

# Welcome Back Families!

BACK TO SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 2022-2023

DEAR FAMILIES,



It's almost time – September 1st will be here before you know it! We would like to extend a warm welcome back to all the children and families of the Washington Township School District. Please know that we are committed as a staff to provide a safe environment where all students will have the opportunity to become thoughtful, productive, and contributing members of society.

Success is a team effort and our team consists of students, parents, teachers, and staff. Parents/guardians play a critical role in the education of their children. Years of research and numerous studies consistently report that children of parents who are involved in their child's education do better in school and in life than the children of parents who are not involved, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the family. Therefore, we encourage you to participate in school activities as they occur during the school year and to support education in your home.

Your child's bus pass and your OnCourse Connect login information will be arriving in the mail this week.

We hope you continue to have a great summer ahead of sending your kids back to school!

Thank you,

Keith T. Neuhs, Superintendent  
[kneuhs@washtwpsd.org](mailto:kneuhs@washtwpsd.org)

Jessica L. Garcia, Principal - Brass Castle School  
[jgarcia@washtwpsd.org](mailto:jgarcia@washtwpsd.org)

Jessica K. McDonagh, Principal - Port Colden School  
[jmcdonagh@washtwpsd.org](mailto:jmcdonagh@washtwpsd.org)

# IMPORTANT TIMES TO REMEMBER IN 2022-2023...

## **Brass Castle School**

Start Time: **8:45am**

Dismissal Time: **3:20pm** (early dismissal 12:50pm)

Preschool Dismissal Time: **11:25am**

## **Port Colden School**

Start Time: **9:00am**

Dismissal Time: **3:35pm** (early dismissal 1:05pm)

- Thursday, September 1, 2022 - First Day of School for all students.
- Friday, September 2, 2022 - Early dismissal day for all students.
- Monday, September 5, 2022 - Labor Day — Schools Closed
- Friday, September 9, 2022 - PTA Meet & Greet @ Meadow Breeze Park
- Tuesday, September 13, 2022 - 6th Grade Back-to-School Night
- Monday, September 19, 2022 - Port Colden Back-to-School Night
- Tuesday, September 20, 2022 - Brass Castle Back-to-School Night

## DISTRICT CALENDAR



WTSD 2022-23 District Calendar.pdf

 [Download](#)

285.4 KB

## 2022-23 HOMEROOM TEACHER - ONCOURSE CONNECT

Enclosed in this week's mailing you will find information to log into your OnCourse Connect account. Once in your OnCourse Connect account, you will be required to complete annual student registration documents. These online documents replace paper back to school documents. Please be sure to complete the annual registration documents as soon as possible.

Once you have completed the annual registration documents, you will be able to access your child's homeroom teacher information. Annual registration documents must be completed for each student.

[OnCourse Connect Login](#)

# COVID UPDATES

As we enter the school year, please review the following information that serves to inform you of procedures currently in place for the 2022-23 school year, as per NJDOE / NJDOH recommendations.

## Masks

- Masks will continue to be optional for both staff and students. On school buses, masks are optional for drivers and students.

## Quarantine

- Students and / or staff members that test positive for COVID-19 will need to quarantine out of school for 5 days and mask for 5 days upon their return. Students and /or staff members that have COVID-19 like symptoms must quarantine, unless they have a negative test result (rapid test is acceptable).
- Unvaccinated students who are close contacts of **household** Covid positive individuals may be quarantined based on NJDOH recommendations. School nurses will communicate with affected families.
- Students that are absent due to COVID-19 illness / quarantine will receive assignments via their TEAMS account. Livestream instruction will not be provided during absences.

## Contact Tracing

- The district will not be contact tracing.

## Testing

- The district has rapid Covid test kits available for students. If a student is in need of a rapid Covid test, the school nurse may provide one to the parents/guardian to administer at home. The school nurse cannot administer a Covid test in the nurse's office.

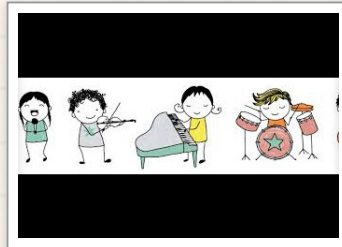
***Please note, all health and safety procedures are subject to change based on NJDOE and NJDOH requirements.***

# WELCOME - NEW STAFF MEMBERS



## PORT COLDEN SCHOOL NURSE

We would like to welcome Mrs. Elizabeth Anema to the Washington Township School District!! Mrs. Anema will be caring for students at the Port Colden School.



## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TEACHER

As you may have heard, Mr. Rizzo and his family will be moving to be closer to extended family. Thank you Mr. Rizzo for instilling a love of music in so many students and being a wonderful member of school community. We will miss you!

The district is currently recruiting Instrumental Music Teacher candidates.

# PLEASE REVIEW THE PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

## [PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK](#)

### FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL - SEND THE STUDENT DISMISSAL FORM IN WITH YOUR CHILD INDICATING DISMISSAL DIRECTIONS, IF NOT A BUS RIDER.

- Please complete the student dismissal form found in your mailing, if your child will be attending the YMCA Childcare program or if they will be a parent pickup.
- Students without this form, will go home on the their normal bus route or be released to walk home (non-bus rider student).

### **IN THE EVENT OF SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS OR EARLY RELEASES:**

In the case of inclement weather, or other reasons, parents will be contacted by the School Messenger program. Please make sure we have your current contact information updated in [OnCourse Connect](#). With School Messenger you can "opt in" on the text service in addition to their email and phone call.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DIRECTIONS:**

- For the welfare and safety of all students, it is requested that students do not arrive at school any earlier than 8:30am (Brass Castle) and 8:45am (Port Colden School).
- This is especially important for those children who walk, ride bicycles or whom parents drop off.
- There is no supervision prior to this time.



- Classroom instruction begins promptly at 8:50am (Brass Castle) and 9:05am (Port Colden School). Please make sure students arrive on time for school. It is important to start the day off on positive note.
- If you need supervision for your child prior to the scheduled start times, you must sign them up for the YMCA Childcare program.

## **STUDENT ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PRECAUTIONS**

### **Parking:**

Please do not park in the bus loading and unloading zones of either elementary building.

### **Parent Drop-Off and Pickup:**

- Brass Castle parent drop-off and pickups are located in the driveway off of Midland Avenue.
- Port Colden parent drop-off and pickups are located in the upper parking lot behind the school.
- SROs will be at the schools to assist with school drop-off and pickup procedures.

## **CHANGE IN DISMISSAL ROUTINE:**

Please contact our office by 2:00PM for changes in transportation. This is for the safety of our students.

## **VISITORS:**

Visitors must contact the school and schedule an appointment to meet with school staff.

To avoid classroom interruptions, parents are not allowed to visit or observe in classrooms while students are present.

## **PARENT & TEACHER MEETINGS:**

Parent-teacher conferences are on the school calendar (early November), but we encourage parents to meet with teachers at other times as well. If any parent would like to meet with a teacher, an appointment must be made with the teacher. The appointment can be requested with the teacher by email or phone call.

## **STUDENT iPADS:**

All students will be assigned an iPad for individual use. An "Acceptable Use" form must be completed on the OnCourse Connect platform. Students will also be assigned a Microsoft 365 account to manage school assignments.

Teachers will review procedures for sending home or keeping iPads at school during Back-to-School Nights.

## **CELL PHONES:**

- Students may NOT have cell phones or other devices visible on school premises for any reason through dismissal. All phones and devices must be turned off, not simply silent.
- All students should turn devices off and put devices away before entering the school building.

- If a student needs to make a call during the day, he or she may do so from the office phones.
- If a parent needs to get in touch with a student, the parent may do so by contacting the main office where the child attends.
- iWatches or similar devices may not be used to make calls and/or texting during the school day.
- Lost or stolen cell phones or electronic devices are not the responsibility of the Washington Township School District.

#### **Cell Phone Violations:**

If a student is utilizing a phone iWatch or similar device during the school day, the student will bring it to the principal and it will be kept in the office.

1. 1st Offense- Warning- phone /device will be turned over to the principal and may be picked up by the student at the end of the day from the principal.
2. 2nd Offense- phone/device confiscated, parent must pick up the phone/device.
3. Additional offenses may lead to disciplinary consequences such as detentions.

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAM**

#### **Menus**

- School breakfast and lunch menus can be found on the district website or by using the following link: <https://washtwpsd.nutrislice.com/menus-eula>

#### **Important Notice**

- The federal government is no longer providing free breakfasts and lunches to all students. Starting this year students will need to purchase breakfast and / or lunch.
- Meals can be purchased online using: <https://www.payschoolscentral.com>

#### **2022/23 Prices**

- Student Breakfast: \$2.00 (free/reduced breakfast, \$0.00 )
- Student Lunch: \$3.50 (free/reduced lunch, \$0.00)
- Milk: \$0.70 (free/reduced, \$0.00)

#### **Free / Reduced Breakfast / Lunch**

- Families may qualify for free or reduced meals. To qualify for free/reduced meals, please complete the application. ALL families are encouraged to complete the application as this critical information affects school funding. A signed copy of the form must be returned to school. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school.
- [Free / Reduced Lunch Application \(English\)](#)
- [Free / Reduced Lunch Application \(Spanish\)](#)

## **YMCA CAMP BERNIE - CHILDCARE PROGRAM**

This year the Washington Township School District is partnering with the YMCA – Camp Bernie to provide before & after care programs for Washington Township School District students. The program will run at Brass Castle School from 7:00am – 8:30am and at Port Colden School from 3:30pm – 6:00pm. Students will continue to be transported between schools in order to participate in the childcare programs. Please note students will not be allowed to enroll in the YMCA - Camp Bernie Childcare program if they have an outstanding balance from the 2021-22 childcare program.

Enrollment Information / Packets can be found at: [YMCA - Camp Bernie Childcare Enrollment Packet](#)

Questions and /or registration packets can be emailed to [info@campbernienymca.org](mailto:info@campbernienymca.org)

## DISTRICT NEWS

LATEST NEWS: GET THE LATEST NEWS ON FACEBOOK!

Be sure to take a look at all school and district updates on Facebook and/or our district website:  
<https://www.washtwpsd.org>



## PTA MEETING

### WHEN

WEDNESDAY, SEP. 21ST, 7PM

### WHERE

16 CASTLE STREET  
WASHINGTON, NJ

### MORE INFORMATION

The first PTA meeting of the year will be held on Wednesday, September 21st in the Brass Castle School Library. All are invited!



# RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED FROM DAY 1

This article has concrete advice for kids & parents, plus a very helpful checklist for parents.



**WASHINGTON  
TOWNSHIP**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT