

# S. Christa McAuliffe Elementary School

# *Principal's Newsletter*

*Wanda Coates, Principal*

Volume VI, No. 2



September, 2016

**Our Vision:** A community school where parents and staff work together as partners for the development of the whole child.

**Our Mission:** A partnership of parents and staff preparing our children for the future.

*We Are McAuliffe. Embracing Equity, Diversity, and Excellence.*

Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome to a new school year! The start of a new school year is always very exciting. This year was no different. It was wonderful welcoming all of the new families and students as well as welcoming back our returning families and students. We had a great turn out for our Back to school Picnic as well as for all of our Back to School Night. This really demonstrates your commitment to the school and to your child's success at school. Parent involvement makes a real difference.

As a reminder, the monthly Principal's newsletter is always posted on the school website at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/mcauliffees/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/mcauliffees/) around the first Thursday of the month to align with Thursday folder reminders. We will post the newsletter in lieu of printing in order to be eco-friendly and conscious as our student population increased over the last 5 years and desire. Please read to the end of the newsletter for important school information.

If you ever receive less than excellent service related to the overall operation of the school, please don't hesitate to let me know about it. I am easily accessible every day before school and after school in the main hallway and am always available by phone or e-mail, whichever mode works best for you. My e-mail address is [wanda\\_p\\_coates@mcpsmd.org](mailto:wanda_p_coates@mcpsmd.org) and our office phone number is (301)353-0910. Please also feel free to reach out to Ms. Jody Price, Administrative Secretary in the main office to help you with your needs.

Sincerely,

Wanda Coates

## *School Procedures*

Please remember that our official school hours are 9:00 a.m.-3:25 p.m. Please adjust your pick up and drop off times accordingly. We had many students arrive too early to school last week. **Students do not enter the building until 8:40. Students who arrive before that time are unsupervised.**

### **Reporting a Student Absence**

If your child wakes up sick and will miss the day of school, there are several ways to communicate this absence to the school. You can send an e-mail to your child's teacher, send in a note to the office when the child returns to school, or call the office in the morning to report an absence. Please note that if a child is out of school sick for 3 or more days in a row, we will need a doctor's note. **These methods are the only method that will provide your school with an excused absence.**

If your child will be absent due to travel, please let the front office and your child's teacher know the date(s) your family will leave for travel and the date you will return. **Any absences recorded for travel are considered unexcused.** Teachers are not required to supply students with work when they are absent, but many teachers will provide work to your child if you ask in advance of the absence. If a child is absent for travel three or more weeks, the child is automatically withdrawn from school and will need to be re-enrolled upon their return. **This is an MCPS policy, not a local school policy.**

## *Arrival and Dismissal*

### **Arrival Reminders**

As a reminder, I ask that parents allow your children to be independent and confident in getting to their classrooms on their own in the morning, without parental escort. This allows your child's day to start the day with the teacher the minute they enter the classroom. There are many staff members on duty throughout the halls in the morning to help students get to their classrooms in case they forget where they are going. Trust us, your children are in good hands.

Bus riders will enter the school through the main doors of the school. Students who come from the surrounding apartments to the right of and in front of the school may also enter through the main doors. All other walkers should enter and exit the school through the kindergarten doors.

## Arriving Late to School

Students are considered tardy if they are not seated in their classrooms by 9:00. Students who arrive at or after 9:00 must sign in at the office, no exceptions. Please never take your child directly to the classroom at or after 9:00. It is a distraction to the classroom teacher and the students in side of the classroom. I also ask that you walk your child into the building when they arrive at school to ensure they arrive to correct location and to help them sign in, especially students in grades K-3. Arriving to school late can make a child feel anxious and if a parent is there to walk them in and say goodbye, signing in will typically be much easier for the student.

## Dismissal Procedures

**Please always notify the office and your child's classroom teacher in writing or by phone call of any changes in your child's way of getting home.** I ask that if you are calling with a change in the way your child gets home that this be communicated prior to 3:00p.m. After 3:00, the office can be very busy and very loud. We want to make sure we have ample time to get the message to your child.

1. If your child is a **walker**, they will leave the school through the kindergarten doors. No walkers will leave through the main entrance. It is important that we designate the main entrance for bus riders only, as the bulk of our students ride the bus to school and we want to make sure they get on the correct busses and board the busses safely. **We cannot allow parents to enter the building to pick up your walkers. It creates too much confusion and chaos in the hallways and does not allow us to have a safe and orderly dismissal process.** Parents of kindergarten walkers should not enter the K rooms looking for your child. Your kindergarten walker will come outside to meet you. Our kindergarten staff is very good about escorting their students outside. Please respect this process, as it really does help with dismissal. **If you park your car, walk up to the doors to meet your child, your child is a walker, not a car rider. You are only considered a car rider if a parent waits in the carpool lane for pick up.** Some students are still confused about this. Please help them understand which one they are, depending on how you pick them up.

2. Car riders and walkers are **NOT** dismissed the same way. If your child is a walker, they are asked to leave immediately when walkers are called and meet a parent or sibling at the kindergarten doors or walk home (whichever a parent has told them to do). Car riders do **NOT** exit from the kindergarten doors right away. Car riders wait inside their designated classroom until their name is called for pick up. **Please do not tell your child or your child's teacher they are a walker if they are being picked up in a car. It makes it very confusing for the child and the staff.**

3. **Car riders and children who ride a daycare van to daycare** are housed in two kindergarten rooms until their ride has arrived. When the staff on duty gets the call that a student's parent is there, a patrol will escort the student to their car or they will walk to the car on their own if they are an older student. **Please do not ever leave your vehicle unattended in the carpool lane.**

4. If you park your car and walk up to the door area to meet your child, your child is NOT a car rider. **They are always considered a walker if your car is not in the carpool line.**

5. **Bus riders** will all exit the building through the front doors and board their buses immediately. Although some of our routes have been the exact same for years, many routes changed this year and may now have a different bus color or route number. **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SCHEDULE SENT HOME THIS SUMMER IS CORRECT!** If you need another copy of the schedule, please let the main office know and we will send another copy with your child. What was printed in the principal's newsletter is correct and should be followed.

6. If you are picking your child up early from school, please park your car in the parking lot and come inside to sign your child out. It would be helpful to know your child's teacher's name in order to make the process faster for both the office staff and for you. If you know in advance that your child is leaving school early that day, please let your child's teacher know via e-mail or note.

**No students should linger after school to visit with teachers and/or friends.** We dismiss over 650 students daily in a short amount of time so it is important that student understand the procedures.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and help with the dismissal process. If you have any questions regarding dismissal, please do not hesitate to contact someone in the main office.

### **Parent Communication**

#### **Connect-Ed**

I will continue to use the computerized telephone/ e-mail system to notify parents about important events and/or issues related to school. Please expect a Sunday night message from me weekly to tell you about any important information needed for the upcoming week. The Connect-Ed system is designed to enhance school communications and increase parent participation in school activities. We will be making an effort this year to send the Connect Ed messages in English and in Spanish. This automated system is also used to inform you if and when your child is absent from school.

## *School News*

### **IT'S HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH!**

During **National Hispanic Heritage Month** we recognize the contributions made and the important presence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the United States and celebrate their heritage and culture. About 17% of the American population are of Hispanic or Latino origin. This represents a significant increase from 2000, which registered the Hispanic population at 35.3 million or 13% of the total U.S. population.

Many of our students are of Hispanic or Latino origin. We will share in this special annual tribute by learning and celebrating the generations of Hispanic and Latino Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society with our students as part of building relationships and making lessons culturally relevant for students.

### **STUDENT EMERGENCY SHEETS AND REUNIFICATION FORMS**

It is essential that every parent return his/her child's or children's sheet/s if there are any corrections needed. If you did not receive your child's sheet, please inform the office. Three additional letters went home last week that I need to draw your attention to briefly. Please sign and return the discipline letter after you have reviewed the Code of Conduct with your student as well as the early dismissal from school sheet that tells u show your child will get home from school in the event of an emergency early dismissal. The third letter which does not need to be returned is the letter regarding mandated MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect training for all volunteers. This training must be completed prior to working with students in the classroom or chaperoning or volunteering for a field trip. Please call Mrs. Alving, Parent Community Coordinator and Volunteer coordinator if you have any questions regarding this. She can be reached at the school number on the first page of this newsletter.

### **FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS**

Each family should have received a Free and Reduced Meal Form/Application. These forms/applications need to be returned **only** if you are applying for Free or Reduced Meals. If your child received free or a reduced payment meal last year, **you must reapply every year**. These students will continue to receive free or reduced meals only until **October 1, 2016** unless they are re-approved this year. All applications must be returned ASAP. If you have received a form back from the office, it is because you are missing some information on the form. Please return any incomplete forms as soon as possible so the school can submit them on your behalf.

### **CALENDAR REMINDERS**

There is NO SCHOOL on the following dates in September.

September 5                    No School; Labor Day. Schools and offices closed  
September 12                 No School for students. Professional Development Day for staff

There will also be an early release day on September 30. **Students will be dismissed at 12:55.**

A look ahead to October

October 3                      No school for students and teachers  
October 12                    No school for students and teachers

# PTA Announcements

September 6th, 2016



## UPCOMING PTA EVENTS

### High Five For Kids Fundraiser

This year, the PTA is having a Direct Donation campaign. Rather than selling wrapping paper, candles, food, or other items, we believe it's easier to simply ask family and friends to each donate \$5. Every dollar counts and together, we CAN reach our fundraising goal! And there's more--we have prizes to raffle off to our highest fundraisers! For every \$25 a person raises, they will earn 1 raffle ticket. The more money you raise, the greater your chances of winning! Prizes include multiple gift cards, participation prizes, and prizes to the highest fundraiser per grade! Fundraising will begin on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and End on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Fundraising Ends October 7

Thank you for supporting our school and our PTA!

### Membership Drive and Volunteers:

If you would like to become a PTA member and have not done so already, please fill out your membership

form and send in your form and dues in an envelope marked with your student's name and "Attention: PTA."

While being a member does not obligate you to volunteer, we hope you will consider helping when you can! If we all do a little, a lot gets done. 😊

## EASY MONEY FOR McAULIFFE

Continue to collect Box Tops, Labels for Education, and Campbell's Soup Labels and turn them into the PTA mailbox (in the office). These add up to big money for our school!

## STAY CONNECTED

Stay current with the latest McAuliffe news!

- ✍ 'Like' us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/mdmcauliffePTA](http://www.facebook.com/mdmcauliffePTA)) and have McAuliffe bulletins post to your timeline.
- ✍ Join our McAuliffe email blast! Please contact Marianna Kasprzak (contact info below) to be added to this email list.

## QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, CONCERNS?

As always, feel free to contact anyone on the PTA board.

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Marianna Kasprzak<br>President<br>Marianna.kasprzak@gmail.com<br>302-750-3293 | Jenny Buchet<br>Vice President<br>jbuchet@gmail.com<br>240-366-7094 | Tamara Hanna<br>Treasurer<br>eeyorecheez@yahoo.com<br>806-317-0537 | Adam Creuziger<br>Secretary<br><a href="mailto:Adam.Creuziger@gmail.com">Adam.Creuziger@gmail.com</a><br>240-751-7407 |
|---|---|--|---|

## MCPS News and Information

### 2017–2018 School Year Calendar

MCPS is proposing an earlier start date for the 2017–2018 school year. The recommended date, August 21, 2017, would be two weeks prior to Labor Day and one week before the traditional start of the school year for MCPS. The proposed start date would allow for an additional week of instruction prior to end-of-year assessments, such as Advanced Placement exams and PARCC assessments, thereby maximizing instructional time for students. This proposed change also would put the MCPS start date in alignment with 11 other school districts in Maryland that will be starting school the week of August 22, including Frederick, Baltimore, and Prince George’s counties. The recommended changes to the calendar are based on the input of various stakeholder groups, including parents, principals, teachers, and administrators.

The Board of Education will adopt the 2017–2018 school year calendar in November. To view the proposed school calendar for 2017–2018 and provide feedback, visit [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org), search “proposed calendar”. A blurb is provided below.

### MCPS Moments

*MCPS Moments* are two-minute videos that highlight recent events, school programs, and more. The videos are featured online and on MCPS TV. Following is a list of some recent *MCPS Moments*:

- [New Program for Elementary Students Designed to Help Close Achievement Gap](#)
- [MCPS Drive for Supplies Program Provides Free School Supplies to Families](#)

### Other News

#### Immunization Requirements for the 2016–2017 School Year

All incoming seventh grade students (as well as eighth and ninth grade students who are new to the state) must receive vaccinations against Tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap) and Meningococcal meningitis (MCV4) prior to the start of the 2016–2017 school year. Students not in compliance with Maryland vaccination requirements will be excluded from attending school until they provide documentation of the required Tdap and MCV4 immunizations. The requirements are in place throughout the state of Maryland. To ensure all students have a chance to receive the necessary immunizations, the Montgomery County Department of Health and



Human Services (DHHS) will hold free vaccination clinics for children 18 years old and younger throughout the summer. Appointments are required and can be made by calling 240-777-3160. A parent or designated adult must be present with a signed parent consent form at the time of vaccination. A blurb is provided below.

## **MCPS TV**

### **Education Matters**

The new MCPS superintendent of schools, Dr. Jack Smith, is the special guest on the latest edition of *Education Matters*. Hosted by Board of Education President Michael Durso, the show includes a conversation about Dr. Smith's educational career; his views about the art, science, and heart of education; and his vision for the school system. Visit the MCPS website to view the show online or to see the MCPS TV schedule (Verizon channel 36 and Comcast channel 34). A blurb is provided below.

### **MCPS News in 90**

*MCPS News in 90* and *Noticias en 90* (in Spanish) are 90-second updates on what is happening throughout the district. The shows are cablecast on MCPS TV and may be viewed at the following URL:

- *News in 90*: <http://news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/>
- *Noticias en 90*: <http://news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/es/noticias/>

## **2017–2018 School Calendar (English and Spanish)**

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### **MCPS Propone Una Fecha Más Temprana para el Inicio del Ciclo Escolar 2017–2018**

MCPS está proponiendo una fecha más temprana para el inicio del ciclo escolar 2017–2018. La fecha del 21 de agosto, 2017, recomendada sería dos semanas antes del Día del Trabajo (Labor Day) y una semana antes del inicio tradicional del ciclo escolar en MCPS. La fecha propuesta para iniciar las clases daría paso a una semana adicional de enseñanza antes de las evaluaciones de fin de año, tales como los exámenes de Estudios Avanzados (Advanced Placement–AP) y las evaluaciones (PARCC) (Asociación de Evaluaciones de Preparación para la Universidad y la Vida

Profesional), de esa manera aprovechando al máximo el tiempo de instrucción para los estudiantes. Este cambio propuesto también alinearía la fecha de inicio de clases en MCPS con la de 11 otros distritos escolares de Maryland que comenzarán las clases durante la semana del 22 de agosto, incluyendo los condados de Frederick, Baltimore, y Prince George's. Los cambios recomendados para el calendario se basan en la opinión de distintos grupos de interesados, incluyendo padres de familia, directores de escuelas, maestros, y administradores del distrito escolar.

El Consejo de Educación aprobará el calendario escolar para 2017–2018 en noviembre. Para ver el calendario propuesto y dar su opinión, ingrese al sitio de Internet de MCPS, [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org), y en la barra de búsqueda escriba “proposed calendar” (calendario propuesto).

condado, organizaciones sin fines de lucro, y líderes empresariales que reunieron a miles de familias de MCPS para que la feria fuese un éxito.

### **MCPS GIVE BACKpacks (English and Spanish)**

#### **Help Support MCPS GIVE BACKpacks Campaign**

Parents, staff, and the MCPS community are encouraged to support the MCPS GIVE BACKpacks campaign, which raises money to buy backpacks filled with school supplies for students in need. Last year, thanks to many generous donations, the district was able to provide nearly 19,000 backpacks to students in need.

A \$10 donation will provide a student with a new backpack filled with school supplies. Individuals also have the option to give at the following levels, or in any other amount they chose:

- \$300 – Provides backpacks for a class
- \$1,500 – Provides backpacks for a grade level
- \$6,500 – Provides backpacks for an entire school
- \$25,000 and up – Provides backpacks for a cluster (elementary and middle schools that feed into particular high schools and consortium schools)

Visit [www.mcpsgivebackpacks.org](http://www.mcpsgivebackpacks.org) or call 301-309-MCPS to learn more or to donate.

#### **Ayuda a Apoyar la Campaña GIVE BACKpacks de MCPS**

Se alienta a los padres, empleados, y comunidad de MCPS a que apoyen la campaña "MCPS GIVE BACKpacks", que recauda fondos para comprar mochilas llenas de útiles escolares para los estudiantes que lo necesiten. El año pasado, gracias a las muchas y generosas donaciones, MCPS pudo proveer casi 19,000 mochilas a estudiantes que las necesitaban.

Una donación de \$10 proveerá una mochila nueva y llena de útiles escolares para un estudiante. Las personas también tienen la opción de hacer sus donaciones en los siguientes niveles, o donar cualquier otra cantidad de dinero que deseen:

- \$300–Proveen mochilas para una clase
- \$1,500–Proveen mochilas para un nivel de grado
- \$6,500–Proveen mochilas para toda una escuela

- \$25,000 o más—Proveen mochilas para un grupo de escuelas (escuelas elementales y de enseñanza media que pertenecen a las distintas áreas específicas de las escuelas secundarias y las escuelas de los consorcios)

Visite [www.mcpsgivebackpacks.org](http://www.mcpsgivebackpacks.org), o llame al 301-309-MCPS (6277) para más detalles o para donar.

### **Immunization Requirements (English and Spanish)**

#### **Immunization Requirements for the 2016–2017 School Year**

All incoming seventh grade students (as well as eighth and ninth grade students who are new to the state) must receive vaccination against Tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis (Tdap) and Meningococcal meningitis (MCV4) prior to the start of the 2016–2017 school year. Students not in compliance with Maryland vaccination requirements will be excluded from attending school until they provide documentation of the required Tdap and MCV4 immunizations. The requirements are in place throughout the state of Maryland.

Parents should contact their doctor to make sure their child is properly immunized and submit a copy of the documentation to the child’s school health nurse as soon as possible, but no later than **Monday, August 29**, the first day of the 2016–2017 school year. To ensure all students have a chance to receive the necessary immunizations, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will hold free vaccination clinics for children 18 years old and younger throughout the summer. Appointments are required and can be made by calling 240-777-3160. A parent or designated adult must be present with a signed parent consent form at the time of vaccination.

#### **Requisitos de Inmunización/Vacunas para el Ciclo Escolar 2016–2017**

Todos los estudiantes que ingresarán al Grado 7 (como así también los estudiantes de los Grados 8 y 9 que son nuevos en el estado) deben recibir la vacuna contra tétanos, difteria, y tos ferina acelular (Tdap, por sus siglas en inglés), además de la vacuna contra la meningitis (meningocócica conjugada) (MCV4) antes del inicio del ciclo escolar 2016–2017. Los estudiantes que no cumplan con los requisitos de vacunación de Maryland no tendrán permitido asistir a la escuela hasta que suministren la documentación correspondiente de las vacunas Tdap y MCV4. Estos requisitos son válidos en todo el estado de Maryland.

Los padres deben comunicarse con su médico para asegurarse de que su hijo/a esté vacunado/a adecuadamente y deberán presentar una copia de la documentación al enfermero/a escolar de la escuela de su hijo/a lo antes posible, pero a más tardar el **lunes, 29 de agosto**, primer día del ciclo escolar 2016–2017. Para asegurar que todos los estudiantes tengan la oportunidad de recibir las vacunas necesarias, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos del Condado de Montgomery (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services—DHHS) ofrecerá clínicas de vacunación gratuitas para niños hasta la edad de 18 años durante el verano. Se requiere una cita, que se puede pedir llamando al 240-777-3160. Un padre/madre/guardián, o un adulto designado,

debe estar presente en el momento de vacunación, y debe traer un formulario de consentimiento firmado por el padre/madre/guardián.

### **Education Matters (English and Spanish)**

#### **Meet Dr. Smith on *Education Matters***

The new MCPS superintendent of schools, Dr. Jack Smith, is the special guest on the latest edition of *Education Matters*. Hosted by Board of Education President Michael Durso, the show includes a conversation about Dr. Smith's educational career; his views about the art, science, and heart of education; and his vision for the school system. Visit the MCPS website to view the show online or to see the MCPS TV schedule (Verizon channel 36 and Comcast channel 34).

#### **Conozca al Dr. Smith en el programa *Education Matters***

El nuevo superintendente de escuelas de MCPS, el Dr. Jack Smith, es el invitado especial en la nueva edición de *Education Matters*. Presentado por el presidente del Consejo de Educación, Michael Durso, el programa incluye una conversación sobre la carrera educativa del Dr. Smith; su punto de vista sobre el arte, la ciencia, y el corazón de la educación; y su visión para el sistema escolar. Visite el sitio de Internet de MCPS para ver el programa en línea, o vea el horario de transmisión por MCPS TV (canal 36 de Verizon y canal 34 de Comcast).