

ACPS FAMILY NEWSLETTER

October 31, 2023

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It is October 31 and another Halloween is upon us. I hope you are ready for the “trick or treaters” that will be visiting your houses this evening. We have now completed ten weeks of school and we are well into the school year. I continue to be impressed by our students. They have shown their resilience and have been able to overcome many of the challenges they have faced. I am extremely grateful for the support our families and community have given ACPS and I am looking forward to seeing the great things that we will accomplish this school year.

The Amherst County High School construction and renovation project will begin around November 6, 2023. Construction at the high school is expected to last 18-20 months and should be completed by the fall of 2025. This is an exciting time for our students and community. We are looking forward to the changes this project will bring to the high school and our community. In order to accommodate the construction, the back parking lot at the high school will be closed effective November 1, 2023. The high school administration has notified staff, parents and students of the changes to the parking and driving patterns at the high school. Please see the updated parking and routing diagrams in the newsletter below. During the construction process the entrances to the back of the high school to include the gym will be closed. Winter sports fans will be required to park in the front of the high school and will enter through the main entrance to get to the main gym. More details regarding entry to the building during construction will be shared as we get closer to the winter sports season.

We are in the beginning stages of developing the 2024-2030 Comprehensive Plan. We have formed committees consisting of staff, parents, and community members. We will hold two community forums to get feedback from our families and the community. The first forum will be held in the ACHS cafeteria on November 28 from 6:00 – 8:15 PM while the second forum will be held in the MMS cafeteria on December 6 from 6:00-8:15 PM. I encourage our families and community members to attend one of the sessions to share your thoughts regarding the direction of ACPS over the next six years.

All schools in the division are participating in the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) project again this year. All schools have received their Brook Trout eggs from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Each school will raise the trout throughout the year and they will be released into a local stream this spring. While visiting your student's school you are welcome to stop by our TIC tanks and take a look at the trout as they move their stages of development.

As part of our #ShowUp Amherst initiative, we want to remind our families and students about the importance of good school attendance. Research on student attendance and how it relates to student performance indicates that students who are chronically absent (absent 2 or more days per month) score 18% lower on reading assessments and 25% lower on math assessments. We want and need our students in school. Please do all you can do to ensure your students are attending school.

I also want to encourage our families and community members to volunteer in our schools. We want our families to engage with us and feel welcomed in our schools. Volunteering can take many forms from assisting with car and bus duty, assisting students in the cafeteria, monitoring hallways, assisting teachers, or helping students with their course work. Support our students and become an ACPS volunteer. Information regarding volunteering in our schools is available below.

I continue to be impressed by the work of our students. Although there is always work that needs to be done, I am encouraged by what I am observing. I am confident that if we all continue to work together we will overcome any obstacle that we may face. I hope everyone has an enjoyable fall season and can spend time with family and friends during the Thanksgiving Holiday. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance or if you have any concerns.

Sincerely,

William

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 7 – Teacher Planning Day

No School for Students

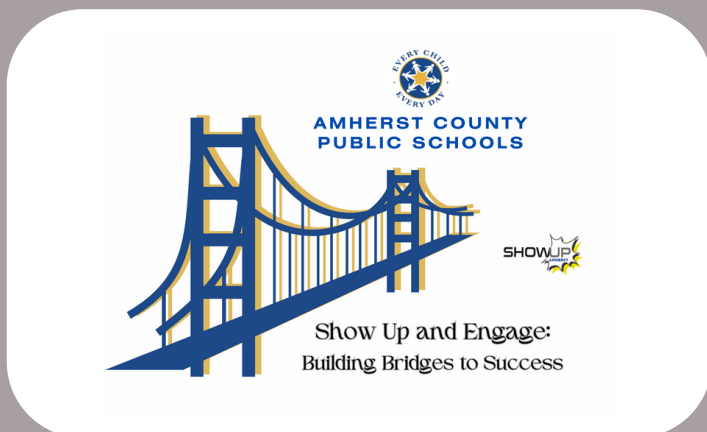
November 22–24

Thanksgiving Holiday

No School for Students or Staff



ALL IN VIRGINIA
and
BUILDING BRIDGES
TO SUCCESS



Visit our website
for more
information!

Students of the Month

September 2023



Skylar Hamilton-Amherst County High School
Adam Gowen-Amherst Middle School
Skylar Rosson-Monelison Middle School
Delilah Davis-Amelon Elementary School
Fynleigh Glover-Amherst Elementary School
Tiara Romo-Ascencio-Central Elementary School
Allison Shumate-Elon Elementary School
Kazlynn Witt-Madison Heights Elementary School
Aria Sprouse-Temperance Elementary School

This program is sponsored by the ACPS Education Foundation with generous funding support from Sonny Merryman!



Our high school and middle school students competed at the Virginia State Fair. Our teams competed in timber sport style competitions and had students place in many events. ACHS took 1st place Overall!! 🏆 Congrats to our FFA students and staff for their hard work and dedication!



Congratulations to AMS Science teacher, Mrs. Lisa Laub, who is the 2023 Middle School Donna Sterling Award winner. This award recognizes exemplary teachers that engage in continuous improvement and is designed to support a professional development plan for the improvement of science teaching. Mrs. Laub is an outstanding educational leader in ACPS and is so deserving of this honor.




Amherst County Public Schools

2023 MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER

DONNA STERLING AWARD WINNER

LISA LAUB

AMHERST MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER

Awardees receive \$4000, presents at the next VAST PDI and will be published in the Science Educator or the Journal of Virginia Science Education.

Congratulations!

OCTOBER IS

DISABILITY HISTORY AWARENESS MONTH

Let's work
together to
create an
inclusive and
accessible
society for all!



DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH

1/5 of all Americans have disabilities, including almost one million Virginians. In October, Disability History Awareness Month activities provide public awareness and an opportunity to create a culture of mutual respect and equal opportunities for all of our students.

Check out our local disability resources by clicking the link below!

[Resources](#)

We celebrated Unity Day on October 18. The day calls on all of us to unite in kindness, inclusion and courage in order to prevent bullying wherever it may occur. One of the most common options to celebrate the day is to wear the color orange. This color symbolizes warmth and safety and has become associated with the day.

Staff and students throughout the division wore orange in support!

UNITY DAY

OCT 18, 2023

WEAR AND SHARE
ORANGE
FOR

#UNITYEVERYDAY
[PACER.ORG/UNITYDAY](https://pacer.org/unityday)





GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

On Friday, September 29, ACPS hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the addition and renovations that will take place at Amherst County High School.

Dr. Wells hosted our School Board, members of the Board of Supervisors, members of the Amherst Town Council, the ACPS Education Foundation, Senator Peake, Delegate Walker, the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Authority, and local business and community leaders. ACPS is grateful for the Amherst County Board of Supervisors' financial support of this project. This event marked the beginning of a wonderful project that will benefit our students, staff, and community.

VIRGINIA FARM TO SCHOOL WEEK

October 2-6 was Virginia Farm to School Week! Our schools featured local produce and proteins during the week and will continue doing so throughout the school year. We will have local apples, grapes, broccoli, snack peppers, salad greens, zucchini and beef. Each school had different Farm to School activities and tastings. Ask your student what locally grown item they had from the cafeteria!

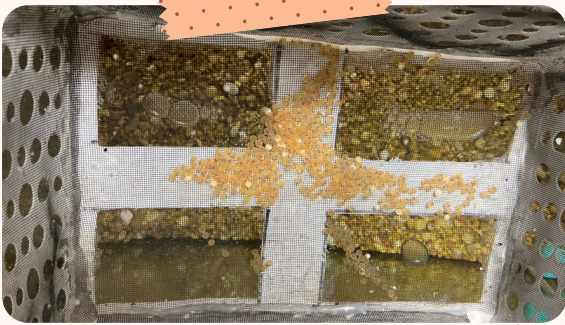


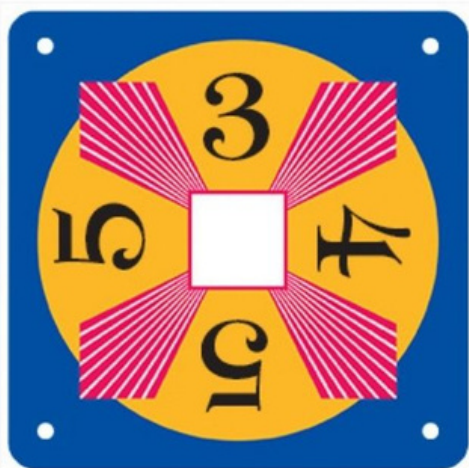
CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION DAY

Happy Custodian Appreciation Day! We are thankful that our custodians not only keep our buildings looking amazing and inviting, but they also care deeply about our students. They can be seen opening milks, zipping backpacks, giving high fives, and much more. They are an essential part of [#TeamAmherst](#) and we rely on them greatly to ensure our buildings are ready each day.

TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

Amherst County Public Schools are gearing up with Trout in the Classroom 2024. Each school is involved in the program to populate the Pedlar River with trout each year. Since 2020, the program has raised and released over 800 trout fries. We are proud of the effort that our teachers and students put into helping the ecosystem of the James River thrive each year. In addition, the teachers and students enjoy the lesson presented by our Superintendent, Dr. Wells, on vertebrates and invertebrates and doing our part to keep the James River healthy.





Math 24 or 4 Numbers game is a great algebraic game for K-12 students. In each puzzle, a player is given 4 numbers between 1 and 13 and the player needs to make 24 with all 4 numbers and $+$ $-$ \times and $/$.

It's a great way to train your brain while having a little bit fun. Pass the phone around with your friends and see who is a stronger mathlete!

Practice Math 24 on
our Apple Device



SCAN ME

Practice Math 24 on
our Google Device



SCAN ME

Save the Dates for the Math 24 Competitions

**Secondary Math 24 -Monday, November 13th,
5:30-7:00 PM (Amherst Middle)**

**Elementary Math 24 -Monday, January 22nd,
5:30-7:00 PM (Amelon Elementary)**



Amherst County Public Schools

COMMUNITY
FORUMS

NOVEMBER 28

Amherst County High School
139 Lancer Lane, Amherst
Cafeteria

Please park at the front of the school

DECEMBER 6

Monelison Middle School
257 Trojan Road, Madison Heights
Cafeteria

FORUMS 6:00-8:15 PM

All community stakeholders are invited to attend and provide their thoughts on the direction of the school division and the priorities of the next comprehensive plan

Literacy Links



Building the Literacy Connection Between Home and School

2023-2024 School Year | Quarter 1

The Goal of Phonics & Word Recognition

Phonics is all about understanding how letters and sounds work together to support automatic and accurate recognition of words. These skills help children become confident readers and skilled spellers.

Learning Sounds: Phonics instruction helps children understand that each letter in the alphabet represents a sound. For example, "b" represents the sound /b/ in ball, and "m" represents the sound /m/ in moon.

More Than Meets the Eye: Even though there are only 26 letters, there are actually 44 different sounds in English. Some sounds, like /sh/ in shoe or /ar/ in barn, are represented by a combination of letters.

Unlocking the Code: With phonics, children learn the "code," or these combinations of letters and the sounds they represent. This helps them read both words they know and new ones they've never encountered before, making reading easier and more fun.

Skilled Spellers: They also discover that some sounds can be spelled in different ways. For example, the long /ā/ sound is spelled different in many words like lane or rain or eight. Learning these helps with spelling too!

Becoming Fluent Readers: As kids get the hang of these letter-sound connections, they become fluent readers, able to read and understand new words they come across.

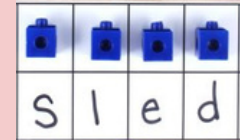
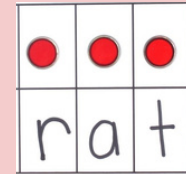
Tackling Big Words: In later grades, they'll face longer words. Learning about the 6 syllable types helps them break these words into smaller parts, making them easier to read and spell. In addition, they'll learn about prefixes and suffixes that can be added to words to change their meaning.

Here are some activities that you can do at home to help support your child's phonics skills as they read and spell words at home.

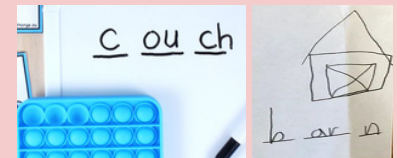
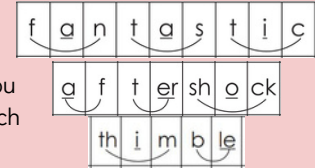
Phoneme-Grapheme Mapping (Grades K-5+)

For this activity your child will spell the word by writing one letter or letter combination in each sound box. Each box represents one sound, not necessarily one letter.

1. Say the word. Have your child repeat the word.
2. Use a small coin or other small item. Have your child push the coin one at a time into the boxes while saying the sounds. Ex: The word sled has 4 sounds, /s/ /l/ /e/ /d/, so your child would move 4 coins into 4 boxes.
3. Have your child write the letter or letter combinations in the boxes used to spell those sounds.
4. Have your child blend the sounds together to read the word.



Multisyllabic Examples



Video #1



Video #2



Resource

Did you know you can also do this activity without boxes? You could have your child draw a horizontal line on paper for each sound they hear in a word. Then on the line, have your child write the letter(s) that represent those sounds. You can even use the pop it toys to have students pop the sounds they hear in the word before they draw the sound lines and write the letters.

Reading Multisyllabic Words - Syllable Chunks (Grades 2-5+)

Does your child read shorter words with ease, but struggle with reading longer words? Does your child read the first part of longer words, then guess the rest of the word? Here's a simple strategy that you can use to help your child break longer words into syllables that make them easier to read.

Video



Start by asking your child these simple questions:

1. How many vowels do you see in the word?
2. Are the vowels together or apart? If needed, you can also ask:
 - a. Do you see a silent e? The 'silent e' and the vowel preceding stay in the syllable together.
 - b. Do you see a vowel team? The vowel team stays together in the syllable.
 - c. Do you see an r-controlled vowel? The r-controlled vowel pair stays together in the syllable.
3. How many syllables will we have? Every syllable must have a vowel sound.
4. Divide the word into syllables. Draw a line for each syllable and write the letters.
5. Use your knowledge of syllable types to read the word.

Resource



6 Syllable Types

- V** vowel team syllable rain
- E** silent e syllable kite
- L** consonant le syllable juggle
- C** closed syllable wet
- R** r-controlled syllable star
- O** open syllable me

fantastic			compensate			newspaper			embezzle		
fan	tas	tic	com	pen	sate	news	pa	per	em	bez	zle



SCAN ME



Math Moments

Meaningful Math Experiences Can Happen Anywhere!



2023-2024 School Year Quarter 1 Focus: Number and Number Sense

What is Number and Number Sense?

Plain and simple, number sense is a person's ability to understand, relate, and connect numbers. Children with strong number sense think flexibly and fluently about numbers. They can:

- Visualize and talk comfortably about numbers. **Number bonds** can help them see the connections between numbers.
- Take numbers apart and put them back together in different ways — e.g. breaking the number five down several times (such as: $5+0=5$; $4+1=5$; $3+2=5$; $2+3=5$; $1+4=5$; $0+5=5$ and so on), which helps your children learn all the ways to make five.
- Compute mentally — solving problems in their heads instead of using a paper and pencil.
- Relate numbers to real-life problems by connecting them to their everyday world. For instance, asking how many apples they've picked at a farm. ("Andy picked 5 apples. Amanda picked 2. How many apples did they pick in all?")

Number sense is so important for elementary math learners because it promotes confidence and encourages flexible thinking. It allows your children to create a relationship with numbers and be able to talk about math as a language. Numbers are just like letters. Each letter has a sound and when you put them together they make words. Well, every digit has a value and when you put those digits together they make numbers!



Here is a video that shares easy examples of number sense routines you can implement at home with your kindergarten through Grade 2 student.

K-2

Let's explore ways to promote number sense with K-2 math learners:

-Estimating to bring math into your child's everyday world. Estimate the number of steps it takes to get from the car to the house or how many minutes you have to wait in line at the grocery store.

-Model numbers in different ways. Seeing numbers in different contexts really helps your child connect with numbers. For example, looking at numbers in a deck of cards or identifying numbers on dice or dominoes without counting the dots.

-Visualize ways to see numbers. Every day ask your child to visualize a number and tell you what they see. Your child will see numbers in different ways. Celebrate all the different ways and encourage them to think outside of the box. An eight can look like a snake or a 10 can be thought of as a baseball and bat.

-Think about math with an open mind. Instead of asking what is $6+4$, ask, "What are some ways to make 10?" This allows for more flexible thinking and builds confidence with knowing more than one answer. Or, you can also ask "Can you make eight with three different numbers?" or "What is 10 more than 22?"

Strong number sense helps build a foundation for mathematical understanding. Strengthening it in the early grades makes it possible for learners to compute and solve more complex problems in older grades. Building a love for math in your children begins with building an understanding of numbers.

Try this quick **Bedtime Math** task to get your child thinking about numbers in a tasty real-life scenario. It has 3 levels: Wee Ones, Little Kids, and Big Kids, plus a "Sky's the Limit" task.



Let's use ten frames to reinforce the Base 10 system:

3-5

Ten frames are a staple in primary classrooms. These two-by-five rectangles can be used to help young students develop number sense within ten. But their uses extend far beyond basic addition and subtraction! Here are three ways that upper elementary students can benefit from using ten frames in the math classroom.

In our base ten number system, each place value is ten times greater than the place value to its right. Ten frames can be used to model this abstract math concept.

For this activity, you will need a ten frame and place value tokens. If you don't have place value tokens, you can easily have students make them.



Begin by modeling a digit in the ones place. For example, to model the number 3, a ones place token would be placed in three of the boxes on the ten frame.



To make a number ten times greater, exchange the ones place tokens for the tens place tokens. By making the place value ten times greater, the new number represented is 30.



Continue by exchanging the tens place tokens with hundreds place tokens (creating 300), and so on.

SHOWUP AMHERST



& BECOME A VOLUNTEER



Join Team Amherst and have a positive impact on the lives of students!

Opportunities

- Greet students during arrival/dismissal
- Assist front office staff
- Monitor hallways
- Lunch duty coverage



These are just a few examples of opportunities in our schools. For more information on how to become a volunteer, please contact our offices or visit our website by scanning the QR code!



Questions? Please contact any of our schools you would like volunteer at!  434-946-9387

Or - Contact Brittany McNerney

 bmcnerney@amherst.k12.va.us

Randolph College and Amherst County Public
Schools proudly announce the

Direct Admission Agreement

In partnership with ACPS,
Randolph is offering any senior
who meets the following
qualifications direct admission
into Randolph College!

In order to qualify, the student
must **successfully complete**
Algebra 2 with a C or better and
have a **minimum cumulative 2.5**
GPA.

Reach out to your high school
counselor to learn more!

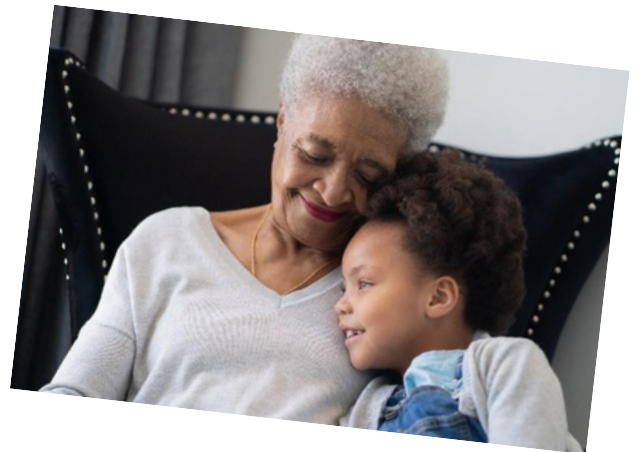


GRANDPARENTS/KINSHIP SUPPORT GROUP

(For grandparents and family members raising other
family members)

November 27, 2023

6pm to 7:30 pm



Madison Heights Library Community Room

200 River James Shopping Center

(Next to Lowe's)

Please RSVP by November 26, 2023 to Wanda PerDieu at

wandaperdieu@gmail.com

or via text or phone call at 434-473-2141



October 24, 2023

Subject: Construction Update New Traffic Pattern & Parking Begins November 1, 2023

To: Our Lancer Families

As you are aware, ACHS will begin construction on our addition very soon. Although we are incredibly excited about this update, we understand that there will be some changes to our day-to-day operations. I will be sending regular updates regarding the construction and any changes that will need to be made to the operation of our school. This first update will provide you with information that you will need regarding transportation, parking, and drop-off/pick-up lines. Please pay special attention to the change in traffic pattern that will take place beginning Wednesday, November 1.

FOR CAR-RIDERS AND STUDENT DRIVERS:

1. In the morning, ALL car-rider traffic and Junior drivers will enter our school through Macadam Road (by the Briar Patch). You may recognize this road as the path you take when you exit from the bottom parking lot after football games. You will not be allowed to drive through Lancer Lane in the morning to drop off students, or to park in the Junior (bottom) parking lot. Parents who are dropping off students should continue up the far right side of the bottom lot and down Lancer Lane in order to drop students off at the CTE entrance closest to the end of Lancer Lane. Please see the attached picture labeled "Morning Drop-Off".

FOR SENIOR STUDENT DRIVERS:

2. Seniors (with a Senior lot parking pass) will enter in the morning on Lancer Lane and will enter the Senior (upper) parking lot at the FIRST gate. This is a change from the current gate that they are currently using. The second gate will be closed and Lancer Lane coming into the school will be blocked after the first gate. We will have a parking attendant checking Senior passes in the morning to allow students into the lot and therefore it is incredibly important for those seniors to display their parking pass as they enter Lancer Lane. Please see the attached picture labeled "Senior Parking".

FOR JUNIOR/SENIOR STUDENT DRIVERS IN THE BOTTOM LOT

3. In the Junior lot ONLY, parking passes will no longer match a specific spot. This is to accommodate our construction worker parking, staff parking, and afternoon car-rider parking. Students with parking passes for the bottom parking lot will have 6-7 rows of parking reserved where it will be first come, first served. Students should NOT park in areas that are designated for staff, construction workers, or afternoon car riders. Please see the attached picture labeled "Junior and Staff Parking".

(continued on page 2)



FOR ALL STUDENTS:

4. When students walk into the building from the bottom parking lot, they should take the normal path through the stadium walkway and into the Senior parking lot. At this point, they will walk to the first gate, closest to the Lancer Lane entrance. There, they will cross Lancer Lane, where our parking attendant will be, and will enter the building through our CTE entrances. Seniors will also enter through the CTE entrances as well. Please see the attached picture labeled "Student Entry From Bottom Lot".

FOR ALL STUDENTS:

5. In the afternoon, students will exit the building through the CTE entrances/exits in order to get to the bottom parking lot. They will take the same path to the bottom lot that they took to enter the building. (Exit the CTE wing, walk through the Senior lot, and down the stadium ramp to the bottom lot).

FOR ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF CAR RIDERS:

6. In the afternoon, parents who pick up car riders will park at the bottom of the parking lot (see attached picture labeled "Junior and Staff Parking"). These parents should wait there until their student has reached the vehicle. At no time should cars be parked on Lancer Lane while waiting on car riders. This will stop traffic exiting our school and will cause a delay in our process. When exiting, parents should take the exit at the top of the bottom of the lot closest to the baseball field (far right on the attached picture labeled "Junior and Staff Parking"). At no time should any cars be exiting the bottom lot on the left side (closest to the stadium). This is where our students will be entering the parking lot and this would cause a safety issue.

FOR ALL:

7. The gate at the bottom of the Junior lot should only be used for ENTERING and not EXITING. This will allow traffic to flow much better.

FOR ALL:

8. None of the exterior entrances/exits on the back of the building will be accessible at any time during construction. This includes the normal car rider entrance/exit as well as the gym entrance/exits. In addition, the back parking lot (by the gym) will not be accessible at all during construction.

ACHS Administration will be speaking with all of our Junior and Senior History and Government classes this week to inform the student drivers of the changes to our process. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out to me at 434-946-2898. **Again, this new traffic pattern and parking will begin on Wednesday, November 1.**

Thank you,

Joey Crawford
Principal, Amherst County High School

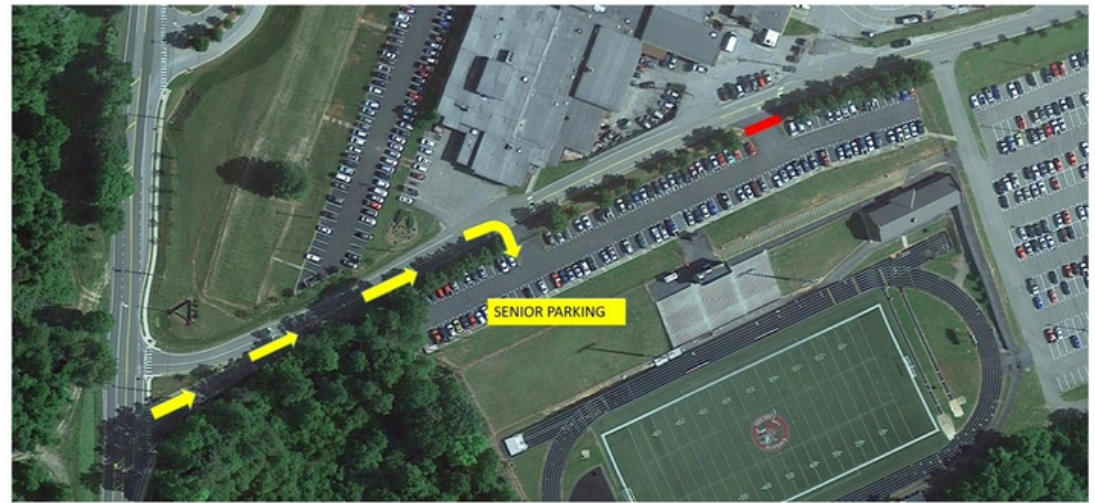
Junior & Staff Parking



Morning Drop-off



Senior Parking



Student Entry From Bottom Lot

