



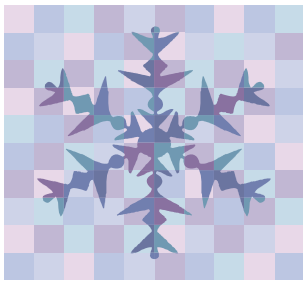
The Stonegate SplashRiding the Waves of Success

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



Alert MCPS is a way that you can receive text messages or e-mail from Montgomery County Public Schools during weather-related emergencies and other major events that impact school system operations. Alert MCPS is administered by Montgomery County Public Schools and is part of the Montgomery County Alert System. You can sign up for this service through Alert Montgomery. Although signing up for Alert MCPS is free of charge, your wireless carrier may charge you a fee to receive text messages. Contact your wireless carrier to learn more about wireless text messaging and any associated costs. Alert MCPS will deliver important emergency alerts to you on all electronic devices that you register. They may include: e-mail account (work, home, other), cell phone, text pager, smart phone (BlackBerry, iPhone) or wireless PDA. Alert MCPS messages are available in both English and Spanish. Emergency messages from Montgomery County's Homeland Security Department will automatically be sent to you as a subscriber to the Alert MCPS system. For more information, visit:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/emergency/sources/alertmcps/>

Baby, It's Cold Outside!

When the weather outside is cold, please send children to school adequately prepared for outdoor recess. Students will go outdoors for recess on all dry days that are above the 32-degree freezing mark. Dressing in layers is the best way to stay warm in the cold. Consider sending children with hats and gloves, as well. Both help to protect sensitive areas from the cold. Children are also reminded to keep items with them during play; our Lost and Found tends to fill up quickly!



Friday, January 8, 2010

Audra Fladung, Principal
Keena Howell, Assistant Principal

Lucille Ellis, Acting AP

Special Points of Interest:

- *In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, there is NO SCHOOL on January 18.*
- *The 5th Grade Winter Concert will be held on Thursday, January 21st at 10:00 am AND at 7:00 pm.*
- *Testing for the Highly Gifted Center at Drew ES will take place on Tuesday, January 19 at Stonegate.*
- *Students will attend the Quarter 2 Town Hall Meeting on Friday, January 22 beginning at 8:50.*
- *January 25th is a Professional Day for staff. NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS.*



School Improvement Planning Updates

Staff members continue to work toward improving student achievement, increasing respectful and responsible student behaviors, and using the writing process to improve writing coherency and skill level. For example, teachers meet weekly to discuss student progress, and are meeting quarterly for content data chats. In addition, staff members have received in-house staff development training on using the 6+1 Traits to implement the writing process.

Most recently, Dr. Erin Jurand, former Stonegate teacher and recipient of the National Literacy Teacher of the Year award, modeled how to use literary text to develop strong ideas for writing. As we continue our focus on writing, teachers are also providing students with quarterly, grade-level writing prompts and are assessing the writing pieces using the Ideas rubric. The analysis of those drafts help to inform instruction and to identify areas of writing

strength and weakness. Finally, our school improvement efforts are supported by our paraeducators as well. For example, our paraeducators have been trained in teaching reading strategies for increasing fluency levels, improving comprehension, and developing strong decoding skills. Our next School Improvement Team meeting will be held on February 22 and will focus on performance results from the first semester.

Save the Date! Winter Concert Coming Soon

Our fifth grade chorus will perform for students and families on **Thursday, January 21st**. The first performance will be held at **10:00 am** in the All Purpose Room. An evening performance for families will be held at **7:00 pm**, also in the All Purpose Room. We hope that you are able to join us for this special event!

Lunchroom Goals and Expectations

Our goal is to create a safe and orderly lunch period where students can enjoy their lunch and interact positively with their peers. As a school, we have put in a number of systems over the last few years to improve the lunchroom environment. We have shared expectations with students orally and in writing, rewarded classes with monthly Silver Spork treats, and acknowledged outstanding behavior through the use of “afternoon shout-outs” on the PA system. We have also designated a time-out table which addresses individual students who may be experiencing difficulty

in demonstrating their core values, and a lunch-time “detention” to model appropriate behaviors. Finally, we have given students requiring additional time for eating, an opportunity to finish their lunch beyond the allocated time. As a result of such strategies, there has been an improvement in the overall climate of the lunchroom. We do, however, need your help in reinforcing the expectations with our students. Please remind children that they are expected to stay in their seats while eating, to request and use passes for exit, to keep their areas clean, and to use appropriate table talk

voices. While silent lunch is not supported and will not be regularly implemented, quiet clean up will be. It is important that students clean up quickly and quietly, as there is no transition time between lunch periods. It is also important that students can hear the directions given and any announcements that need to be made. With your continued support, we will be better able to provide a respectful eating environment where all students are valued and interacted with in a positive manner.





Budget Information

Our Superintendent, Dr. Weast, has released his proposed operating budget for next school year. The recommended budget proposes no new initiatives but allows our school and our school system to maintain the services and programs we are currently providing. The only increase – about 1 percent – is to help fund MCPS’ continued growth in enrollment. Given the economic challenges at the state and county levels, the future of Dr. Weast’s proposal is very uncertain and before the budget receives final approval from the County Council and the Board of Education, the district could be forced to make

some very difficult cuts. With his recommendation, Dr. Weast and the budget team – which included our employee associations and PTAs – released a list of areas that could be impacted should cuts to the budget need to be made. These are not final recommendations and we are hopeful that we will not need to make any reductions. We want to maintain the high level of service to our students that has yielded such outstanding results in our school and our system. However, we must be prepared. With all of this uncertainty, it is more important than ever that our parents and community members are fully in-

formed about the budget and know exactly how to make their voice heard. A budget website has been created that includes a video presentation by Dr. Weast; the full budget book, as well as a summary; frequently asked questions and much more. Please take the time to learn more about Dr. Weast’s proposal and make sure the members of the Board of Education and the County Council know your priorities and your concerns. You can visit the website at <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget/>.

Change in Dismissal Plans?

If your child will have a change of plans at the end of day such as being picked up instead of riding the bus or riding home with a friend instead of riding home with you, please send in a note to your child’s teacher on the morning of change. Lately, we have received many calls during the day notifying us that there will be a change in plans for students that day. When calls such as these are received, we must interrupt the classroom to com-

municate the change and ensure each student gets the message. At Stonegate, we try our very best to preserve instructional time in classrooms and refrain from interrupting as much as possible. When a planned change is to take place, please send a note with your child instead of calling. We appreciate your help!



After School Academy, Session II



Registration forms for session 2 of the After School Program will be available

today January 8. Registration is free and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. All registration forms are due by Wednesday, January 13. This semester students will have fewer options to select from. Options include, but are not limited to: Homework Club, Book Club, and Black Saga. We continue to thank our staff members who have once again VOLUNTEERED their

time to support our students and their academic goals. We truly could NOT do it without them! Please contact Ms. Elaraj, Staff Development Teacher, with any questions regarding the After School Program.





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SCHOOL HOURS: 8:50 A.M - 3:05 P.M

Core Values

Respect

Responsibility

Collaboration

Commitment

UMD Students Observe and Support Stonegate

We welcome 6 students from the University of Maryland's Teaching and Education program. These students will observe in a variety of classrooms and will learn more about the field of education throughout the month of January.

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.

Have You Updated Your Child's Lunch Account?

We currently have a number of students arriving to school each day with insufficient funds for lunch. It is crucial that students are sent to school with a prepared lunch from home or have an ample amount of money in their SNAP account. Account statements are sent on a regular basis with students who have a low lunch balance. Please note that it is the parent/guardians responsibility to refund money loaned to students and to place additional money in accounts to cover the cost of future meals. In

addition, we have a number of students "choosing" not to eat. Please support us in advocating for proper and necessary nourishment. Students can become lethargic and easily distracted when they have not eaten. If you have any questions regarding your child's lunch balance, please contact the cafeteria.

