



The Stonegate SplashRiding the Waves of Success

THE PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER FOR STONEGATE FAMILIES

STONEGATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
14811 NOTLEY ROAD
SILVER SPRING, MD 20905
301.989.5668



A Message from Ms. Fladung

Students in Montgomery County are assigned to public schools based on their place of residence or in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are expected to attend their assigned school. However, changes from one school to another are permitted for students who are exempt or who are granted a change of school assignment based upon unique hardship. Some reasons that may be considered for an approved transfer, include:

- **Documented, Unique Hardship**
- **Sibling:** Older sibling attends requested school in the regular program absent a boundary change.
- **Continuation:** Middle school students on an approved change of school assignment may continue to that school's feeder pattern high school, except when affected by boundary change or consortium choice guidelines. To continue in the feeder pattern from middle school to high school, a new change of school assignment form must be submitted. (Elementary school students on an approved transfer transitioning to middle school are not exempt and must document a unique hardship.)
- **Exempt Programs:** Student selected for an exempt program.
- **Family Relocation:** When a family moves within Montgomery County, preference to remain in the original school will be considered to complete the current school year only.

Please note that by accepting a change of school assignment, the parent or guardian accepts responsibility to provide transportation.

The transfer process begins in the home school, where parents may request an assignment change form and the Change of School Assignment Information Booklet that describes the process and provides useful information. Assignment change forms and the information booklets will be available in schools beginning the first week of February. Special programs that do not fall under the transfer guidelines are listed in the information booklet. Every effort will be made to notify parents of the assignment decision in May.

Friday, February 5, 2010

Audra Fladung, Principal
Keena Howell, Assistant Principal

Lucille Ellis, Acting AP

Special Points of Interest:

- *Valentine Parties will take place on Friday, February 12, beginning at 1:45.*
- *School will be CLOSED on Monday, February 15 in honor of Presidents' Day.*
- *Family Science Night is scheduled for Friday, February 19 from 6:00-8:00.*



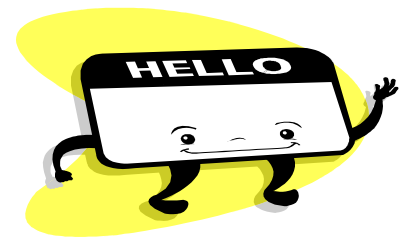


Want to Speak or Meet with a Teacher?

We value the home-school connection at Stonegate. When families take a vested interest in their child's schooling, the child reaps the benefits! Should you have a question or concern regarding your child's progress, please feel free to call and schedule an appointment. We respectfully ask, however, that you do not arrive at a teacher's door before, during, or after the school day wishing to meet without

an appointment. Teachers use the time before and after the duty day to plan, organize materials, analyze data, and to meet with colleagues. This time is highly valued and is limited! As in any profession, an unannounced visit can often disrupt the day. In addition, when not given notice, the staff member will unlikely be able to give you the full attention your visit may require. By requesting an appoint-

ment and providing advanced notice for a meeting, staff members can adequately prepare to address your questions and concerns. We appreciate your support and the extension of professional courtesy.



Report Cards Recently Distributed

Report cards for the second quarter were distributed on Thursday, February 4. Please take the time to review your child's progress and to set goals for the upcoming quarter. We encourage all of our children to celebrate their successes and to identify areas for improvement.

Kindergarten Orientation

We will host our annual Kindergarten Orientation on **Friday, April 16 from 9:00-3:00 pm for families with students who will be 5 years old ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2010.** A letter with additional information is currently being developed and will be sent home within the next few weeks. Kindergarten Orientation focuses on creating a stress-free, informal experience for parents and incoming students. During orientation,

parents will have an opportunity to meet teachers, complete registration, and learn briefly about the kindergarten program. Students will have an opportunity to work on kindergarten related tasks and to meet other incoming peers. **Classes WILL BE cancelled for current kindergarten students in order to accommodate the orientation day. Please make arrangements for your kindergarten student that day.**

Please note that Early Entrance to Kindergarten (EEK) applications will also be accepted for children who will be five years of age between September 2 and October 15, 2010. *According to MCPS policy, consideration will NOT be given for children with birthdates beyond October 15. There will be NO appeal process for children with birthdates beyond the October 15 window.*





2 Hour Delay? Now what!



A delayed opening means that schools open two hours later than scheduled. For Stonegate, this is 10:45 a.m.; students will be considered late at 10:50 or after. **School building doors will open at 10:30 to receive students. Please DO NOT drop students off at school prior to 10:30 am, as there is no staff supervision available before this time.** All buses operate on the same delayed schedule and, therefore, the pick-up times are **two**

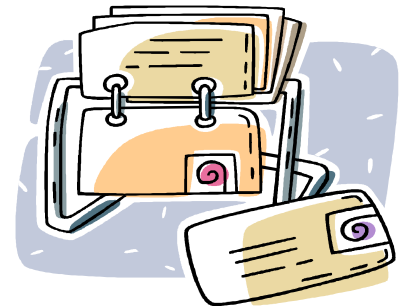
hours later than normal. Parents should continue to check for radio, television, or Web announcements in the event a decision is made to delay the opening of schools or to close schools for the day. This decision is made at 7:00 a.m. Likewise, please listen out for possible early closures. When an early closure is announced, students are dismissed at 12:35.

Now is the Time to Make Updates

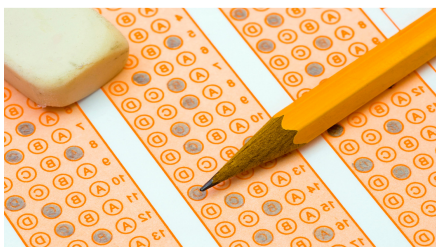
Now is a great time to inform the office of any updates in telephone numbers or addresses. It is imperative that we have current information in the event of an emergency. Unfortunately, it is also that time of year when household income for many families may change and this is especially true with the economic downturn. Please remember that students may apply for free and re-

duced-price meal benefits at **any time during the school year.** If a family or household applied for meal benefits during the first semester and was not approved, they may reapply at any time. The Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meal Benefits is available in a number of languages and may be found on the Montgomery County Public Schools website:

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/foodserv/farms/application.shtm



Winter MAPR Administration



Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are currently completing the winter administration of the MAP-R. The MAP-R is

one tool that teachers use to diagnose and monitor reading achievement of students. MAP-R results help to identify skills and concepts students have learned and help to diagnose instructional needs. MAP-R results help to identify skills and concepts students have learned and help to diagnose instructional needs. Grade level teams will use this winter administration

data to find out whether an individual student, or an entire grade level, is making satisfactory progress in the basic reading skill areas and to identify instructional needs. School-wide MAP-R is currently posted on our data center board, located in the front hallway.





Core Values

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Collaboration
- Commitment

Mission Statement

Stonegate's mission as a caring community is to foster the growth of life-long learners by communicating high expectations and standards through respect, flexibility, and collaboration.

Vision Statement

The Stonegate Community will be committed to a multicultural learning environment that motivates and supports all learners to achieve their greatest potential. We will collaborate respectfully to develop a standard of excellence that promotes high expectations for all learners.

Farewell to Dr. Ellis

We'd like to extend a warm 'thank you' to Dr. Ellis for serving as our Acting Assistant Principal over the last few months. She has been a wonderful asset to our school and our community. Her commitment to our students and our families has been greatly appreciated. We wish her well in her next "adventure"!



Public Comment Sought on Parental Involvement

The Board of Education has requested community comment regarding its Policy ABC, *Parental Involvement* and the regulatory framework for ABC-RA. The policy sets forth guidelines for encouraging parent and family involvement in the school community to support children's education, healthy development, and well-being. The policy was updated to remove regulatory language and align with research-based national standards for family-school partnerships. A copy of the draft policy and regulatory framework are available through

the Public Information Office by calling 301-279-3853. You also can access the documents on the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/policy.

Individuals who wish to provide comments should respond in writing by Tuesday, April 20, 2010. All responses should be sent to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 122, Rockville, Maryland 20850. The responses will be shared with the members of the

Board of Education.





Follow Up from the PTA Meeting

The following questions were posed at the most recent PTA meeting:

- **Have the medal ceremonies been discontinued?**

Yes. The gold medal ceremonies in grades 3-5 were discontinued in November.

- **Does the “no peanut” policy apply to lunch as well?**

We recently sent information home regarding the increased number of students suffering from peanut and tree-nut allergies. In an attempt to accommodate those students, we have requested that students do not bring peanut/nut products for snack or classroom celebrations. It is during snack time and classroom celebrations, that food products are often shared among students and allergic reactions can occur. We have not made a similar request regarding lunches at this time. We are better able to separate affected students in the cafeteria to avoid contact.

- **Is there a cursing issue in third grade?**

There have been student and staff reports in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade of students using inappropriate language at school. For the most part, this language is being used by students in social situations on the playground and buses, and in the lunchroom, bathrooms, and hallways. Grade levels have been addressed through counseling lessons and meetings with administration. School staff has also met with individual students and their families regarding the concerns. However, the school cannot do it alone. We need students to take ownership for their behavior and for families to be responsive when mistakes or poor choices have been made. We know that such mistakes will occur and want to empower our students to learn from those mistakes and to improve their behavior. The discipline policy clearly states, *“Students will use positive and respectful language and actions at all times. The use of profanity, put-downs, name-calling, threats, or the spreading of rumors is grounds for disciplinary action. In addition, teasing, threatening, sexual harassment, and bullying are not tolerated in the school environment and could result in consequences.”* Therefore, it is important that ALL parents discuss this important issue with their children. Inappropriate language can be hurtful and can create a negative climate for all. We ask that you reinforce the expectations and the school’s core values at home.

- **Are there background checks for volunteers? Is there a time when a child could be alone at any point with a parent volunteer?**

School/parent volunteers are not required to complete a background check in MCPS. At the beginning of each year, Stonegate holds an orientation meeting and training for school volunteers. Volunteers are provided information regarding school policies, procedures, and expectations. Volunteers have no access to confidential student or personnel information and are never assigned the responsibility for disciplining students. Volunteers are most often used to support classroom clerical and instructional needs. The volunteers are under the supervision of the classroom staff or office staff during these times. In the case of mentoring, which requires parent permission for participation, students may be 1:1 with an adult volunteer in various areas of the building. However, staff members regularly circulate through rooms being used and help to monitor adult-student interactions.

