

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



What is a Blue Ribbon School?

A National Blue Ribbon School's flag waving overhead has become a trademark of excellence, a symbol of quality recognized by everyone from parents to policy-makers in thousands of communities. We have a lot of work to do to make this dream a reality, and the results will not be known until next September, but I feel confident that Wiesbaden Middle School is

already a Blue Ribbon School. We just have to do the paperwork to tie this up, and let the rest of the world know that we are the best kept secret!



We Have Vision

The entire WMS community will provide a positive school climate through which all students can mature academically, socially, emotionally, and physically, while developing a lifelong love of learning.



From the Office of the Principal

Dear Parents:

Great news for Wiesbaden Middle School! Based on our high achievement scores and great student growth, our school has qualified for the preliminaries of the Blue Ribbon School competition. This is exciting news! To give you an idea of how prestigious this award is, last year the U.S. Department of Education only awarded four schools in the state of Virginia Blue Ribbon status - and only four schools in all of DoDEA. Since 1982, the U.S. Department of Education's National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has honored America's most successful public and private elementary, middle and high schools.



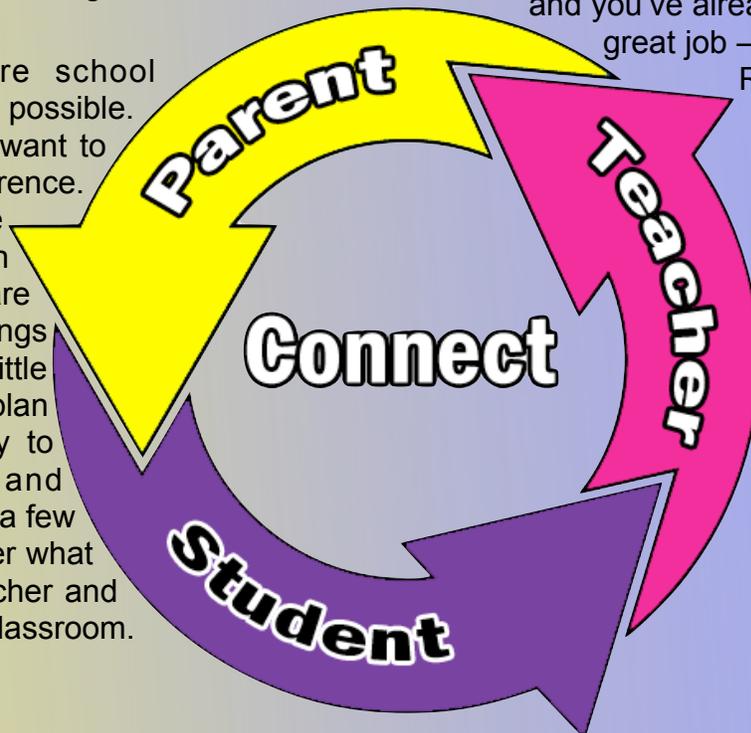
Conferences Are Coming!

One of the hallmarks of a successful school is strong parental support. Next week we will hold our fall parent conference day on November 9th. Please make an appointment to meet with your child's teachers. This is vital to your child's long-term success as a student. The point of the conference is not to walk away with his or her grades in your hand or to find out their missing assignments. You can easily find that information on Gradespeed. The point of the parent-teacher conference is for open and honest two-way conversation about your child and what will make your child *even more* successful as a student. Even if your child makes good grades, there is rigor or more challenges that will encourage your child to grow as an independent learner and life-long student. The point of the parent-teacher conference is for you to make a connection with your child's teachers and support their educational process through a mutually beneficial dialogue.

Advance planning helps ensure school conferences are as productive as possible. Arrive on time and plan what you want to ask the teacher before the conference. Bring a pen and paper. Often there is a "hurry up and wait" mentality on conference day, because there are so many parents, younger siblings running around, and often too little time for just one teacher. If you plan ahead of time, you are less likely to forget your major questions and concerns. Sit down with your child a few days beforehand and ask him or her what they would like you to ask the teacher and what their concerns are about the classroom.

Use this conference as a time to tell the teacher something about your child and how your child learns best. Tell the teachers how he likes to learn. Tell the teacher what your child says about him or her at home. After a truly effective conference, both teacher and parent leave with a better understanding of the child and how things could be better for him or her and how the parent and teacher can better support the student.

I know this is difficult, but ask the uncomfortable questions. This is your child. It's middle school, and now is such a time of tremendous growth. If you have something that weighs heavy on your heart, you have to ask it. Trust me, the teacher has been asked every question before by another parent. Your child is unique to you, and you want to know the answers, so ask the uncomfortable questions. Your child's first teacher was you, and you've already done a great job – a Blue Ribbon job!



Math Night Nears!

WMS will be hosting its second annual math night on Thursday, November 8th, from 4 to 6 PM. It will be held in the school gymnasium. Last year's inaugural event drew over two hundred visitors, and this year's promises to be a big draw as well.

This event supports our Continuous School Improvement math goal: *All students will increase scores in math computation, word problems, and problem solving*

None of this would be possible without the tremendous support of Mrs. Arnold, our 8th grade math teacher, the USACE, Boy Scout troops 65 and 107, the PTSO, and the many other teachers, staff and volunteers who always help out when needed.



There will be over twenty interesting and fun events, including

- Lessons and competition for the tallest and strongest paper-built tower, sponsored by our partners in the US Army Corps of Engineers
- Competition for the best math-related costume
- Paper plane building lessons and competition
- Lessons on getting homework help online with Tutor.com
- Flash Mob dancing
- Free food, sponsored by our hard working PTSO

FINAL THOUGHTS

I look forward to seeing you on the 9th of November. As always, if you need me, I'm just a phone call or e-mail away. Or if you are in the neighborhood, just drop in and say, "Hello."

Susan P. Hargis, PhD
Principal

