



August 2017

Dear Students, Parents and Caretakers:

Greetings from Poquessing Middle School! Welcome to new and returning students and their families! We are enthusiastically preparing for your arrival and we hope this newsletter will provide you with valuable information for the 2017-18 school year.

Our district mission statement: The Neshaminy community builds futures by empowering each child to become a productive citizen and a lifelong learner.

This statement carries with it many beliefs that should drive the action of this faculty.

- Children are the future.
- All people can learn.
- All people have worth.
- A quality education is a right.

Poquessing Middle School students will share in experiences and challenges, which the faculty believes will empower each child to become productive and will help them grow academically, physically, and emotionally. **Our expectation is that our students will “Be Kind” to one another. We believe being kind is easily accomplished. We will reinforce this through activities, Rachel’s Challenge and modeling.**

Within the first few days of school, we will introduce our **SOAR program** to our new students and reintroduce it to our upperclassmen. This is a K-12 positive approach to school-wide behavior through support and interventions. SOAR stands for **SAFE, ORGANIZED, ACCOUNTABLE and RESPECTFUL**. Similar to teaching reading, writing and math, we will teach the expectations through mini-lessons. And, we will randomly reward students for exhibiting those behaviors as well and collect data to measure our efforts and reteach as needed.

The 1:1 technology initiative is expanding building-wide this year! All students will receive a take-home device. Grades six and seven will continue with the use of IPADS. Fifth and eighth grade students will receive DELL Chromebooks, which will be distributed the second week of school. Students new to the Chromebook will receive instruction on the use of the device. *IMPORTANT: Please complete the attached paperwork and fee, so that your child will receive their device in a timely manner. Devices will be used in every classroom.*

We anticipate an exciting new year of growing and learning. Our accomplished staff endeavors to maintain an excellent educational program for your children. This team will dedicate their time to understand your child’s strengths and needs. Poquessing parents and caretakers have been extraordinarily supportive thru the years and we look forward to continuing this relationship. We are TEAM Poquessing!

It is not news that the middle years can be difficult transitional years, but they are rewarding as well! Parents who have “survived” the middle years know that keeping students engaged is one key to success. Frequent home and school communication is also key. No issue is too big or too small to be addressed. We look forward to open communication as we facilitate the growth and development of your child through the middle school. Please contact us with any concerns. Welcome to Poquessing!

Joann Holland
Principal
jholland@neshaminy.org

Main Office: 215-809-6210

Don Palmer
Assistant Principal
dpalmer@neshaminy.org

Guidance Office: 215-809-6215

Attendance Office: 215-809-6211

IMPORTANT DATES

- New Student Orientation--Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in the Auditorium. Chromebook Technology Fee and Form Collection Opportunity.
- First Day of School for 5th Grade Only: Wednesday August 30th
 - Fifth Grade will grade will report to the Cafeteria, sit by homeroom teacher and be escorted to classroom.
- All Students Report Back to School: Thursday, August 31st
- Back to School Night – Thursday, September 14th, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. Meet your child’s teachers and learn about our program.
- School Picture Day –Wednesday, September 27th, 2017.

School Day Hours:

Begins at 7:55 a.m. (doors open at 7:25 a.m.)

Dismissal 2:55 p.m. (buses depart approx. 3:05 p.m.)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **ABSENCES:** Absence excuse notes must be received within three days of the absence and may be handwritten and signed by the parent/guardian to the HOMEROOM teacher OR emailed to poq-attendance@neshaminy.org. Reasons of acceptable absences are outlined in the NSD School Board Attendance Policy [Student Attendance Policy 552](#)
- **BOOK BAGS** - are not permitted during the school day to facilitate school safety. As students arrive in the building they are required to place their book bags in their lockers. Students should carry only those items required for the first three classes. Two 5-minute locker breaks are provided each day (10:30 a.m. and 12:41 p.m.) During locker break students will exchange their materials for the next assigned classes. **NO Book Bags on wheels.** Small gym bags containing a change of clothes on days when students have an assigned PE or swimming class will be permitted. These must be kept under the student’s desk during regular classes. Books and other school supplies may not be carried in gym bags.
- **CAFETERIA CHATTER** – Visit the Neshaminy web site for detailed information about menus, nutrition and prepayment options. All Neshaminy cafeterias have the computerized “Point of Sale Payment System.” Each student has an account for the prepayment of all purchases made in the cafeteria. Prepayment can be made with cash or by a check made payable to **Neshaminy Food Service**. You may also prepay for your student's meals online or by phone safely and conveniently. Access meal account balances online, or by phone. Choose Visa, MasterCard, Discover, electronic check or debit card. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of the prepayment system, as all children will benefit from quicker lunch lines, giving them a quality lunch time. **The school board has approved the lunch price increase to \$3.10 for secondary schools. Breakfast has been increased to \$1.60.** Please plan accordingly.
- **EARLY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES** – please send a note with your child to the ATTENDANCE OFFICE or EMAIL poq-attendance@neshaminy.org. Include the date/time of the pick-up as well as WHO is picking up your child. The person picking up your child (including parent/guardian) MUST be listed in the Home Access Center and have a PHOTO ID. Safety First!
- **FIFTH GRADE FAQs please see attached for fifth grade families**

- **Grades: Grades can be accessed from Home Access Center.** This is a valuable communication tool for sharing information school information between school, parents, students and teachers. View GRADES, teacher GRADEBOOKS, REPORT CARDS and INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS. Also view attendance, medical, contact and transportation information. The Home Access Center is a valuable communication tool for sharing information school information between school, parents, students and teachers. [The Home Access Center](#)
- **GUIDANCE: THE GUIDANCE OFFICE CAN BE CONTACTED DIRECTLY AT 215-809-6215.**

COUNSELOR assignments are as follows:

GRADE 5: Mrs. Abrohms

GRADE 7: Mrs. Lenahan

GRADE 8: Mr. Passman

GRADE 6 Student Last Names A—G: Mr. Passman

GRADE 6 Student Last Names H—O: Mrs. Lenahan

GRADE 6 Student Last Names P—Z: Mrs. Abrohms

- **HOME BASE** - Students must be aware of their **"HOME BASE/HOMEROOM"**. This is the room they are assigned for WIN *initially*. **Home Base is also the name associated with emergency evacuation and drills.** This is referred to as **HOME BASE/HOMEROOM**. **6th, 7th and 8th grade STUDENTS WILL REPORT TO HOME BASE on the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.** **HOME BASE/HOMEROOM** is listed on your student's schedule. **SCHEDULES WILL BE LIVE ON HOME ACCESS on AUGUST 23rd.**
- **INTRAMURAL AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** - We offer a comprehensive intramural program and as well extracurricular activities for students after school. Some of these activities may include: cheerleading, band, chorus, orchestra, student council, school store, yearbook, Reading Olympics, Science Olympiad, basketball, weight training, street hockey, computer club, etc. Programs are offered based on student interest and demand. **No physical exam is required to participate in the extracurricular or activity programs.** A signed parent permission slip is required.
- **IPAD/CHROMEBOOKS** – NEW! All 5th and 8th grade students will receive DELL Chromebooks the first week of school. 5th grade students may submit paperwork and the technology fee at Orientation. Cash, money order or online payment only. **NO CHECKS, PLEASE!** Re-distribution of iPads for grades 6 and 7 will occur during the first week of school. **Please see REQUIRED Technology Paperwork Attachment**
- **LOCKERS** - A hallway locker and lock will be assigned to each student. Each student is responsible for the cleanliness and care of the interior and exterior of his/her locker. **The security of the locker is the responsibility of each student.** Do not allow other students to use your locker. **Lost or damaged locks can be replaced for \$5.00.** **GYM LOCKERS - Students are REQUIRED to provide** a lock for use during gym class. The lock needs to be removed at the end of the PE class period. Students are advised that they should not bring valuable items into the gym area. The school will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items. Lockers belong to the school and will be checked periodically to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our students at Poquessing.
- **LUNCH WITH THE PRINCIPAL** – Students will be given a choice early in the school year to indicate whether or not they would like to have "Lunch with the Principal." Student names are selected by a random drawing. Lunch includes pizza and soda or water. Students may bring their own lunch. Parents will be notified if their student's name is selected.

- **NOT A “NUT FREE” SCHOOL** - There are members of our building that have severe allergies to food and environmental antigens. Please help us continue to promote an environment that all can enjoy without allergic reactions by instructing your child that food cannot be shared in the classroom, the lunchroom, on the bus or at the bus stop or at after school activities. Because the consumption of certain foods or even the scent of certain foods may cause complications that may leave children and or adults in compromised conditions requiring health care, children are asked to bring their own snacks for the various special celebrations when permissible throughout the year. Please contact your child’s teacher before you send food to school for special events. Students should wash their hands after they eat snacks and lunch. We are also asking students to refrain from bringing scented body sprays, perfumes, hand sanitizers, or any scented items. Similar unwanted reactions can occur to those within the building.
- **NURSE INFORMATION** - Please send documentation of your child’s immunizations to the nurse. **All students in all grades are required to have two measles vaccines.** See the nurse’s web link on our Poquessing site for updated information throughout the year.

[School Nurse](#)

All immunizations MUST be up to date [New VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS](#). The School Health Law requires medical examinations for all children in 6th grade and dental examinations for all children in 7th grade. It is recommended that these examinations be done by your family physician and dentist. Please see the Nurse’s webpage on Poquessing’s website for the appropriate forms for these examinations. The completed forms should be in the Nurse’s office by October 1st.

- **ONE-WAY TRAFFIC PATTERN** – Parents/guardians dropping students off are asked to enter the main driveway on Heights Lane and proceed left around the building for drop-off at the gym door then continue out Poquessing Way exit. To help insure the safety of students and drivers, **one-way patterns are in effect at all times. Parents/guardians dropping off and picking up students during bus transport times cannot use the main bus port.**
- You will be able to use the rear entrance near the gym for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. **Doors will open at 7:25 a.m.** – 8:00 a.m. and at 2:55 p.m. We ask that you pull close to the curb to avoid blocking the drive. **DO NOT DROP OFF ON THE CURB OPPOSITE THE BUILDING.** During non-busing times (8:00 am – 2:35 pm), early dismissals and late drop offs may use the front entrance/circle. Signs are posted and arrows painted on the drives to assist motorists with directions.
- **AFTERNOON PICK-UP – 2:55 p.m.** Parents may park in the **Ferderbar bus circle** or **the rear of Poquessing** to pick-up Students. Please avoid the crowded area around Poquessing. Please plan ahead, communicate with your child, and have a routine.

SECURITY SYSTEM at ENTRANCE - Please be advised as a part of Poquessing’s renovation, we are pleased to report an enhancement to our school security. We now have the addition of a secure entrance vestibule AND an entrance security management system called **EasyLobby Secure Visitor**. Easy Lobby is a secure vestibule and check-in system. The system will allow the school office staff to track who is entering and exiting the school. The key benefits not only include improved security but will enhance the visitor check-in procedures. It will also provide additional safeguards by screening against certain individuals. The system will improve security by identifying who is in a facility quickly and accurately, especially in emergency situations. More information will be forthcoming once the system is fully installed. **A secure STATE ISSUED Driver’s License or PHOTO ID will be required for entrance to the building.**

- **SPORTS** - Students interested in participating in a fall sports activity such as football, girls' field hockey or coed soccer must have a physical on file in the physical education office prior to tryouts. A PIAA physical card is signed by a doctor and parent in order to participate. **The form can be obtained online (see our web site).** Students who participate in any athletic activity must be covered by school insurance or personal insurance through your family plan.
- **STUDENT AGENDA BOOK** - An agenda book will be provided for every student. The agenda book is a *REQUIRED* tool to assist students in organizing and planning their learning time. **Students are expected to take this assignment book to every class. We strongly encourage students to bring the agenda book home each evening for parents to look over and respond as needed. The agenda book is a great communication tool for parents and teachers when used regularly. Student will record daily and homework assignments, tests, quizzes and projects.**
- **STUDENT DROP-OFF TIME** - To ensure student safety and supervision, students are not permitted to enter the building before **7:25 a.m.** unless they are involved in a scheduled co-curricular program. Between 7:30 and 7:50 a.m., the cafeteria will be open for students to enjoy a nutritious breakfast and the gymnasium will be open for warm-up activities. At 7:50 a.m. daily, students are permitted to enter the classroom/locker areas. *In the event of a two-hour delay the times above would reflect a two-hour change.*
- **STUDENT HANDBOOK** – Found on the Poquessing Middle School website under Our School.
- **STUDENT INSURANCE** - **Neshaminy School District does not carry insurance for students.** Student accident insurance will be available for purchase and we strongly recommend you consider one of the school coverage plans. The parent letter and brochure are available through links on the Poquessing Middle School website under ANNOUNCEMENTS: Supplemental Medical Insurance.
- **TRANSPORTATION** - Busing information will be posted on Home Access on August 23rd. Students should be at the bus stop *ten minutes before* the scheduled time. Students who walk to school should plan to arrive at school by 7:45 a.m.
The after school bus runs will be at 4:15 and 5:00 p.m. for students participating in supervised afternoon activities.
- **WATER BOTTLES**- As we know, there are health benefits to staying hydrated throughout the day. Students MAY carry a water bottle throughout the school day (this is water only, not juice, coffee, iced tea, etc...) Glass bottles are not permitted. Containers must be clear. Classroom teachers will communicate their individual classroom procedures regarding water bottles near electronic devices with students. We ask that our students, as always, show respect to their teachers regarding individual classroom rules. We must ensure that our investment in technology is not compromised by spills, our students remain healthy and learning in the classroom continues.

To stay informed throughout the year please check the following information sites:

Neshaminy.org

Sign-up for the NESHAMINY APP

FOLLOW NESHAMINY ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION.

The AHERA requirements include a notification to the parents of registered students, faculty and staff of the existence of the Management Plan and subsequent additions to the management plan. It is mandatory that the notice below be distributed to all parents.

"Neshaminy School District has engaged Eagle Industrial Hygiene Assoc., Inc., to fulfill the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 CFR Part 763, Subpart E. This law requires that each Local Education Authority (LEA) engage EPA accredited individuals to initially inspect and subsequently reinspect every three years all student and staff accessed areas for the presence of both friable and non-friable asbestos containing materials (ACM) and to develop an Asbestos Management Plan from the information developed from the building inspections. All areas of our facilities were inspected for asbestos-containing materials.

The Management Plan provides a description of the amount, type, location and condition of all ACM found in these areas. The Plan also contains a detailed schedule of responses and activities for handling the ACM. The Management Plan is available for review by interested parents, faculty and staff in all school offices during business hours.

Sincerely,



*Barbara Markowitz
Business Administrator"*

- ❖ This document is not all inclusive, but is meant to acquaint you with Poquessing Middle School. Please refer to our online student handbook, student discipline policy, NSD School Board Policies, attend New Student Orientation, Back to School Night and contact teachers and the office with your questions or concerns.