



February 2020



## Cobras Striking Success

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### Message from the Principal...

Dear Parents or Guardians,

As we closed out this semester, we are very proud of the work our students and teachers have accomplished. Our greatest accomplishments have been in community service. Our students have responded to the call for assistance with unselfishness and passion for helping others. This month we were honored at the AACO foodbank as one of the top contributors. We will be attending an awards program on January 23. Central Middle School collected 3783 pounds of food and \$8760.62. This gives us a combined total 73,876.96 pounds of food donated. Each dollar equals 8 pounds of food. Our Chilly Cobras are numbered over 168 students Their total donation at this time is \$18,000. They are the #1 middle school in the state, and 2nd in the state with South River High School #1 in the state. The Central Middle School community continues demonstrated unselfishness, kindness, compassion, and caring at a very impressive level.

At some point in time we have all had to work hard to perfect our skills in order to advance. There is no one out there who is successful by accident. Success takes perseverance and hard work. If your child is meeting a challenge with their school work this year, encourage them to use every resource, ask questions, and work harder. Do not let them make excuses. Do not accept minimal compliance with assignments. Help us to push students to do their best. We have very bright students and they can all be successful here. Middle school students need to be held accountable and at times monitored closely. Success comes when we all pull together. Please contact your team leader or counselor if you need support or have questions.

February is a very busy month the year. As we gear up for the registration of our students for the 2019-2020 school year, Central Middle School is projected to enroll 1320 students next year. Our state capacity is 1295. This is not the actual enrollment. The enrollment for any school year is finalized on September 30 of each school year. This year's enrollment was 1284. Our teaching positions allotted are based on a ratio of 22 students per teacher which is based on the projected enrollment. Class size is affected by the leveling of students and the number of encore classes offered which may require higher student teacher ratios in some classes. The leveling of students is done by the teachers using the AACPS leveling criteria. The criteria which includes the use of PARCC scores, quarterly assessments, grades, and Gates scores. This year our students will select their courses online. The students will be given a student portal which is the same as the parent portal. Their access will not affect parent accounts in any way, but will allow them to select courses, view grades and view attendance. More information will be coming home soon.

When completing and reviewing your child's course selections, pay attention to the choices he/she made in the encore subjects. Unlike the core program of studies, student selections determine which encore programs are scheduled and staffed. The staff roster will be finalized by May. It is important that encore selections be made wisely. The courses offered next fall are determined now by the number of students choosing them at this time. Since the staffing is decided based on these selections, changes in encore will not be honored if the encore was a first, second, or third choice.

Our eighth-grade students will select their courses using the same process, which will be directed by the high school counselors. **SAVE THE DATE:** The South River High Parent night is February 4. This is the same day the students select their courses in math classes.

On March 10, we will be inviting parents in for conferences, the conference day will be divided into times for developing plans for struggling students and for student Led conferences. Students should accompany their parents to all conferences. The Student-Led conference will be 10:30 to 12:30. Please be sure to accept the invitation to meet with us. Your weekly team newsletters will provide you the schedule for the day.

In closing, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the support our PTSA has given Central Middle School. They truly go above and beyond providing funding for clubs, organizing volunteers, supporting school programs such as our outdoor classroom, outside cafeteria space, supporting our environmental science program, providing assemblies for each grade level, funding the Living History experience, and providing parent programs on timely topics. If you have not joined our PTSA you might consider helping them by joining or volunteering for upcoming events.

Sincerely,

Millie Beall

Principal

## Changes in emergency contacts and picking up students.

This year anyone picking up a student must be the Contact 1 or Contact 2 in the student information system. This is the parent or guardian with whom the student resides. We can no longer just use the emergency cards. These cards do not replace a permission letter from the parent on the day of pick-up. The Instructional Data Division of Anne Arundel County Public Schools explanation for this change has been copied and pasted below.

There have been several questions regarding how contacts are being handled in the upgraded PowerSchool platform. Many of those questions are coming from parents and guardians. As you know, we no longer store unlimited contacts in the student information system. That decision was made based on the safety and security needs of all students. Permission from a parent or legal guardian is required for a child to be picked up by another adult, in a non-emergency situation. This should be provided in writing on an as-needed basis.

As part of the data conversion process from SMS to PowerSchool, we found three main issues:

Invalid contact relationship information was identified for Contacts 1 and 2. For example, we had babysitters, neighbors, and friends listed as the primary contact for students.

Schools were using the "Can Pick up" flag in SMS as blanket permission for that person to pick up the student from school, in any situation and for any reason. In many cases, this data was potentially inaccurate and possibly many years old. This created a situation where a student could accidentally be released to the wrong adult based on data collected once a year.

Contacts in PowerSchool are now "linked," meaning there is a single record of data for a given contact. This means when a phone number is updated for a contact at one school, it is now reflected for other students the contact is linked to at other schools. Therefore, we are limiting contacts stored in the system to parent/legal guardian relationships.

Only the following contacts should be entered into PowerSchool:

Contacts 1 and 2 should reflect the parents/legal guardians of the student. The address of Contact 1 should reflect the physical address of the student.

For contacts 3 or more, ***only those contacts*** with one of the following relationships should be entered: Mother, Father, Stepmother, Stepfather, Foster Mother, Foster Father, or Legal Guardian. It should be noted that stepparents are not legal guardians and would require permission from the parents to pick up a student, so they should not be flagged as "Can Pick Up."

With this type of change, we need all schools to share a consistent message with our parents and legal guardians. We understand that family dynamics can look very different depending on the student, but we need to err on the side of caution when it comes to protecting our students and who AACPS contacts on their behalf. Please use the information above to answer any questions the school receives about the changes to recording contact information in PowerSchool. We appreciate your support in sharing this information with your families. Please contact me with any questions. Thank you.

ATTENTION PARENTS:  
NEW VACCINE  
REQUIREMENTS  
FOR 7th GRADERS

These required vaccines should  
be administered at age 11:

MCV4 (Meningococcal) &  
Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria,  
pertussis)



## What happens when the school administration is made aware of threats?

- If a student brings any threatening situation to the attention of the administrative team it is responded to immediately.
- Whenever weapons of any kind are a part of the threat description the police department is notified, the office of school security, the communication center and the Regional Superintendent, Mr. Truffer.
- The school team takes written statements from the students reporting as well as the witnesses. The alleged offender is interviewed and detained in the office.
- All information is shared with the police when they arrive. The police conduct their investigation. The police interview students in the presence of their parents. The school administration fully cooperates with the police and provide all contact information and access to students involved. The actions the police determine appropriate are not in place of disciplinary actions to be taken by the school administration.
- Each incident is assessed and responded to based on the available information provided at the time. The school administration follows the Student Code of Conduct. All students are provided due process rights and the established policies and procedures are implemented.
- All parents of students involved in the investigation are contacted by school administration.
- All parents are informed of the threat and a letter is posted on the website and sent out through the Connect Ed messaging service.

### Our Vision

*Central Middle School will continuously strive to become a collaborative community of staff, parents and students where active engagement in instruction is tailored to students needs and interests.*





### Our Mission

**In order to be productive citizens of the 21st century, all students will be actively engaged in opportunities to achieve high levels of performance on quality standards through rigorous instruction tailored to their diverse needs, cultures, and interests.**



## Video Camera System/V-Soft School Security

CMS is equipped with a video camera system. It covers selected interior and exterior public portions of the building/grounds.

It is NOT monitored constantly, but is monitored during emergency situations. During events when the safety or security of students may be in question, authorized personnel from local, state or federal police or fire emergency units may be given access to view images projected on the camera system. If you have any questions about the system, you should call the supervisor of School Security at 410-222-5083.

### V-Soft by Raptor Ware.....

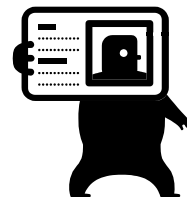
When you visit our school you will be asked to present a government/state issued photo ID (i.e Driver's License) to a staff person in the school office. The ID will be scanned and the following information collected: your photo, name and date of birth. This information will be utilized to check you in, create an ID badge, and compare your information against sexual offender databases throughout the county.

If your name appears on the list or you refuse to allow the use of your ID, you will NOT be allowed access to the school. You will also be asked to check out with the office upon leaving. The information will not be shared outside of the school and is kept on a secure server. Your assistance in keeping students safe is appreciated.

**All Parents and Visitors must have a government issued ID in hand upon entrance to our building.**

**NO exceptions!**

Thank you for your help in keeping Central Middle School safe.



## NEWS...Central Middle has a clothing donation bin!

This bin will be permanently outside of Central Middle School. CMS will receive money based on how much clothing (and other items- see below) is collected throughout the year.

We accept the following Textiles in All Conditions:

1. All Clothing
2. All Shoes
3. Accessories (Handbags, backpacks, etc.)
4. Bed Linens (sheets, blankets, etc.)
5. Towels
6. Pillows
7. Toys (if made of cloth, NOT plastic)

We do **NOT** accept:

1. Items too Large to that fit inside the collection bin opening.
2. Furniture
3. Foam Cushions
4. Food
5. Hangars
6. Plastic Toys
7. Carpet (anything larger than small rug)

It is a great way to educate children on the importance of recycling and help their school.

### All collected clothing in:

- good or better condition is given a second life at thrift stores here in the U.S. **Reworn**
- less than good condition will be **Repurposed** (I.E. items worn out could be turned into rags )
- poor condition or less will be processed for recycling. **Recycled**

Recycling happens as the final option. We accept ALL Clothing, in ALL Conditions, this is what makes Clothing to Cash unique.

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Central Middle School PTSA  
Thank you for being involved!





## Book Bag Policy

Our Book bag policy is as follows:

- ⇒ Students may use book bags to carry materials to and from school
- ⇒ Students may NOT carry book bags during the school day
- ⇒ Students will have access to their lockers at the start and end of the school day

and at lunchtime  
This policy was designed to maximize your child's educational experience at Central Middle in that:

- \* Complies with medical findings that carrying heavy book bags can permanently injure a child or interfere with his/her physical development
- \* Reduces the amount of materials being carried by

our students, reducing the opportunity for injuries

- \* Assists students in developing organizational skills and helps students become more responsible for planning their academic day
- \* Minimizes students' capacity to bring inappropriate items to school



## Lockers



Locks must be purchased from Central Middle School for \$5.00

Students will use the same lock for the years he/she is a student at CMS.

**The school will not assume responsibility for stolen items**

Students should not share lockers!

Students are responsible for the contents of their lockers.

Only school related items and outerwear should be stored in lockers.

Administrators have the authority to search lockers at any time

if they have probable cause.

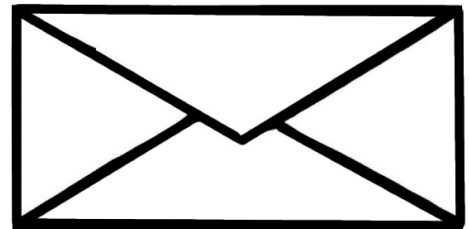
Though every effort is made to maintain locker security, students are encouraged NOT to store valuables in them.

## Newsletters

Newsletters are posted on the AACPS website the first of every month.

**IF you do not have computer access, please contact Ms. Linthicum** in the office and we will distribute a hard copy of the Newsletter to your student to bring home.

# N Newsletter



## Holiday/Birthday/Gift Protocol



To minimize any disruption in the cafeteria, classrooms or busses, Central Middle School established the following guideline:

**NO** balloons, snacks, food/beverage items, gift or fruit baskets are to be brought into school. Thank you for your cooperation.



## Extracurricular Activity Programs



Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:05 until 4:05 are Extracurricular Activity Days at Central Middle.

Activities include intramural sports, Yearbook Club, Science Club Mathematics Club, French Club, Drama Club, Robotics, and instrumental and choral music programs.

Student transportation is provided by activity buses.

Information about extracurricular activities is communicated via morning announcements .

Additionally, a comprehensive list of Clubs/Activities can be found on our website.



## PowerSchool for Parents

All parents/guardians of students in grades 1-12 will need to create a new Parent Portal account. Please take a moment to review ALL literature sent home as there are many changes this school year.



## Attendance at Central Middle

Anne Arundel County Public Schools has an attendance tracking system for all middle schools. Attendance is taken for each student for every period of the day through the county's student data system. Hopefully, the following information will be helpful to parents.

Parents will receive phone calls from the Anne Arundel County Public School system (Connect ED) each morning around 9:00 a.m. and in the evenings around 6:00 p.m. every time that their student is recorded as being absent- either all day OR just for one period during the day. A tardy message is also sent out via Connect Ed whether there is an unexcused tardy to school or an unexpected tardy to class. Parents can do the following to check on their child's attendance when they receive phone calls from Connect Ed.

Ask your child if perhaps they were late to class or in the guidance office or health room- If the period was coded by the teacher as an absence, that code can be changed to an excused tardy to class if the student had a pass.

If you have a Parent Portal account, you can log in to see your child's attendance for the day. You will see a code for each period by holding the cursor over the attendance icons. Parent Portal will also let you see tardies. Then:

*Touch base with the teacher when you see an unexcused absence for a period and your child isn't sure why they were marked absent. If a correction needs to be made, the teacher will contact the attendance secretary "Tardy to class" questions should be addressed by the teacher first.*

According to the Anne Arundel County Board of Education, children who are absent six or more days of school per semester regardless of the cause, are considered 'excessively absent'. We are always willing to work with parents and students to address issues which impact your child's attendance.

Make sure that when your child is absent, you send in a note to the student's first period teacher explaining the absence(s) OR the student may bring their note to the Main Office. Any absence due to illness of more than 5 days requires a doctor's note. Vacations during the school year are considered unexcused absences under Maryland state law and Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

## TRANSPORTATION:

### Bus Riders, Bike Riders, Car Riders and Walkers



Cobras Striking Success

Parents, teachers, administrators, bus drivers and students all need to work together to ensure a safe arrival and departure for everyone each day.

**BUS RIDERS:** You are expected to board the bus at **your** designated bus stop. Please be **on time** each day. While on the bus, all school rules are in effect. **We expect each student to behave well so that bus drivers can pay attention to their driving.** Students who cannot comply may have the privilege of bus transportation taken away.

Teachers will review bus behavior standards written in the “Student Handbook” during the first week of school.

**Changes in bus transportation arrangements** can be made only by filling out an **Exceptional Transportation Request** form, available in the main office. Where possible, we ask that this form be submitted **at least three days before** the change is to take place. **Emergency** situations will be handled on an individual basis. All requests are subject to verification prior to final approval by the Supervisor of Transportation

**Types of requests that will be approved include long-term child care arrangements, medical requests. Requests for transportation to athletic practices, doctor appointments, employment and visits to friends’ houses will be denied as per Board of Education policy.**



**PARKING:** Our parking lot spaces are for staff and visitors to Central Middle. Any other cars parked in our areas are subject to being towed.

**STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:** Please honor the “Do Not Enter” signs leading into the main driveway in front of the school. Drop off your children in the morning by pulling into the parking lot and proceeding to the area opposite the crosswalk (between the two handicapped parking signs).

**CAR RIDERS, BIKE RIDERS, AND WALKERS:** Car riders, bike riders, and walkers report to the cafeteria after the 2:50 bell. They are to remain there until the buses depart. **This is a safety issue** for both students and parents. Buses pulling into their slots can NOT see students coming out from behind other parked buses.

## REMINDER FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS



If your student feels ill during the school day, please let them know to report to the Health Room (located near the main office). The Health Room staff will assess the student and then call a parent.

**Students are not allowed to use their cell phones in the classroom for texting or any other purpose. After the second offense, the phone will be held for a parent to pick it up from the office.**



### Blackboard

*Check Blackboard often and stay informed*

[www.aacps.org](http://www.aacps.org) (Anne Arundel County's homepage)

- . username: centralms (all lowercase and all one word)
- . Type in the password: cobras (all lowercase)



If you are picking your student up early,  
please arrive before 2:45.

Thank you for your cooperation.

