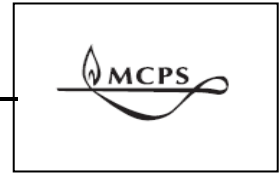


# Ashburton Elementary School

6314 Lone Oak Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817 \* 301-571-6959



## PRINCIPAL'S NEWS

January 6, 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Happy New Year! I hope you had an enjoyable and relaxing Winter Break with family and friends. I would like to congratulate our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade chorus members for an outstanding Winter Chorus Performance. It was wonderful to see so many people from the Ashburton community attend this special performance in December.

As we end the holiday season and begin 2010, it is important for students to continue to stay engaged and focused on learning. It is so important to be on time for school each and every day of the school year. It is the expectation for all students to be in class and ready for learning by 8:50 a.m. If you find that traffic is heavy during the winter months, please allow extra time in your schedule to ensure that you are at school on time.

It is that time of year when the weather can be difficult to predict. Please listen to the radio or television for school delays and closings. (*See the next page for information about closings.*) Also, students need to remember to dress appropriately for the weather so they are comfortable for outdoor recess by wearing coats, scarves, gloves, and hats. It is our goal to have outdoor recess as much as possible in order to allow students to be engaged in physical activities with peers.

We understand that everyone has a busy and hectic schedule, but it is **very important** that all visitors maintain a **safe driving speed** when entering and exiting school property. Safety is our number one priority at Ashburton and we are asking all visitors to maintain a safe speed when dropping off and/or picking up children. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in order to maintain a safe school environment.

Please note that we are rescheduling Family Science Night from the February 2<sup>nd</sup> PTA meeting to the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. This will allow students to have more of an opportunity for science investigations.

I look forward to seeing you at many of the January events!

### **Calendar Updates:**

January 11- Dine Out with Ashburton  
-California Pizza Kitchen  
January 12- SIT meeting 3:30 p.m.  
January 18- Holiday- Martin Luther  
King, Jr.'s Birthday-No School  
January 22- End of the Second  
Marking Period  
January 25- Professional Day for  
Teachers, No School for Students  
January 29- PTA's Bingo Night  
February 2- PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Sincerely,

Charlene Eroh, Principal

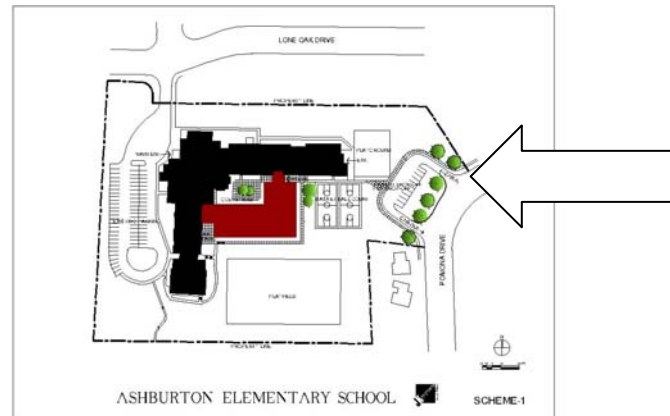
### Dropping off students-

Please make use of our student drop-off area located off of Pomona Drive- it is much safer than dropping students off on Lone Oak Drive. If you use Lone Oak, please be considerate about neighbor's driveways and **DO NOT TURN AROUND** in the middle of this busy street **NOR DROP-OFF** students and let them cross in the middle of the street.

The rear drop-off is supervised from 8:30 a.m. until 8:50 a.m. The doors to enter the school at the breezeway are closed at 8:50 a.m. and students should not be dropped off after that time.

Additionally, there is supervision at the loop from 3:05-3:15 p.m. in the afternoon. Children who are not picked up from either gym lobby or the breezeway near the drop-off after 3:15 will be escorted to the office. Please call if you have an unusual circumstance and cannot pick your child up on time.

For the safety of all students, the main entrance is closed to **all cars** from 8:25 until 9:00 a.m. and from 2:45 until 3:25 p.m.



### *Inclement Weather Information*

Announcements about the closing of schools in Montgomery County, delayed opening or early dismissal due to winter weather emergencies are available through a number of outlets:

- MCPS QuickNotes e-mail news service (subscribe at [www.mcpsquicknotes.org](http://www.mcpsquicknotes.org))  
Or [schools-out.com](http://schools-out.com)
- Local radio and television stations – WMAL (AM-630), WTOP (AM-1500), MCPS Cable Channel 34, NBC-4, Fox 5, ABC-7, CBS-9
- MCPS website [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org)
- MCPS information telephone line at 301 279-3673
- ASK MCPS at 301 309-6277 (7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. M-F)
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/mcps>
- Decisions to close or delay opening are usually made by 6:00 a.m.
- When school opening is delayed, it is usually by 2 hours, so that Ashburton opens at 10:50 a.m., with buses making their usual pick-ups 2 hours later than normal. There is no PEP when we have a delayed opening.
- Decisions to close early are usually made by 11:00 a.m. An early dismissal usually means Ashburton students leave the school around 12:30



It's not too late to link your Harris Teeter VIC card to earn money for our school until May 31, 2010  
[www.harristeeter.com/community/together\\_in\\_education/tie.aspx](http://www.harristeeter.com/community/together_in_education/tie.aspx)

## PEP

Dear Families,

The first PEP theme of the new year is *Winter Wonderland* and it will last for 4 weeks. This is a good unit for talking to your child about the changes winter is bringing to the weather and the environment outside. We will be learning about temperature, freezing and melting. We will also be learning the names for clothing that we wear to keep us warm and the different animals associated with cold weather. Please see more detailed information below. Thanks for your continued support!

**Theme:** Winter Wonderland – January 4<sup>th</sup> – January 29<sup>th</sup>

**Possible Topics:** Snow/Ice, Winter Activities, Polar Bears & Penguins, Hibernation, Winter Clothes, Jan Brett's *The Mitten*, *The Hat* and *The Three Snow Bears*

**Vocabulary:** cold, freezing, ice, icicle, iceberg, freeze, melt, snow, snowflake, snowball, snowman, sledding, ice skating, shivering, gloves, scarf, mittens, socks, snowsuit, boots, hat, ear muffs, penguin, walrus, seal, polar bear, bear, cave, hedgehog, badger, raccoon

### Some Suggested Reading:

- *The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs
- *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Kent
- *Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn Buehner
- *The Hat* by Jan Brett
- *The Mitten* by Jan Brett
- *The Three Snow Bears* by Jan Brett
- *Froggy Gets Dressed* by Jonathan London
- *When Winter Comes* by Nancy Vann Laan
- *Bear Snores On* by Karma Wilson

- *Animals in Winter* by Henrietta Bancroft & Richard G. Van Gelder
- *Pearl's New Skates* by Holly Keller
- *Little Fern's First Winter* by Jane Simmons
- *Flannel Kisses* by Mari Takabayashi
- *Sleepy Bear* by Lydia Dabovich
- *Time to Sleep* by Denise Fleming
- *The Jacket I Wear in the Snow* by Shirley Neitzel
- *Caps, Hats, Socks and Mittens* by Louise Borden

### Sample of Possible Activities:

- "Penguin Race" = Children race each other outside while trying to hold a ball between their feet.
- Acting out *The Mitten* (small size) = Children act out the story of the Mitten using a real mitten and small finger puppets, animal crackers or felt characters.
- *The Mitten/The Hat and Masks* = Children choose one or two of their favorite animals from *The Mitten* or *The Hat* and make a mask representing the animal
- Acting out *The Mitten* (child size) = Have children act out the story of the Mitten using masks they have made and either a large sleeping bag or a table with a large sheet covering it.
- Paper Plate Hedgehog = Children cut out a hedgehog shape from a paper plate and make prickles by snipping at the edges.
- Jan Brett Memory = Children take turns choosing two cards, picture side down, trying to find a match. Cards have pictures of Jan Brett characters on them. Teachers are



working on vocabulary and retelling a story.

- Ice Cubes in the Water Table = Children bring in mittens and play with ice cubes before they melt.
- Snowmen = Making snowmen using different mediums (e.g. paint, paper, found items, etc)
- Mitten Cookies = Make mitten shaped sugar cookies. Children frost and make an ABAB or ABCABC pattern on top with M&Ms.
- Polar Bear Desert = A scoop of vanilla ice cream, marshmallow ears, whip cream snout, M&M eyes and chocolate chip nose.



#### Suggestions for Home:

- Checkout some books that are suggested on the reading list such as Jan Brett books from the library. Try to get your child to guess what will happen on the next page (Jan Brett is famous for giving hints on what is to come in the margins of each page).
- Have your child review their winter clothes as they put them on. Use sequencing words such as first, next and last.
- Go on winter walks with your child. Have your child describe – or describe yourself – what is seen, felt, heard, etc.

#### Reminders:

- There is no school for PEP students on January 18<sup>th</sup> and January 25<sup>th</sup>. (January 18<sup>th</sup>: Martin Luther King Jr. Day; January 25<sup>th</sup>: Professional Day)

Looking forward to a great new year!

The PEP Team

## January Happenings In Kindergarten

### Reading

In January, we will continue our unit on Folktales. Within this unit we will introduce the story elements of **problem and the solution**. Next, we will begin to read about cold climate animals, such as penguins and polar bears. We will discuss the difference between **fiction** and **informational** texts. Continue practicing the kindergarten words with your child!

### Writing

In writing, we will continue to write using Kindergarten words we know and sounding out unknown words. We will be making personal connections in our writing, and we will also be writing facts we learn in non-fiction texts.

### Math

We will finish Unit 2: Exploring Numbers for the second marking period.

Your child should be able to:

- Read, write and count to thirty-one and beyond
- Count back from ten
- Match numerals to sets
- Use objects to make two equal sets
- Use ordinal numbers first through tenth
- Determine if a number is odd or even



It is very important that your child is able to consistently and accurately count a number of objects, not just rote count.

### Science/ Social Studies

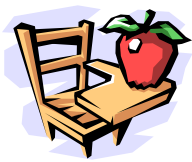
We will learn about the natural world around us, as the weather changes to winter this month. We will learn about living

things, and their cold weather habitats. In social studies, we will also be discussing winter customs around the world.

**January focuses:**

- The season of winter
- How animals and people adapt in cold weather
- Family Customs and Celebrations
  - The New Year in the United States
  - Chinese New Year
  - Martin Luther King Day

Sincerely,  
The Kindergarten Team



## First Grade News

Dear First Grade Families,

Welcome back!!! We hope that everyone had a wonderful vacation!

Since January is here, we wanted to let you know what we will be focusing on in all areas of the curriculum.

**Reading:** First graders will be reading at their own level and continue to progress at their own pace. We will be studying Fairy Tales, Fables and Folk Tales. In addition to an instructional focus on story structure and spelling patterns, the Montgomery County reading assessment (MCPS-AP or also known as Reading 3D) will be administered. The data from this testing will be used to assure that each first grader is receiving appropriate instruction. Since teachers and students will be involved in testing, your child may not be bringing home “just right”

books in the plastic bag as often as they have been. *Please help us by continuing to read with your child nightly, anyway!!*

**Math:** We will be focusing our attention on addition and subtraction strategies that help us become speedy mathematicians! The goal is for all first graders to have all facts memorized through 20 by the end of the school year. During our next unit, students will be working hands-on with graphs.

**Science:** We are beginning our next Science Unit, “Constructions”. During this unit the students will be learning about structures. The students will be learning about the types of three dimensional shapes best used to make tall towers.



Talk with your child about the materials that structures are made of when you see a neat-looking building!

**Social Studies:** We will continue to focus on directional words for maps (North, South, East, and West). We will also still be working on learning the names of the seven continents and five large oceans. Please work at home on learning these names!

We are looking forward to the month of January being an exciting start to the New Year!

Sincerely,  
The First Grade Team

## Town News from Second Grade

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful winter break. We are excited about the new year and all of the exciting learning that will take place. Here's what we will be doing in January.

### READING/LANGUAGE ARTS

This month we will begin our unit on plays. We will focus on understanding the characters, problem and solution and



identifying the important message in plays. We will also continue with reading to perform a task. Students will understand how

directions help them to perform a task successfully. They will understand what could be added to make a set of directions easier. In reading to perform a task we will focus on sequence, process, transitional words, and text features such as illustrations and labels.

*Please help at home by having your child read plays and recipes/directions. Have them sequence a recipe or game instructions and then have them evaluate the directions: are they easy or hard to follow and what could be added to make the directions easier to follow?*

### WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Students will go through the writing process of prewriting, writing a first draft, revising, editing, and writing a final copy to publish an informational paragraph on a topic of interest. We will be focusing on using a topic sentence, using facts versus opinions for details, and a concluding sentence for our paragraphs. The purpose of writing to inform is to

describe, explain, instruct, or retell. *Please help at home by having children write about their favorite season or sport. They should include facts about the topic. They should include a topic sentence to tell the reader what they are writing about. Also, they should include a concluding sentence to "wrap" the paragraph up.*

### SCIENCE

In science our unit is balancing and weighing. Students will be involved in a variety of activities and will explore the following:

- \*thinking about balance
- \*building structures that balance
- \*exploring a beam balance

*Please help at home by reviewing important vocabulary words such as fulcrum, beam, balance, and weight.*

### MATH

#### Unit 3: Computation

Students are continuing to learn how to model, represent, and interpret number relationships to help solve problems involving addition and subtraction. They are learning how to relate mathematical situations to given mathematical expressions. Please continue to practice basic addition and subtraction facts at home to increase their computation skills. Writing out a word problem is a great way to help your child understand the mathematical language. Using words such as difference, altogether, in all, and find the sum will help increase their vocabulary. *Please help your child practice their basic addition and subtraction facts. The goal is for every child to know their basic facts*

*in subtraction and addition with sums up to 20. Thank you for your cooperation!*

Math with Ms. Canard's

We will continue with our unit on multiplication and division. Students will model division using pictures, repeated subtraction, and arrays. They will also explore fact strategies and hands on equations. *Please help your child practice their multiplication and division facts. Their goal is to demonstrate mastery of multiplication/division facts for 0, 1, 2, 5 and 10, as well as to apply strategies to solve other basic facts.*

### **Language Mechanics**

In preparation for the Terra Nova's we are starting to increase our testing preparation in the classroom. One area we are focusing on is language mechanics. To help increase confidence and accuracy on the assessment in this area, we are going to be sending home nightly (Monday-Thursday) practice sheets to reinforce what the students are learning in class. Language mechanics homework needs to be returned the following day so that we may review it during class. Thank you for your support!

We look forward to working together with you for a successful 2010!

As always, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.



-Ms. Ashin, Ms. Bouquet, Ms. Canard, Ms. Fox & Mrs. Rush

## **January News from Third Grade**

We hope that you had a restful and relaxing winter break and wish you the best of health and happiness in 2010. The second quarter will be coming to a close in January and the third graders are working hard in each subject.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Math:**

Third graders are continuing their study of multiplication in math class. Students should be working on their basic facts each night for at least 10 minutes. If your child is in Ms. Zeccardi's class, please make sure that he or she is following the math calendar each night as well.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math:**

Third graders instructed on fourth grade material will be working on fractions and decimals. The students will be working on using a variety of mathematical operations in conjunction with fractions and decimals. Third graders will also be studying how to simplify and convert improper fractions and mixed numbers during the month of January. At home, you can help your third grader by finding fractions in everyday life. For example, using pizza or lasagna, discuss the number of slices using fractions and converting those fractions to decimals.

### **Reading:**

In reading during the month of January, students will learn the characteristics of folktales, read a

variety of folktales from different cultures, sequence events in a folktale, identify the theme in a story, and learn how to write a summary of fiction material. We will be using the acronym S.W.B.S. to teach the concept of summary. S.W.B.S. stands for 'Somebody Wanted But So' where students are to decide the following: the main character, what he or she wanted, what the problem in the story is, and how that problem is solved. At home, you can work with your third grader on this concept with independent reading books.

**Science:** In Science, third graders will begin their study of crime lab and chromatography. Third graders will be analyzing and classifying different fingerprints and working on strategies to solve a case using motive and the different fingerprint types. Students will also be working on chromatography which is the study of separating colors from a variety of inks using water.



**Social Studies:**

In Social Studies, third graders will be working on map skills and identifying the elements of a map. Students will be constructing their own towns in January and will continue their study of man made features, physical features, and resources. Students will also learn about the production equation and how media can affect culture. At home, you can help your third grader by examining different maps and locating each of the elements of the map, including compass roses. You can also review

the three kinds of resources: human, natural, and capital.

**Reminders:**

In January, your student will be receiving weekly MSA packets in both reading and math. This additional work will help the students prepare for the test in March. Although the packets are not mandatory, we urge you to work with your child on the skills that will help them succeed on the MSA.

**Field Trip:**

We will be going to the **Newseum on February 18<sup>th</sup>**.

- ★ Please look for the permission slip in your child's take home folder!

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support!

The Third Grade Team

Becki Segal, Sean White, Jessica Rush, Susan Zeccardi, Katie Butler

*News 4 You*

Happy New Year! We hope you had a wonderful break. From the sounds of the students, the fourth grade had some great times over the vacation. Some traveled to various locations while others did stuck around in the SNOW or other new and exciting things. As we start a new year we are excited about all the new things the fourth grade will experience at Ashburton as well. We also welcome Mrs. Melendez to the team and send our best wishes to Mrs. Ralles. Please check for the Friday Folder and the learning skills charts on Fridays. Discuss the celebrations written on the learning skills chart with your child. Empty Friday Folders are expected to be returned the following Monday or school day.

## Reading

Students will:

- Explore Realistic Fiction and compare this genre to the other that we have studied thus far.
- Reading and Writing skills will continue to be reinforced at home with handouts and work in the Finishline Books.

**Writing:** As second marking period comes to a close, we are wrapping up our work with the Ideas, Organization and Sentence Fluency traits of writing. Students will continue to practice writing to inform and make sure of the various text features available to writers.

**Social Studies:** During the month of January we are wrapping up our study of immigration, with a celebration and special guest, Mr. Steve Roberts. Students will continue to read and research about the migration of people to Maryland. In the third marking period, students will begin their study of Native Americans and the history of Maryland.

**Mathematics:** As we near the end of the second marking period, all students will continue to work rigorously on math concepts. Some students will be working on Whole Numbers and Decimal Fractions, while others focus on Common Fractions. In addition to nightly homework, students are highly encouraged to complete a math packet to help prepare for the MSA. A new packet will be distributed each Friday, and is due the following Friday. Ask your student what he/she is currently working on to help prepare!

All students have been working hard towards meeting their goal of mastering basic math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division! All students participate in fact tests regularly. As they master each set of facts, they track themselves on a chart, as well as on the fact calendar in their notebook. Each fourth grader was given fact family triangles to

assist in studying their basic facts. If you need more resources to assist with the learning of basic math facts, see Mrs. Brenner.

**Science:** We are wrapping up our unit on the Chesapeake Bay! As the new year begins, so does the newest 4<sup>th</sup> grade science unit! Fourth graders will be learning about chemistry. We will be learning the definition of matter, the three states of matter and weather. It is a great unit with lots of hand on activities.



Happy New Year!

Mrs. Brenner, Mrs. Davis, Ms. Leiser, Mrs. Melendez, Mrs. Ralles, Mrs. Weaver

Please note that Mrs. Melendez' email address is

[Vanessa L Melendez @mcpsmd.org](mailto:Vanessa.L.Melendez@mcpsmd.org)

## *Fifth Grade's Fabulous News*

Happy New Year! It's 2010 and we are almost half way through the school year. The second marking period ends in a few weeks, and we would like to remind all of the students to continue their hard work.

Here are January's happenings...

### Math

During January, periods 1 and 2 math students will continue working on Unit 3A, whole numbers and decimal fractions. Students will learn how to multiply and divide decimals and whole numbers. We will then transition to Unit 3B where students will relate all of their knowledge of decimals to both fractions and percents. Just as students had to compare and order decimals, they will learn to compare and order fractions. Students will also learn to add and subtract fractions and mixed

numbers. Period 3 math students will be finishing Unit 2C and will then move on to Unit 2D: Fraction, Decimal, and Percent Connections and Applications. Students will be exploring the idea that fractions, decimals, and percents can be used interchangeably. Students will also use computational estimates to produce approximate results.

Please remember that all math students will have a Maintaining Skills Packet due every Thursday. Encourage your child to manage their time and complete as much of the packet before Wednesday night.

### Reading

The students have completed their study of poetry in reading. For our next genre of study, the students will be *reading to be informed*, specifically focusing on feature articles. We will be focusing on skills such as making predictions, making inferences, and identifying text features. Students will also be focusing on analogies and identifying relationships between analogies.

We will begin reviewing both concepts and test taking strategies for the reading portion of the MSA. Students will receive weekly reading review materials entitled “Maintaining Skills Packet”. They will be handed out each Friday, and will be due the following Friday. Each packet will be reviewed thoroughly in class. The review lessons and materials will include topics previously taught and provide practice with test taking strategies, including strategies for answering selected response questions (multiple choice), writing BCR’s (Brief Constructed Responses) in response to readings, and making inferences to answer test questions.

### Writing

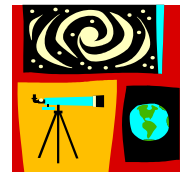
The fifth graders will be creating their final poems and then polishing the poetry for publication in their anthologies. After celebrating their accomplishments as poets, the students will shift back to writing to

inform, the form of writing they explored briefly at the beginning of the second term.

We shall follow the steps of the writing process to write informational essays, using topics about which students already enjoy some expertise and those they discover through their investigations of science. We shall then embark on the first stages of the AGOPPE process through which students will select topics, develop research questions, evaluate and use sources, and record important information in note form.

### Science

We will be wrapping up our study of electricity and electromagnetism. Having successfully created electromagnets, the students will be concluding this unit with further explorations of the relationship between electricity and magnetism. We shall then begin our study of astronomy by observing and studying the special properties of Earth.



### Social Studies

We are nearing the end of our current unit, and it wraps up as students complete the timeline of the American Revolution. We will then get started on the next unit which is all about economics. Students will learn how the economy, at the time of the writing of the Constitution, shaped the outline of our country.

-The Fifth Grade Team

## ESOL News



Our “Ready, Set, Go” unit in kindergarten focuses on helping students develop language to express the idea of traveling. This includes vocabulary for the destination they will travel to, items they will need (clothing), and who will travel

with them. Other targeted skills include expressing likes and dislikes, asking and answering questions about themselves and others, and expressing ideas in writing to share a personal experience. We have been having fun choosing a pretend destination, as well as “packing” our pretend suitcases with needed items.

In the thematic unit “Home Sweet Home,” first graders have been learning that following directions is easier when they listen carefully and retell directions in a sequence. In the beginning of the quarter, the students focused on developing language to follow and explain everyday routines. They extended and applied the language learned in previous lessons by retelling the steps that they followed to make a paper-bag house. The students also enjoyed a variety of songs and chants, such as “Polka Dot Pajamas” and “Where Are They Hiding?” They will be writing about their homes and their favorite toys in January.

The second graders are reading texts about animals as they research information for a written report. Along with topic sentences and supporting details, they are learning to use specific verb tenses and adjectives to describe details. The students are also developing specific language to perform a task. They are practicing language for expressing actions, quantity, and materials when they explain a recipe.

The students in the three through five beginner group have been studying how to communicate with others in school. This quarter students are learning the vocabulary and structures associated

with being a member of a school community. The instructional objectives include stating personal information, expressing opinions and feelings, using some basic verbs to indicate action, using words that show spatial relationships, and using subject verb agreement in simple statements. They have also been reading both fiction and non-fiction, and they are learning how to identify basic story elements and text features. The students are writing using words, phrases, and simple modeled sentence patterns.

Intermediate and advanced students in grades three through five have been learning about communities. The students have been developing language for reading to comprehend informational text and writing to compare. The third graders are learning about map skills and have been listening to and giving directions to a place on a map. The students in grades four and five have been listening to information and identifying the main idea and details. All of the students have been improving their editing skills by concentrating on conventions, such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the International Festival on February 19th. Please contact Ceci Villegas ([mcvillegas@msn.com](mailto:mcvillegas@msn.com)), Meggin Griffin ([meggingriffin@verizomn.net](mailto:meggingriffin@verizomn.net)), or Agustina Marino ([agustina.marino@gmail.com](mailto:agustina.marino@gmail.com)) for additional information about the International Festival. Have a happy and healthy New Year!

Mrs. Glick, Mrs. Golden, Mrs. King

## From the Counselor:

I hope everyone has had a wonderful and relaxing holiday break! Mine was filled with family, relaxation, football, and a trip to the most magical place on Earth, Disney World (for child development research of course☺). We have been covering a lot in our guidance lessons this year including topics such as the role of the counselor, bullying, “de-bug”, appreciating differences, and showing respect towards others.

Our next lessons will focus on a topic that none of us had to learn about as children, internet safety. How many of you out there have children that know their way around a computer better than you do? The internet is a great place for school, research, fun, and shopping ☺ but we also have to be careful about how our children are using the internet. Our next lessons will focus (in kid friendly terms) on topics such as how to be safe on the internet by never giving out our personal information, never agreeing to meet anyone from the internet, and never opening emails from people we do not know without a trusted adult around. We will also learn how to navigate an internet site for children about internet safety called [www.netsmartzkids.org](http://www.netsmartzkids.org). I encourage you to talk to your children about being safe on the internet and navigating the internet safely.

I also wanted to talk about another opportunity that I will be offering as the second semester begins. I run many different kinds of small group lunch bunches through the year with children on topics such as making friends, social skills, anger management, and making good choices. In the second semester, I will be offering group counseling to families who are divorced, separated, or going through family changes and who would like to take advantage of these services. Beginning towards the middle of February, students in these groups will meet during lunch on a bi-weekly basis with other children who are their age going through similar issues. The purpose of a counseling group such as this one is for children to know they are not alone in facing a particular problem, to validate their feelings, and to identify and try out good strategies for how to cope with those feelings.

If you would like your child to participate in a group for children of families who are divorced, separated, or going through life changes, please return the permission form below to Andrea Gillespie, school counselor. If you have any questions, please contact me at [Andrea\\_S\\_Gillespie@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Andrea_S_Gillespie@mcpsmd.org) or 301-571-6959. Thanks and Happy Holidays!

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Yes, I would like my child to participate in group counseling with Mrs. Gillespie on the topic of divorce, separation, or changing families

Child name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child have any food allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this portion of this form to Andrea Gillespie, counselor, Ashburton ES