

Summer
2010



PARENT CONNECTION



A Strong Partnership Improving Student Achievement

As you probably already know, 2010–2011 will be a challenging budget year for the school system. With an increasing number of students and less funding than we need to remain at the same level of services, we will be increasing class size by one student at all grade levels and implementing other savings and reductions in our central office and systemwide operations.

One thing hasn't changed, though—our commitment to providing all children in Montgomery County Public Schools with a quality education. I want to assure you that the success of all students who attend MCPS continues to be our top priority. We have always put students first, and, as you do, we want the best education possible for your children.

For many of our MCPS families, budgets are tight at home, too. Nevertheless, there are still ways you can support learning, at no cost, so your children can continue to expand their knowledge during the summer and be prepared for the start of the new school year. In this issue, we share some ideas on how you can keep your children engaged in learning by using the web as a resource—from having fun with educational games, to summer reading, to strengthening math skills, to preparing for college. You also can take advantage of the many museums and free programs available in the area.

Your involvement, both over the summer or during the school year, is very important to your child's academic success. Together, we can continue to make a difference for our children.

Respectfully,

Jerry D. Weast, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
CORNER**

Service Learning Hours to Increase

Starting with next fall's Class of 2011, MCPS students will be required to complete 75 student service learning (SSL) hours to graduate.

Students can begin earning SSL hours the summer after completing fifth grade. They can earn hours by volunteering with a nonprofit community group, taking specific courses, or participating

in school-sponsored clubs and organizations. Through service learning, students have a positive impact on their communities while learning new skills, practicing leadership and considering future courses and careers.

Questions? Contact your school counselor or SSL coordinator, or visit the website, www.mcpsssl.org.

Summer Learning Just a Click Away

How can you keep your children engaged in learning over the summer? The Internet can be a great resource. Go online at home or use a computer at your public library—and pick up a few books while you're there.

Here are some suggestions that are available with the click of a mouse.

Keep Reading. MCPS and other educational websites offer information and tips to keep children engaged in learning while having fun. Check out WETA's Reading Rockets for tips on helping young children read: www.readingrockets.org/audiencel/parents. Summer reading lists for elementary and secondary students will be available on the MCPS website in June. www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/readinglists/

Have Fun with Algebra. The Math Dude makes learning algebra an adventure. The video series follows the MCPS curriculum to help middle and high school students strengthen their algebra skills. Watch online. www.mcpsmathdude.org

Prepare for College. MCPS offers free online test preparation for the PSAT, SAT and ACT. Free online study guides are available for the SAT and ACT. www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/hsil/testprep.shtm

Don't Forget to Keep Active. Make sure your children get enough exercise during the summer. Schedule outings to the museum, nature hikes, scavenger hunts, bike rides or sports activities. Here's a link to some ideas to keep your children moving. www.letsmove.gov

Don't Miss August School Orientation

If your child is transitioning to middle or high school, be sure to contact the school and ask about August orientation dates and times. Students will be able to meet teachers and other school staff, and may get to know their class schedules before the first day of school. For questions, contact your child's school.

SAVE THE DATE!

Third Annual Back-to-School Fair

Saturday, August 28, 2010
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center
850 Hungerford Dr., Rockville
Bring the family and get the school year off to a great start!

Sponsored by the Office of Communications and Family Outreach

Questions?
Call 301-279-3100 or
visit www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/backtoschoolfair

2010-2011 School Calendar

It's not too early to start thinking about the next school year. The first day of school for students will be Monday, Aug. 30, 2010. Winter break and Christmas holidays run from Dec. 24-31. Spring break and the Easter holidays are April 18-25, 2011. The last day of school for students is scheduled for June 16, 2011.

Parents and other community members who want to keep track of holidays, early release dates and report card distributions are reminded that they can import the school calendar into their electronic calendars. The calendar for import is available in English. Instructions on importing an iCal file to an Outlook, Apple or Google calendar are available on the School Calendar website www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/calendars/future/

Parent-to-Parent: Supporting Our Children

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) has had a busy year as we work to help parents become more involved in their children's academic success. During 2009-2010, more than 200 parents participated in the workshops created and presented (in English and Spanish) by PAC members—"Can We Talk? Speaking Up for Your Children to Help Them Succeed." The workshops provided parents with time to ask questions and share tips with other parents. Feedback collected at each workshop will help us plan advocacy workshops next year.



As the school year ends, we'd like to acknowledge the service of the 15 PAC members who are ending their two-year terms. Fifteen new members will be selected for 2010-2011. If you are interested in becoming a PAC member, look for information and nomination packets during the first week of school in the fall. Nominations must be submitted to the Department of Family and Community Partnerships (DFCP) by Sept. 15. For more information, call DFPCP at 301-279-3100 or send an e-mail to PAC@mcpsmd.org.

Kelley Eiskant and Elisa George, Co-chairs
2009-2010 Parent Advisory Council



Sign Up for Summer School

Registration continues through June and July for summer school programs in elementary and high school.

Elementary summer school is July 6-30. The first high school session is June 28-July 16, and the second session is July 20-Aug. 6. Middle schools also have summer school programs; call your child's school for information.

Application forms are available in schools and online. www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/extendedhours/summerschool/

Mark Your Calendar



May 24-27, June 1-4—High School Assessment makeup exams

May 28—Last day for seniors

May 31—Memorial Day holiday

June 5—SAT administered

June 10-11, 14-15—Final exams

June 12—ACT administered

June 16—Last day of school for students (half day); final exam makeup

June 23—Report cards mailed

Aug. 28—Back-to-School Fair

Aug. 30—First day of school for students

Sept. 6—Labor Day holiday

Montgomery County Public Schools

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