

In the Middle

Arbutus Middle School Quarterly Newsletter
2022-23 Q1



6th Grade

Mr. Warren – 6th Grade AP

Congratulations to our incoming 6th grade students on a smooth start to their middle school years. We are halfway through the first quarter and students have settled into their schedules and school routines. Please encourage your child to keep track of their class progress and assignments through Schoology. If you find your child needs additional help, please encourage them to see their teacher during PRIDE class, or sign up our Arbutus Achievers program after school to work with a UMBC tutor. If there is any way we can assist your child please reach out to Mr. Warren (6th grade administrator), Ms. Gardner (6th grade counselor), or Mrs. Jackson (6th grade team leader). We look forward to a great year with the 6th grade class.

Our new 6th grade Eagles have made a great transition to middle school life at AMS! Please be sure that students charge their devices every evening and bring their chargers with them to school daily!

Help your son/daughter keep up with work by checking Schoology with him/her regularly to make sure all work is being submitted and grades are staying strong.

ELA

Standard Language Arts classes have been reading a variety of short stories as well as the novel Freak the Mighty. Students will determine how elements of narration are interdependent in the advancement of theme, character, and plot development. Students will specifically focus on how characters change and develop over the course of texts. We have been using a variety of technology and paper-based tools to show understanding. Keep up the good work!

GT Language Arts students are critically reading and analyzing The Lightning Thief. Throughout this unit students analyze archetypes, theme, characterization, and structure in a variety of myths from around the world. Students apply the archetypal, feminist, and philosophical approaches to literary criticism in their analysis of setting, plot, and characterization in order to determine when stereotypes are perpetuated or interrupted. We have been actively engaged in a lot of great classroom discussions. Keep shining!

Reading Research

Reading Research students are off to a great start as they become familiar with how to determine the validity/reliability of sources. Students read, analyzed, and synthesized information on a legend or strange phenomenon of their choice. They were able to refine and focus their research with a central question about their topic. Their next step is to develop an informational essay in which they answer that central question.

Reading

Read 180 reading classes are working on our first unit titled “Stand Up.” In this unit we will be learning about three activists: Kesz Valdez, Malala Yousafzai, and James Kofi Annan. We will work on identifying the central

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idea and supporting details as well as summarizing and writing informatively. Students have also started working on “Mindset Matters” on their computer software. Once they finish this segment, they will be able to pick a segment of their choice. Students should also be reading their independent Read 180 books in class. There is a quiz available for each of the books online. We are looking forward to a great year, filled with reading growth!

System 44 reading classes are jumping into phonics. We are working with letter blends and informative writing. All students should also be working on their computer software for 20 minutes a day. This helps build comprehension and phonics skills

Math

We are starting a brand-new curriculum in math this year! Students learn by solving problems and constructing arguments using precise language. Most of our work will be done in our math workbooks and on paper. This means 6th graders will have to get the missing assignments when they are out.

World Languages

In Spanish and Chinese, our students are learning how to introduce themselves and introduce our classmates! They are doing a great job speaking in class, asking and answering questions with their classmates, and demonstrating how much they have learned through their written work. Keep it up!!

Science

Sixth graders began the year in science learning about what science is, the process of doing science, and how to be safe in science class. We are currently learning about ecosystem interactions including food chains, food webs, and taking time to observe our model ecosystems in class. Classes have taken time to explore our schoolyard habitat and have begun thinking about actions that may help native species thrive in our ecosystem.

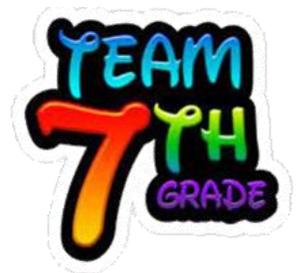
World History

Unit 1 on Prehistory is already over for students in World History! Look out for new learning about Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt! Students will analyze the geography of these areas to determine why they were the first to be settled by early humans. We’ll examine what defines a “civilization” by learning about beliefs, government systems, art, trade and more!

7th Grade

Ms. Parker – 7th Grade AP

I would like to welcome everyone back to school and extend a special welcome to all of our new 7th grade students and their families. I am looking forward to another exciting year of learning at Arbutus Middle School. You can expect periodic newsletters and communication to keep you up to date as to what is happening in the 7th grade and in the classrooms. Please help us by communicating with 7th grade teachers as well.



If you have not joined the PTA, I encourage you to join. The PTA will support the grade level in several activities, this year. They will also be instrumental in planning 8th grade culminating activities for next year. I encourage you to join a committee now in preparation for upcoming events.

A good way of staying up to date on school information is to visit our website at <https://arbutusms.bcps.org/>. From there you can find several sources of information that will keep you informed of all the happenings at Arbutus Middle School.

I am excited to begin the 2022-2023 school year. We will strive to provide the best education possible for your child. If at any time during the school year you feel the need to contact me, please feel free to call 410-809-1402 or via e-mail at lparker2@bcps.org.

-Lynetta Parker

Science

We are finishing up our first unit on energy: transferring, transforming, and conservation. We will be constructing our Culminating Event Project: A solar cooker to cook S'mores! Materials from home will need to be brought in to construct our cookers so please ask your child about what materials they will need. It is a group project so each student should have an item to bring in to construct their group project. Students will then have to explain the energy transfer, transformations, while using the law of conservation of energy to support their evidence.

World Languages

In Spanish 1 (Novice A) we have been doing basic introductions (name, age, birthday, personality, likes/dislikes). Students have been practicing speaking, reading, and writing introductory Spanish. We will finish the Unit by discussing family. We will be taking the Mid-Unit Exam within the next week.

Chinese A - We just finished taking the Mid-Unit Proficiency Challenge. Prior to that they had been learning how to greet people and find out their Nationality, which is what the MUPC was on. Now we are learning about people in schools and then languages. Ms. Horowitz will be returning on Nov. 7th, the start of the 2nd quarter, to begin their new unit with them.

Chinese B - We just finished taking the Mid-Unit Proficiency Challenge. Prior to that they had been learning school classes, supplies, and schedules, which is what the MUPC was on. Now we are learning about places in the school and extracurricular activities. Ms. Horowitz will be returning on Nov. 7th, the start of the 2nd quarter, to begin their new unit with them.

World History

We are off to a great start this year in 7th grade Social Studies, and it has been great to be back in the building for a "normal" school year! We began the school year by reviewing the Fall of Rome, which is where we finished last school year (6th grade). After our review, we moved on to the Byzantine Empire. We examined how the Byzantine Empire was an extension of the Eastern Roman Empire, as well as the most famous ruler of the Byzantines, Justinian. Once we completed the Byzantine Empire, we examined the religion of Islam, the spread of Islam, the achievements of the Islamic Golden Age, as well as the Abbasid Caliphate. For the remainder of the 1st quarter, we will learn about Ibn Battuta, the gold/salt trade of Africa, Mansa Musa, the Silk Road/cultural diffusion, and achievements of the Song Dynasty of Ancient China. We will be having our first unit exam around Halloween, and we look forward to all students achieving very well on the exam. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let us know!

English/ Language Arts

GT: Students are continuing to learn about unsung heroes! We will be starting our PBA soon where students will research an unsung hero of their choice.

Unit 1, "Facing Challenges Fearlessly," is designed to introduce Grade 7 students to English Language Arts while they examine the accomplishments of people who have faced challenges successfully. This unit will engage students in a variety of reading activities to explore the concept of different challenges that can be faced, both chosen and unexpected. Students will analyze one literary text and a variety of informational texts as part of their work in this unit. They will engage in careful analysis of these texts in order to not only understand the

fearless acts of the people studied, but to explain the lessons learned by the people themselves and by anyone reading their stories.

Reading

In Reading, students are learning about the characteristics of dystopias. They are reading an excerpt from *The Hunger Games*. At the end of the workshop, students will be writing an essay about how characters reacted to their dystopian society.



8th Grade

Mrs. Owens – 8th Grade AP

Welcome Back 8th Grade Eagles!!

First, we would like to introduce the 8th grade team: Mrs. Owens is the 8th grade Assistant Principal, Mrs. Edwards is the 8th grade School Counselor/Department Chair, and the 8th grade Team Leader is Mrs. Guiliano. This past month has been a very successful transition from 7th grade to 8th grade! The students seem extremely eager to learn and get back into school routine. Our AMS staff will be preparing your student for high school, and we are excited to watch them build upon their life and academic skills to become successful high school students.

The online Magnet Applications are now open for parents to fill out for their 8th grade students who are interested in applying to a magnet program. The last day to apply is November 4th at 1:00p.m.

Fall after school activities have begun, please encourage your child to join an activity. We have a wide variety of activities at AMS. We offer clubs such as: Green school, student council, art club, yearbook club, GSA, robotics, jazz band, strategy club, the butterfly club, broadcast production, and National Junior Honor Society. We offer after-school sports such as cross country, badminton, basketball, soccer, dance & cheer team, and morning basketball. We also have UMBC students provide support to AMS students by helping with homework, study skills and organization. After-school activities are held on predetermined days of the week. A full list of clubs is posted on our website.

Reminder for School Etiquette: Cell Phones- Last year, BCPS passed a policy for cell phones to be away and out of view. This means students should not have their cell phones (nor earbuds) out. Students need to keep phones silenced and away. The only time students should be on the phone is during lunch per decision of the administration. If you need to get in touch with your students during the school day, please call the main office (443-809-1402) and they will relay your message to your child. Thank you for your support!

Science

Students are completing their first unit climate detectives. Students have explored how weather works to create natural disasters. We will then look at how climate affects Maryland. Students will end the unit by looking at real world data and determining the answer to the question “What will happen to the strength and frequency of Atlantic hurricanes in the next 100 years?” Next unit students will take a deep dive into the geologic past to determine how life adapts to changes in climate.

Spanish

In Intermediate Spanish, students have been discovering various ways to express themselves. This includes their personality, likes/dislikes, preferences, and choice/experiences. Students have enjoyed taking everything that they have learned in Spanish 1 and 2 and elaborating more in order to prepare them for High School Spanish. For the next half of the Unit, students will be exploring their ideal world and plans for their futures. In Ms. Milstead's Spanish B Students are learning how to describe themselves and their interests in both the present and past. They will compare their present selves with their younger selves.

American History

Welcome to America's Past. So far, our year is off to a great start! The teachers and students engaged in great discussions as we examined the first 20 chapters of the book *Stamped*. We will revisit and conclude our examination at the end of the quarter. We then dove into Unit 1, Revolution. Starting with the French Indian War, we will conclude with the Treaty of Paris. We will go outside, using hockey sticks as pretend rifles and learn tactics used and reenact a couple battles. We will meet many of the famous Founding Fathers of our country.

Also, we are hopeful of going on 2 field trips this year. Possible destinations include Fort McHenry, Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Museums of African American, American, or Natural History and Gettysburg. Information should be out by the end of October regarding our first trip.

Language Arts

ELA has started the year with the unit *Through the Storyteller's Eyes: The Power of an Engaging Narrative*. This unit provides students with multiple opportunities to read various, engaging stories and to analyze them for techniques used by authors, such as dramatic irony and point of view, to create texts that captivate a reader's interest. For the PBA, students will write a narrative in the form of an additional scene (prequel, sequel, alternate ending, or deleted scene) for a story read in the unit. The scene must reflect well-structured event sequences and narrative techniques such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection to develop the events and the characters

In GT ELA we are starting the year with *Narrative Voices: Examining the Impact of Point of View and Dialogue*. This unit allows students to explore how authors use lines of dialogue and differences in point of view to engage a reader's emotions. During this unit students will read and analyze a variety of texts including poetry, short stories, and informational articles. The texts analyzed in this unit challenge students to determine how an author's use of point of view affects the reader's experience with special attention to suspense and humor in fictional texts. Students will also compose narratives that use techniques to engage readers. It is important that students receive a full introduction to each standard and multiple opportunities to practice and obtain the expected level of mastery for this grade level.

Reading

Reading classes are working on unit 2 titled "Water Fight" in this unit we will work on identifying the central idea and supporting details as well as summarizing and writing informatively. Students should also be continuing their computer software and reading their independent Read 180 books in class. There is a quiz available for each of the books online. We are looking forward to a great year, filled with reading growth!

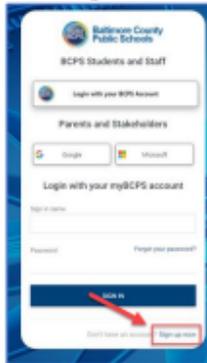
Math

All math classes this year are starting a new curriculum called Illustrative Math. This curriculum uses problem-based learning to develop new concepts. Using problem-based learning, students build a deeper understanding of why things work the way they do or why we use a specific process to find a solution. In both Geometry and Math 8, students are just finishing their first unit exploring rigid transformations and congruence through these transformations. For Math 8, our next unit of study is dilations, similarity, and slope. We will explore similar triangles and how they apply to finding slope of lines. Geometry's next unit will dive deeper into congruence while continuing to apply transformations to prove congruence. In Algebra 1 students started Unit 2 titled "Linear Equations, Inequalities, and Systems". In this Unit students will be solving for variables by building equations based on real life scenarios. Students will be able to interpret and explain what the solutions to these real-life scenarios mean.

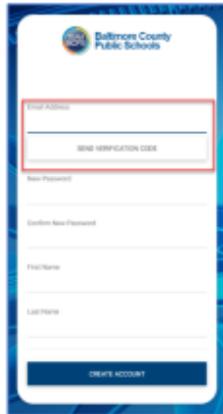
Creating a Parent Account

Note: Parents need to use the email that was provided to the school to create this account. Parents may access Schoology using the link in the Parent Portal 24-48 hours after the creation of their myBCPS parent account.

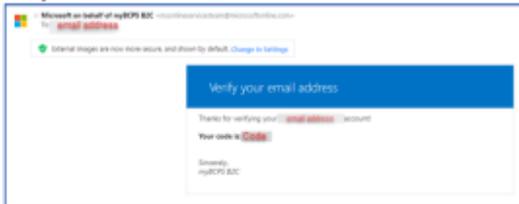
1. Using a CHROME browser, navigate to:
<https://baltimore.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus>
2. Click **Sign up now** in lower right corner.



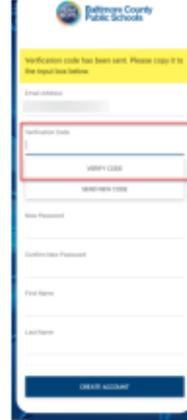
3. Enter the email address that was provided to the school and click **Send Verification Code**.



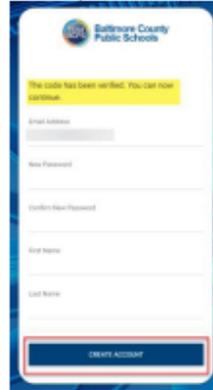
4. Open the email and locate the email correspondence from myBCPS B2C.



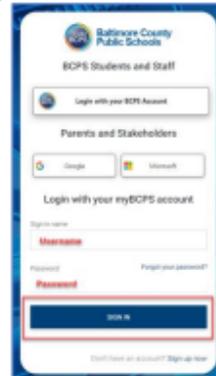
5. Copy the code from the email and enter it on the portal screen under **Verification Code** and select **Verify Code**.



6. After entering the code, users should continue by making a **New Password**, **Confirm New Password** and enter their **First Name** and **Last Name**, click **Create Account**.



7. Returning users should enter their **username** and **password** and click **Sign in**.



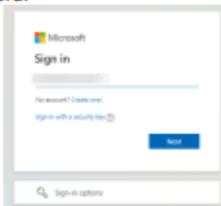
Creating a Parent Account – Using a Social Account

Note: Parents need to use the email that was provided to the school to create this account. Parents may access Schoology using the link in the Parent Portal 24-48 hours after the creation of their myBCPS parent account.

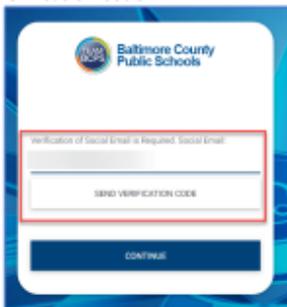
1. Using a CHROME browser, navigate to:
<https://baltimore.focusschoolsoftware.com/focus>
2. Click either the **Google** or **Microsoft** button to make an account with your **Google** or **Microsoft** email.



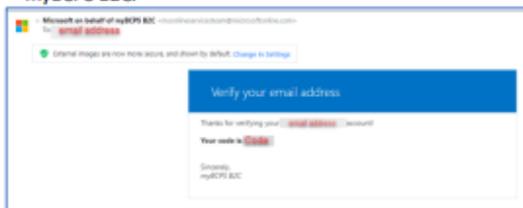
3. Log-in to the account using the screen prompts to enter the email and password.



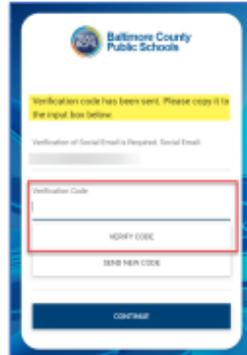
4. Enter the email address that was provided to the school and click **Send Verification Code**.



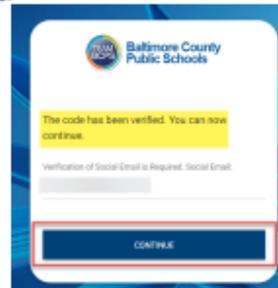
5. Open the email and locate the email correspondence from myBCPS B2C.



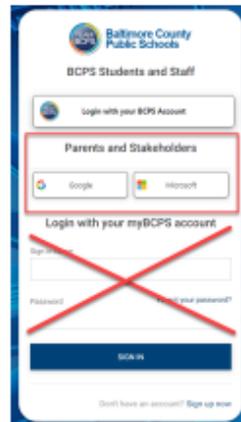
6. Copy the code from the email and enter it on the portal screen under **Verification Code** and select **Verify Code**.



7. After entering the code, users should continue by clicking **Continue**.



8. Returning users should click the **Google** or **Microsoft** button to sign-in.



Note: It will take up to 30 minutes to gain access to Focus and up to 48 hours to access Schoology. There is a link within the Focus portal that will take you directly to Schoology once it is active. If you click this link before the account is active you will receive an error.

ATTENDANCE

Any time a student is absent from school, an email or hard copy note must be provided to the First Period teacher upon returning to school.

**** OFFICIAL MSDE ATTENDANCE RULE** A full-time student must be present for at least 4 hours to be marked present for a full day. A full-time student must be present at least 2 hours to be marked half-day present. Full-time students present for less than 2 hours will be marked as absent.

BCPS RULE 5120 III. Lawful and Unlawful Absences A. Lawful Absence 1. In accordance with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), a student enrolled in BCPS will be considered lawfully absent from school for any portion of the school day under the following conditions: a. Death in the immediate family. b. Illness of the student. (1) The principal or pupil personnel worker (PPW) may require a physician's certificate from the parent/guardian of a student reported continuously absent for illness. c. Court Summons. d. Hazardous weather conditions, which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school. e. Work approved or sponsored by the school, BCPS or the Maryland State Department of Education and accepted by the Superintendent or the school principal, or their designees, as reason for excusing the student. f. Observance of a religious holiday. g. State emergency. h. Other emergency or set of circumstances, which, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school. i. Health exclusion. j. Suspension. k. Lack of authorized transportation. Lack of transportation does not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons

STUDENT SERVICE LEARNING

Students must complete 75 service-learning hours in order to graduate from a Baltimore County Public School. Some courses offer infused service-learning hours into its curriculum. For most students following a typical sequence of middle school courses, completing all activities within the course, 60 hours of service learning will be met as follows:

6th Grade - Language Arts, Social Studies, Health, and Project Lead the Way
7th Grade - Art, and Project Lead the Way
8th Grade - Science and Health

When students complete middle school, they could have accumulated 60 service-learning hours if they have attended school regularly and made-up any missing work related to the service-learning curriculum infusion courses.

Students may be able to earn additional service-learning hours through student-initiated service in the community, extra-curricular activities, and special projects.

Please refer to *BCPS's Student Service Learning Website for more information including project forms* : : https://bcpscoss3.sharpschool.com/departments/communications/family_and_community_engagement/student_service_learning

Please complete the *Service-Learning Pre-approval and Reflection Forms* for service learning projects done outside of school and return to Ms. Gardner (kgardner4@bcps.org) in the School Counseling Office when hours have been completed.



Specials

Music Department

We are excited to meet and work with our new 6th grade class. They are a wonderful group of young musicians! Everyone should have instruments and books in the band classes. Look at your child's Schoology page for information about lesson books and events.

We have started our after-school groups: Arbutus Wind Ensemble (Tues) Chamber Orchestra (Tuesday), Festival Choir (Wed.) Concert Orchestra (Thurs.) and Jazz Band (Thurs). A BIG shout out to Ms. McCusker for leading our Festival Choir. ALSO, a BIG THANK YOU to Tammy Mills for coming in and teaching our AMS choruses for the month of September. She did a FANTASTIC job!

We are in need of a Chorus teacher for A days. If you know of anyone who would be interested, please contact Mr. Miskimon (jmiskimon@bcps.org) or Mrs. Boyle (kboyle@bcps.org). Mr. Miskimon will be teaching the chorus classes for now.

The Music Department sponsors an Elementary School Tour every year. We will be travelling to and performing for CES, AES and RES on October 19th. The groups that will be performing are: AWE, Concert Orchestra and Jazz Band. Everyone in these groups needs to have the AMS music polo shirt and black pants for these performances. We will need parent chaperones for this event. This is an important event to spread music in our community, highlight our talented students, and attract students to our music program.

LHS has invited our 8th grade chorus, band, and orchestra to a Side-by-Side event October 26th. We will be rehearsing with the LHS students after school and then presenting a concert at LHS at 7pm.

AMS stands for **A**mazing **M**usic **S**tudents! Keep them practicing!!

P.E.

The P.E. department is enjoying the fall weather! Students had fun in the team building unit and are on to flag football, soccer, badminton, and fitness testing. Please make sure students come to school ready for P.E. with weather appropriate athletic clothes and sneakers. We have started our soccer and morning basketball intramurals program and are looking forward to our afterschool events coming up!

Family Fitness Night 10/18

Turkey Trot 11/9

Art

Art students are creating artworks inspired by their identities during Quarter 1 and shifting to Object Representation for Quarter 2. Student artworks will be on display during the winter Concerts on December 6th, 7th and 8th and will be available to view digitally starting December 16th.

Upcoming Dates:

Oct. 18 – Family Fitness Night

Oct. 21 – Schools Closed for MSEA Convention

Oct. 24 – System Wide Professional Development Day: Schools closed for students

Oct. 25-28 – Spirit Week

10/25- 10/28



Crazy Hat/Hair
Day

Pictures &
Grade level Color

Costume
Day

Pj Pants
Day

Oct. 26 – Picture Day

Oct. 27 – Boo Bash

Nov. 4 – End of First Marking Period: Schools close 3 hours early for students

Nov. 8 – Election Day: Schools and Offices Closed

Nov. 14-18 – American Education Week

Nov. 23 – Schools and offices closed 3 hours early

Nov. 24-25 – Thanksgiving Break

For more information on things happening in Baltimore County Schools please visit the county website at www.bcps.org.



For more information on events happening at Arbutus Middle School, please be sure to visit our website at <https://arbutusms.bcps.org/>, and to like our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/arbutusmiddleschool.

