



## WHITMORE LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1077 Barker Rd., Whitmore Lake, MI 48189

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Exceptional, Personalized Education

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Principal Sue Wanamaker | Superintendent Tom DeKeyser

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are excited to share with you how we are expanding opportunities for student growth and engagement at Whitmore Lake Elementary School. For the 2017/2018 school year we are rolling out a new student-centered schedule for students in grades 5 and 6. The highlights of this change are detailed below.

### What does student-centered schedule mean?

Students in 5th and 6th grade will follow the middle and high school time schedule, starting and ending one hour earlier than the rest of the elementary students (7:50 a.m.- 2:35 p.m.)

#### Benefits:

- Provides a first hour block in the morning dedicated to Project Based Learning (PBL) and access to ALL school technology.
  - Project Based Learning is an innovative teaching approach. At its foundation are the four C's: communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. PBL encourages students to dig deeply into a subject, going beyond memorization, and grappling with the concepts and skills fundamental to the discipline.
- Allows students to follow a more traditional middle school schedule, changing classes and teachers in the core subjects (Math, English, Science and Social Studies) and easing the transition to the middle and high school for 7th grade.
- Gives students the flexibility to move within the 5th and 6th grade levels according to their strengths.

### What is going to change?

- Start and end time
  - 5th and 6th grade students will go to school from 7:50 a.m.-2:35 p.m. (Doors open at 7:35 a.m.) *Students must leave the building at 2:35 p.m. unless they are participating in an after school club, band or heading to Kids Club.*
- Transportation
  - 5th and 6th grade students will ride the same buses as our middle and high school students to and from school. This is similar to what we did when our 5th and 6th grades were housed at our Main Street campus.
- Band
  - 5th and 6th grade students will stay after school for band class, instead of arriving before school. They will have the option of riding the bus with the other elementary students at 3:35 p.m. or being picked up/walk home as usual.
    - If your student is interested in joining band, please contact our band teacher, Ms. Fixler at [elisa.fixler@wlps.net](mailto:elisa.fixler@wlps.net).

- After School Clubs and Programs
  - While the programs themselves are the same, getting students home afterwards is much easier. Students who stay to participate in any of the clubs listed below can ride the elementary bus routes at 3:35 p.m., be picked up in the Kiss N Go or walk home.
    - *Club Options*
      - Builders Club: A community service-centered group. Keep an eye out for information sent home from your classroom teacher on how to join.
      - Student Council: A student government organization. Elections will be held in the fall.
      - Homework Club: Students needing extra assistance with core subject areas can stay to get help. More details will be available at Open House.

### **What is going to stay the same?**

- Breakfast
  - As before, breakfast will be available first thing in the morning at 7:35 a.m. for 5th and 6th grade students, whether they are arriving on the bus, walking or through Kiss N Go.
- Building Support
  - WLES staff members will be ready to guide walkers, those being dropped off in the Kiss N Go and anyone who needs help in the office.
  - Teacher Consultants will be available during that early hour, just like the rest of the school day, to work with our students with special needs.
- Specials
  - Students will continue to enjoy our specials including art, music, physical education and guitar.
- Kids Club
  - Kids Club is a great option for before and after school care, and this does not change! It is available from 6 a.m.-6 p.m. If your student wants to ride the bus on the elementary route at 3:35 p.m. or needs care until you are able to pick them up, Kids Club is a great option. For information on pricing and how to enroll, head to [www.wlps.net](http://www.wlps.net) or contact [sue.wanamaker@wlps.net](mailto:sue.wanamaker@wlps.net).

I look forward to an exciting school year as we incorporate these changes into our 5th and 6th grade classrooms!

If you have further questions please contact me at [sue.wanamaker@wlps.net](mailto:sue.wanamaker@wlps.net) or leave a message at 734-449-4464 extension 1000. I will get back with you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Sue Wanamaker, Principal  
Whitmore Lake Elementary School