

Around the Courtyard

Williams Middle School
410 Williams St., Longmeadow, MA 01106
August, 2015



*WILLIAMS MIDDLE
SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER*

AUGUST, 2015

Upcoming School Events		In this issue:
August 18	New Student Orientation (for students & parents new to our district)—9:30 a.m.	From the Principal’s Desk
August 31	First Day of School	Upcoming Events
Sept. 4	No School	Music Notes
Sept. 7	Labor Day-- No School	Notes from the Nurse
Sept. 9	Back-to-School Night—6:30-8:00 p.m.	Grade Six News
Sept. 10	School Picture Day	Grade Seven News
Sept. 14	Rosh Hashanah-- No School	Grade Eight News
Sept. 23	No School-Yom Kippur	PAC News
Sept. 24	School Improvement Council—4:00 p.m.	
Oct. 2	Gr. 8 Field Trip to Boston	
Oct. 5	Early Release Day—1:30 p.m. dismissal	
Oct. 12	Columbus Day-- No School	
Oct. 20	Picture Retake Day	
Oct. 22	Parent Conferences--Gr. 6-8 afternoon & evening Half Day – 11:30 a.m. dismissal	
Oct. 23	Grade 6 Parent Conferences—11:30 a.m. Dismissal (Grade 6 only)	

This edition of the WMS newsletter is the only hard copy that will be mailed out. For the remainder of the year, the newsletter will be posted on the school website. We will e-mail parents once it is posted. Please double check to see that we have the most up to date e-mail on file.

School supply web address – <https://goo.gl/fBAhiq>

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Hello Williams Middle School,

I hope that you are enjoying the last few days of summer and getting excited to see all the friendly faces here at Williams Middle School on August 31st. Teachers and staff have spent numerous hours working on various professional development opportunities and the custodial staff has done a tremendous job getting the school ready this summer.

As you know, this will be my first year as Principal of Williams Middle School, and I am thrilled at the opportunity to get to know all of you and engage in the educational process together. In order to help make this a smooth transition, I ask that you take a moment to complete a brief survey that will allow me to gain a comprehensive view of Williams Middle School from the parent, student and community perspective. The survey is located here: <http://goo.gl/forms/CMSvxrJDyF>

In addition, we have a few new faces joining us this year. I would like to welcome the following people to Williams Middle School:

- Nicole Cottam - Grade 7/8 ELA teacher
- Alecia Pettengill - Literacy Lab teacher
- Melissa Tardiff - Special Education Grade 6 teacher
- Briana Roy - Special Education LLD classroom teacher

We will be posting the much anticipated advisory groups on the windows by the main entrance for all to see on Friday August 21st after 3 p.m. I will be sending out a notification once the group listings are posted. Another date to remember is back to school night. Back to school night will be held on September 9th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

We have an exciting new program starting at both middle schools in the fall. We will institute a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program for 8th grades students that mirrors the the high school program. More information about the BYOD program will be presented in September.

This year I will be looking for volunteers to be part of the WMS School Council. The first meeting is on September 24th from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. and each consecutive meeting will be on the last Thursday of every month. Please e-mail me at twrye@longmeadow.k12.ma.us if you would like to participate.

We look forward to seeing everyone in a few short days. If you have any questions, comments or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the main office. Also, please follow us on our new Williams Middle School [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts for information and to observe student achievements. As always, please check the WMS website for all important and up to date information about the middle school.

Sincerely,

Taylor P. Wrye, CAGS
Principal

UPCOMING EVENTS

On Wednesday, September 9, you are invited to attend a **"Back-To-School Night" at 6:30 p.m.** The evening is designed to give parents an opportunity to meet their child's teachers and to hear teachers explain their plans for the school year. If you wish to talk to a teacher more specifically about your child, please call the school to set up a mutually convenient time as there will not be time for these discussions on this evening. The schedule for the evening will run about 90 minutes.

MUSIC NOTES

By Travis Higa, Susan Lauser, and Michael Smith

We had an outstanding 2014 - 2015 school year full of successful rehearsals, concerts and community performances. All of us in the music department look forward to this new school year's upcoming successes through the generous support of parents, community, returning students, and incoming sixth graders.

Parents, please be on the lookout for important paperwork that includes concert dates for the year. Remember to mark these dates on your family calendars as soon as possible to avoid conflicts. This important paperwork also includes details on necessary equipment and books for Band and Orchestra students.

Expect auditions for Ensemble 7:45 (an auditioned eighth grade vocal ensemble that meets before school) and Jazz Ensemble (an auditioned sixth through eighth grade after school instrumental ensemble that includes saxophones, flutes, clarinets, trumpets, trombones, guitar, piano, bass, and drum set) to take place during the last weeks of September. Audition music for these groups will be distributed during the opening days of school.

Enjoy the rest of the summer! We look forward to making great music with Williams' students this fall.

NOTES FROM THE NURSE

I hope you are all enjoying this beautiful summer as I have. School will be starting soon though and I have a few reminders for parents.

1. GRADE 7 PARENTS -- You have been notified that your children must have updated immunizations in order to enter grade 7. Thank you to those parents who have already submitted the necessary paperwork but I still have many children without updated records. This is to be completed by the first day of school August 31.
2. All students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will have scoliosis testing done within the first two weeks of school. Please be prepared as this will occur in your child's first or second regular length PE class. Grade 7 will also have vision, hearing and BMI testing done as well within the first month of school as well.

If you have any questions please email me at egartman@longmeadow.k12.ma.us

Thank you and see you all soon.

Liz Gartman, RN School Nurse

GRADE 6 NEWS

Welcome to Williams Middle School! We are looking forward to meeting our new students and helping them all adjust to the move to a new school. Communication and organization skills are two important goals the team has set for all students this year. To help meet these goals, all sixth grade students will be given an agenda book which will include the WMS handbook and daily assignment book. This is an important tool we use to help keep students organized, keep parents informed about the daily assignments, and to create an open line of communication between the classroom and home. To ensure that this is a successful tool, please review the agenda frequently with your child and visit homeworkknow.com.

GRADE 7 NEWS

Welcome to seventh grade! This will be a year filled with exciting changes; we look forward to working with you to help you have a positive year.

Parents - In order to help you make a smooth transition to seventh grade, we would like to share our expectations for the school year. Carefully spelled out guidelines offer the greatest chance for success. We know that when parents and teachers collaborate, the result is a successful school experience. Your child will be receiving a copy of the grade 7 policies on the first day of school. Please ask your child to show you the copy of our policies for grade 7 and review them together. In addition, one of the best ways to support your child from home is to get into the habit of checking your child's agenda notebook on a daily basis to ensure homework completion on the day it is due.

Students - One basic way to help you be successful in school is to complete your homework assignments every night. We have learned that a clear and consistent homework plan is the first step in being prepared for a successful school day. One goal in seventh grade is to encourage our students to take responsibility for their work. We know that we can count on your parents for support as well.

This is going to be an exciting year for all of us and we look forward to meeting all of our new parents on Back to School Night.

GRADE 8 NEWS

The teachers in the 8th grade want to welcome the 8th grade parents and students who are entering this fall. In order to smooth the transition from seventh grade to eighth grade, we would like to provide you with some information about what to expect this year.

The eighth grade teachers strive to provide a sense of belonging and unity for our eighth grade students. It is important to note that eighth grade is different because it is the transition year to the high school. At Williams we see dramatic changes in students as they mature over the three years. In eighth grade we stress the need for students to take more responsibility for their learning as they head to the high school. In each class there will be an emphasis on learning

appropriate study skills as they relate to that discipline. We stress that students must know themselves as learners and are ready to use different strategies until they discover what is the most effective for them.

The team attempts to further support this development of self-discipline by having uniform team policies concerning homework, standards for the work, due dates, make-up work and behavior. As a team, we would like to reassure students that these policies are set up as a way of helping students to make the connection between choices and consequences. It is important that we let our children learn from the “little mistakes” just as we did when we were growing up.

Eighth grade is a dynamite year for all of us. The eighth grade students are the school leaders and should be encouraged to take the lead in all school activities. Many special activities are planned for these students with the expectation that they can respond with enthusiasm and some maturity. We believe that by meeting the expectations we have for them, your children will develop a real sense of achievement and pride in what they have done. In our minds this is how lasting self-esteem and confidence is developed.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC) News

Welcome back to school to all of our new and returning families. The Williams Middle School PAC typically hosts meetings every couple of months during the school year. The meetings are generally at 9:00 and take place in the school library. Members of the PAC board and Mr. Wrye (or teacher/staff liaison) are present to update on a variety of school-related topics. Please look for an upcoming announcement for our first meeting date.

Included with this newsletter are three documents from PAC: PAC membership, directory information, and volunteer sign-up. Please take time to fill them out and return them to school at your earliest convenience. WMS PAC has an email account, separate from AlertNow. We use this account to notify families of upcoming projects and happenings. If you are new to WMS, or need to notify us of a new email account please provide us that information at: pac.wms@gmail.com It is very important to provide an email address, if possible. This is the only way PAC sends out communications.

Below is some additional PAC contact information. Please feel free to contact these individuals if you have any PAC related questions. Thank you and we are looking forward to another great year!

Amy Cardaropoli - grade 8 representative	acardaropoli@comcast.net
Deb Cartelli - grade 7 representative	dcartelli@comcast.net
Laura Mulderig – grade 6 representative	mulderig@netapp.com
Sherri Ehrenberg - treasurer	ssehrenberg@yahoo.com