



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

Welcome back! It has been a great first week! Teachers and students have been busy establishing routines, setting goals, and participating in pre-assessments and curriculum instruction. Mrs. Glawe and I have had the opportunity to visit each classroom and have been impressed by the active and engaging lessons already being implemented.

We currently have 442 students enrolled and our class sizes are beginning to stabilize as some families are continuing to enroll and others have moved away.

We are looking forward to continuing the many initiatives that have marked our success over the last few years, including: access to rigorous curriculum, flexible grouping, differentiated instruction, re-teaching and enrichment opportunities, ongoing monitoring of student achievement, and school-wide student incentives. Likewise, we will continue to offer the Highly Gifted Center reading curriculum to qualifying students in grades 4 and 5, Junior Great Books in grades K-5, William and Mary reading instruction in grades 2-5, an academic after-school program, a mentoring program in grades K-5, and refined lunchroom and recess procedures. We will also continue our school-wide Peace Days, 5th grade leadership roles, and a comprehensive character education program, including new, monthly class meetings.

We are eagerly anticipating **Back to School Night on Tuesday, September 21 for K-2 students and our LFI students, and Wednesday, September 22 for grades 3-5.** Our general session will begin at 7:00 pm in the All Purpose Room. Parents will then be dismissed to individual classrooms. This is an opportunity for parents to formally learn about their child's curriculum and daily activities. During conferences in November, parents will learn from the teacher how their child is progressing academically, socially, and emotionally. You will have an opportunity to schedule your conference at Back to School Night.

The staff at Stonegate is committed to making the most of these very important elementary school years. You are a major contributor to your child's school success, and we look forward to working together to provide the very best educational program for your child.

Friday, September 3, 2010

Audra Fladung, Principal

Carla Glawe, Principal Intern

Special points of interest:

- *There is no school for students on Monday, September 6, Thursday, September 9 and Tuesday, September 14.*
- *Fourth and fifth grade parents can learn more about the instrumental music program at a meeting on Tuesday, September 7 at 9:30 in the All Purpose Room.*
- *Back to School Nights are scheduled for September 21 (K-2 LFI), and September 22 (3-5) at 7:00 pm.*
- *Our Volunteer Orientation will be held on September 10 at 9:15 in the Media Center. Come to learn about volunteer duties at school, equipment, and confidentiality poli-*





Data and School Improvement Plan

Our School Improvement Team, including parent representatives, met over the summer to review performance data and to revise our school improvement plan for the upcoming year. We celebrated our many successes, including meeting AYP for all subgroups on the MSA reading and math! In addition, we increased the reading performance of our English Language Learners by 30% and in math by 19%. Our Hispanic students also increased their performance in reading by 14%. Finally, we decreased our office referral rate by 5%. And the success list goes on and on! I look forward to sharing more of our data at Back to School

Night.

We also agree that there is ALWAYS room for improvement. In particular, we noted areas of need for our Hispanic students and our students receiving special education services in the area of math. As a result of our analysis, we identified three main goals:

- To meet AYP and to exceed the 2011 AMO in reading and math, with special emphasis on our Hispanic and special needs students
- To reduce our discipline referrals by 15%, and

- To use the writing process and the 6 +1 Traits to improve writing coherency and skills

We have put a number of processes in place to achieve our goals and will be monitoring our progress quarterly throughout the year. Our School Improvement Plan will soon be posted on our school's website. We look forward to celebrating many successes along the way!



Homework for Parents: Important Information and Forms

In your child's backpack this week, you were sent important information and "homework" for parents. Please read, complete and return these important forms to help ensure the safety and well-being of your child(ren). You should have received the following:

White Emergency Card Sheets

It is very important that these sheets are filled out thoroughly. Please check the names, addresses, and phone numbers very carefully for accuracy and update the information as needed. In addition, emergency contact names and numbers are required. These information sheets will be used regularly by the main office staff, teachers, and the health room technician. They should be returned **IMMEDIATELY and updated of any changes throughout the year.**

Application for Free/Reduced Lunch

Complete and return immediately. See the eligibility chart on the back page and if your family does not qualify, please discard the form. There is one form per family and will be sent home via backpack with the youngest or only in family. Students who received free/reduced meals last year are eligible to continue in the program until the end of September. However, **new applications must be filled out yearly to continue eligibility.**

Request to Withhold Directory Information

The MCPS Request to Withhold Directory Information is attached and must be returned in the school office no later than September 10.

Stonegate Homework Policy

This document should be reviewed carefully with your child. If you have questions about homework, please discuss them with your child's teacher. Grade level homework expectations will be discussed at Back to School Night.

Stonegate Discipline Policy

Review with your child VERY carefully. After being signed by each of you, please return it to school by September 10. Please discuss the expectations and consequences as defined in the policy.

Pest Management Notice

Attached, too, is the 2010-2011 Pest Management notice. Please review.





Lunchroom Procedures

Staff members and parents have been working together to create an efficient and orderly lunch period that provides opportunity for socialization and sufficient time to eat. Please note the following lunchroom policies and procedures:

Cafeteria-prepared lunches are available daily for \$2.50. We recommend that students have ample money in their individual accounts each week. Account notices are sent home each Friday.

Students who owe money to the cafeteria will receive a cheese sandwich until the cafeteria is reimbursed.

Students may purchase milk through the lunch line by bringing \$0.60 daily. **Students purchasing milk must have cash; milk purchases cannot be deducted from the SNAP account.**

A snack cart will be available twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students may bring small amounts of cash to purchase a snack, including chips, ice cream, and juice. Students will be permitted to purchase **one snack only**.

Students are not permitted to share lunches with peers.

Student behavior will be positively rein-

forced through a lunchtime incentive known as the "Silver Spork Award". In order to earn the award, students are asked to: use inside voices, stay seated, use manners, raise their hand for help, keep their area clean, and clean up silently.

Have you heard of mylunchmoney.com? Parents are able to put money into student lunch accounts online! Check it out!

We are always looking for volunteers to assist in the cafeteria. Please let us know if you are interested.



Peace Days Continue at Stonegate

Students will continue to work together this year to "keep the peace"! In addition to celebrating positive student behavior through the Shark Tank awards and the Silver Spork award, we will continue our Peace Day program. A Peace Day is a day when all Stonegate Elementary students follow all core values: Responsibility, Respect, Collaboration, and Commitment. Working as a team, the goal is for students to avoid being

referred to the office due to inappropriate behavior. Each day that all students achieve this goal, the Peace Wave increases and a special announcement will be made at the end of the day. The Peace Wave will monitor the accomplishments of Stonegate students. It will be on display for all to see as they enter Stonegate. In the shape of a wave, it will represent a single bar graph with increments starting at 10, leveling out at

100. Every time a Peace Day is achieved, the Peace Wave will increase in number. As we reach our established goals, students will be rewarded with special celebrations and awards!!! Last year, we enjoyed Pajama Day, free seating, a DJ dance party, and a kickball game! We can't wait to celebrate this year!



Student Drop Off and Pick Up

The student school day begins at 8:50 and ends at 3:05. In order for students to be ready to begin instruction, it is important that they arrive to school on time. **Students may be dropped off at school beginning at 8:30. There are no adults on duty to supervise students before this time..** Students walking or being dropped off in grades K-2 should enter through the main doors and report directly to the All Purpose Room for line-up. Staff members will supervise the lines until 8:45, at which time the students will be dismissed to their

classrooms. Students in grades 3-5 will line up in designated hallways and will be invited into classrooms at the 8:45 bell. All bus students will enter through the side entrance to the All Purpose Room and will report to the appropriate line up area. **Students arriving after 8:50 will be considered tardy.** Dismissal will begin at 3:00, following the afternoon announcements. Parents meeting walkers should do so outside the school's main doors. It is important to keep the main hallway clear during this time for students. Parents arriving in cars

should pick up students using the car circle. **Parents SHOULD NOT LEAVE THEIR CAR UNATTENDED**, doing so creates an unsafe dismissal and causes traffic delays on Notley Road. Bus riders will be dismissed from their classrooms as buses arrive. Students remaining at school after 3:15 will be asked to call home for prompt pick up, as we do not have staff supervision for students left at school beyond 3:15. We appreciate everyone's **cooperation and support!**





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

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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.

Visiting a Classroom

We welcome parents into our building and our classrooms! Visits to classrooms should be arranged through the main office with at least 24 hours notice given. When visiting, it is important to respect the learning environment and the confidentiality of student performance within the classroom. Classroom visits are not a time to conference with the teacher. If a parent-teacher conference is desired, please contact the teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time. We appreciate your cooperation and support.

Safety and Security

Safety and security are top priorities at Stonegate. Therefore, when visiting, please remember to always enter the school through the main entrance doors and to stop by the main office. **All visitors MUST sign in and receive a visitor's sticker before proceeding to classrooms and offices in the building.** Staff members have been encouraged to stop any and all persons in the building that do not have the appropriate identification.

To further keep our school a safe learning environment, staff and students will practice safety drills throughout the school year. We are required

to hold 10 fire drills throughout the year. In addition, we are required to practice Code Blue and Code Red drills. Code Blue is a term used to alert staff when an emergency/crisis exists at or near a MCPS facility. When the administrator announces a Code Blue, all students are accounted for in an instructional area. While students and staff await further directions, classroom instruction continues. During a Code Blue, lockdown does NOT occur.

Code Red is a term used to describe an emergency/crisis at an MCPS facility. Code Red alerts staff that immi-

nent danger exists inside or outside the building, and requires moving to an immediate lockdown mode. It requires all students to be accounted for and under supervision.

Please talk with your children about these drills and what they mean.





The NEW Visitor Management System

A new access control system (ACS) has been installed at Stonegate Elementary, *and will soon be operational*. This initiative to enhance school-based security is a component of the Montgomery County Public Schools six-year capital improvements plan which includes installation of an ACS in all elementary schools during the next three years.

The ACS consists of a surveillance camera installed at the school's main entrance with a second camera at another entrance. Signage will direct visitors to push a button to alert main office staff of their arrival. A remote locking system, controlled from the main office, will allow entry into the building during the period between students' morning arrival times and afternoon dismissal times. When a visitor arrives during these times, they will be prompted to press an alert button at the main entrance. Office staff will communicate with the visitor and provide controlled entry into the school. All visitors will be instructed to report to the main office to sign-in. Visitors arriving at the secondary entrance will be instructed to enter through only the main entrance. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the ACS, all other entrances to the school building will remain secured at all times.

Visitors will report to the main office to sign in using a new automated system that replaces the current paper/pencil sign-in/out logs for visitors. Driver's licenses will be scanned, and those without identification will manually enter their information. All visitors will receive a badge to wear while in the school building and are expected to return the badge before leaving the building.

The safety and security of our students and staff are a MCPS and Stonegate priority. This new system is intended to enhance MCPS security measures to ensure a safe and secure learning and working environment. If you have questions regarding this system, please contact the staff of the Department of School Safety and Security at 301-279-3066.

Release of Children

For the safety of all children, it is requested that parents who wish to pick up their children to attend after-school appointments do so **before 2:45 p.m.** **Students will not be released between 2:45-3:00.** When picking up students prior to dismissal, parents must sign them out in the office. The student will be called from the classroom to the office. For safety reasons, no student will be dismissed directly from the classroom. **Students will not be released to unknown parties.** If there are any changes to your child's regular p.m. schedule, please have all arrangements made before the start of the school day. If it is necessary for a student to be picked up by someone other than the parent, the school must receive written permission from the parent. If in a special circumstance, a student who normally walks, must ride a bus, or vice versa, **the student must bring in a note** from the parents to be signed by a member of the administration or classroom teacher. If an emergency should arise during the day which changes the dismissal plan for your child, please call the school as soon as possible, but **no later than 2:30 p.m.**, to ensure adequate notice for your child. Please review with your child that he/she is never to leave school during the day without the permission from the office and the teacher.



UPDATED Math Pathways at Stonegate: What Parents Need to Know

There are many different paths that students can take in math, as acceleration can occur at various times throughout a student's mathematical studies. However, an accelerated class, where above-grade level indicators are taught and assessed, may not be appropriate for all students. **Such classes typically move at a more rigorous pace and require a high level of independence.** Additionally, students are assessed on above-grade level indicators, which can be quite challenging. It is important to remember that ALL students have access to the accelerated indicators, both in the on-grade level and the above-grade level classes.

With the exception of kindergarten, each grade level will consist of two compacted classes and an above-grade level class (first grade will have three compacted classes and 1 above-grade level class). In the compacted classes, students are instructed using the on-grade level instructional guide and **are assessed using the on-grade level unit assessment.** However, instruction is compacted. Students are taught both the on and the above-grade level indicators and are expected to **demonstrate mastery of the on-grade level indicators and 80% or more of the TAUGHT above-grade level indicators.** Differentiation will occur in small group instruction to effectively meet student needs.

In the above-grade level class, students are instructed using the **next grade level's instructional guide**, and **students are assessed using the next-grade level unit assessment.** They will be taught the next-grade level's indicators and will be exposed to the above-grade level indicators as appropriate. Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the next-grade level indicators, and will have the opportunity to attempt the above-grade level assessment items on that unit assessment. **This is an extremely challenging class, as it moves very quickly and demands a great deal of mathematical proficiency and at-home practice.** There is little opportunity for re-teaching and the class size is above the average class size. Therefore, it is with great care that students will be selected for this class. **Data** drives student selection.

To ensure that our students are appropriately challenged and appropriately placed, our staff reviews and analyzes a variety of data points. During our summer leadership and pre-service weeks, we analyzed multiple data sources to begin determining class math groupings; such data sources included: quarter grades, grade level proficiency, TN2 scores, MSA scores, unit assessment performance, and teacher recommendations. **Math groupings have been shared, as letters have gone home or will be going home to families indicating their child's placement.**

Should you have questions regarding your child's placement, please contact his or her math teacher.

