



Dr. Sally K. Ride Elementary  
21301 Seneca Crossing Drive  
Germantown, Maryland 20876  
301-353-0994



Christopher Wynne, Principal  
Nichola Wallen, Assistant Principal

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) by Parents 2007-2008

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### 1. **How is my child doing?**

Review your child's class work and homework regularly. When your child brings home his/her interim report, discuss your child's progress with him/her. Stay in contact with the teacher in the way that works best for you (i.e. make an appointment to discuss your child's progress in person, write a letter, use email, or call school). Sally Ride's phone number is 301-353-0994.

Additional references for parents:

- *A Parent's Guide to Grade \_\_\_* This document was sent home with each child in the first day of school packet.
- The grade level newsletters inform parents of the learning expectations for the upcoming quarter of school.
- The Montgomery County Public Schools web site (<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us>)

### 2. **My child often needs additional help with their schoolwork. Should I hire a tutor? Where can I get help for my child in reading and math? My child is on grade level but I'm still concerned about his/her comprehension.**

You may want to try the following suggestions first.

- Contact the classroom teacher to discuss classroom performance (strengths and areas needing improvement). Discuss what is being done at school and how you can support your child's learning at home.
- Ask the teacher to explain and model how to use effective reading or math strategies.
- Take your child to the public library, use math and reading computer programs, if possible, and most importantly, read to your child.
- Talk about math at home as opportunities naturally occur throughout you and your child's day (i.e. counting, cooking, planning your daily schedule, buying groceries, sharing supplies). Review basic facts with manipulatives and flash cards - both are important.
- Have your child read to you and ask your child questions to help with comprehension (Infer, clarify, summarize, make predictions and connections).

Montgomery County Public Schools has a partnership with The George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. to provide The Saturday School. The mission of the program is

to accelerate students' mastery of academics, specifically reading, language arts, and mathematics. The Saturday School locations closest to Sally Ride are Northwest High School and Gaithersburg High School. There is a fee for this program.

**3a. What does above grade level, grade level, and below grade level mean? How was the grade level determined by assessments, testing, and class work?**

These designations on the quarterly report cards are one of the many ways teachers inform parents about a child's academic progress in reading and math. During each marking period, teachers work on specific curriculum objectives. Students show what they know in many ways, including oral discussion, written assignments and performance on quizzes and tests. Refer to *The Parent's Guide to Grade \_\_\_\_* for additional information.

- On grade level: Students are consistently instructed on grade level.
- Above grade level: Students are consistently instructed above grade level.
- Below grade level: Students are consistently instructed below grade level.

As always, if you have a question or concern about your child's academic progress in school, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

**3b. My child's progress in reading is either shown by a number (level 12) or a letter (letter P). What do these numbers and letters mean? How will I know if my child is performing on grade level?**

Reading levels begin at level 1 and move to level 16. These levels are divided into 4 categories according to the characteristics of text (amount of words on a page, length of sentences, vocabulary, etc.)

- Early Emergent (EE) Levels 1-3
- Upper Emergent (UE) Levels 4-9
- Early Fluent (EF) Levels 10-16
- Fluent (F) The levels change to letters J-Z.

The following chart shows the level at which your children would meet benchmark for each of the four marking periods at each grade. A student's level is determined by the ability to *fluently* read a particular level with 90% accuracy. Of equal importance, they also need to *demonstrate* (either orally or through writing) *comprehension* of what was read.

If you have questions about reading levels in general or the specific level at which *your* child is reading, please contact the teacher for further information.

**How do I know if my child has met the reading benchmark for each quarter?**

Note: Numbers or letters indicate the current guided reading instructional text level.

<u>Quarter One</u> Reading Level Target Chart	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Slightly Below</b>	<b>Significantly Below</b>
K	1 or higher	n/a	n/a	n/a
1	8 or higher	5-7	4	3 or below
2	L or higher	J or K	16-18	15 or below
3	O or higher	M or N	L	K or below
4	S or higher	P, Q, or R	N or O	M or below
5	V or higher	S, T, or U	Q or R	P or below

<u>Quarter Two</u> Reading Level Target Chart	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Slightly Below</b>	<b>Significantly Below</b>
K	1 or higher	n/a	n/a	n/a
1	12 or higher	8-11	5-7	4 or below
2	M or higher	K or L	J	18 or below
3	P or higher	N or O	M	L or below
4	S or higher	P, Q, or R	N or O	M or below
5	V or higher	S, T, or U	Q or R	P or below

<u>Quarter Three</u> Reading Level Target Chart	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Slightly Below</b>	<b>Significantly Below</b>
K	2 or higher	1	Non-readers	Learning letters/sounds
1	16 or higher	12-15	8-11	7 or below
2	N or higher	L or M	K	J or below
3	Q or higher	O or P	N	M or below
4	T or higher	Q, R, or S	P	O or below
5	X or higher	U, V, W	S or T	R or below

<u>Quarter Four</u> Reading Level Target Chart	<b>Exceeded</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Slightly Below</b>	<b>Significantly Below</b>
K	4 or higher	3	2	1
1	J or higher	16-18	12-15	11 or below
2	N or higher	M	L	K or below
3	Q or higher	P	O	N or below
4	T or higher	Q, R, or S	P	O or below
5	X or higher	U, V, W	S or T	R or below

**3c. What are the math levels?**

In addition to report cards, math levels are shown on Unit Assessment Progress Reports sent home at the conclusion of each unit. These assessments are divided into categories by indicators that are being assessed and levels are given for those categories. Unit Assessment levels are indicated by the following:

- **Complete Understanding:** Student scored 90% or more of the possible points for the category assessed
- **Developing Understanding:** Student scored 50 - 89% of possible points for the category assessed
- **Minimal Understanding:** Student scored less than 50% of possible points in the category assessed

**4. How is my child's behavior?**

Contact the teacher. Let the teacher know if you have a specific concern. Also, let the teacher know that you want to be informed if a concern arises. Discuss the Keys to Success (listed in the school discipline policy) with your child. The school's discipline policy is a guide for expected student behavior. Ask your child to give examples of ways he/she demonstrates the Keys to Success at school.

**5. What can/should I do to help my child be more successful?**

- Stay positive! Build your child's self esteem.
- Provide a consistent schedule to complete homework. Provide a separate and quiet place for homework to be done.
- Participate in as many school activities as possible.
- Talk about school with your child. Ask questions about your child's school day.
- Provide "at-home" examples of what's happening in school. Explain how you read and do math in your daily life. Share your strategies for success with your child.
- Be aware of your child's socialization skills. Are there needs that should be addressed?
- Make sure your child has all of the necessary school materials and completed homework every day.
- Read to your child. Write with your child. Do math with your child. Show your child that you are a reader, writer, and mathematician, too.
- Review graded work with your child. Discuss the strengths and areas of need. Develop an action plan to help your child improve.
- Stay in contact with the teacher (i.e make an appointment to discuss your child's progress in person, write a letter, use email, or call school). Sally Ride's phone number is 301-353-0994.
- Make sure your child eats breakfast and is dressed appropriately for the weather, school temperature, and/or specials team classes (art, music, and physical education).
- Visit our school web site often <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/schools/ridees/>

- Review and discuss your child's report card with your child.
- Read the Principal's Newsletter as well as your child's grade level team's newsletter (at the beginning of each quarter).
- Discuss, model, and enforce Sally Ride's Mission Statement at home.

**Mission Statement:** We are a diverse learning community comprised of educators, students, and parents who have high expectations and strive together to achieve high standards of life-long learning for all students.

**6. My child is bored and finishes his/her homework in five minutes? What can be done to challenge or accelerate achievement?**

- Inform the teacher of your concerns.
- If your child has a hobby, expand on the hobby with a self determined project (ex. instrument, science projects, & sports).
- Use the next grade level's workbook (math, reading, etc.) available in stores.
- Make sure your child is independently and completely understanding homework before adding additional challenges.
- Go to the library/bookstore to get a reading selection that your child is interested in to read independently. Ask comprehension questions as they read. Make up a game board with questions about the book at the end.
- Be sure to monitor work sent home to see if his/her work in the classroom matches what you see at home.

**7. How can I find out about drama, safety patrol, the variety show, Junior Great Books, or other school and PTA programs?**

- Look for flyers and newsletters sent home via backpacks.
- Call the school (301-353-0994) to contact the activity sponsor.
- Attend PTA meetings when your schedule permits.

**8. Other students are bullying my child. What should I do?**

Contact the school and let the teacher, counselor or administrator know what is taking place. The parent will be requested to complete a form. Designated school personnel will be assigned to investigate the bullying incident. After a thorough investigation, a plan is usually developed to prevent the incident from reoccurring.