

# Small Talk September 2021

A FORT SMALLWOOD ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

## DEAR FORT SMALLWOOD COMMUNITY,

What a fabulous start to the school year. It has been an exciting few days for everyone. What brings me the most joy is seeing and hearing the joy all students are experiencing being back in school. It certainly is music to my ears.

Unfortunately, we continue to experience the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students have participated in lessons regarding safety protocols including social distancing, hand washing and sanitizing, and proper wearing of masks. Thank you to all of you for supporting these efforts.

As a reminder, if your student has any ONE of the following symptoms, please do NOT send them to school:

1. temperature of 100.4°F or higher
2. sore throat
3. cough
4. difficulty breathing
5. diarrhea or
6. vomiting
7. new onset of severe headache, especially with a fever new loss of taste or smell.

Students who present one of these symptoms while at school will be sent home. Please have your student tested for COVID-19 or obtain an alternate diagnosis from a medical professional if presented with any one of these symptoms. Students must present a negative COVID test in order to return to school. Most importantly, the Health room in collaboration with the County Health Department will determine the return date for any student who tests positive OR who has not been tested but displays symptoms. Students who test negative must still be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we are also limiting activities at the school. Our building is open to guests BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. It is important that you call ahead to make an appointment.

Finally, our dismissal time is a very busy time for the school and especially the front office. That being said, please notify the office BEFORE 3 PM FOR any changes to your student's normal dismissal routine. Changes after 3 pm will only be honored when there is an emergency.

I look forward to our continued partnership as the school year goes on. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or just need to chat.

In Partnership,  
Mrs. Bobbie Kesecker, Principal  
[bkesecker@aacps.org](mailto:bkesecker@aacps.org)



## MASKS REQUIRED

Prior to entry to the building, and at all times while in the building, masks will be required by all staff, students, and visitors. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## BUILDING ACCESS

We continue to limit access to the building, including the front office. The office will be open from 8 to 4 Monday through Friday. Prior to coming to the building, please make an appointment by calling the office at 410-222-6450.



If you need to drop something off, such as a forgotten lunch bag or instrument, we will continue to ask you to use the basket placed outside the front door. Simply ring the bell to let us know that you have left an item.

Because access to the building is limited for the time being, our need for volunteers will also be greatly reduced. We thank you in advance for your understanding.



## CHROMEBOOKS

**IMPORTANT for ALL FAMILIES:** All students in grades 3-12 should plan to bring your AACPS Chromebook to and from school daily in the fall. You will be using your Chromebook as a learning tool at times during the school day and will need it

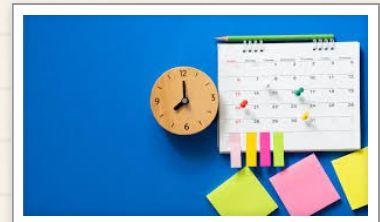
at home to complete assignments in the evening. All students in grades preK-2 should keep their AACPS-issued Chromebook at home for use there. When at school, there will be Chromebooks available in primary level classrooms for student use.

If you have an ECI, Pre-K or K student, or are new to the county, please contact the office to make an appointment for getting a Chromebook. All caregivers must sign a User Agreement prior to Chromebooks being assigned to students.

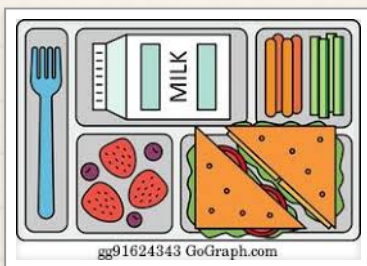
If you were assigned a Chromebook before this school year, and it is now damaged or lost, please contact the Office ASAP. You will be assigned another Chromebook and charged the cost of replacement.

## AACPS CALENDAR

Here is the link for the 2021-2022 school calendar. Please note that school starts for students in Grades 1 to 5 on Wednesday, September 8.



<https://www.aacps.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=29639&dataid=76053&FileName=202122%20School%20Calendar-rev4821.pdf>



## SCHOOL MEALS

All school meals (breakfast and lunch) are **FREE** to all students effective September 8, 2021, through the last day of school in June 2022. Students who wish to get a breakfast will pick it up in the hallway prior to going to their classroom in the morning.

**Meal Benefit Applications are still required by the State. We ask that ALL families please complete the application found at:**

<https://aacpschools.org/nutrition/apply-for-free-or-reduced-price-meals/>

Although meals are free, we are required to collect Meal Benefit Applications for programming and funding.

If you have any questions regarding the school meals program, please email [irissa@aacps.org](mailto:irissa@aacps.org) or call 410-222-5900



# ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

## Busses:

Bus Schedules will be posted by the County.. Please watch for an announcement from the County. Here is the link to access the site: <https://busstops.aacps.org/>



While we have experienced a few delays, we have been largely unaffected by the driver shortage. That being said, we ask for your continued patience with busses. Some of our busses do not leave the Fort until 4 pm.

## Car Riders:

We strongly encourage the use of busses. The car rider pick up and drop off line can be very long causing a log jam in the parking lot and spilling out onto Poplar Ridge Road.

If you are choosing to self-transport, we kindly ask that you remain in your car when dropping off and picking up. Please do not park in the lot for pick up. Thank you for your understanding.

## Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals:

If a student arrives after 9:10 am, they must be accompanied to the building and office by a caregiver to be signed in for the day. Please do not drop off students after 9:10 without bringing them into the building.

If you are picking up students early (before 3:35), we kindly ask that you provide us with a note alerting us to the early dismissal. Changes to a students dismissal after 3:00 cannot be honored as this is a very busy time of the day and message may not be relayed to teachers in time. Thank you for your understanding.



## FROM THE HEALTH ROOM

Medications: As a reminder, if you have a student who requires medication, this must be administered through the Health Room only.

Parents/caregivers must complete this form

<https://www.aacps.org/cms/lib/MD02215556/Centricity/Domain/1364/Medic%20Admin.pdf>

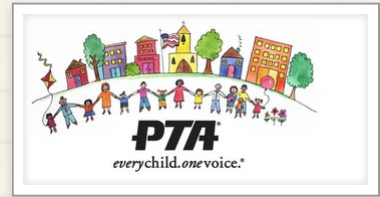
and return it to the Health Room.

Please do not send any medication with your student via the backpack.

Questions may be referred to our School Nurse by calling 410-222-6450.

## PTA

Fort Smallwood is fortunate to have a supportive, active, and robust PTA. Please consider joining the PTA. The application link can be found here:



<https://2021-2022-pta-membership.cheddarup.com>

The PTA is limiting their cash transactions. Please consider paying by credit card or check whenever possible.



## VISION AND MISSION

Our *vision*, to have each and every student achieve his or her individual potential in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment; and our *mission* to create a rich educational environment where every student will succeed and become a responsible, caring citizen will only be achieved by creating thoughtful, student-centered, standards-based, learning experiences that are facilitated by a group of caring teachers.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE - NOTICE OF POLICY @ AACPS

Anne Arundel County Public Schools NON-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE:

Anne Arundel County Public Schools prohibits discrimination in its educational programs, and in employment, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or disability. This prohibition pertains to enrollment in courses and program offerings, participation in school-sponsored activities, hiring, promotion, compensation, job classification, assignment, and all other functions and activities of the school system affecting either its student population or its employees.

For inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, please contact:

Asha Smith, Senior Manager, EEO Compliance; Title IX Coordinator

[asmith93@aacps.org](mailto:asmith93@aacps.org)

2644 Riva Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401

