



February 2020



Cobras Striking Success

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Message from the Principal...

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! This will be my last newsletter to the Central Middle School community. As I write this letter, my thoughts turn to the amazing accomplishments, we have experienced together in this short first semester of the school year. We have produced a school play, SHREK, and the students and adults involved were fabulous. The music department has performed in the All-County chorus and orchestra with record numbers of students qualifying. In the All-County orchestra concert, Lucas Porter was the led cello. The Visual Arts department received grant funds to have a motivational speaker, Ty Howard, and will have a future trip to New York city to visit an art museum.

The NJHS successfully implemented a very successful food drive which included the annual faculty vs. student basketball game. The students now have won three consecutive years. Chris Buchanan wrote an essay about his favorite teacher and his essay was chosen. Mrs. Laura Casciato was awarded the favorite teacher award. The award was provided by Mathnasium.

We successfully completed two evacuation drills during lunch periods. Participated in the South River High Hispanic culture fair and the South River Cluster concerts. We had two teachers recognized as outstanding educators, Mr. Marcus- Wenger for educator of the month, and Mrs. Lauren Walker our semifinalist for Teacher of the Year. The week before winter break, the Chorus performed at the Board of Education, only five schools were selected from the county to perform. The music department wowed us with their Choral and instrumental winter concerts.

Closing out our accomplishments were Zachariah Jackson who won second place in the Young Authors competition. Our seventh-grade scientist, Ella Lovelace, Natalie Wolf, Abigail Ippolito, and Mary-Catherine Parks are moving to the next level in the Mission 14 science experiment competition. They are in the running for their experiment to be perform by astronauts on a space mission. It is apparent that the CMS Cobras are continuing to Strike Success! They are truly amazing young people.

The beginning of the new calendar year is here, and the end of the first semester is approaching. The interim grades went out prior to the winter break, and now is the time to make sure incomplete work is done, and redo assignments are completed. January is a very quick month. Please be sure you check the parent portal and help your child fill any gaps they might have. At the end of this marking period, those in danger of failing will be identified and parent notified. If each student cooperates with their teachers and uses the resources and time provided no student should fail.

The students will be completing their second quarterly assessment this month in Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, World Language and Mathematics. The exams will be given January 6th- 24th. The exact dates will be given by each content teacher. Be sure to talk with your child about studying, getting a good night's sleep, and eating a nutritious breakfast.

Currently, counselors and administrators are preparing for registrations. The registration process is moving to an online feature which will allow parents to review and edit their child's course selections. This feature will appear in the parent portal. More information will be provided later. We will continue to offer intervention classes for mathematics and reading. Next year, there are some additional choices for students in the encore elective subjects. Dance and Digital Palette will be offered in all three grade levels next year. The encore courses will continue to be offered based on students' interest. The staffing and master schedule is determined by the number of student requests. When your course selection sheets come home, they will only have the courses we can offer at Central Middle School. We cannot offer all the courses in the booklet due to limited space and teaching staff.

The eighth graders are preparing for high school registration. The counselors from the high school will be meeting with teachers and administrators to review course registration procedures this month and will register student through math classes February 4. On February 4 at 6:30 pm, there will be a parent information night at South River High School. Prior to the winter break the eighth graders visited the CAT-S program. Those interested in this program can register between now and March 15.

The winter months are here and with them comes the possibility of early closings, late openings, and school cancellations. Be sure you have arrangements for your child in the event of an early closing and review the plans with them. We will continue to use the telephone messaging, AACPS website, system and the media to communicate school closings.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us, counselors, assistant principals and teachers are available to help with your concerns. All parents are welcome to come in and visit, however you may want to arrange this through your child's team leader to avoid a testing day.

I wish to take this opportunity to once again thank everyone for their support. I have spent 13 wonderful years as principal and have enjoyed everyone of them. The students are exceptional young people who I know will become productive citizens. Some of them may even return as teachers at Central Middle. I will miss them and their parents. My final day here will be January 31. I will be leaving to take care of urgent family needs.

Gratefully,
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.....

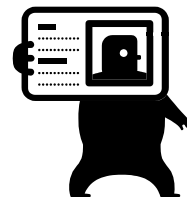
When you visit our school you will be asked to present a government/state issued photo ID (i.e Driver's License) to a staff person in the school office. The ID will be scanned and the following information collected: your photo, name and date of birth. This information will be utilized to check you in,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

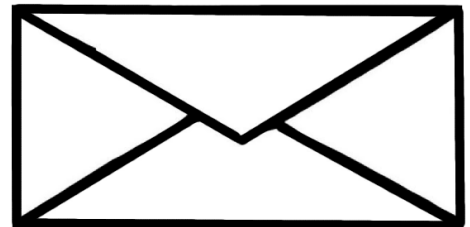
Though every effort is made to maintain locker security, students are encouraged NOT to store valuables in them.

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.

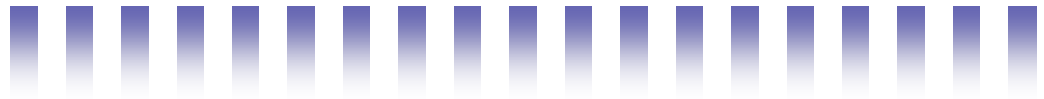
STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP: Please honor the “Do Not Enter” signs leading into the main driveway in front of the school. Drop off your children in the morning by pulling into the parking lot and proceeding to the area opposite the crosswalk (between the two handicapped parking signs).

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.



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 (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.

