

# Glenallan Elementary School

*"Focused on the Excellence of Every Gator"*



## Gator Gazette December 2015

### Important December/January Dates

December 23	Glenallan Family Day 8:30 a.m.
January 4	Return from Winter Break
January 12	PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m.
January 13	Café Con El Director 8:30 a.m.
January 18	Dr. MLK Birthday -No School

Dear Glenallan Families,

Happy Holidays from the Gators! As we celebrate the holiday season, I believe it is important to focus on the gifts we are in each other's lives. This focus brings to mind the powerful quote, "That it's not what you have, "it's who you have. The people that make up our community are extraordinary. We have students who are motivated, enthusiastic about learning, and focused on becoming good people. We have a parent community that is supportive, encouraging, and proud of what Glenallan represents. We have a staff that is committed to the excellence of every student and works incredibly hard to ensure this goal is fulfilled. Who we have is what makes Glenallan extraordinary. The unity of the Glenallan community members is a driving force of student success and a positive climate. With the end of 2015, it is important we take a moment to reflect on what the year meant. The successful start to the third year in our new building, creating a community school environment where parents are involved and have a voice in their child's education, and the integration of new and creative instruction that has our students highly engaged. Following winter break, we will evaluate our goals that were constructed in the summer and determined how we can grow our successes as a school. Below is the instructional focus for every Glenallan student, the goals from our school improvement plan and school security updates.

**Instructional Focus:** Glenallan Instructional Focus: We will increase the achievement of all students, with a specific focus in reading, by providing daily, differentiated instruction that is matched to student needs as determined by consistent data analysis. By June 2016, students at Glenallan ES will demonstrate increased academic achievement in reading and math as measured by district wide milestones.

- All students in grades K – 5 **will make at least one year's worth** of growth in reading as demonstrated by running record data and m-class data.
- All students and all subgroups will increase their performance on the MAP-r by 8 points and by 10 points MAP-M assessments by the completion of the 2015 – 2016 school year.

*\*As students prepare for the January Administration of MAP-r/MAP-m, please discuss the above growth goal with your child.*

### **School Security Updates**

On December 21, 2015, all students participated in lockdown/shelter drills during lunch and recess. Students having a clear understanding of emergency processes is a priority of our staff. We worked on students understanding where the nearest safe location is during lunch and recess and how staff will communicate with them to move to these locations. We will continue to practice and strengthen these processes with every drill. Definition of drills are below:

**Lockdown:** This safety process is utilized to alert staff/students that imminent danger exists inside or outside of the building and requires moving into immediate lockdown mode.

**Shelter:** This safety process is in response to a situation that has developed in the community that requires an increase in the level of safety and security in the school.

### **Radon Updates**

A summary listing of radon testing reports for all MCPS facilities has been posted to the Division of Maintenance website. This provides if available historical testing data for MCPS locations. We are in the process of being retested at this time and once those results are available I will share them with our community. Below is the link to the website mentioned above.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/facilities/maintenance/default.aspx?id=461422>

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to share that our staff was recently visited by many surrounding elementary, middle, and high school administrators and teachers as a model for math instruction. There was an overwhelming consensus of feedback focused on the high level of student autonomy and empowerment, the exceptional student discourse, and the student's deep understanding of math content, specifically with number sense. The model of teaching and learning at Glenallan will be utilized to strengthen the comprehensive (Pre K – 12) math program in our county. The best model for that was the mathematical thinking and intellectual discussions by your children! The staff and I look forward to seeing you in the Gator Nation. Happy New Year!

Respectfully,

Mr. Moran

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### Kindergarten News -Mrs. Frank, Mrs. Beckett, Mrs. Carbone, Ms. Miller, Ms. Ali, and Mrs. Wiz

We hope everyone enjoyed their winter break! Thanks to all the parents and families who came to help make our gingerbread cookies; what a fun time! In reading, we have been reading non-fiction books about animal life cycles. This goes along nicely with our science unit on life cycles. The kindergarteners will be receiving mealworms this month. They will get a chance to see how the mealworm changes into a darkling beetle. In writing, students wrote their very own books about winter! Ask your child what he/she likes to do in the winter. We hope you have seen the growth that we have in the students' writing. At home, please encourage them to write and read the kindergarten word wall words. In math we have been working on counting by 10s to 100, counting by 1s to 100, and counting on from a number other than 1. For example, students may count on a tens frame and begin with ten, instead of going back and starting at 1. See the below example:

●	●	●	●	●
●	●	●	●	●
●	●	●	●	

We have also been working on combining and removing when solving math word problems. For example, "I have 7 apple slices, I ate 3 apple slices. How many apple slices are left?" Please continue to help your child tie his/her OWN shoes. This is a very important skill the children need to master. Please remember to read to your child every night. Also, please check and empty their folders every day. With winter finally here, please make sure your child is dressed for the cold weather and that his/her name is on all mittens,

10, 11, 12, 13, 14 14 dots

### Grade 1 News - Mrs. Correa, Mrs. Ralph, Mr. Cord, Ms. Rodriguez, Ms. Hwang, and Ms. Dowling

Our first graders had a great month of December, and we cannot wait to start back up strong in the New Year. Thank you to all the parents, guardians, and family members who were able to attend Glenallan's Annual Math Night. There were so many great activities that students can practice in school as well as at home. The students had so much fun making gingerbread houses. What a hit! Thank you to all our families that came out to help their children build. In the month of January we will begin m-Class testing again. Please remember to implement the following strategies to ensure your child's continued growth in reading: read every night, ask open ended questions about what the child read, practice reading and writing the first grade word wall words, and use the decoding strategies to sound out tricky words. We will continue to use multiple strategies to solve various word problems and equations in math. Examples will be on your child's homework for both you and them to use for support. Try out multiple strategies to solve the same math problem. Remember to provide chances for learning at home. For example, ask your child to read a word from your personal book, newspaper, or magazine and have them solve a simple math problem. It can make them feel proud of themselves knowing that they are helping you. Celebrate the achievements! Our goals as teachers and guardians are the same; to help children grow and succeed as much as possible. Let's start off 2016 with a positive attitude and readiness to learn!

### Grade 2 News - Mrs. Ghee, Mrs. Navas, Ms. Shider, Mrs. Genua, Ms. Komara, and Mrs. Monti

Another great month in second grade! In December, students completed their first research project and wrote nonfiction chapter books all about biomes! In reading we have been reading folktales from around the world and learning how to determine the central message of each tale. In social studies we learned all about family traditions and customs. In math we continued building our knowledge and learning strategies for addition and subtraction! To top it all off, we had two great fieldtrips-to Strathmore and Woodlawn Manor! It was a quick month with lots of learning! In January, the learning continues!! In writing students will be publishing their very own adapted fairytales. In reading, we will continue reading folktales from around the world and look at some great nonfiction texts! We will learn how to ask and answer questions to demonstrate our understanding and how to identify the main idea of a paragraph. In Math we will continue learning a variety of strategies to add and subtract with 2 digit numbers and solve two-step word problems. We are also starting a unit all about money! In science we will continue learning how to analyze the parts of an object and will finish the marking period by building our own toy out of recycled materials! Remember, students have math homework and journal homework nightly. They should also be reading for 20 minutes every day. Thank you for your continued support and Happy New Year!

### News for our Literacy Coach – Mrs. Oh

Encourage your children to read holiday cards and write thank you cards for gifts they receive.

Let children read a recipe to cook a special treat. It's a great way for them to learn measurements and temperatures.

Play a new board game or make an arts and crafts project by reading directions.

Set aside time for kids to "show off" their new reading skills to visiting relatives. Children love being the focus of attention, and grandparents are usually more than willing to see their progress.

Encourage your children to play a guessing word/phrase game adopted from the popular game show, Wheel of Fortune.

Scrabble and Taboo are other fun words games you might consider playing.

Find books that focus on an interest your child has. For example if they ask for a bike, find a book on Lance Armstrong, or a children's book that includes a bicycle adventure. There are books out there to suit every interest under the sun – it just takes a little browsing.

Don't forget to visit your local library to stock up on some books to read over the winter break.

- Want more ideas? Visit [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org) or [www.education.com](http://www.education.com)



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### Grade 3 - Ms. Edhegard, Mrs. Treichler, Ms. Nansimbi, and Mrs. Mayer

Thank you for all of your continued support! Please continue to:

1. Check your child's homework **each day** and encourage your child to do his/her best work.
2. **Complete and return** important forms promptly.
3. Take interest in what your child is reading. Ask questions and provide opportunities for him/her to demonstrate what they've learned from reading the text.

**Multiplication and Division:** Students are continuing to explore the relationship between multiplication and division. Our goal is for students to explain their thinking, while solving problems using multiple strategies. If your child is drawing pictures to represent equations, encourage them to use more efficient strategies. For example: If I know  $6 \times 2 = 12$ , I can double the product to find  $6 \times 4$ . 12 doubled is 24.

**Research:** In writing, students have been conducting research to investigate how people have improved technologies to meet their wants and needs. Our third graders have already selected a technology topic. Next they will record facts, definitions, and information as evidence of how technology has improved over time. The research will be used for both informative and opinion writing. Share with your child the changes you've seen in technology since you were in elementary school. As always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns!

### Grade 4 News –Ms. Davies, Mr. Sabia, Mrs. Hubbard, and Mrs. Pfeiffer

**Reading** — In the next few weeks we will be studying informational texts. We will focus on paraphrasing information to determine the main idea of a text. **Please monitor your child's reading at home. They should be reading for at least 25 minutes each night and recording what they read on their reading log (due every Friday). Students should also be completing Words Their Way assignments each night.**

**Math** — Students will be learning different strategies to determine perimeter and area of shapes. They will extend their multiplication skills previously learned in order to connect the area model of multiplication to the area model of geometry. They will also learn how to apply the formulas to a variety of problems and find the area and perimeter of everyday objects. It would benefit children to work towards mastery of their multiplication and division facts.

**Writing** — Students will begin researching Christopher Columbus in order to form an opinion on whether or not Christopher Columbus Day should be celebrated as a holiday. They will take notes, paraphrase, and write a well-written paragraph using both the information they researched and support for their opinion.

**Science** — We will learn about pollution and its effects on the environment.

**Social Studies** — We will be learning about economic topics such as specialization and opportunity costs, as well as about the goals and journeys of European explorers such as Columbus and Magellan.

### Ms. Brophy's Math Tips

#### Math Tips for Winter Break

**Play strategy games with friends and family.** You can play board games with your family so that your kids can use their problem solving skills. Have your kids talk about their strategies while playing the game so that you can hear their reasoning. Try playing a game like Scrabble, but skip the calculator when totaling each player's score.

**Read books that contain mathematics content with your children.** Visit your local public library and challenge your child to find 3 or 4 books with math concepts (and ask them to defend their choices).

You can visit the website <http://www.thereadingnook.com/math/> for book ideas.

**Create a number book with your child.** Create a number book with your child and have them decorate each page with pictures, stickers or stamps (or even glue beads or macaroni) that show the number on the page. For more advanced students, ask them to write expressions that equal the target number. For example, for the number 6, they could write  $3 \times 2$ ,  $10 - 4$  and  $2 + 2 + 1 + 1$ . Also consider having them write and illustrate a story that deals with math and the use of numbers in real life.

**Exercise your body; MATHercise your mind!** Take in a sporting event, even if it's only on TV. Keep track of yards gained and lost from running versus passing plays of their favorite football team or the shooting percentage of their favorite basketball player. Work with them to make comparisons between two of their favorite players and display it graphically. If you've got kids playing on a sports team, consider having siblings keep the stats on their sibling or sibling's team.

**Have a problem of the day.** Work through one new problem before or after dinner each night. Let older siblings write the problem of the day for younger siblings. Be sure to have them teach their younger siblings how to find the answer.

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## George B. Thomas Saturday School

The core program of the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Saturday School offers tutoring and mentoring in reading/language arts, mathematics, and test-taking skills for students in grades 1-12. It takes place Saturday mornings from 8:30 to 11 a.m. at Kennedy High School.

## Family Math Night

A big thank you to all that attended our 4th annual math. Over 200 students and parents were in attendance. Students participated in multiple math activities with their parents and had the opportunity to take strategies and resources to support their learning at home.

## Automated Cameras on MCPS School Buses

MCPS school buses are now equipped with automated cameras that will capture images of vehicles that pass school buses illegally. MCPS is working with the Montgomery County Police Department in this effort to enforce the law that prohibits the passing of school buses that are stopped to pick-up or discharge students. When a violation is detected by the camera, and verified by the police, a \$125 ticket will be issued to the owner of the vehicle. The program will start with five cameras and will expand to 25 cameras over the next several months.

*"No act of kindness is too small. The gift of kindness may start as a small ripple that over time can turn into a tidal wave affecting the lives of many."*



## *Important Dates for the Gators in December/January 2016*



December 23 Glenallan Family Day 8:30 – 11:30

Dec24 – Jan 3 Winter Break

January 5 First Grade to Imagination Stage

January 8 Pancakes with the Principals

January 12 PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m.

January 13 Café Con El Director 8:30 a.m.

January 18 No School – Dr. King Bday

January 20 PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m.

January 22 Family Fitness Night 6:30 p.m.

January 25 Professional Day: No School for Students

January 27 First Quarter Awards Ceremony  
9:10 – 10:10 Pre K – Grade 2  
10:30 – 11:30 Grade 3 – Grade 5

## Character Counts:

The character trait for the month of December was **Caring**. Staff identified students who demonstrated respect at school, in the community, and focusing on it through instruction.