Distance Learning Handbook
2020–2021

&

THINK BIGGER

&

GO BEYOND
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Mrs. Rhonda Simley, Principal

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Message from the Principal

Dear William Wirt Students and Families,

Welcome to William Wirt Middle School (WWMS), where we can’t hide our Jaguar P.R.I.D.E! We have many things to celebrate at WWMS: sound leadership, dedicated and caring teachers, academic achievement, opportunities in the arts, a diverse student body, and involved parents who know the importance of being active members of their children’s education.

As principal, I am proud to be a part of the excellence established at William Wirt Middle School. This guide was created to support both parents and students in navigating distance learning. There are a lot of great things that have been planned to keep our Jaguar’s participating, interested, and active during SY 20/21.

Our theme this year is to think bigger and go beyond. It will take our entire community to reach our goal of student learning. I know our staff is ready to go beyond to support.

Although we are apart physically WWMS wants you to know, we are all in this together! Here’s to thinking bigger about what education looks like and going beyond to make sure that our children are safe, happy, and successful this year!

Mrs. Rhonda Simley, Principal

The Prince George's County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to designated youth groups.
**WWMS Mission Statement**
The mission of William Wirt MS is to collaborate with all stakeholders to provide a well rounded education that is innovative, inclusive, diverse and committed to supporting scholars and staff as we engage in developing strong literacy & technological skills, critical thinkers and lifelong learners.

**WWMS Vision Statement**
William Wirt MS is where diversity is embraced, innovative ideas are developed and critical thinking fosters scholars who are college, career and life ready.
William Wirt Theme
During the first semester we will be virtual and our staff is ready to encourage and support you in your efforts to succeed online. Our **distance learning goal** is to **inspire** each other to **think bigger & go beyond!** But what does that mean when you are learning from home?

What does it mean to think bigger?
Think about doing things that involve a lot of effort: to think about doing bigger things is to be ambitious.

**Distance Learning Big Thoughts:**
- Set a schedule & attend every virtual class
- Wear your uniform daily
- Find a quiet place & set up a work station
- Charge your chromebook

**THINK BIGGER:** Encourage your friends to do the same

What does it mean to go beyond?
Do more than (something): to do more than is expected or required.

**Distance Learning Requirements...**
- Participate in class discussions as a speaker and an active listener
- Work collaboratively with your peers
- Complete and turn in all assignments on time

**Go Beyond:** Ask Questions and set up meetings with your teachers if you are confused about a topic. We are here to help each other!
PGCPS Mission Statement
To provide a great education that empowers all students and contributes to thriving communities.

- Students are our priority and all students can achieve at high academic levels.
- Families, students, and educators share the responsibility for student success.
- High expectations inspire high performance.
- All staff share the responsibility for a safe and supportive school environment contributing to excellence in education.
- The support of everyone in our community is essential to the success of our schools and students, and this success enriches our community.
- Continuous improvement in teaching, leadership, and accountability is the key to our destiny.

PGCPS Vision Statement
PGCPS will be a GREAT school system recognized for providing education services which ensure that every student in our diverse school district graduates ready for college and careers in a global society.

PGCPS School System Communication
A centralized and dedicated external crisis communications team will:

- Keep families abreast of school events with weekly communication updates and announcements via school website.
- Create and implement a virtual Parent University in order to provide support with the technical and adaptive aspects of distance learning.
- Communicate Back-to-School information about immunization requirements/clinics, non-PGCPS student transfer requests, and FARMS Lunch applications.
- Deliver information using various platforms and resources (television broadcast, interpreting services, global communication, etc.)
PGCPS Distance Learning Plan

Due to the uncertainties related to the spread of the Covid-19 virus, full distance learning for all students will occur during Semester 1.

All schools will operate during their regularly scheduled hours, in an online format. For more information click on the PGCPS Fall 2020 Reopening Plan link above.

All teachers will utilize the content curriculum documents/resources and distance learning platforms to plan synchronous, engaging lessons for all students. All teachers will adhere to the grade procedures for distance learning.

Each student will be provided a technology device to attend classes, access online platforms, complete assignments and communicate with teachers. Specific assignments will be collected, graded and recorded in SchoolMax. Students should submit assignments as determined by the teachers.

WWMS Distance Learning Schedule

Semester One  Aug 31st to Jan 29th  Classes start @ 9am and end @ 3:40pm

William Wirt students will receive live synchronous lessons daily in all scheduled classes. Some classes are scheduled to meet every day and some meet every other day. The William Wirt A/B day Schedule provides a structure for a 6 Mod day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow A-Day class schedule</td>
<td>Follow B-Day class schedule</td>
<td>Teacher-Led Small Group Instruction and Enrichment</td>
<td>Follow A-Day class schedule</td>
<td>Follow B-Day class schedule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the distance learning structure, support for English Learners (ELs) and students with disabilities will be provided by classroom teachers and certified specialists (e.g., ESOL teachers, special educators) on a regular schedule. During distance learning live lessons, ELs and students with disabilities should join breakout sessions with their ESOL teacher or special educator during a portion of the instructional block. Small group instruction for enrichment or intervention will be provided on Wednesdays for all classes and as needed or documented by an IEP, EL plan, or 504 plan.

Semester Two: To Be Determined by December 1, 2020
Distance Learning Grading and Reporting

PGCPS Grading and Reporting Policy 5121 was updated to include language geared toward expectations and updates in grading factors to include distance learning. All work assigned during the student’s absence remains required for submission. Live recordings and student assignments will be made available to students via Google Classroom.

Course of Study Syllabus

At the beginning of a grade or a course of study, teachers shall provide access online or hard copy for students and parents/guardians to a written course outline, syllabus, or overview of grade/course expectations.

Grading Elements

The grades eligible for use on assignments, assessments, and report cards and the interpretation of letter grades is as follows:

A = Excellent progress toward meeting course objectives (90–100%).
B = Above average progress toward meeting course objectives (80–89%).
C = Average progress toward meeting course objectives (70–79%).
D = Below Average progress toward meeting course objectives (60–69%).
E = Failure toward meeting course objectives and learning outcomes (below 60%).
I = Incomplete. The “I” grade may be used temporarily for lawfully absent students who have not had an opportunity to make up work.
N = No Grade. The “N” grade may be used only for transfer students
P = Pass (credit bearing).
F = Fail (not credit bearing).
W = Withdrawn. The Student Intervention Team agrees to allow a student to drop a course after twenty (20) school days from the start of a year-long course or ten (10) days in a semester course.

**Assignments**

Teachers will collect a *minimum of two grades per week* (per period/class) grade and record these in SchoolMax. There are three factors used to determine student grades: 35% Class Work + 25% Independent Work + 40% Assessment = Total Grade

*Examples of graded work may include, but is not limited to:*
- Google Classroom Assignments
- Google Forms
- Snapshots taken of work and uploaded or emailed
- Online software (i.e., iReady, Discovery Ed, Newsela, Dreambox, Imagine Learning, etc.)
- Virtual platforms (Padlet, Mote, NearPod, Peardeck, etc.)
- Oral presentations during live meetings and use of chat box

**SchoolMax Parent Portal Link**

At any time during the school year, parents may access their child’s school information through this link to the [SchoolMax Parent Portal](#). Please follow directions to register. If you have difficulty contact our Parent Engagement Assistant, at (301) 985-1720 to receive instructions on accessing the SchoolMax Parent Portal.

**WWMS Distance Learning Dress Code**

During the *distance learning* phase of instruction (August 31 – January 29) students are *not expected to wear a school uniform*. Students must adhere to the system-wide dress code which requires students to *dress appropriately*. Further details can be found in the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook](#).
**WWMS Attendance Policy**

Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) continues to follow the state and local guidance in collection of student and teacher attendance. All students are expected to attend school regularly in accordance with state laws and regulations. *(see Board Policy 5113)* Attendance will be taken in schoolmax each mod. Students not present on days live instruction occurs will be considered ABSENT. All students who participate in an approved activity on days when asynchronous instruction occurs will be marked as participating. Any student who misses more than 10% of their days enrolled are deemed chronically absent. A follow up meeting will be scheduled with the student and family to discuss next steps.

**Lawful Absence**

A written explanation of each absence is required from the parent/guardian within three days of the student’s return to virtual learning. The note must indicate the dates and reason for the absence(s). Here are reasons that are considered lawful absences:

- parent work schedule
- child care
- military family and/or technical issues (up to 5 days)
- illness (a physician’s certificate may be request if student misses more than 3 days in a quarter, click the wellness center link below for locations)
Be on time to all WWMS classes

- Check

Type your full name in your Google Meet and Zoom profiles.

- Denise Osorio

or

Upload a Bitmoji, photo, or selfie in your profile

- Carlos Aguilar

Stay on Mute

Use hand signals

- yes
- no
- I can’t hear
- participate
- I feel the same
- restroom

Be mindful of what you say or type

Complete all assignments

- Use chat for questions

- Pear Deck
- Kahoot!
- Quizlet

- G Suite

- Google Meet

- Zoom

- hand signals

- Google Meet/Zoom icons

- chat

- communicate

- message

- teacher

Be mindful of what you say or type — inappropriate language or bullying is unacceptable and will be referred to administration.

Complete all class assignments in every content area, as this is part of your grade.

- charged chromebook
- class materials

- profile

- Google Meet

- Zoom

- Bitmoji

- selfie

- class photo

- on camera

- appropriately

- sit

- wall

- background noise

- hand signals

- Google Meet/Zoom icons

- chat

- communicate

- message

- teacher

- inappropriate language

- bullying

- unacceptable

- referred

- administration

- content area

- grade
Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) is not a program or a curriculum. It is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn. We have adopted a unified set of school-wide expectations. This year WWMS students who earn the expected points will be rewarded monthly by winning a Jaguar Jackpot!

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“Can’t Hide That Jaguar P.R.I.D.E.”

P - Preparation  R - Respect  I - Integrity  D - Disciplined  E - Engaged
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>80% Attendance = points 90% Attendance = points 100% Attendance = points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Dojo Points</td>
<td>Points are awarded based on class participation and behavior</td>
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**Jaguar Jackpot Incentives**

Each month students who have earned the expected PBIS points will be awarded a place on the William Wirt’s Virtual Wall of Fame and given a Jaguar Jackpot Prize! Jaguar Jackpots change monthly and may include: snack box pick ups, school swag, sport kits and/or candy kits.
Distance Learning Instructional Materials

All students will have access to instructional materials for use at home during distance learning. Content may include, but not limited to; instructional materials for Academic Classes, Creative and Performing Arts, Special Education, and ESOL. Each student will receive instructional materials based on his or her grade level and/or courses of study. All students will also have access to the following hardware/software:

- **Chromebook**: a laptop computer with charger will be provided to each student in middle school.

- **Hapara Student Dashboard**: a Classroom Management System that provides students access to all of their assignments in Google Classroom, Google Drive and in one convenient location.

- **Clever**: a service that brings all digital tools and textbooks into a secure portal for access by teachers and students.

- **Google Classroom**: a digital platform that streamlines the distribution and collection of resources and assignments between teachers and students.

- **Library Books/Digital Resources**: Students and staff may check out Ebooks and other digital resources through the online catalog, Follett Destiny, and will continue to have access to [online research databases 24/7](#) from school/home. Resources are available through the [PGCPS Professional Library Website](#).
Distance Learning Food Services Plan

Food service will operate under the National School Lunch and Breakfast program. *Students not eligible for free and reduced-priced meals will have to pay* for breakfast and lunch. Food and Nutrition Services strongly *encourages cashless transactions* and encourages all households to click this link to deposit funds *My School Bucks account*. Here is the plan for meal distribution:

- All schools will serve as meal distribution sites.
- Meals will be *pre-packaged* and distributed *two days per week from 8 to 1 pm*.
  - *Monday* – meals for Monday and Tuesday
  - *Wednesday* – meals for Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday
- Students have the opportunity to pick up meals from a school they do not regularly attend as long as they provide their Name and Pin Number.

FARMS Lunch Application

Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) is pleased to offer a time-saving, convenient online application process for Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMS). For details on the application process, visit the *PGCPS Department of Food and Nutrition Services website*, or call *301–952–6517*, or *click the apple for the application*. 
**WWMS Student Activities**

In an effort to keep staff and students safe, WWMS will be utilizing virtual meeting spaces such as Zoom or Google Meet for tutoring, parent conferences, teacher office hours, student activities, organizations and extracurricular activities. Here are some of the offerings available during the SY 20/21 school year.

**WWMS Student Clubs**

School clubs and organizations are a vital part of the total school experience and enhance the educational and social experiences of students. WWMS will be sponsoring the following clubs virtually during SY 20/21.

- Science Club
- Dance/Zumba Club
- Quarantine Kidz Program
- Cooking Club
- Arts & Crafts Club
- Sewing Club

**WWMS Virtual Field Trips**

WWMS Teachers in every content area have been encouraged to conduct virtual field trips with their students and with strict adherence to Administrative Procedure 6153. WWMS teachers will continue to reach out to parents to inform them of virtual field trips.
PGCPS Performance Arts

PGCPS has released guidelines for the safety of faculty and students: Performance and Exhibition Guidelines by Fine Art Form. Any virtual performances scheduled will utilize digital platforms such as YouTube Live, Zoom or Google Meet to stream performances. All students who are involved must complete the following Student Publicity Release Form. For more information about the PGCPS’ Creative and Performing Arts program, please visit: https://www.pgcps.org/creative-and-performing-arts/

PGCPS Athletics

The PGCPS roadmap for return to Interscholastic athletics participation is built specifically for education-based athletic programs. The health and safety of students and athletics personnel is paramount as we gradually implement a staged approach for a safe return in February 2021. For information about the SY 20/21 Interscholastic Athletics Plan moving forward please click this link: PGCPS Athletics.
**School Support Services**
A variety of school support services are available to you and your child. They include: Professional School Counselor, Special Education Resource Teachers, Media Specialist, Instructional Lead Teachers, ESOL Teachers, Speech/Language Pathologist, School Psychologist, Pupil Personnel Worker, and Occupational/Physical Therapist.

**WWMS Student Consultation Counseling** – Mr. Kehinde Paul will be addressing the needs of WWMS students as it relates to issues of attendance, suspension, grief and/or suicidal thoughts. Mr. Paul will also be scheduling parent workshops, student workshops, and staff professional development workshops geared towards supporting the community during this pandemic. If you would like to schedule a consultation, please send Ms. Paul an email: k paul@abhmaryland.com

**Professional School Counselors and Mental Health Coordinators**
- Provide crisis support for schools due to staff/student loss will occur via Zoom and telehealth.
- Provide evening counseling services for students via telehealth for substance abuse and other mental health conditions.
- Provide classroom guidance lessons focused on students’ social and emotional health and academic advice will be conducted virtually for all levels. Naviance will be used for middle school and high school.
- Provide professional development for teachers and parents about how to cope with the challenges associated with COVID-19.

**If you need support, WWMS is here...**
**Phone:** 301-985-1720 | **Fax:** 301-985-2135
**WWMS Community Schools Initiative**

The goal of all Community Schools is to help ensure students and their families are resilient, successful and ready to learn and are prepared to be involved in their community. PGCPS currently has a total of 45 Community Schools and WWMS is very proud to be one of them. Here are some of the wrap-around services our Community School Coordinator, Mrs. Meakes and our WWMS Parent Engagement Assistant Ms. Alonzo, have in the works for SY 20/21:

**WWMS Town Hall Meetings** - WWMS will be holding monthly town hall meetings virtually in an effort to keep everyone informed during distance learning. The First Parent Townhall of the year is August 24, 2020 at 5pm (English Session) & 6:30 (Spanish Session). More information about these workshops will be shared via our social media platforms. Stay Tuned!

**WWMS Parent Resource Center** - WWMS Parents are welcome to schedule an appointment with Mrs. Meakes for support in completing the following types of applications: job, social services applications, internet, and/or free and reduced lunch.

**WWMS Parent Academy** - Ms. Meakes and Ms. Alonzo will be facilitating monthly parent workshops for parent empowerment and enrichment covering topics such as: Digital Learning 101, Literacy Learning Parties, mediation, self-care, English classes, cooking classes, and physical wellness. More information about these workshops will be shared via our Jaguar Resource Spot newsletter and social media platforms. Stay Tuned!

**WWMS Family Nights** - Ms. Meakes and Ms. Alonzo will be facilitating virtual family night activities to make sure we stay connected during distance learning. Family Nights may include a Virtual Family Game Night, Virtual Family Movie Night, and/or a Virtual Family Jaguar Dinner. More information about these celebrations will be shared via our social media platforms. Stay Tuned!
WWMS Student Participation Incentive Program - WWMS Community School funds will allow us to purchase prizes and other types of incentives to encourage participation and good behavior during distance learning.

WWMS Enrichment Programs & Afterschool Clubs - WWMS Community School funds will provide our students with exciting virtual after school clubs and our families with enrichment opportunities. During SY 20/21 look out for information on Family Movie Nights, Family Game Nights & a Family Art Series.

WMMS Beautification Project - WWMS Community School funds will ensure students the materials to create murals that will decorate our outdoor classrooms.

WWMS Staff Development - WWMS Community School funds will ensure our staff has the necessary tools to support our students through distance learning. Here are some of the professional development opportunities planned for staff during SY 20/21: distance learning, trauma, equity, cultural competency and mindfulness training.

WWMS Social Media Platforms - WWMS will utilize the following social media platforms to keep you informed of parent events scheduled:

- **Remind:** Remind.com/join/wwmspar3
- **Twitter:** Twitter.com/wwmsjaquars
- **Instagram:** Instagram.com/wwmsjaquars

WWMS PTO - The WWMS PTO supports all of the activities happening at the school. Parents like you who give of their time and talents to support the community. Join us by clicking the link below and our PTO President, Mr.Brandon Smith will reach out to you. If you have any questions send an email to: williamwirtpto@gmail.com