

#ThisIsMyMcMeen

WEEKLY FAMILY NEWSLETTER - September 17, 2021

Next Week at A Glance

Monday 9/20	Tuesday 9/21	Wednesday 9/22	Thursday 9/23	Friday 9/24	Weekend
		McMeen Eats at Pie Society 4-8pm - use code MCMEEN25		Teacher Planning Day - No School	



Toys (Pop-its)

We have had some difficulty with students bringing toys, especially pop-its and Pokemon cards, to school and are specifically concerned about students sharing these toys with others. This obviously poses a serious challenge when it comes to COVID mitigation. As such, we are going to implement a **no toy policy at school**. Students will not be permitted to bring or use toys while at school. The only exception is if they are bringing and using a pop-it or a similar fidget to help them focus during class. This tool will then be kept in class and not taken to recess or lunch, and must not be shared with other students. We would greatly appreciate families supporting this policy.

MCMEEN ELEMENTARY

PTO

Next Meeting - Our next Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Meeting will be **this Tuesday, October 12th at 6pm** via [this Zoom link](#).

McMeen Eats is Back! - Our first McMeen Eats for the year will be Wednesday, September 22nd at Pie Society (4615 E Mississippi Ave) from 4-8pm. Order online for pickup using code **MCMEEN25**.

Fundraising Opportunities - For opportunities, see [here](#).

Contact Us!

Email: mcmeenpto@gmail.com

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/McMeenElementary>

Instagram: [@realstudentsofmcmeen](#)

COVID Information and Updates

We have had lots of questions regarding COVID policies and protocols this year. We sincerely hope the information below will help answer some of those.

How to get questions answered:

As always, please know that we are here to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to reach out to **Principal Andria Hinman** at andria_hinman@dpsk12.org or **Nurse Stacia McNeely** at stacia_mcneely@dpsk12.org. Additionally, the Administration team (Principal Andria Hinman and Assistant Principal Lauren Bartsch) are generally outside and available during arrival and dismissal times. We also share a lot of this information at our monthly Collaborative School Committee (CSC) meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at 5pm, and strongly encourage everyone to attend.

How have things changed since last year?

There are several things that are different this year from last year. Below are just a few of the big changes that have occurred, which ultimately impact our planning for COVID mitigation:

- This year we have full classes of students as opposed to the hybrid model we had last year where often only about half of students in a class were in-person.
- There is no SafeAccess program available in the District this year. We noticed that last year the use of SafeAccess forced families to really think about if their child was well enough to attend school. As a result of losing this tool, we have had a lot more students sent to school exhibiting symptoms of COVID. There was one day where we sent home 16 sick students by 9:30am.
- There are no cohorting requirements by the District this year and fewer supports provided for cohorting. For example, we no longer have a substitute assigned to our building or daily central office supports assigned to help out with our building.
- We have noticed a shift in the community, and ultimately our students, around consistency with mask wearing. As a result, we are struggling with students consistently coming to school with masks and keeping them on throughout the day. We are currently giving out about 800 masks to students weekly in order to combat this challenge.
- There is an overall shift in fewer precautions being taken in the world around us in regards to COVID. This has resulted in students contracting the virus outside of school as well as a general increase in difficulty when it comes to enforcing protocols within the building. We fully recognize that a large part of this is fatigue with COVID protocols throughout our society.

What is McMeen doing to prevent COVID spread?

- We are continuing to work with teachers and students to build consistency with mask wearing.
- We have purchased as well as sought out other sources of masks in order to ensure we can give students masks if and when they need them. This includes having boxes of masks at each entry.
- We ensure our procedures adhere to limiting student maskless time while inside to less than 15 minutes. This includes at lunch time.
- Students are spaced at least 3 feet apart in the cafeteria and when possible, in the classroom.
- We are implementing the new no toy policy to reduce the amount of shared materials and possible spread of germs that come along with such activities.
- We are looking into our own version of SafeAccess to implement as a school.
- We are working on positive reinforcement of expectations around masks, social distancing, etc. with students.
- We are advocating for the bringing back of District-wide initiatives that were in place last year and additional supports to help with possible cohorting.



Amazon Wishlists

Do you want to know how to support your kids' classroom and teachers? One good way is to make purchases through the PTO's Amazon Wish List! Items are requested by teachers--both personal and classroom support items are available. These are things that teachers have told us would directly benefit them and their classes! And this way you don't have to wonder if it's the right item! You can put a note in the "gift" section specifying which teacher (or we can refer back to the list!) and items will ship directly to the school. Check it out! <https://a.co/40mQHwW>



ANNOUNCEMENTS

REMINDER Community Clean-up Day - Save the Date! Our Parent Garden Committee is planning a community clean-up day on October 17th from 8-11am.

REMINDER Gifted and Talented - If you would like to have your child test for Magnet Eligibility please follow [this link](#). Only 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students are eligible to take this cognitive assessment. Kindergarten and 2nd grade will be taking the NNAT in October and November. You must register your student by 10/14 using the link above. I will receive a list of students and your student will take the assessment at McMeen in November. If you have any questions please reach out to me at jennifer_cessar@dpsk12.org. Thanks - Jenni Cessar enrichment/GT

REMINDER Cultural Moments Resources - DPS Library Services has put together these resources to help support DPS's celebrating cultural moments. These can be shared with teachers and families and include resources such as ebooks and more.

- Hispanic Heritage Month: <https://www.smores.com/rb395>
- Indigenous People's Day: <https://www.smores.com/8ncp7>
- Disability Awareness Month: <https://www.smores.com/ug3cv>

REMINDER Pumpkin Harvest Festival at 4 Mile Historic Park - This year's Pumpkin Harvest Festival at 4 Mile Historic Park will be held October 1-3. The Pumpkin Harvest Festival is a family friendly event that has been reimagined from the traditional format of the last 10 years to bring in some pieces that allow for a safe environment and new experiences. The entire event is outdoors and will be featuring timed entries with limited capacities. **Use code McMeen2021 for \$5 off Gold VIP tickets. Find more information [here](#).**



American Furniture Warehouse Fundraiser

Did you know that purchases at American Furniture Warehouse help our school fund field trips? **On September 10-19, AFW is hosting a 10 -Day Store Rally where they will donate 2-4% of proceeds directly to McMeen!** PLUS, you might win a \$500 gift card. All you have to do is mention McMeen or our ID **MCMN71** at checkout and they will donate to the school. We use these funds to help fund field trips.