

Happy First Day of School Gators!

It is officially Greenwood's 50th year, what an exceptional way to begin!! Safe to say there hasn't been another year like it. Administration and staff have been working hard to try to optimize your child's virtual learning experience. There will undoubtedly be some technical difficulties, changes, and annoyances as we all learn to use this new system. I ask that you give yourself, your child, and the staff grace during this time to figure it out together. The common goal is to provide the best possible education for your child, including their well being.

I encourage you all to join the PTA and stay connected throughout the year. One membership is only \$10 and each subsequent membership for someone in your household is an additional \$5. Join now by going [here](#). Now more than ever it's important to reach out. All members of the PTA are asked to update their contact information in our Memberhub directory. The directory is available to members only and it is an amazing resource for all of us, especially this year when reaching out is both so important and also that much more difficult.

PTA meetings will be held virtually for the first semester. Our first meeting will be mid-September, date and details will be posted this week.

Outgoing executive board members

I want to extend a huge debt of gratitude and thanks to Lindsay Vilardo and Christina Conroy for all of their hard work and dedication for the past two years. They not only put in all the time and effort for their board positions but took on many event committee roles as well becoming two of the best fundraising volunteers Greenwood has ever seen! I especially appreciate their help planning for this coming year even after their official term ended.

Similarly, after many years taking on several different positions on the executive board Kandi Barakat has decided not to continue as MCCPTA rep this year. Her helpfulness and expertise were invaluable to the board. Greenwood thanks you all for helping to make our community so great!

Incoming board members

Thank you to the volunteers that stepped forward to fill the Secretary and Vice President position. It is amazing to have so many people willing to help out especially during this time, definitely a sign of how great our Greenwood community is. Candidates will be announced this week by our nomination committee this week to be voted in at our September meeting.

Social Media

As a member of the PTA you will receive monthly newsletters by email as well as any timely information. You can also join our Facebook page for updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/GreenwoodPTA>

In addition there are Facebook pages for each class at Greenwood for grade-specific information and communication.

Kindergarten: [Greenwood Elementary Class of 2026 Mamas](#)

1st grade: [Greenwood Elementary-Class of 2025](#)

2nd grade: [Greenwood E.S. - Second Grade Parents \(class of 2024!\)](#)

3rd grade: [Greenwood Gators Third Grade Parents](#)

4th grade: [Greenwood Elementary Class of 2022](#)

5th grade: [Greenwood Elementary class of 2021](#)

Calendar of Events

Unfortunately we cannot hold any in person events for at least the first semester. We are currently working on a calendar of events for the fall but we need you! We would like to continue as many of our amazing community events as possible. We are looking for volunteers to run virtual Bingo, virtual dance parties similar to our Rock N Roll Recess event last spring, potentially a virtual Fun Run and a virtual book fair. Have another virtual activity in mind? The board would love to hear your ideas! Email Mary at President@greenwood-pta.org.

Yearbook

We are still waiting on Lifetouch to finish printing yearbooks from last year. We just received an estimate of another 4-6 weeks however that is not definite. Once we have a delivery date we will work out a distribution plan. The following is a note from Lifetouch regarding the 2019/2020 yearbooks:

Dear Families,

Yearbooks are a tradition for schools throughout the US and Canada. At Lifetouch, we are humbled to be a part of providing that tradition. We know how important yearbooks are - especially in times like these.

We want to take a moment to acknowledge this year's delayed yearbook delivery is not what you, as our customers expect, nor deserve, from Lifetouch.

We want you to be aware that our primary yearbook production facilities are located in some of the states that are being hardest hit by the pandemic. We have prioritized the safety of our employees; and we are following all state and local health guidelines to create a safe working environment. Social distancing requirements mean that there are fewer people available to work at any given time. These changes have impacted our production schedule in meaningful ways.

We realize this has created a lot of frustration since we are currently unable to provide an estimated delivery time frame for your school's yearbook. Please know our teams are doing everything possible to get your yearbook to you. Shipping is monitored daily. As soon as your yearbook ships, your school will receive tracking information so they can arrange to distribute the yearbooks to the students and families in a manner that is best suited for everyone's safety.

As we navigate COVID-19, our intent is to provide you with a yearbook that your student will treasure for a lifetime. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate this unprecedented time together.

Sincerely,
Lifetouch

After School Programs/Creative Enrichment

For the Fall 2020 semester, our normal after school program carrier, Creative Enrichment, will be offering all of their enrichment virtually, using Zoom. As usual, the classes will last from 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on the specific program. Please see below for specific programs and grades.

Classes will begin the week of October 5th. Most classes will be 5-8 week sessions. Classes will be held in the mornings, afternoons, early evenings and weekends.

Here are the Fall 2020 course offerings:

- SPARK Business Academy - 1 hour - K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th
- Shining Kids Yoga - 45 minutes - K-3rd and 4th- 6th
- Creative Kids Drama - 45 minutes PK - 2nd, 3rd-5th
- JumpBunch - 30 minutes Ages 2 - 6
- Music Start - 45 minutes - K-3rd (Keyboard), 2nd-5th (Guitar)
- Tippy Toes - 45 minutes - Tippi Jam: 3rd-5th, Pop Stars: 1st-3rd, Hip Hop: 3rd-5th. We can also combine Pop Stars and Hip Hop and do one class for grades 1st-5th
- Silver Knights- Chess Club - 1 hour- K- 5

NEW...

Beginning this Fall, we will partner with COOK KITZ, an all-inclusive, educational and delicious cooking project delivery service. Students, along with their families, will now be able to have the Young Chef experience at home.

COOK KITZ complements a child's education, building on skills such as problem solving, math, reading and science as they cook their way through delicious recipes. The first 4 week series, *The Art of the Rise*, has been designed for Creative Enrichment and gives Young Chef families an inside look at the baking process and how utilizing different ingredients impacts rise, taste and texture of baked goods.

The packages will be contactlessly delivered starting September 14th and run through the end of the month (families will purchase a delivery week based on their location). KITZ will include all the ingredients (pantry and fridge), detailed instructions, cooking worksheets and specialty tools or equipment needed to create 4 delicious cooking projects.

Each project provides "choose-your-own-adventure" elements that teach basic techniques paired with culinary imagination and recipe versatility. Specifically, *The Art of the Rise* provides recipes utilizing similar ingredients to create 4-8 different outcomes that all rise in different ways.

COOK KITZ is designed for children aged 3+. Each KITZ offers suggestions on how to get Kid Chefs of all ages involved with each activity. As they become more comfortable in the kitchen, their confidence will grow and they will happily tackle more steps and more kitchen responsibilities.

For more information, please visit our website at <https://creativeenrichment.org>.

Tech Support for Parents

If you are confused about the MCPS technology this fall, you are not alone. A fellow parent within MCPS (H. Braswell) compiled this helpful list of all the various platforms and tech terms.

***Google Apps for Education** (aka G Suite for Education) - Students that are registered in MCPS, are generated an account within Google Apps For Education, with their student login. You can access these google apps in Clever or when your student logs into Google. Google Apps for Education includes cloud based products like Google Docs, Google Slides etc..

***Clever** - Clever is a landing page used to access many educational tools in one location. Tools include Google Apps for Education, the student MyMCPS/Canvas, Synergy portal access and much more. The same student login provided by MCPS, will be used in Clever. Resources are customized per grade. <https://clever.com>

***MyMCPS Classroom** - MyMCPS, is powered by **Canvas**, therefore these two names are used interchangeably. MyMCPS/Canvas, is a learning platform so all classes will be instructed through the MyMCPS classroom. Google Classroom (old information is still visible) is no longer in use this year. MyMCPS Classroom is our district Learning Management System (LMS) that syncs with the Synergy grade book to inform it what subject tiles to create for teachers and students to use. These subject tiles, referred to as myMCPS Classroom courses, are what house the instructional content and instructions teachers provide to students and parents for learning; links to zoom meetings, websites, files, assignments documents, videos, etc... Once logged into MyMCPS/Canvas, you will see the MCPS dashboard (same as last spring). I have been able to access MyMCPS/Canvas through the Synergy portal, Clever and on my mobile device through the Canvas app. The actual daily classroom/classwork will be found here.

***Zoom** (Video communication) – I believe everyone is familiar with this. One important note is sessions will be recorded and available to classroom students for about 72 hours. If you choose to opt a student out of audio and or video recordings (done through the ParentVUE), you must shut off those features when logging into Zoom and the student will not be able to participate in the class verbally or visually but can observe.

***Kami** - Used to make PDF's interactive. Students can annotate, type, record their voice and submit assignments. Teachers may provide a link to an assignment and when clicking on the link, a PDF may open in the Kami app and the students can do their classwork

***Synergy Portals** (Student Information System aka SIS) - This school year, MCPS is using a new platform run by Synergy to access student information. Synergy has different access entry points (aka portals) for parents, students, teachers, and administrators. The entry points are referred to as **ParentVUE**, **StudentVUE**, TeacherVUE, and an AdminVUE portals. The Oasis portal and gradebook will no longer be utilized this year. This Synergy portal allows access to student and classroom information. The same student login and password will be used to access everything needed for the fall virtual learning environment. Student login information will remain unchanged and parents have been sent login access of their own, which must be activated. During the first parent login, you will be asked to update online student registration, which is a replacement of the yellow emergency cards (now referred to as Annual Verification of Student Information). Each parent, whom has custody, education rights and where contact is allowed, was sent an individual activation letter through email or mail so you should have received this information by now. As the grade book and the tools used to schedule students for their classes all takes place in one location as a system (Synergy) now, the integration and sync of information is seamless and instant; in real-time.

Click here to login to either ParentVUE or StudentVUE (also found on the MCPS website):

https://md-mcps-psv.edupoint.com/PXP2_Login.aspx

Once in the Synergy portal (parent or student), you will see a menu for things like Synergy Mail, Calendar, Attendance, Class Schedule, Course History, Grade Book, School Information and Parent Resources. When logging into the ParentVUE portal, you are considered an observer therefore you will not have the same access availability as your student. You can access MyMCPS/Canvas in the Synergy portal, by clicking on the Parent Resources tab and then on MyMCPS Classroom.

There have been noticeable glitches in the system for a percentage of parents. Here is a form to submit if your ParentVue account doesn't include all your kids.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc3RJam5FI3jdbhxmSttrSLB-ybJ3Gwp4sB8dPAwqj1VjmzNg/viewform>

Alternatively you can contact Sandra Carrol in the Greenwood front office by emailing sandra_l_carroll@mcpsmd.org .

*Additional Information:

-Grades: To view classroom grades for completed work, you must be in the MyMCPS classroom. Report card grades can be found under the Grades tab on the main Synergy portal page.

-Calendars: The ParentVUE and StudentVUE calendars differ. The ParentVUE calendar will show information as teachers enter completed work into the gradebook and it is for reporting purposes. The StudentVUE calendar will show assignments due, Zoom links, and allow students to access assignments.

-Apps: Mobile apps are available for ParentVUE and StudentVUE. I also have found them for Canvas (for now).

-StudentVUE Login Info - One student login and password is used to login to all resources.

*Webinar Videos

-Part 1: Introduction to ParentVUE Webinar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9f3wDGM-FMI&list=PLgLV4LUSPzBakhl--IXM51wL_fHzlTuPp&index=2

-Part 2: ParentVUE Online Registration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KsTwJgCnkQ>

-Unpacking your Digital Backpack (about additional educational tools and resources):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrUb7upOrtc&list=PLgLV4LUSPzBakhl--IXM51wL_fHzlTuPp

Parent support sessions are being offered by MCPS

https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1S7qQJcm_zk4yQUtRPPZY7uoo16govBitrtMUPHljav0/mobilebasic

This year definitely looks different and will have it's own unique set of challenges. Let's work together to make it the best year it can be for our kids. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to the PTA, we are here to help.

Sincerely,

Mary Quirion

Acting PTA President

President@Greenwood-pta.org