



Middle School Message

Monthly Newsletter of
Wissahickon Middle School

October 2018

Building Safety and Security Drills

The staff and students have spent the first two months of school practicing our safety routines at WMS. This year, a major emphasis was placed on the fire drill protocol and instituting a newly named Run/Hide/Resist (Interior Threat) drill. We have conducted successful fire drills, a bus evacuation drill, evacuation to an off-campus location and a Run/Hide/Resist procedure all within the first several weeks of school.

Conducting these state-mandated drills allows us to examine and improve our responses to specific types of emergencies and maximize student safety while reducing their risk of injury. During each of these coordinated and supervised drills, WSD employees and outside personnel work collaboratively to educate our students and have them practice exiting the building safely. Emphasized strategies and practices for each drill are listed below:

- Fire Drill – safe evacuation of building and accounting for all students and staff
- Bus Evacuation Drill - safe evacuation of bus and accounting for all students and staff
- Lockout Drill (Exterior Threat) – lock doors, limit visibility, lights off, shades down, account for students
- Evacuation/Re-location Drill- safe evacuation of building, student accounting, travel to/from off-campus location
- Run/Hide/Resist (Interior Threat) – decision making by the adult to determine safest course of action, account for students

WMS planned drills for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year are:

- Fire Drills– Monthly
- Bus Evacuation Drill– March
- Run/Hide/Resist Drill –January/February
- Exterior Lockout Drill – December
- Shelter-In-Place/Severe Weather Drill – April

All drills are reviewed and discussed at building Crisis Management Team meetings. The team consists of both teachers and administrators and meets once a month to discuss current safety protocols and make recommendations for improvements. We are continually working to improve communication and establish an environment where all students, staff and WSD community feel safe and informed about all safety/security procedures.

A Physical Essay Project

Each year students participate in the PSSA. For Language Arts, there has been an increased emphasis on the weight of the essay that students must compose, known as the TDA (text dependent analysis). This task requires students to demonstrate a wide variety of skills associated with composition: focus of writing, development of content, structure and organization, conventions, and use of evidence to support their point. There are many ways that students can practice this particular skill set, and it doesn't always involve writing an essay as practice.

Through an unusual project, a shoe sculpture, students were tasked with practicing the TDA skillset by heeding the advice of Atticus Finch: to look at the world from someone else's perspective, and to walk in their shoes. Students selected from one of the many characters who occupy Maycomb in the classic novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and analyzed the meaning that the author communicated using their dialogue, settings, status, and key symbols throughout the text.

The end results are shoe sculptures that depict the deeper themes that Harper Lee challenges readers to confront, such as discrimination, injustice, courage and moral development. The students are proud of their creations, which are now on display in the atrium and the library. Now students will move on to the traditional practice of composing an essay, fully prepared to practice the TDA skillset again. Thank you to Ms. Mehler and Mr. Towarnicki on the Pioneers team, for their creative efforts in making this project a success.





Staff Spotlight Leon Kanopka Functional Skills Teacher

Birthday? February 11th
Years at WMS? This is my first year!
Family: Wife-Sue; Sons- Leo (14) & Colby (10); Dog, Luna
Favorite food? Anything with peanut butter

Favorite Super Hero? The Flash
Favorite team? The Philadelphia Union & Arsenal Gunners
Favorite season? Fall
Favorite color? Blue
Favorite holiday? Thanksgiving
First job? My very first jobs were mowing lawns and delivering newspapers. Once I turned 16, I worked my summer days at a party rental business called Miller Rentals in Edison, NJ. My nights were filled with counter service at Carvel Ice Cream. (Somehow I still love soft serve!)
Have you ever traveled outside of the U.S.? I have been to England twice, as well as, Wales, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Costa Rica.

Have you ever played an instrument? As a student, I played the clarinet. Currently, I dabble on the guitar.
Hobbies? I head up the travel program for the Perkiomen Valley Soccer Club, coach a U12 boys travel team and enjoy listening and seeing live music. I also enjoy running, biking, hiking and fishing (fresh/salt). In the little free time I have left, I love repurposing. I have picked, repaired and donated over a dozen bicycles as well as snow blowers, weed wackers and furniture.

After-School Sports

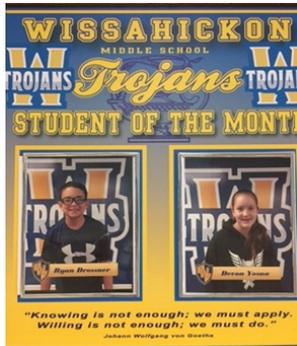
The fall session of 6th grade After School Sports is well under way! There are over 85 students participating in our 5-week program that began on September 25th. Students have been participating in a wide variety of games and sports activities during our Tuesday and Thursday sessions. Not only have they had an opportunity to have fun, get exercise and learn some new games, they have also been able to reconnect with friends and to make new connections with fellow 6th grade students from other pods.

In February, 6th grade students who did not yet have an opportunity to participate in our after school program will have top priority to register for the spring session. Permission forms will be sent home via homeroom teachers in the beginning of February.

Mrs. Rosa-Bian is enjoying the enthusiastic participation of our students who are currently involved in the after school sports program and she is looking forward to our spring session.



Students & Athletes of the Month



This month, our two Students of the Month are Ryan Drossner and Devon Yosua. Ryan and Devon were selected based on their positive contributions to WMS, strong interest in learning, involvement in school/community programs and great character and citizenship.



Our two Student Athletes of the Month are Jack O'Donnell-Boys Soccer and Meredith Walsh-Girls Soccer. Jack and Meredith were selected based on their displays of good sportsmanship, respect, "team before self" mentality, commitment and demonstration of outstanding character, in addition to their athletic skill levels.

Please join us in recognizing these students' positive contributions to the WMS learning community. Their photos are on display in

the Atrium hallway.

2018 Fall Sports Summary at WMS

The Wissahickon Middle School has had another successful Fall Sports Season despite the amount of rain and cancellations throughout the entire season. We had approximately 256 students participate in our middle school fall sports teams, which included boys' and girls' soccer, field hockey, football, cheerleading, cross-country, tennis and volleyball. As you can see below, our cross-country squad, volleyball teams, and field hockey teams participated in yoga on a rainy day in the middle school gym.



Here's a recap and some season highlights for each sport!

Boys Soccer

Coach Jason White managed the 8th grade team. As of October 17, the boys' eighth grade soccer team is off to a 4-0 start. The season started with an 8-0 victory against Springfield. Following that game, the team won three close and hard-fought games against Springfield, Lower Moreland and Keith Valley. Coach Scott Landis managed the 7th grade team. The 7th grade boys' soccer team began with Mother Nature making it very difficult to get field time. Now that the season has started, the team posts a 1-2 record, with many games to come in the final weeks of the season.

Girls Soccer

Coach Patrick Lacon managed the 8th grade team. The 8th grade girls' soccer team is currently undefeated in their season with a record of 4-0-1. We had a tough game versus Keith Valley that ended in our only tie of the season thus far. We are looking forward to playing our big cross-town rival, Sandy Run Middle School, next week. The girls have been working hard on and off the field – learning different nuances of the game and finding successes as teammates and competitors. It has been a very successful season thus far and we look forward to finishing the season on a high note. Each member of the team has played a pivotal part of our success this year.



Coach Jim Kelly managed the 7th grade team. The 7th grade girls' soccer team is currently 1-2-1. The team beat Colonial by a score of 4-1 and lost to Springfield and Keith Valley. The first game of the season ended in a 3-3 tie with Abington. The girls have been working hard to become one unit and look forward to finishing the season on a high note. The remaining schedule includes games against Upper Moreland, Cedarbrook, and Sandy Run.
continued next page

7th and 8th Grade Girls Basketball

All paperwork must be turned in by October 29 in order to begin tryouts on the court.

Tryouts will be held on Wednesday, October 31 (until 5:15 pm), Thursday, November 1 (until 4:15 pm), and Friday, November 2 (until 5:15 pm).

The teams will have their first scrimmage on Thursday, November 15.

WMS General Winter Sports Information

Wrestling will be starting up at the end of November/beginning of December. Also, boys' basketball tryouts will occur prior to the Winter Break. Please check the daily WMS announcements at the following website: <http://www.wsdweb.org/schools/wissahickon-middle-school>.

Please get your PIAA paperwork in immediately. This paperwork and instructions are listed on the following website: <http://www.wsdweb.org/schools/wissahickon-middle-school/athletics>.

Any student interested in attending a home girls' basketball game, boys' basketball game, or a wrestling match, stop into the main office or guidance for a Student Winter Season Pass. We would love to have students -come out, support, and cheer their peers on during these competitions.

Watch Principal Beth Bauer's Video Blog!

Mrs. Bauer shares information about important events including Parent Teacher Conferences!
[VIEW BLOG](#)

Field Hockey

Coach Ericka Leslie coached the 8th grade and Coach Sue Brown coached the 7th grade team. The 7th and 8th grade field hockey teams worked inside and outside through the rainy month of September to prepare for their packed game schedule in the month of October. High grass, wet fields and thunderstorms did not keep the girls from growing their field hockey skills of dribbling, driving and learning how to score! The girls have demonstrated team unison during practices and preparation for their games. A special thank you to the four girls who have stepped into the role of goalkeeper for both teams. A difficult position due to equipment alone, but definitely the most important one on the field! They have allowed zero number of goals so far this season! Nineteen 8th grade players have led both teams through drills, skills, stretching and running. Their leadership and friendships with all team players have been a key to the teams' success. Fifteen 7th grade players are challenging the 8th graders by working hard daily. They are quick to learn new skills, especially with the 8th graders working with or against them. Currently both teams have the same record of 2 wins, 0 losses, and 1 tie. They look forward to five more games before the end of the season!



Girls Tennis

Coach Lindsay Weiner helped lead the Girls Tennis team to an undefeated season! Congrats to Saachi Mehta for a 6-0 6-0 win against Keith Valley, Colonial, Springfield and Upper Moreland; Lily Zhao and Oliva Spector 6-0 6-0 win against Keith Valley and Springfield; Vanessa Urzua, Tiffany Chen, Gabby Jones and Jacqueline Germer 6-0 6-0 against Springfield. The MCAA league tournament will take place on Tuesday, October 23rd at Abington Junior High School. Varsity Team members will compete for medals against other players in their respective positions.



Volleyball

Coach Marlene Singer and Coach Sharon Frankenfield managed the girls' volleyball teams. The Wissahickon Middle School 7th and 8th grade Ladies Volleyball teams both had an exciting season this year. The teams started strong with wins in their season openers. Consistent serving and strong defensive play by members of both teams set the tone for the games. Despite some injuries, both teams rallied and exhibited teamwork and leadership to finish the season on a high note.



Cheerleading

Coach Toni Reed is the manager of the squad. The WMS Cheerleaders are off to a great start this year! They are a group of 15 young women with lots of energy, and, yes, they have the S-P-I-R-I-T Spirit! This fall they are cheering for all football home games, cheering for both varsity and junior varsity squads! Instead of having designated Captains this year, they are rotating the Captain responsibilities to give each young lady the chance to grow her leadership skills! Come on out to a game and cheer along with the girls.



Boys and Girls Cross Country

Coach Brett Storm and Coach Matt Schill coached the boys and girls' cross country team. The 2018 Cross Country team remains undefeated in head-to-head competitions with Colonial Middle School, North Penn middle schools and Germantown Friends School. The team also won an invitational meet we participated in at Arcola Middle School. Consistent highlights have been dominant performances by Mila Jovanovich and Josh Sasson who have received first place in every competition in easy fashion. Ava Walters and Kasey Weiss have also placed in each competition as well. A specific highlight was the Arcola Invitational in which three Wiss girls took 1, 2, 3 (Mila Jovanovich, Ava Walters and Thalia Tsiobikas) to complete the sweep. At that race, Josh Sasson and Kasey Weiss took the first and second place spots.

The cross-country team ends the season on Wednesday, October 24 when they participate in the Germantown Friends Invitational. Last year, this invitational had 21 schools and 373 runners participate in a spirited and healthy day of competition. The squad represented Wissahickon very well last season at this invitational and plans to continue this tradition. In addition to our success on the scoreboard, a huge accomplishment is that each runner has made improvements in his/her times each race.



Football

The WMS football team currently has approximately 48 players on the team and is improving daily. Steve Ebert, Brian Evers, Steve Moggs, and Kevin D'Annunzio are the coaches for the team. The WMS football team has over 45 players participating on the team. They have been working hard to get better each day whether it sunny, raining, outside, or inside. The team will play a Varsity and JV game each week for the next 6 weeks and will conclude the schedule with a night game on Tuesday, November 13 at 6:00pm at the Wissahickon High School stadium. The season started with tough losses to Keith Valley, but the team has a positive outlook as they move towards future games. Hard work, positive attitude, and building consistency are key themes the team is working on throughout the season.”

