Greetings William Wirt Parents/Guardians and Students!

As the last few weeks of summer draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to personally welcome each of you to a new and exciting 2020-21 school year! I truly hope you had an opportunity to experience a little summer fun, found time to relax, and rejuvenate during this pandemic. You have earned it! This has definitely pushed my creativity to create fun and engaging activities for my family while respecting social distance expectations. I couldn’t have imagined in 100 years, the crazy end to our 2020 SY! As I begin my 5th year at William Wirt MS, I am incredibly proud to serve as the principal. Leading my school team this past spring, demonstrated the dedication to our field, the passion for teaching, and an immaculate skill in flexibility that makes our school stellar. I still can’t believe there are a little less than 3 weeks left before we open our doors for the 2021-21 SY, and students and staff will not fill the halls. Although we will be returning to distance learning, our mission and vision remain the same, and our virtual schedule has been created. Despite the challenges with the pandemic, I once again have met and hired some AMAZING staff members that I know will definitely help us improve effectiveness and increase student achievement.

The staff assembled this school year have the experience, instructional capability, and the willingness to help your child achieve academic excellence and social emotional wellness. As a Community School, this summer, our major focus has been in providing wrap-around services to our school community. We have held 3 technology distributions, partnered w/local food vendors to distribute perishable and non-perishable food items, delivered diapers and toiletries to families in need, and are currently preparing to assemble distance learning kits to students and staff later this month.

I have had the privilege of being an educator in Gorgeous Prince George’s for 16 years; witness my oldest son graduate from Roosevelt High School, and my youngest begin his 7th grade year in middle school. I have a vested interest in our county’s success and a strong belief that we will continue to raise the standards of education in Maryland and the world through the use of current technology, bridging documents, and innovative ideas for student engagement! This pandemic will not stifle our quest to provide your children with a rigorous, robust, and relevant instructional program! Please know that expectations are high, and the instructional programming will be challenging yet rewarding. Parents play a key role in the academic success of our students; therefore, school/parent communication is crucial. We have a brand new amazing Parent Engagement Specialist, Mrs. Alonzo, and along with our sensational Community School Coordinator Mrs. Meakes, they will continue to partner with the Parent Teacher Organization to ensure that our school community has the necessary resources, supports, and enrichment opportunities; all we need is your active participation. Please inquire with the PEA, PTO, and CSC on how you can get involved.

As we embark on a new Distance Learning experience, it is absolutely imperative that families remain connected with the school through their grade level administrators, professional school counselors, and classroom teachers utilizing a variety of platforms. We will post regular updates to our school website, social media sites, remind apps, make robo calls to phone numbers listed in schoolmax and make important announcements through your child’s google classrooms. At your earliest convenience, please ensure that your phone number, email address and mailing address is updated with the school.

“Can’t hide that Jaguar PRIDE: Be Prepared, Respectful, Integrity, Disciplined, and always be Engaged!”
If you are a returning family and have not received any automated calls from the school please call 301-985-1720 and ask to speak with either Mr. Boone or Ms. Arias, our school registrar to ensure that we have the correct contact number for you in our system. If you have a Twitter account, please follow William Wirt Middle School at @wwmsjaguars and @wwmsjaguars on Instagram for school related updates. We take great pride in showcasing the great work of our students and staff. If you would like to receive updates via text message, please text @wwmspar4 to 81010. Please continue to check our school website frequently for more information.

New this year: Students will not be required to wear uniforms during distance learning.

New this year: Nationally, there has been a high demand for the procurement of electronic devices, which has resulted in delay of receiving them for PGCPS. We have placed an order for our students and are awaiting delivery. If your child is currently utilizing a personal device in the home, we ask that they continue to do so until our order is received. We anticipate that additional devices will be available by September 21, 2020. Once received, you will be notified and a date and time will be scheduled for you to pick up a device. Your understanding is appreciated. As you may imagine, many of our parents have been impacted by the pandemic, so giving consideration to the costs associated with excessive spending for supplies is essential. Also, school supply lists are being added to each school’s website by the Communications Office.

New this year: The main office staff will only allow access to the building if a pre-made appointment has been scheduled.

New this year: Meal Distribution will be on Monday & Wednesday ONLY. Time: 8–1 pm. Any students who live more than 1 1/2 miles from a school in their community, are being provided mobile delivery by way of school buses. (approx. 175 buses) 10 - 1:30 pm.

New this year: Students must have their schedules for the first day of school, which is a mock A Day on Friday, August 28, 2020 in the morning. Detailed mock A Day schedules will be released before that date on the school’s website and via robocall. Students will follow the schedules in SchoolMax available through the SchoolMax Family Portal. Here is the link to all of the tutorial videos, resources, etc. to access and use the SchoolMax Family Portal: https://www1.pgcps.org/schoolmax-support/. Again, there will be NO schedule distribution in person. This is the ONLY way students can receive their schedules. Schedules will be available through SchoolMax beginning August 21, 2020. Attendance mandates will be shared with families throughout the school year. SchoolMAX is an electronic student information system used by Prince George’s County Public schools to record attendance, grades, assignments, report cards, discipline incidents, and other information about your child. The Family Portal is an application that allows parents to view this student information as it is added in real time. If you do not have an email account, you will need to create one. A free email account can be created at gmail.com. In addition to using this email to log in to Family Portal, PGCPS may use it to contact you about important announcements such as school closures.
The 20-21 staff welcome e-greetings will be posted on the school’s website by Monday, September 24th. The first Parent Townhall Meeting of the 20-21 SY will be on Monday, August 24th at 5:30pm. Material Distribution for students will be on August 24-27th (more information will be shared on the school’s website and through robocalls). New Student Orientation will be held on Friday, August 28th for all new incoming 6th and 7th grade students (more information will be shared on the school’s website and through robocalls). Our Special Education families can login in to the following workshops: Creating the "Just Right" Learning Environment (Live and Recorded) August 27, 2020 Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Register: https://pgcps-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUuce6srjgrGtGfGYHAVvVoB-mdA42WY3 August 27, 2020 Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. Register: https://pgcps-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcocOCgqTkqGdDlRPH_GYHAVvVoB-mdA42WY3 August 27, 2020 Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:45 p.m. Register: https://pgcps-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcocOCgqTkqGdDlRPH_GYHAVvVoB-mdA42WY3. The first day of school this year is Monday, August 31st; our school hours are 9:00 am – 3:40 pm and virtual instruction will take place during these times. Virtual Back-to-School Nights TBD (more details to come on our school website and announced via robocall.) Please know that my staff and I will login every day prepared professionally to meet the ultimate goal of educating and empowering your children. My staff and I look forward to working with each and every one of you and your families! Let’s work together to make this another awesome school year!

Sincerely,

Rhonda Simley
Principal, William Wirt MS
“Can’t Hide that Jaguar Pride”