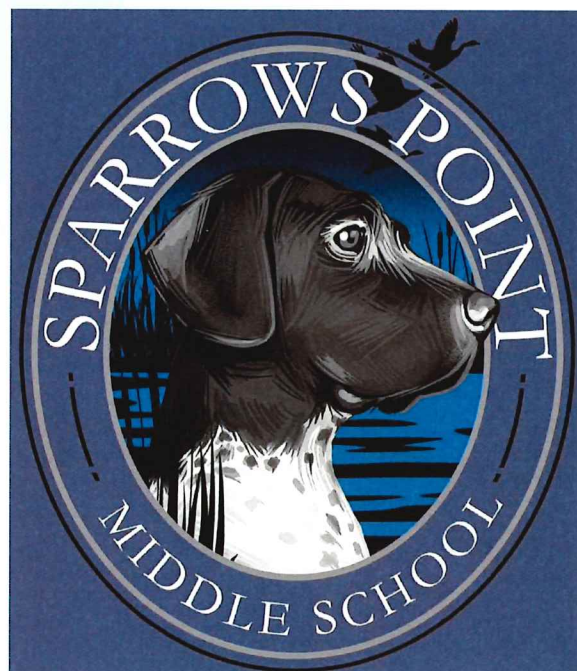


August 2023

## Sparrows Point Middle School

# Welcome Back to School! 2023-2024



## A Message from the Principal

Dear Students, Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

Welcome back to the 2023-2024 academic year!



I am excited to join the Sparrows Point community as the new middle school Principal. I am entering my 28th year as an educator. I've served as a classroom teacher, department chair, assistant principal, principal, central coordinator, Executive Director, and Chief Academic Officer across three local school systems: Harford County, Baltimore City, and Baltimore County. I grew up in the peninsular community of Locust Point—South Baltimore, and I previously served as the Principal of Francis Scott Key Elementary-Middle School #76 in Locust Point. I share this because I appreciate and understand the tight-knit community that develops as a result of the geographic nature of a pen-

insula. Sparrows Point feels like home to me and I look forward to getting to know you and becoming a part of the community. I will conduct my meet and greet as part of our Back to School Night, August 30th 5:30 pm—7:00 pm.

I have worked in elementary, middle, and high schools covering pre kindergarten to 12th grade and I've become dedicated to the middle grades student. I understand how critically important these middle grades are for students and parents as children transform into very young adults who move onto high school. As a mother of three children, I learned to appreciate the transformation that students experience as they grow through physical, social and emotional changes all while trying to learn more demanding academic skills and knowledge. I came to understand how each child grows through these years in a unique way, discovering interest and talents and exploring opportunities from science, to music, to writing, and athletics. It's an amazing time for a student as personalities develop and dreams of their future emerge. It's also a challenging time as students experience puberty and physical changes that impact their mood, interactions and relations with parents and peers. I'm honored to be part of this chapter of growing-up for so many students and to be a partner with parents in the process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary McComas, Principal

## Important Dates

**August 20th** ..... BCPS Fest

**August 24th** ..... 6th Grade  
Orientation 7:50 am-11:45 am

**August 28th** ..... Opening Day  
All Students

**August 30th** ..... Back to  
School Night 5:30 pm—7:00pm

**September 5th** ..... Labor Day  
Schools Closed

**September 15th**..... Professional  
Development Day Closed for Students

**September 25th**..... Professional  
Development Day Closed for Students

## Join the PTSA

Facebook: SPMS-PTSA

## Meeting Dates:

9/12/23 & 10/10/23

11/14/23 & 1/9/24

2/13/24 & 3/12/24



### SPMS 6th Grade Early Entry Day 8/24/23

**8:00-8:20:**

Breakfast & Introductions to SPMS  
faculty and counselors

**8:25– 8:30:** transition time

**8:30-9:40:** Students remain in Period  
1 to learn about:

- ⇒ Schedules
- ⇒ Classroom Rules
- ⇒ Loading Stations
- ⇒ Combination Locks

**9:40-10:33:**

Special Area rotation

**10:33-10:35:** transition to Gym

**10:35-11:13:**

Fun Ice Breaker Exercise

**11:15-11:30:**

Lunch & clean up

**11:30-11:40:**

Dismissal by loading stations

## Parent Access to Key Information: FOCUS & Schoology

### What is FOCUS and Schoology?

Focus is our student information system and Schoology is the learning management system by which teachers, students, and guardians will monitor student achievement in all courses. All parents should have a Focus/Schoology Account in order to access real-time information about grades, assignments,

attendance, etc.

### How do I set up access ?

For directions on how to access the parent FOCUS:

- [Parent Portal Registration](#)

Additional Parent Resources:

- [Parent Quick Links](#)

**August 24, 2023**

**6th Grade Orientation—8:00 am-11:40 am**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In support of our students' successful transitions to Grades 6, we invite students to participate in an Early Entry Day program. Sparrows Point Middle School is excited to host our annual half-day "Orientation Day" on Thursday, August 24, 2023, for students entering Grade 6 for the 2023-2024 school year. Students will participate in a wide variety of activities – designed based on student feedback – to become more familiar with their new school setting prior to the start of school. Students will review their class schedules, visit their classrooms, take school tours, and meet all their teachers and the school counselors. Please see our Early Entry Day Agenda by clicking here" [SPMS Early Entry Day 2023](#).

Transportation will be provided for those students who are scheduled to take a bus to school. Those students will be picked up at their assigned bus stops at their regularly scheduled times and will be transported home at the end of the half-day schedule. A complimentary lunch will be served to all participating students, and students will be able to add funds to their cafeteria accounts in preparation for the first day of school.

The Orientation Day is for students only and will not replace other school-based student-parent orientation activities. More detailed information regarding Orientation Day, such as specific bus stops and hours of the morning half-day, will be emailed to parents and posted on our school website and social media the week of August 21, 2023.

Helpful videos have been prepared for viewing by students and families at home. These videos share experiences and helpful information about middle and high school transitions. The videos are available via Vimeo from the main BCPS website as follows:

[Making the Transition to Middle School](#)

[Transition Tips - Lockers](#)

[Transition Tips—Cafeteria](#)

[Transition Tips - Locker Room](#)





## Back to School By the numbers...

1. [Log into FOCUS/Schoology](#)
2. Access the following information through FOCUS/Schoology

- ◆ **Student Schedules** : available through FOCUS Parent Portal on Schoology.
- ◆ **Transportation**: Bus information will be available in FOCUS between August 21st and August 23rd.

Positive student behavior while entering, riding, and leaving the bus contributes to safe transportation by making it possible for drivers to dedicate their full attention to the roads and other drivers. Student bus riders are expected to act responsibly and respectfully at all times. Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege may be temporarily denied or permanently revoked if misconduct jeopardizes the safe operation of the school bus or the safety of students riding the bus. School buses are equipped with video/digital cameras and audio recording devices. These tools monitor the passenger area of the bus. As such, riders are subject to video and audio surveillance. Bus discipline procedures and consequences can be found on the BCPS website. [Transportation Procedures & Expectations](#)

- ◆ **Parent/Guardian Contact Information** should be reviewed and updated as needed in FOCUS

Please be sure to update your phone and email addresses in our Focus Student Information System so that all communication is received. SPMS families can expect to receive Weekly Updates from Dr. McComas as well as regular outreach regarding attendance and grades.

- ◆ **Emergency Contact Information** should be reviewed and updated as needed in FOCUS

Complete your child's Student Emergency Information Form in Focus or email Ms. Shelley in our Guidance Office at [jshelley2@bcps.org](mailto:jshelley2@bcps.org) regarding changes to your email, contact number, or emergency contacts. Updating this information will ensure you're contacted about school closings, illnesses, and important updates. Be sure to inform the school if your information changes during the school year.

### Bell Schedule

6 <sup>th</sup> /7 <sup>th</sup> Grade		
Period	Start Time	End Time
Homeroom	7:50	8:05
Announcements	8:05	8:10
1	8:10	9:16
2	9:19	10:25
3: Advisory	10:28	10:50
Lunch	10:53	11:23
4	11:26	12:32
5	12:35	1:41
6	1:44	2:50

8 <sup>th</sup> Grade		
Period	Start Time	End Time
Homeroom	7:50	8:05
Announcements	8:05	8:10
1	8:10	9:16
2	9:19	10:25
3: Advisory	10:28	10:50
4	10:53	11:59
5	12:02	1:08
Lunch	1:11	1:41
6	1:44	2:50



## Back to School By the numbers...



### 3. School Supply List 2023-2024

- ⇒ 2" Heavy Duty Biner
- ⇒ Lined notebook paper
- ⇒ Spiral/ Composition notebook ( for math)
- ⇒ Sketch book, spiral bound, 50 blank pages ( for art only)
- ⇒ Dividers (8 tabs)
- ⇒ #2 Pencils ( 2-3 packs)
- ⇒ Colored Pencils or makers
- ⇒ Highlighters (multi-colored)
- ⇒ Dry erase markers
- ⇒ Pencil case
- ⇒ Rule
- ⇒ Wired earbuds
- ⇒ Post-it note (multi-colored)
- ⇒ Glue sticks
- ⇒ Tissues
- ⇒ Hand Sanitizer
- ⇒ Roll of Paper Towels
- ⇒ *For Geometry students only:* 1 math compass

\* Individual teachers may require students to have specific supplies during the school year for projects.

### Note about Supplies

- ◆ Please make sure your child has enough supplies for the year and replenish as needed.
- ◆ Replenishment is often needed in January / February timeframe.
- ◆ Individual teachers may require students to have specific supplies during the school year for projects.

DONATE



- ◆ We gladly accept donations of any school supplies throughout the school year, i.e. tissues, pencils, paper towels, lined paper, sanitizing wipes, ... etc.





## Back to School By the numbers...

### 4. Campus Procedures:

#### ◆ Drop-off and Pick-up times

Every school day will follow the hours of 7:50 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.

When dropping off or picking up a student, the parent/guardian should travel down Main Avenue (which runs beside the convenience store) off North Point Road, make the second right turn into the school's parking lot, and continue moving through the parking lot and drop off/pick up the student at the end of the lot before exiting the lot.

Please do not park in a space because they are designated for student drivers and faculty/staff.

Students may not be dropped off or picked up in the bus loop during morning arrival or afternoon dismissal in order to ensure student safety.

*Students may not be dropped off or picked up in the Volunteer Fire Department's parking lot next to the school campus.*

#### ◆ Daily Entry/ Dismissal Process

Students will enter the building in the morning according to the mode of transportation.

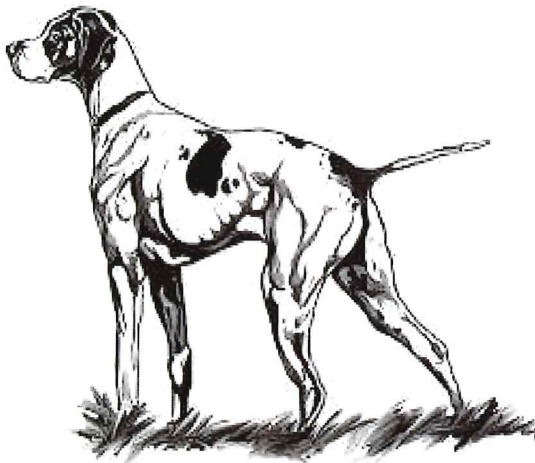
Car riders-front doors outside of the auditorium lobby

Bus riders: front doors outside of the cafeteria lobby

During dismissal, students will be called to exit the building in the following order:

Car riders, walkers, and bus riders in the cottages

Bus riders (bus numbers will be called as they arrive)



### Lockers

#### Academic Wing : \*Change this Year

While students will not be assigned a specific locker to store their belongings, lockers are available upon student request from their homeroom teacher. We do understand that a student might desire a locker to secure their property and avoid carrying around a sizable number of supplies. The student will be responsible for purchasing their own combination lock and sharing the combination with their homeroom teacher in the event that they forget this information. It is not uncommon for incoming middle school students to be anxious about operating a pre-installed lock so by giving these options the intention is to reduce any unnecessary nervousness for the student.

#### Physical Education Wing:

Students will be assigned a physical education locker with a built in combinations. Refer to the combination locker diagram for directions on the next page.



## Philosophy of Middle School Athletics

To provide an enjoyable educational experience for young adolescents based on their developmental characteristics and needs.

The development of self-esteem, citizenship, responsibility, and skills in cooperative and leadership behaviors are positive outcomes of appropriate middle-level athletic program.

## Requirements to Participate

1. Meet the BCPS academic eligibility requirements (2.0 with no more than one failing grade in the marking period prior to try-outs.
2. Completed Physical Examination, signed by physician
3. Completed registration on Form-ReLeaf <http://www.formreleaf.com/>

## Interscholastic Sports

*Would your child be interested in participating in the Sparrows Point Middle School interscholastic sports program for the 2023-24 school year?*

Sparrows Point Middle School offers an interscholastic sports program. Would your child be interested in participating in the Sparrows Point Middle School interscholastic sports program for the 2023-24 school year? Tryouts are open to all eligible middle school students— see schedule below.

The allied programs are designed for students who are interested in playing a sport, but do not necessarily possess the skill or desire to play on a varsity or junior varsity team. Allied sports are co-ed with appropriate rule modifications to ensure a safe and successful non-competitive experience for all students, regardless of ability.

The athletic teams are an incentive/reward for students becoming successful in school. The administration, athletic advisor, grade level team leader, and/or the coach will exclude any contestant who:

- ⇒ Because of bad habit, or improper conduct, could not represent the school in a becoming manner
- ⇒ Has suffered serious illness or injury until that contestant is pronounced physically fit by a physician
- ⇒ Is willfully non-proficient in class work and guilty of poor citizenship.

*If your child is interested in participating in any of these sports, you are urged to get their pre-participation physical completed A.S.A.P. and to return the pre-participation physical to Ms. Ryan.*

Questions about SPMS Sports: Contact: Athletic Advisor,

Ms. Amy L. Ryan, RAA, Email: [abeall@bcps.org](mailto:abeall@bcps.org) & Phone: 443-809-7524

## SPMS Interscholastic Sports Schedule

Season	Sport	Online Registration Opens	Try-outs Tentative Date	Play Day/ Games/Meet Date	Championship event
Fall	Badminton	June 1	Sept. 12	Saturday Sept. 30	Saturday Oct. 21
Fall	Cross-Country	June 1	Sept. 12	Saturday Sept. 30	Saturday Oct. 21
Fall	Allied Soccer	June 1	Sept. 12	N/A	Saturday Oct. 21
Winter	Basketball	October 9	Nov. 15	Tues/Thurs Dec – Feb. 4 p.m. & 5:15 p.m. Approx. 12 games	
Winter	Allied Bocce	October 9	Nov. 15		
Spring	Tennis	February 13	March 12	Saturday April 13	Saturday May 4
Spring	Track & Field	February 13	March 12	Saturday April 13	Saturday May 4
Spring	Allied Softball	February 13	March 12	Saturday April 13	Saturday TBD

Students will practice 4-5 days a week after school. *Allied program:* students will practice 2 days a week after school. Fall and Spring programs will have 1 –2 culminating activities on Saturdays.





## Major Change SY23-24

Physical Education Uniforms **NOT** required..

Students should wear/bring to change into athletic shirt preferably white or grey; black athletic shorts or sweatpants.

## Physical Education Lockers

Students will be assigned a physical education locker with a built in combinations.

Students should practice how to open a locker.

<b>Step 1</b> Turn the dial 2 full turns to the right, so you pass "0" twice.  Then stop at _____. (This is the first number in your combination.) Stop when it lines up with the triangle at the top of the lock.	
<b>Step 2</b> Turn the dial 1 full turn to the left past the first number in your combination.  Then stop at _____. (This is the second number in your combination.)	
<b>Step 3</b> Turn the dial to the right and stop the first time _____ lines up with the triangle. (This is the last number in your combination.)  Pull down to open the lock.	

If the lock doesn't open after step 3, go back to step 1 and try again. Slow down. Take a deep breath. And remember: You can always ask a teacher or custodian for help.

## Physical Education: 2023– 2024

Physical education is a comprehensive instructional program which provides a developmentally appropriate, instructional program for all students that advances the student's knowledge, confidence, skills, and motivation to enjoy a lifetime of healthful physical activity. This comprehensive instruction program will provide for the diversity of student needs, abilities and interests and will include all the following Maryland Physical Education Content standards.

Students shall:

- ◆ Demonstrate competency in a variety of motor skills and movement patterns.
- ◆ Apply knowledge of concepts, principles, strategies, and tactics related to movement and performance.
- ◆ Demonstrate the knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.
- ◆ Exhibit responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.
- ◆ Recognize the value of physical activity for health, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and social interaction.

The goal of BCPS physical education is to develop student motor and social skills, increase fitness levels, and promote a lifetime of physical activity. Students can participate in these movement opportunities providing their attire meets basic safety standards. Appropriate attire during physical education class is essential for safe and free movement during activities. A combination locker will be provided in the locker

Clothing Requirements for Physical Education	
To ensure the safety of all students while maintaining a safe learning environment, the following guidelines <b>must</b> be followed.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Appropriate, safe, and supportive footwear such as <b>sneakers or athletic shoes must be worn.</b> Cleats, Crocs, Snooks, Hey Dudes, open-toed, or open-back shoes of any type are not allowed.</li> <li>☑ Avoid overly loose/baggy clothing and clothing with unnecessary zippers or other features that could become caught on equipment.</li> <li>☑ Refrain from any items with pockets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☑ Refrain from wearing any type of jewelry or items around the neck. This includes long/ hoop earrings, bracelets, necklaces, lanyards, etc.</li> <li>☑ Wear an <b>athletic tee-shirt</b>; white or grey is suggested as they are cooler when the students are outside in the warmer weather.</li> <li>☑ Wear <b>Black colored athletic shorts, or sweat-pants.</b></li> </ul>

## SPMS Intramural Sports

### Intramurals:

Intramurals provide all students with opportunities to participate in selected activities before or after school. Intramural instructors provide enrichment to the physical education instructional program. Students should listen to morning announcements and announcements in class for days and times that intramurals will be held. Students should listen to morning announcements to learn when and where intramurals will be held.

Ms. Ryan, Physical Education/Health Department Chair [abeall@bcps.org](mailto:abeall@bcps.org)

Mr. Szewczyk, Physical Education Teacher [tszewczyk@bcps.org](mailto:tszewczyk@bcps.org)

Mrs. Antonelli, Health & Physical Education Teacher [nantalfy2@bcps.org](mailto:nantalfy2@bcps.org)