



DuFief Elementary School
 15001 DuFief Drive
 Gaithersburg, MD 20878



DUFIEF NEWS

Volume 7, Issue 1

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

September 3, 2009

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Instrumental Music Meeting for 4th/5th Grade Parents



Wednesday
September 9
7:00 p.m.

A Wonderful First Day!

Our first day of school was amazing! 405 excited and happy children had a very successful day! Many thanks to our dedicated staff for all they did to prepare for our new school year. We enrolled 28 new students (grades 1 - 5) and 42 kindergartners this year (two kindergarten classes). We welcomed 39 students in our special education Learning Center (K - 5) and look forward to meeting 27 Pre K students in our special education speech and language program (not included in our 405 total enrollment).

Please join us in welcoming Miss Kirstie Pringle, our new 4/5 teacher in our Learning Center. Miss Pringle comes to DuFief with many experiences. Congratulations to Mr. Yates and his family with the birth of Tysen James Yates, (7lb. 1oz.) born on September 2!

Thank you to all of our parents who attended our first PTA meeting of the year this past Tuesday. We had the opportunity to meet our new families, and hear parents share all of the wonderful PTA programs and events our children will experience this year. We are very grateful to our families for all they do to support our school. We are hoping to reach 100% membership in the PTA this year. A special thanks to Mrs. Bridget Pavlak, our new PTA president, for her leadership, dedication, and efforts as we begin this new school year together.

I am very pleased to share with you the fact that we made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on the 2008 Maryland School Assessment (MSA). Each spring, children in grades 3, 4, and 5 are assessed in math and reading, and an individual score of basic, proficient, or advanced is achieved. We are so proud of our children and grateful for your support in achieving this success. We will share more about the MSA and other measures of our students' success at a future PTA meeting.

As we begin this school year together, the health and safety of our children, families and staff is foremost on our minds. MCPS will be giving the seasonal flu vaccine (FluMist nasal vaccine) or seasonal flu shots to all of our children on Sept. 23 with parent permission. Please read the four-page information/consent flyer sent home with your children this past week. There is no cost for this flu vaccine for elementary school children. We must receive the consent form by Sept. 11 for your child to receive this vaccine. This is not the H1N1 flu vaccine. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. *(continued on page 2)*

If your child is absent...

Please call the school by 9:15 a.m. We do have an answering machine, so calls may be made earlier than our office is open. Also, please call if your child is going to be late. Thank you very much!



Cafeteria News!



Snacks will be available in the dining room at lunch time very soon. In my next newsletter, we will itemize the snack items for sale during lunch.

Did you know? If you do not want your child to purchase snacks using the money you have put in your child's account, you can block certain items on your child's account. Please inform Mrs. Lee, our cafeteria manager.

Mrs. Lee, our cafeteria manager, is requesting parents to write phone numbers and their child's PIN number on checks for the cafeteria. Thank you!
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call! Thank you!

Wear Sneakers for Safety!

Please send your children to school each day wearing sneakers! The children are running and playing at recess and/or have physical education. Other types of shoes slip off and may cause serious injuries. Think, safety before fashion! Thank you!



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A Wonderful First Day!

We are also encouraging best practices for hand-washing, coughing, and sneezing. Please help us to reinforce these good habits at home and school.

We are very excited about this school year! As I write this newsletter, it seems as if we never left for the summer. The children are happy, excited, and engaged in learning as if they didn't miss a beat since June! Thank you for sending your children to our school. We will keep them safe, help them learn and grow, and celebrate their accomplishments and successes!

Many thanks to the PTA Sunshine Committee and our parents who prepared a wonderful "Welcome-Back-to-School" breakfast for our staff last week! This special event was very much appreciated and a wonderful way to begin our school year together!

I look forward to seeing all of you at our PTA Back-to-School Picnic on September 11 and our Back-to-School Night on September 16. Please enjoy the upcoming Labor Day weekend with your family and friends!

Sincerely,



Back-to-School Night



Our annual Back-to-School Night is scheduled for Wednesday, September 16, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Teachers will present information in two, thirty-minute sessions, one beginning at 7:00 p.m. and the second presentation beginning at 7:40 p.m. This is a great opportunity to meet your child's teacher and learn about the curriculum and grade level expectations. You may want to carpool or walk, since parking will be limited. Please do not park in the fire lanes in front of our building. We are looking forward to seeing you!

Guidance Corner

I hope you and your children had a fantastic summer! I am looking forward to working with you all this school year. Here is some homework advice to start off the year.

How can I motivate my child to do their homework?

Are you tired of arguing, nagging and struggling with your kids to get them to do their homework? If so, here are the 3 laws of homework and 8 homework tips for you.

Law #1: Most children do not like to do homework. Do not try to get your child to like it, but focus on getting them to do it.

Law #2: You cannot make your child do it. You can not make your child learn. However, you can assist them. Send positive invitations. Invite and encourage your child by using the ideas that follow.

Law #3: Too many parents see homework as the parent's problem. So, they scream and shout. Have you noticed this does not work? Our responsibility as parents is to provide children with an opportunity to do homework and provide structure.

Tip #1: Eliminate the word homework from your vocabulary. Replace it with word study. Have a study time instead of a homework time.

Tip #2: Establish a study routine. This should be the same time every day and your children should have some input on when this will be.

Tip #3: Keep the routine predictable and simple. For example, have a warning that study time is approaching, clear the study table, and empty their backpack and supplies.

Tip #4: Allow children to make choices about homework. Do you want to study right when you get home from school or after dinner?

Tip #5: Help without over-functioning. Only help if your child asks for it. Don't do the work for your child. When your child says, "I can't do it," suggest they act as if they can and let them pretend like they know and see what happens. Then leave their study area and see if they can handle it. If they still can't do it, you can ask:

"What do you get?", "What parts do you understand?", "Can you give me an example?", "How could you find out?"

Tip #6: If you want a behavior you have to teach a behavior. Disorganization is a problem for many school age children. If you want them to be organized you have to invest the time to help them learn an organizational system. Their job is to use it. Provide direction and correction when necessary. If your child needs help with time management, teach them time management skill. Help them learn what it means to prioritize. Help them experience the value of getting the important things done first.

Tip #7: Replace monetary and external rewards with encouraging verbal responses. Make positive verbal comments that concentrate on describing the behavior you wish to encourage.

Tip #8: Use study time to get some of your own responsibilities handled. Keep the TV off! This may distract your child. Study time is a family commitment. If you won't commit don't expect that your children will.

Good luck!
Suzanne Pape
School Counselor



DUFIEF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Mrs. Dorothy J. Reitz, Principal
Mr. Harry Williams, Assistant Principal

*LEARNING TO LIVE,
LIVING TO LEARN*

We envision a DuFief Elementary School community where staff and parents enthusiastically support students in mastering academic and social skills that guide them to become productive, lifelong learners.



Mark Your Calendars!

Sept. 7 - No School - Labor Day!

Sept. 11 - Back-to-School Picnic

Sept. 11 - Wootton Cluster Football

Night 6:00 p.m.

Sept. 16 - Back-to-School Night

Sept. 23 - Books and Bagels - 8:00 a.m.

Sept. 23 - Seasonal Flu Vaccine

Sept. 23 - Principals' Coffee - 9:00 a.m.

Sept. 28 - No School - Yom Kippur

Friendly Reminders

- **Box Tops for Education** - Please save your box tops! There will be a drawing once a month for students to earn a prize. Students should write their name on the back of the box tops and send them to the office. Each box top is worth 10 cents! Last year, this special project raised over \$800 - that's a lot of box tops! Thank you!
- **HELP!** Please write your child's name on his/her lunchbox, thermos, containers, etc. that are sent to school. This will help us to get the lunchboxes in the correct teacher basket. Thank you!
- Piano Classes at Montgomery College, Rockville Campus are beginning the week of Sept. 12 for students in grades K - 3. Call Sharon Wolfgang at 240-567-7264 or 240-567-7917.
- A September calendar and health information flyers are attached for your reference!

