



Dane B. Despres
Principal

(781) 861-2450
ddespres@lexingtonma.org

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Dear Clarke Community,

Good afternoon! Believe it or not, we are two weeks away from the first day of school! It's hard to believe that summer is quickly coming to an end and it's back-to-school season again. I hope your families have all found time this summer for some fun and relaxation! I'm reaching out today to share useful information regarding the upcoming school year; if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the front office at the number listed above.

Our students' team, homeroom, and locker information was posted earlier this morning via the online parent and student portal [in Aspen](#). To ensure that you can access this information, please check that you can log into your Aspen account(s). If students have forgotten their login and password information, please send an email with the student's full name and grade level to studentportal@lexingtonma.org. In addition, if you have forgotten how to log into your account or if your account is disabled, please contact familyportal@lexingtonma.org with the same information. If you have other questions about the Aspen portal, please refer to [this website](#). **Complete schedules will be distributed to students on the first day of school. Our teams have posted their summer letters, which provide important back-to-school information and a listing of team personnel, [on this webpage](#).**

On Friday, August 26, Clarke will host an open house between the hours of 9:00 and 11:00 AM for incoming 6th graders, new 7th & 8th graders, and their families. We will have a number of 8th grade volunteer student guides present to help you locate rooms, open lockers, and answer your questions about Clarke. We're excited to welcome you all to the Clarke community and help you learn your way around the building!

The first day of school for all students is Tuesday, August 30, 2022 (8:00 AM - 2:40 PM). Bus transportation will be provided for those that have registered for the bus. There will be no school on Friday, September 2 and Monday, September 5 for the Labor Day holiday.

I hope that you enjoy the remaining days of summer. I'm looking forward to welcoming everyone on opening day!

Sincerely,

Dane B. Despres
Principal

Important Housekeeping Item

1. **From the LPS Central Office:** In the beginning of the year, we ask parents/caregivers to review and update critical information through the [ASPEN Family Portal](#). Through the portal, we ask you to review and update the following:

- ☐ Your child's contact information ([How to review](#) & [how to change your child's contact information](#))
- ☐ Update your annual agreements. This includes media permissions and data privacy preferences and LPS handbook & acceptable technology use agreements ([How to review](#) & [how to change annual agreements](#))

Not sure what your user name and password is? Please send an email to familyportal@lexingtonma.org. For additional ASPEN help resources, you can always visit our webpage [here](#).

Our Weekly Family Newsletter: The Clarke Community Update

Starting with Friday, September 2, I will begin sending out weekly updates again via our newsletter, the *Clarke Community Update*. This year, I will be sending families a link to the *Clarke Community Update* each Friday evening. Please be sure to check those weekly mailings for a recap of important announcements, information about upcoming activities & events, and highlights of the learning and activities happening around the building. Many families find it helpful to bookmark the [Clarke Community Update archive link](#), so that it can be accessed at any time. Additionally, you can follow the [daily student announcements at this link](#), which is also located on our website via the Clarke Daily News button on the main page.

Schedule & School Information 2022-2023

Here is a blank copy of our 6-day schedule:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NHLQ4BQgDZiN2RQMOSYoo4lIArT1rcam/view?usp=sharing>

We have prepared [this calendar](#) to help everyone keep track of the 6-day cycle. We also post the “learning day” number of each day on the [Clarke website calendar](#).

We will be reviewing important highlights (Clarke's Five Expectations, our B.A.R.K. values, and information about technology, etc.) of our of our student handbook during the first week of school. Here's the link to this document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BHPp3DrD_uT7NwXXoM6nuOwR1CSN32MDwDyo2-3L7T4/edit

Arrival and Dismissal Information

Student Drop-off and Pick-up:

- School starts at 8:00 a.m. We let students into the building starting at 7:50 a.m.
- Buses start dropping off students at 7:40 a.m.
- Parents can drop off their children between 7:40 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. **There are NOT enough spaces in our parking lots to accommodate parents wishing to escort their children to the building or stand with them until the building opens.**
- Please do not arrive on campus prior to 7:40 a.m.
- **Please be sure to arrive no later than 7:55 a.m.**
- **Please pull all the way forward to the drop-off/pick-up curve in front of the new wing entrance.**
- **Cars need to yield to school buses coming up and down the bus lane. Please check for buses before turning into the drop-off/pick-up area in the front of the school.**
- Cars should arrive for drop off between 7:40-7:55 a.m. and for pickup at or after 2:40 p.m.

Parents who drive students to and from school may use the parking lots by the tennis courts or the lower parking lot (running along the brook). **Please use Brookside Avenue to access the school; do not use the back entrance of the school (via Allen Street) for dropping off or picking up students. For safety reasons, Stedman Road is closed to all traffic and will only be used by school buses for both drop-off and pick-up.** The area designated for drop-off and pick-up of students arriving by car is located along the side of the building near the front and gymnasium entrance. Please be sure not to block the handicapped spaces during drop-off and pick-up and cars should pull up as far as possible towards the gymnasium entrance.

Walkers & Cyclists:

We encourage our students who can walk and bike to school to do so! Bike racks are located in front and rear of the school. In the front of the school, bike racks are located outside the new entrance to the gymnasium, along the side of the school. Students who approach the school from Brookside Avenue should use the sidewalk along the brook taking them over the pedestrian bridge. In the rear of the school, bike racks are located outside the classrooms, along the pathway from Stedman Road.

In the interest of safety:

- Once on the sidewalk, students should walk their bikes to the bike rack.
- Students may not use skateboards, scooters, etc. on school property.

Crossing guards are posted at the intersection of Waltham Street and Brookside Avenue and on Marrett Road at the entrance to the Stedman Path.

Parent/Guardian Information Meetings

We will hold grade-level parent/guardian information meetings in September. All meetings will be held virtually. I will announce the dates in a future mailing and will send a reminder, along with the link, a few days prior to each meeting. The information from these meetings will be posted after each meeting so everyone will be able to access it whether or not they attend.

Student Chromebooks

Student Chromebooks will be distributed to all students on the first day of school. All students in grades 6-8 should take their Chromebooks home each night. We do not have charging stations here at school, so students

should be sure to charge their Chromebooks each night. During the first two weeks of school, we will be reviewing Chromebook norms with all students and will share this information with you as well.

Athletics

Sports are held during the fall, winter and spring seasons. Please see the [Clarke athletics website](#) for more detailed information, including

School Lunch & Breakfast Service

FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR, BREAKFAST AND LUNCH ARE FREE FOR ALL STUDENTS (this does not include any à la carte items). Students and their parents/guardians can pre-order **cold** meals (e.g., made-to-order deli sandwiches and salads) for students using an application called CHOOSI on their Chromebooks. Doing so helps us eliminate lines and keep students safe with speed of service and social distancing in mind. For more information, please visit the [LPS Food Services website](#).

For 8th Grade Families - Graphing Calculator

Please review [this letter](#) from Kathryn Jones, middle school Mathematics Department Head, regarding graphing calculators for 8th grade students.

Clarke PTO Events & Information

The Clarke PTO will host a **welcome back coffee at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 30**. All are invited to attend as we make introductions and welcome in the new school year. We look forward to seeing you there!

Be on the lookout for a separate email welcoming you to the Clarke PTO (www.ClarkePTO.org), an all-parent/-guardian volunteer school support and community building organization. The PTO strives to be a resource for Clarke families, to bring the community together, and to show our appreciation for teachers and staff. Bring your own coffee/tea and come to the front patio at 8:00 AM on the first day of school, Aug 30, to learn more about the PTO and meet other Clarke parents/guardians!

The first Clarke PTO Meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, September 7 at 7:00 PM in the Clarke cafeteria, and they are hoping to host a Clarke Family Welcome Back Picnic on Friday, Sep 16. If you have any questions or want to volunteer, please contact PresidentClarkePTO@gmail.com.

Here's a link to their updated calendar:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13kTPLxI21HYbNChvUDx6VuA1oAOXtIPT/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111464468664892941197&rtpof=true&sd=true>

For families of new Clarke students: The PTO will sell Clarke spiritwear t-shirts at the new student Open House on Aug 26th. These will feature the classic Clarke spiritwear t-shirt design, and will be sold for a similar \$15 price each. We will have shirts on hand that morning. Sale will be first come, first served, with limited quantities/sizes available. These shirts will be available again during our regular spiritwear sale later in the school year.

Other Useful Information

Below are some links that you may find helpful as you plan for the new school year:

- [2022-2023 District Calendar](#)
- [LPS Transportation Department](#)

Upcoming Dates:

Friday, August 26 | Open House – All new students and families, 9:00-11:00 AM

Tuesday, August 30 | First day for all students: 8:00 AM - 2:40 PM

Clarke PTO BYO tea/coffee event: 8:00 AM on the front patio

Friday, September 2 | No School

Monday, September 5 | No School

Wednesday, September 7 | Clarke PTO Meeting, 7 PM (Cafeteria)

Wednesday, September 14 | School Picture Day

Friday, September 16 | Tentative: PTO Clarke community picnic at Clarke

Friday, September 23 | Half Day (11:30 dismissal)

Monday, September 26 | No School

Wednesday, September 28 | Back-To-School Night, 6th grade (more info to follow)

Thursday, September 29 | Back-To-School Night, 7th and 8th grade (more info to follow)

Wednesday, October 5 | No School

Monday, October 10 | No School