis in Thompson, CT.**
2. What was your favorite subject in high school? **I enjoyed Biology and English when I was in high school. I was inspired by the teaching style of my English teacher, and I was fascinated by the subject matter of Biology.**
3. What sport and/or extracurricular were you involved in high school? 1. **I warmed a mean bench for JV Basketball. I also starred in the play "The Nerd" my senior year...typecasting at its finest.**
4. What is one of your hidden talents? **I can wiggle my ears.**
5. Favorite Movie/Book/Band/Food?
Movie: Jaws
Book: "The 4 Hour Body" by Tim Ferriss
Band: I recently discovered Aesop Rock, which I've been listening to a lot lately. But my overall favorite band might be Gorillaz.
Food: Yes
6. Is there a quote or saying that you live your life by? **"Every pizza is a personal pizza if you try hard and believe in yourself" - Bill Murray**

*Don't forget to scroll all the way down to find out who this is!

WHS IMPORTANT DATES - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[Click here for District School Calendar](#)

MON 1/24 - Quarter 3 begins, PFA Meeting - 7PM @ WHS

TUE 1/25 - Early Release

MON 2/21 - FRI 2/25 - February Vacation

WPS COVID-19 UPDATE

Since the return to school after winter break, we have had over 300 students and staff report testing positive for COVID-19. See [this link](#) for more information. Our team of school nurses and the Town Health Department continue to collaborate in managing cases and providing information about isolation. We are dealing with a significant surge in positive cases at a rate we have not seen before. While overall illness appears mild, the sheer volume of cases is causing disruption both in and out of school. It is imperative that sick kids be kept home from school. COVID-19 symptoms can be as mild as a headache or runny nose.

Very Important updates and safety reminders:

- **NEW:** ALL positive COVID-19 test results should now be submitted via [this link](#) (regardless of whether the test was taken at home or through a clinic). This is required to determine your student's clearance date for returning to school.
 - You do not need to contact your school nurse.
 - Please remember to report your student absent as you normally would.
 - While isolation guidance for COVID-19 has been shortened to 5 days if you never had symptoms or if symptoms have resolved, it is your responsibility to monitor your students and keep them home longer to recover, if needed.
- Please take advantage of our free and convenient weekly safety check testing available to ALL students and staff. These are PCR tests. This process is different from standard pooled testing because retesting happens immediately if needed without the collection of another sample. Parents/Caregivers must enroll their student(s). More details [here](#).
 - Individuals that participate in our WPS COVID-19 Safety Checks will receive an email directly from CIC or Veritas if they have tested positive. Please check your emails often if your child is participating in the testing program.
 - **THIS IS SURVEILLANCE TESTING - IF YOUR STUDENT IS**

SICK AND NEEDS A TEST, PLEASE DO NOT SEND THEM TO SCHOOL. CALL YOUR DOCTOR OR GO TO

The primary focus of our school nurses must be on attending to the daily medical needs of our students and moving COVID-positive students into isolation at home as quickly as possible. The immediate short-term impact of this is on our capacity to notify close contacts promptly.

While we are working to notify close contacts to the extent feasible, it is currently not possible to complete at the middle and high school. Everyone needs to be vigilant and self-monitor for symptoms. Getting vaccinated/boosted and participating in the free Weekly Safety Check program is more important than ever before.

We greatly appreciate the additional steps parents and students are taking to reach out to close friends from school with who they may have had lunch or spent extra time during the school day. It is incumbent upon all positive students to also notify anyone they have been in close contact with outside of school.

Available Information: Please Check First Before you Call:

It is hard to keep track of the ever-changing guidelines issued by the CDC and the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE). We understand the need for parents to contact our nursing and administrative staff with questions; however, as cases have risen, our team is even more pressed for time, so we encourage you first to check the information we provide on our website:

- [COVID-19 Resources](#) for resources for students in isolation or quarantine
- [COVID-19 Guidance](#) (includes guidance on what to do if test positive or if have been exposed to someone with COVID-19)

Bus Transportation:

With COVID-19 cases continuing to rise, we are seeing an effect on bus transportation for our district. As drivers test positive, we require a substitute driver in their place, which can cause delays in pickups/drop-offs as they learn the routes. If families see consistent delays or issues with their transportation, don't hesitate to contact our transportation office at 781-721-7000, extension

1001.

Keeping WPS Schools Safe & Open: A Collective Responsibility:

Our goal is to keep our students and staff safe and keep our schools open, and we are collectively responsible for making that happen. The motto of "personal responsibility" only works for our schools if taking personal responsibility means protecting those around us. Please note that DESE is not allowing structured remote learning programs: if we are faced with staffing shortages and/or extraordinarily high case counts, our only option will be to cancel school in the same way we do for snow days - any days canceled will be added to the end of the school year to meet the state-required 180 student days.

As always, we appreciate your patience, support, & understanding.



**Feeling sick?
Gathering with others?
Visiting anyone at high risk?**

TEST FOR COVID-19!
If positive: notify your close contacts and stay home!

*Take personal responsibility.
Protect our community.*

Keep informed: www.winchester.us/covid



Important tools to limit the spread of COVID, and especially important to protect vulnerable members of our community:

- GET A BOOSTER SHOT IF QUALIFY!
- WEAR A MASK: effective way to stop the spread of COVID.
 - It is strongly advised that everyone wear masks indoors in public settings.
- STAY HOME IF SICK: Stay away from others and if test positive, notify your close contacts.
- TEST: Before gathering with friends and family, traveling, or if you

have symptoms. Go to an official testing site or take a home test.
(Note: Home tests have limitations. For school attendance purposes,
official testing site results are required when students/staff are showing
symptoms of COVID-19).

We all need to remain vigilant. Take personal responsibility.
Protect our community.

www.winchester.us/COVID

A recording of the Standardized Testing Night program and copies of
the slides are now available on the [WHS Guidance website](#) along
with additional information about the ACT and SAT.

Please note the upcoming Class of 2023 College Info Night panel for juniors
and their families will be held on **Wednesday, February 16th**.

Please see your child's counselor directly with any questions.

PHOTO RETAKES

Any students who took pictures on the photo retake day: your new school IDs are in the
main office. Please come pick them up.

CAFETERIA CHANGES

For the next few weeks we will be returning the spaced out seating to the high
school cafeteria. Please make sure you are only sitting in "open" seats, and
that you are adhering to the capacity limits at tables. Additional seating will be
available in the gym. Students are still encouraged to eat outside on days the
weather cooperates. Thank you for helping us do all we can to keep everyone
healthy.

ENKA FAIR THEME & DIGITAL POSTER CONTEST



Be a part of our Enka Fair Theme and Digital Poster Contest
This contest is open to ALL WHS Students

Design a Digital Poster and include a Theme/Hash Tag for the 2022
Enka Fair

Contest date: January 7th, 2022 - midnight of January 28th, 2022

Please send submissions to ALL three emails:

pmichienzi1@winchesterps.org

kgrace@winchesterps.org

jlevatino@winchesterps.org

The winning poster/theme will be used in advertisements, on buttons
and in Social Media

Poster Requirements:

Size 14" W x 21" H

Add dates: Friday 5/20 5pm-11pm

Saturday 5/21 10am-10pm

Add: New Enka Logo (details below)

Add location: Downtown Winchester Center

Include: Rockwell Amusements

To view other posters/new logo visit www.enkasociety.org click on
Enka Fair and scroll to bottom: Enka Fair Posters over the Years

The winner will be announced in February.

WHSPFA | 80 Skillings Road, Winchester, MA 01890

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