

August 3, 2021

Dear Parents,

Welcome Whitesides Wildcat Families to the 2021-2022 School Year!

I hope you and your family have enjoyed some fun and exciting summer activities. We know it has been a short summer, but hope it was filled with "back to normal" activities and of course lots of reading! There are still a few weeks left to enjoy and finish all those adventures. It is very quiet here and I can't wait for the school to be filled with your wonderful smiles and lots of great learning experiences.

Mamie P. Whitesides
Elementary School

Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Karolyn Belcher
Chief Academic Officer

Jennifer Swearingen, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Early Learning Community

Catherine Middleton
Interim Principal

I look forward to meeting you all. I am so honored to be at Mamie P. Whitesides for the coming year and I look forward to getting to know the students, staff and families. I am entering my 47th year in education, 38 of them in Charleston County and 9 in Georgetown County. I am married, have 2 grown children and 3 very creative, talented grandchildren! We have lived in Mt. Pleasant or Awendaw for 38 years having moved here from my home in Pawleys Island. All that to say, I love being a part of this community and look forward to building strong relationships with the students, staff, parents, and community. Mr. Bloomfield and I will continue to have an open door policy, so please don't hesitate to call or email us if you have questions or concerns. We are planning on resuming normal activities and will keep you informed about the many opportunities as the year goes forward.

Here are some important dates and information for the beginning of the year.

Our **Fact and Fee Night** will be **Monday, August 16th from 3:30 to 6:15 PM**. Because we want to continue to have 3 ft. social distancing, we are dividing the students up by last name into groups to visit the school and assigning a time for that group. Please see the following chart:

A-G 3:30 - 4:15
H - O 4:30 - 5:15
P - Z 5:30 - 6:15

You will receive an email from your child's teacher before the 16th, letting you know your child's teacher. Parents will go to the cafeteria to pay fees if you have not already done so. While in the cafeteria, you can check in with PTA (please join), sign up for committees, buy t-shirts, update information and visit with some of our community partners including Kaleidoscope. Our supply fee this year is \$40.00 and we ask that you pay that On-Line through the link on our web page or we will have a QR code on the 16th. We are trying very hard to use this link to save you time during this busy night. After you have visited the cafeteria, you and your child are welcome to go to the classroom and meet your teachers. If you have supplies and want to bring them in that night, you are welcome to do so. We will make an announcement asking you to end your visit so the next group can come in at their time.

Child Development and Kindergarten parents are invited to an orientation meeting on Wednesday, August 11th from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM. This is a PARENTS only meeting, please. We are asking that only ONE parent attend to conform to social distancing in the classroom. You will also get an email from your teacher that day to let you know the class your child is in and the room number for the meeting. You and your child are welcome to return on the 16th to visit the classroom and have your child meet the teacher.

Our first day for students (Kindergarten - 5th) will be Wednesday, August 18th. I invite you to walk with your child to class on this first day, but ask that you not stay as the teacher will be anxious to get started on the day with all the students. The first day for CD will be Monday, August 23rd. Please remember that Fact and Fee and the first morning are not the best times for a conference with the teachers as they want to give their full attention to the students. You are welcome to set up a conference time if you have any concerns that you wish to share with them.

School hours for the 2021-2022 year are 7:25 AM - 2:25PM. **Students are tardy if they are not in their classroom by the 7:25 bell.** Students may not enter the building before 7:00AM each morning as there will not be supervision available. Laidlaw will be providing transportation for our students to and from school. The bus route information will be posted in early August in the Post and Courier and on the CCSD web page and on our web site.

While the back loop is reserved for buses only, the front car loop is for all car traffic. Traffic will only be allowed to turn right onto Rifle Range Road during arrival and dismissal times. Please read the information in the Parent/Student Handbook, which can be found on the Whitesides web site. **Please note that the parking lot that joins Whitesides and Mt. Pleasant Waterworks will not be available to Whitesides traffic or parking.**

We encourage you to bookmark the Whitesides web page, as we will be adding more relevant information and useful links to our page during the year. In addition to the handbook, you will find many items that will be outlined or references in your student's registration packet. You also may want to download the CCSD App and follow us on Facebook and the PTA Facebook page. We strive to communicate with you as much as we can and ask that you read information sent home in Monday folders as well as checking these sites.

We are thrilled to continue to have a dynamic PTA that supports our school and our students in many ways. They are only successful when they have the support of our parents. Please join them, volunteer to help in some capacity and be an active member to the WES community. No task is too small, and any amount of time that you can give is very much appreciated. Our 2021-2022 Board members are as follows:

President - Lindsey Martins
Vice-President (Merchandise) - Jessica O'Reilly
Vice-President (Membership) - Jessica Paulsen
Secretary - Devon Adams
Treasurer - Allison Flanary

On behalf of all the staff at WES, we are looking forward to an exciting school year with everyone back together. We hope to be able to have volunteers back in the building, so be on the lookout for those opportunities. The teachers have been working hard all summer getting ready for the coming year and are excited about welcoming their students and you back for many extraordinary learning experiences.

Enjoy the remainder of the summer, make sure you read another good book and we will see you on the 16th for Fact and Fee. I am looking forward to meeting all of you.

With Wildcat Pride,

Cathie Middleton, Principal

Sheldon Bloomfield, Assistant Principal