

Powhatan Elementary School

1330 Kelox Road, Baltimore, MD 21207

August 3, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Happy New Year! The Powhatan staff and I are excited about the opportunity to work with you and your child(ren) for the 2017-2018 school year. Our mission is to “provide every student with the highest quality 21st century education in a safe, secure and positive environment that is conducive to high levels of teaching, learning, and student engagement.” As a result, our students will be globally competitive and prepared for their chosen college and/or career path. We pledge to work closely with parents and community stakeholders to ensure that all students experience success.

The safety of all students and staff in Baltimore County Public Schools is of the utmost importance to all of us. All Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) are utilizing a system for checking in all visitors called RaptorWare or Raptor. The system requires a staff member to scan photo IDs which register all visitors to our school and verifies whether or not they are a registered sex offender. The following procedures will take place the first time someone visits our school. Visitors will be asked to **present a government-issued photo ID**, or a driver’s license to a staff member in the school office. The **ID will be scanned** and the following information will be collected: photo, name, and date of birth. This information will be utilized to check the visitor in, create an ID badge, and compare the information against **sexual offender databases throughout the country. If the name appears on any of the lists or if they refuse to allow the school to scan their ID, the visitor will not be allowed access to the school.** The only alternative will be to allow the staff to see the ID, verify the first name, last name, and date of birth to be entered into the system manually. However, this method does not store the information, and the visitor must do this each time they visit the school. If the visitor has his/her ID scanned, they will be asked to show their ID only on future visits, and their name will be selected from an existing list of previous visitors. The visitor will also be asked to check out with the office staff upon leaving the school so that we know they are no longer in the building. The visitor will be required to check into the system even if they are only coming to school to pick up their child. The information collected will not be shared outside of the school and is kept on a secure server. Your assistance in keeping our students and staff at Powhatan Elementary School safe is greatly appreciated.

In addition to utilizing the Raptor system, BCPS has issued staff and student ID badges to be worn at all times in the building. All staff members will wear a blue colored badge that indicates they are staff members and students will wear red colored badges that identify them as students to our school. **If your child is a returning Powhatan student who has lost his/her badge, a \$5.00 replacement fee will be collected before a new badge can be issued.** Students who are new to the school will be provided with a badge.

We want to make certain that all of our students arrive and are dismissed safely from school. For your child’s safety and the safety of others, the following **pick-up and drop-off** procedures are in place for all students:

- Students should not arrive to school before 8:25 am. Staff members are not available to ensure safety prior to 8:25;
- ***If your child is arriving to school after 8:40 am, he/she is considered late. All students arriving late (after 8:40 am) must be walked in to the building and signed in by an adult 21 years of age or older—no exceptions;***
- **Only buses should pull into the school’s bus loop;**
- Walkers must follow the direction of the crossing guard when crossing the street and only walk in crosswalks or paved areas; and

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- Car riders must be dropped off on the side parking lot (cars stopping in front of the flag pole creates the potential for accidents with other vehicles and/or walkers). Car riders can easily be dropped off on the side parking lot and utilize the paved areas to walk to the front door.

Your cooperation and understanding of this important safety measure is needed.

Sneak-a-Peek-at-Your-Seat, for students in *first through fifth* will be held on August 30, 2018 from 4 pm to 5pm. **Back-to-School Night** for students in grades *first through fifth* is scheduled for August 30, 2018 from 5:00 to 7:00 P.M. **Pre-K and Kindergarten students and parents will receive pertinent information during gradual entry conferences and will not participate in Back-to-School Night or Sneak-a-Peek.** During Back-to-School Night, two **Parent Volunteer Training sessions** have been scheduled, the first session is from 4:30 – 5:00 P.M. and the second session is from 6:30 – 7:00 P.M. Subsequent Volunteer Training sessions will be held throughout the school year. Additionally, parents may complete volunteer training on line at <http://bit.ly/1hC7J1w>. Please note: you must participate in at least **one** Volunteer Training session **each school year** prior to volunteering in the school or prior to attending a field trip.

The **first day of school** for students in grades first through fifth is **Tuesday, September 4, 2018**. The school day begins at **8:25 A.M. and ends at 3:15 P.M (Please note that this is a new end time)**. Our kindergarten students will follow a separate gradual entry schedule, which is included in this mailing as a separate attachment for parents of kindergarten students. On the first day of school, your child will receive forms that should be completed and returned to school no later than September 7, 2018.

During the first weeks of school, students will also receive a presentation relating to school policies and expectations as they are given a revised copy of the *Baltimore County Public Schools Student Handbook*¹. Every student and parent/guardian will be asked to sign indicating that they have read and understood the information.

To assist you in preparing for a successful beginning of the new school year, please refer to the enclosed **supply list**, which highlights all recommended items needed for students to begin the school year. When purchasing book bags and/or backpacks, **please do not purchase bags on wheels**. These bags are too large to fit into the student lockers and pose a safety risk when left in the hallways. Please feel free to drop off supplies when you meet the teacher during Sneak-a-Peak. Coming to school prepared and ready to learn is essential on the first day and every day of school! Attendance is critical to student success! When planning family vacations, please review the BCPS school calendar as family vacations are not excused absences. Thank you in advance for ensuring your child is present every day.

Powhatan students are not permitted to have cell phones in school. Teachers/Staff members who see and/or hear student cell phones in school will confiscate the phone and a parent will be required to pick the phone up from the main office. Additionally, fidget spinners are prohibited. If your child needs supports for his/her IEP or 504 plan please contact the IEP Facilitator.

Included in this mailing are **nine important documents**. The **first document** is the Emergency Contact Information Form for School Year 2018-2019. This has replaced the traditional student emergency card. You should review and revise this form in order to provide the school with updated contact information. The information included on this document will be used to contact parents during emergency situations and early school closings.

¹ Please carefully review the hand-outs in this summer mailing that highlight BCPS policies governing video surveillance, bullying reporting form, bus stop information, and other essential information enclosed.

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The **second document** includes a list of neighborhood bus stops and the approximate arrival time of the bus as well as the list of walking streets. Students should report to his/her bus stop 10 minutes prior to the listed time.

The **third document** is the “Opt-Out Form.” Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, school systems may release directory information on enrolled students. The form is to be used whenever parents/guardians or eligible students do not permit BCPS to share a student’s directory information, do not want the student to use telecommunications, and/or do not want the student’s intellectual property published/produced/displayed anywhere. Parents may elect to have their children’s information removed from this directory by completing this form. Please include the names of all children you would like removed from the directory. If you do not want to “Opt-Out” you do not need to return the form. The deadline to return the form is October 3, 2016.

The **fourth document**, the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form, is being mailed to you for your information. On July 1, 2008, the Maryland General Assembly directed the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), in consultation with the local school systems, to develop and adopt a model policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, or intimidation in schools. MSDE approved its model policy on February 24, 2009. As a result of MSDE’s model policy, the Board of Education of Baltimore County approved Board of Education Policy and Superintendent’s Rule 5580, “Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation,” which prohibits students from engaging in intentional conduct involving bullying, harassment, or intimidation, which can substantially interfere with a student’s educational opportunities, or any acts of retaliation against those who report instances of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. The “Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form” is used to track alleged instances of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. The form is available at your local school or on the Baltimore County Public Schools’ website under the “Student” and “Parent” tabs. You may contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time.

The **fifth document** is the Notification of Availability of Asbestos Management Plan. According to the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), schools are required to provide parents/legal guardians Notification of Asbestos management Plan. This notification is included.

The **sixth document** is notification of our In-Classroom breakfast program. Powhatan Elementary School will have the opportunity to participate in a free in-classroom breakfast program. The included letter explains the details of the free program. Lunch prices will remain the same for this school year--\$2.90 regular lunch and \$0.40 for reduced lunch.

The **seventh document** explains entry and exit procedures for our school. These procedures ensure student, staff and visitor safety as well as ensure smooth entry and exit procedures.

The **eighth document** is the BCPS Ethics Code.

The **ninth document** is a gradual entry schedule for pre-k and kindergarten. ***Remember that Sneak-a-Peek and Back-to-School Night are not for pre-k and Kindergarten students.***

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Parents, we want your child to be happy, safe², and successful at Powhatan Elementary School. We believe that you play a key role by continually showing interest in and support for your child's education. The child who knows that his or her family is interested in and supports the school program will usually experience success in school.

Please share with your child's teachers any information regarding his or her special needs that will help us better serve your family. We believe that communication among parents, students, and teachers is critical in assuring student success. Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year!

Signed with Powhatan Pride,

Deborea Montgomery, Ph.D., Principal

Kortney Griffin, Assistant Principal

²We have video cameras to administratively monitor student and staff safety. All visitors must be buzzed into the building. We are committed to maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment.