

WESTGLADES MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHOOL ADVISORY FORUM (“SAF”) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JOINT SAC/SAF 		December 15, 2017		
		SAF MINUTES		
		11000 Holmberg Road, Parkland, FL 33076		
Attendance: Refer to SAC attendance as this was a Joint SAC/SAF Meeting				
MINUTES				
Principal’s Report				
Mr. Matthew J. Bianchi, Principal, Westglades Middle School 754-322-4800				
North Area Advisory Council (“NAAC”)				
Report from most recent meeting – Ms. Elisha Johnson				
<p>Option I School Calendar has been officially selected for 2018/2019 School Year.</p> <p>The School Board approved its calendar for the 2018-19 school year, which will start Wednesday, Aug. 15 — six days earlier than last year. It’s also the first midweek start in recent years.</p> <p><u>Under the new calendar:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanksgiving break runs from Wednesday, Nov. 21 through Friday Nov. 23 • Winter break will start Monday, Dec. 24, 2018 and end on Friday, Jan. 4, 2019 • Spring break is March 25 to March 29 • Schools will be closed on Election Day, Nov. 6 • There are 10 teacher planning days and six early release days • Holidays include Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President’s Day, Memorial Day and two Jewish holidays • School will end Tuesday, June 4, 2019. <p>The calendar also has contingencies for up to five hurricane makeup days, if needed.</p> <p>The new calendar allows the two semesters at the secondary-school level to have nearly the same number of days. District officials say it also will ensure that students can complete final semester exams before the winter holiday.</p>				
Updates & Follow Up Items from Prior Meeting(s):				
Item:	Coral Ridge/Holmberg Intersection Email addresses for City of Coral Springs Mayor and Commissioners for parents to voice concerns on decision not to fund a crossing guard. Mayor Skip Campbell - wcampbell@coralsprings.org ; Vice Mayor Dan Daley - ddaley@coralsprings.org ; Commissioner Larry Vignola - lvignola@coralsprings.org ; Commissioner Lou Cimaglia - lcimaglia@coralsprings.org ; Commissioner Joy Carter – joycarter@coralsprings.org			
Agenda Item 1:		911 Emergency		
On Friday, December 1, 2017 it took three (3) calls to 911 before someone in the 911 Communications Center answered the 911 call for a student having a medical emergency. The issue and concern has been raised with Deputy India – Deputy India was not on campus on 12/01/2017.				

Agenda: Item 2:	“BCPS Wants Your Feedback on K-12 Science Instructional Materials”
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Broward Schools is seeking your input! The District values your feedback on the elementary, middle and high school science instructional materials being considered for adoption. Please contribute your ideas and thoughts and learn about the community review process at <http://bit.ly/2BIIT0y>. Thanks for your help!

Pursuant to SAF Parent request and feedback, below is a summary of the WMS faculty findings (submitted by Ms. Arriola) after reviewing the science textbook adoption materials.

The website link below discusses research that supports the use of physical / hard-cover books and their benefit to student learning. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/02/27/print-ebooks-studies_n_6762674.html The research supports that students do best with a physical book. Most physical books include an online component (virtual labs, digital lessons, etc.) as well. I like the Houghton-Mifflin option for these reasons.

Amplify looks interesting, but a physical book will also help students increase their reading skills in addition to learning science. These books usually have online support in the form of virtual labs, etc. I feel that teachers can create their own project-based learning activities without purchasing a program like Amplify. Creating our own project-based learning activities will allow our department to decide where our money is best spent rather than spending it on supplies that are pre-determined for us and required for the activities from Amplify. Some of the materials supplied through Amplify we already have (ex. hot plates). We feel this is an unnecessary expense and would prefer the freedom to select our own supplies and activities.

We think Houghton-Mifflin is the best option - it provides a physical book with online resources and allows teachers/schools the opportunity to create their own project-based activities and select their own supplies for them.

Agenda Item 3:	Heavy Book Bags / Backpacks
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**It has been requested that we readdress the issue of heavy backpacks
Refer to EXHIBIT “B”**

In the last several months, members of SAF have invested several hours researching and documenting the issues and impacts of heavy backpacks using a variety of sources that included: (i) US Consumer Product Safety Commission; (ii) American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons; and (iii) American Chiropractic Associations Pediatrics Council.

The information has been circulated to the school administration, faculty and staff in hopes that there would be more dialogue and better communication with students on the issue and some proactive solutions.

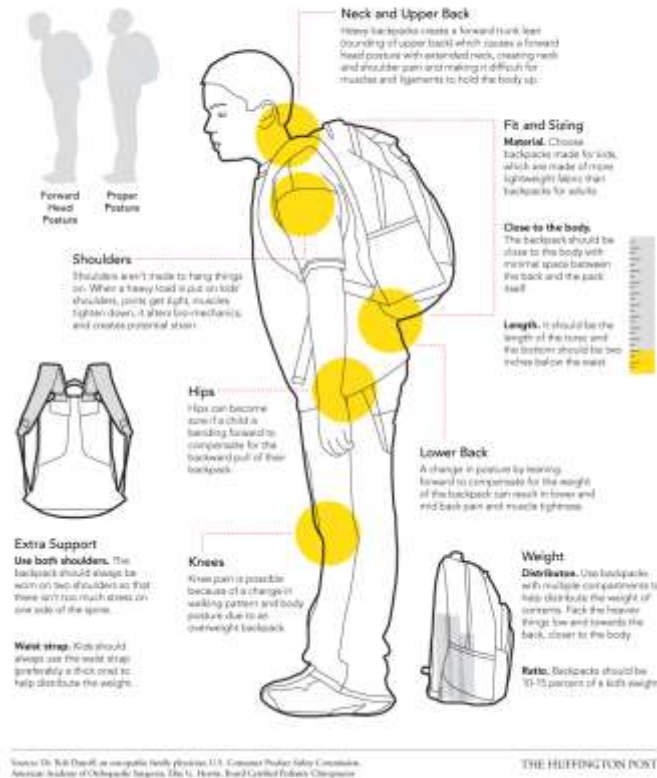
A more aggressive posture from parents may be warranted to avoid the legacy of “kicking the can down the road”. We are proposing a task force be established by Mr. Bianchi or his designate that will develop, implement and monitor a program to reduce the weight of student backpacks. The task force would include representatives from the school administration, faculty, parents and the community. The task force would solicit and engage feedback from health care professionals and establish benchmarks for progress.

Task Force Parent/Community Members:
 T. Allison; D. Gaines; C. James; B. McKenna; S. Tephford-Rush; J. Wolfe



What Heavy Backpacks Are Doing To Kids' Bodies

About 5,000 children visit emergency rooms each year because of backpack-related injuries, and at least 14,000 kids are treated for them. While not every kid will go to the hospital because of heavy backpacks, overweight loads can cause neck, back and shoulder pain and more. Below, see what is so dangerous about kids carrying heavy backpacks — and what parents can do about it.



Meeting Adjourned @ 9:30 AM (Joint SAC/SAF)

Next Meeting: Friday, January 19, 2018

Respectfully submitted by:

Jeff Wolfe

BCPS Legislative Update: It is very important that we stay informed of proposed Federal & State Education issues that impact our public schools.

This week in Tallahassee the legislature met for the final round of pre-committee meetings. The House PreK-12 Innovation subcommittee discussed the Tax Credit Scholarship along with school voucher programs across the nation.

The legislature has received presentations on the Governor's education budget and the House has already said that they will pass a "simplified" version of the budget. The Houses' main concern with the Governor's education budget is its reliance on the local required effort to fund additional student funding. The Senate was more receptive.

Proposals to term limit school board members and to end the election of district superintendents has passed the Constitution Review Commission Education Committee. These proposals now head to the commission's Local Government committee.

In Washington, Congress has failed to reauthorize funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Congress has extended funding for CHIP by attaching a rule to the continuing resolution spending bill that averts a government shutdown until December 22. This rule would allow the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide reserve CHIP funds to the states most in-need. As of last week, the Government had given \$1.2 billion of the \$3 billion in reserve CHIP funds to 15 states and Washington, DC. The House has passed a bill to continue the program, however the Senate has not due to disagreement on how to pay for it.

Reports from MACPAC project that Florida will run out of CHIP funding sometime in January. More than 27,000 children in Broward County and approximately 2.5 million statewide are insured through CHIP subsidized programs including Healthy Kids, MediKids, and Children's Medical Services Managed Care Plan.

The Senate narrowly passed a tax bill on Saturday, December 2 that would provide incentives to private school parents through tax-free school savings accounts while curtailing the deduction for state and local taxes that fund public schools. The Senate Tax bill would bar school districts from using cost-effective, tax-free "advance refund bonds" to refinance school bond debt. The two versions (the House passed a tax bill on November 16) now head to conference where select lawmakers from both chambers will work to unify the bill.

Provisions regarding the DREAM Act have yet to pass the legislature. If they are not included in the year-end spending bill, the chances of legislation that allows children protection from deportation will have a slim chance of passing as a standalone bill. Broward County has approximately 19,500 DACA eligible immigrants.

The Dangers of Heavy Backpacks — and How Kids Can Wear Them Safely

By **Jessica Samakow**

Between studying, homework and extracurricular activities, going [back to school](#) may make kids feel like they have the weight of the world on their shoulders. And sometimes, they literally do. After you pile a lunch, school supplies, binders and textbooks — which typically weigh 3.5 lbs each — into your child's backpack, the load he or she is lugging around could be huge ... and potentially dangerous. [According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission](#), at least 14,000 children are treated for backpack-related injuries every year.

[The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons](#) recommends that the weight of a backpack should be less than 10-15 percent of a child's body weight, but that isn't always the case. Too often, children don't wear their packs correctly, increasing risk of injury. "Improperly used backpacks may injure muscles and joints and can lead to severe back, neck, and shoulder pain, as well as posture problems," orthopedic surgeon and AAOS spokesperson Daniel Green, MD, told The Huffington Post. (Though, backpacks will *not* cause scoliosis, Dr. Green stressed.)

It's easy to spot symptoms of a load that's too hefty for your child, adds Dr. Rob Dan off, an osteopathic family physician. If kids grunt when putting on or taking off the backpack, have red marks on their shoulders from the straps, or if they complain that their shoulders, arms or fingers are "falling asleep," those packs might just be too heavy.

But don't fret, injury is preventable and it *is* possible for kids to carry backpacks comfortably. First thing's first: Dr. Elise G. Hewitt, president of the American Chiropractic Association's (ACA) Pediatrics Council, recommends shopping at a sporting goods store because employees know how to fit backpacks.

And though kids might object, Dr. Hewitt stresses the importance of using waist straps. "Shoulders are not designed to hang things from," Dr. Hewitt told The Huffington Post, pointing out the reason indigenous people carry things on their heads. By using the strap, the bulk of the weight can be carried on the hip bones, rather than on the shoulders.