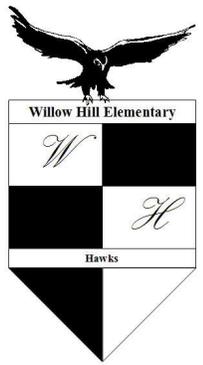


Willow Hill Elementary School
1700 Coolidge Avenue
Willow Grove, PA 19090
215.657.3800



August 20, 2020

Dear Willow Hill Parents/Guardians:

Welcome back! It is my hope that you and your family are doing well and remaining healthy and safe. I am confident that your children and our students have been reading, practicing their mathematics, and are ready for the start of another productive and successful year at Willow Hill Elementary School.

As I prepare for my thirteenth year as principal of the most dynamic and culturally diverse elementary school in the Abington School District, I am proud of our continued progress. This progress, in part, is the result of our shared vision, which is deeply rooted in a culture and climate composed of high expectations for teaching and learning, as well as equitable and consistent opportunities for children to progress, evolve and excel. However, we must not allow success to breed complacency, but rather continue to push forward to achieve greater success.

As parents, you are an integral part of your child's academic development. Your engagement is essential; therefore, I challenge you to become active participants in our learning community. Please log on to our website at <http://www.abington.k12.pa.us/willowhill/> and then click on the PTO link to view opportunities to get involved. Together, we will navigate any challenges and obstacles that the beginning of this school year may bring and remain present in the lives of your children and our students.

On August 11, 2020, the Abington School District Board of School Directors approved a Health, Safety and Instructional Plan for the Fall of 2020 that includes a fully virtual instructional delivery model through Thanksgiving.

I write to provide you with some additional information as we prepare for back-to-school:

Adjustment to School Calendar

Please be advised that at the August 11, 2020 meeting of the Board of School Directors, the Board approved a change to the 2020-2021 calendar that makes September 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2020 (the first four days of school), early dismissal days for students, to allow for professional development in the afternoon. Students can expect to have full days of instruction beginning on Monday, September 14.

Chromebooks

I know many of you have reached out with questions regarding Chromebook distribution and timing. As stated in [Dr. Fecher's letter to families on August 5th](#), devices have been ordered for all students in grades 4-12 as part of the advancement of Abington School District's Digital Transformation Plan, with students in younger grades being able to take home devices from the District's existing supply of Chromebooks.

The new Chromebooks will be arriving on a rolling basis as we head into the new school year. To help prioritize getting devices into the hands of students who have the greatest need first, we have created the following Chromebook Request Form:

<https://forms.gle/EzWsBb3ZfKNcQ57Q8>.

We ask that if you do *not* have a device available at home for your student(s) to participate in virtual learning, please fill out this form for *each* child who is in need. As devices become available, we will accommodate our families in need of a device and will distribute Chromebooks that are available in the District accordingly.

More information about the Digital Transformation Plan, as well as resources for parents/guardians and students, will be available [on our website](#) in the coming weeks.

Teacher Assignments

One of the most exciting parts of going back to school for students is learning the name of their teacher, along with which other students are in their class. Teacher assignments will be posted to Skyward next week. Please see the section below on how to access Skyward Family Access.

Skyward Family Access

Skyward houses information regarding students' attendance, grades, etc. Information is accessible to parents/guardians of Abington School District students through Skyward's Family Access portal. Family Access features include information regarding assignments, activities, discipline, attendance, grades, and student schedules. During this period of remote learning, some school permission forms will also be issued via this platform.

Please note that Skyward Family Access is currently closed as we complete the annual transition of information in preparation for the 2020-2021 school year. Skyward will reopen on Monday, August 24th at 6:00 p.m., at which point you will be able to log-in to access your student's information and update your contact information.

- To find your student’s assigned teacher(s), log into [Skyward](#), and from the dropdown menu at the top left of the screen, select the student (if you have more than one student enrolled) for whom you would like to see the teacher assignment. For elementary students, this information is accessed by clicking the “Student Info” tab from the vertical menu on the left side. For secondary students, clicking “Gradebook” from the vertical menu will bring up your child’s class schedule, which includes the assigned teachers.
- Parent/guardian contact information is also located under the “Student Info” tab found on the left-side, vertical menu. Once in this tab, click “Request Changes” in the top right corner to make any updates, if needed. Phone numbers and email addresses provided through Skyward for parents/guardians will be used for school-level and District communications generated through Skyward and our automated phone system, including in the event of an emergency. Please continue to update the information for your student(s) over the course of the school year as necessary.

If you do not have your Skyward login information—including if your student is new to Abington School District or an incoming kindergartener—login information will be sent to you soon. This communication will also include directions for families regarding what tasks will need to be completed in Skyward in preparation for the 2020-2021 school year.

Supply List

With our plan for at-home learning during the fall of the 2020-2021 school year, Abington School District elementary school principals have developed a list of *recommended* items that your elementary school student may find helpful to aid in virtual learning. These items include:

- a consistent location (desk/table) for your child to work (preferably near an outlet to power the electronic device throughout the day)
- a supply of sharpened pencils, paper, and erasers
- headphones (optional, depending on your child’s preference at home)
- your child’s preferred art supplies (examples: crayons, markers, etc.)
- glue stick/scissors

YMCA Student Support Centers

Families in need of childcare for their grades K-6 students can take advantage of the YMCA’s Student Support Centers, M-F from 7 a.m.-6 p.m. These centers, operated by YMCA staffers who will serve a supervisory role, will operate in Abington elementary schools and are available exclusively to Abington School District students. The cost is \$45 per child, per day, for five days each week (or \$50/child/day for a partial week). For more information and to register, visit the Greater Philadelphia YMCA website: <https://philaymca.org/yssc>. Please note that this page includes information regarding financial assistance as well.

Welcoming Activities

Our teachers and staff are very excited to welcome our students “back” to school! I will have more information to share next week regarding instructional materials distribution, which is currently planned for the first week of school. Stay tuned for a schedule of dates and times.

Resources

- **Handbooks** - As we do every year, we will issue a student handbook this Fall. We are working to update it to align with a virtual learning environment, and will send it out to all families soon. I know many of you have questions about schedules, attendance, and other facets of the school day. Please note that this information will be included within those handbooks.
- **[Instructional Hub](#)** - Located on the Abington School District website, the Instructional Hub will be updated throughout the year with Teaching and Learning resources specific to the Fall 2020 virtual instructional plan.
- **[COVID-19 Support Services](#)** - We understand that this is an incredibly difficult time for our families. The Student Services Department has established a specially tailored website to help families in need during the pandemic, which includes resources ranging from mental health assistance to community aid.
- **[District Communications](#)** - Stay up to date using Abington School District’s various communications resources, including our text messaging system and social media. This page includes instructions on how to update your contact information in Skyward, how to opt-in to our text message alerts, and more.
- **[FAQs](#)** - If you still have questions, please consult the FAQ document available on the Instructional Hub, or you can contact me at 215.657.3800 or email me at damonjordan@abington.k12.pa.us

You are reminded that the first student day is Tuesday, September 8 and that more information will follow as we continue back-to-school preparations. Enjoy the remainder of your summer season and I look forward to working with you and a day when we welcome our Willow Hill Hawks back to school.

Take care,

Damon R. Jordan
Damon R. Jordan, Ed.D.