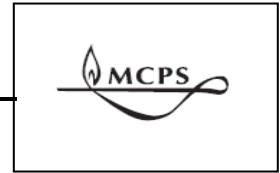


# Ashburton Elementary School

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



## PRINCIPAL'S NEWS

January 3, 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Happy New Year! I hope you had an enjoyable and relaxing Winter Break with family and friends. I enjoyed the break with my family, especially my son Christopher. I am looking forward to continued success with the students in 2012. I have been busy getting to know the new students and visiting students in the classrooms. Mrs. Dunn and Ms. Cino kept me up to date on the busy start of the school year and I am pleased to be back working with our amazing students, staff, and community.

I am excited to report that we are having some work done to spruce up the school, such as exterior painting, drainage modifications, and roof repair. Later this spring our fields will be re-graded and new sod will be put down to make the fields more even. We are excited that restroom renovations will occur this winter rather than 2014 and are pleased that electric handriers have been installed to cut down on paper towel usage. We feel very fortunate that MCPS has provided Ashburton with funding to upkeep our facility.

We are looking forward to the many activities this month, including the return of the popular evening event: Books, Bears and Blankets on January 19<sup>th</sup>. It is a fun hour from 7-8 p.m. to bring your favorite book and blanket and snuggle down for a good family read.

As we end the holiday season and begin 2012, 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. If possible, have your child take the bus to school to ensure timely arrival.

I need to ask your cooperation in making sure that pedestrian safety is a priority in particular with our main entrance arrival and drop-off system. During arrival, cars are not allowed to drive into our parking lot; it is closed to all cars from 8:25 until 9:00 a.m. The crossing guard has been directed to allow only buses in at that time. You will need to park and walk your child in, or you may use the drop-off loop on Pomona Drive. Please do not park illegally or let children off into the street. Follow the directions of the guard and patrols to safely cross streets. You must park and walk your child into school if you are late to sign her/him in. We have been in contact with Montgomery County Police to ensure that consistent safety guidelines are followed. Please be aware that police can ticket if you park illegally in the circle or on neighborhood streets.

### Calendar Updates:

January 4 - PTA Meeting Cancelled  
January 10- Dine Out with Ashburton-  
California Pizza Kitchen  
January 16- Holiday- Martin Luther King Jr.'s  
Birthday-No school  
January 19- Books, Bears and Blankets 7-8 p.m.  
January 20- End of the Second Marking Period  
January 23- Professional Day for Teachers,  
No School for Students  
January 31- Advanced Instrumental Music  
Cluster Concert 7:30 p.m.  
February 3- Rescheduled Bingo Night  
February 7- PTA Meeting- Speaker from  
Suburban Hospital on Nutrition – Family  
Science Night Rescheduled to **March 6**

It is that time of year when the weather can be difficult to predict. Please listen to the radio or television or check the MCPS website for school delays and closings. If it is snowing or icy, the decision to close or

delay schools is usually made by 6:30 a.m. If there is a delayed opening, it is usually a two-hour delay and our school starts at 10:50 a.m.; however, children should not be dropped off before 10:30 a.m. If bad weather occurs during the day, MCPS usually makes a decision regarding early dismissal by 11:00 a.m. in order to get all students home and we usually dismiss at 12:35. Please make sure you discuss with your child/ren where s/he would go if school were to let out early. (*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.

Sincerely,

Charlene Garran, Principal

### **Classroom Supplies**

Please check with your child's teacher to see if more classroom supplies are needed. Most classes can use glue sticks, pencils, tissues, and disinfecting wipes. Your child may need other supplies such as paper, crayons, and/or pencils/pens replenished.

We can use sweatpants of all sizes for children who need a change of clothes from the health room.

**Thanks to the many parent volunteers who help out at lunch and recess.  
We truly appreciate your support and your children love having you around!**

### **New Kindergarten/Prospective Parent Tours**

We will offer several tours for new Kindergarten and/or prospective parents early in the new year. A short presentation by the principal will be followed by a tour of the school. Please pass this on to neighbors and friends who may be considering coming to Ashburton. This will be in addition to our annual Kindergarten Orientation later in the spring.

Please RVSP to Mrs. Jacobs in the office. Each session will last about an hour.

- January 9<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m.
- January 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.
- January 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m.
- February 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.





## How to Receive MCPS Emergency Information

### **MCPS QuickNotes**

Receive emergency announcements, as well as other school news and information, via email through MCPS QuickNotes. Sign up at [www.mcpsquicknotes.org](http://www.mcpsquicknotes.org). Information is available in six languages.

### **Alert MCPS**

Alert MCPS provides information about major changes in school system operations via text messages delivered to devices you register, such as cell phones, smart phones, and pagers. Signing up for Alert MCPS is free, but check with your wireless provider about charges associated with text messages. Messages are provided in English and Spanish. Parents and staff can also sign up to receive messages for specific MCPS schools. This service would be used for situations that affect one or a small number of schools, such as a power outage. Sign up at <http://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov/>.

### **Twitter**

A Twitter account allows you to follow MCPS updates, including emergency messages, on your computer, cell phone, or mobile device. Go to <http://twitter.com/mcps> to follow MCPS or to create an account.

### **MCPS Website**

Changes in school operations due to weather conditions or other emergencies are posted on the MCPS website at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org). Messages are posted in English and Spanish.

### **Recorded Information Line**

To hear a recorded message about changes in school operations in English and Spanish, call 301-279-3673.

### **MCPS TV**

Emergency messages, news about MCPS, coverage of Board of Education meetings, and more, are provided on Comcast Cable Ch. 34, Verizon Ch. 36, and RCN Ch. 89. For more info, visit [www.mcpstv.org](http://www.mcpstv.org).

### **TV and Radio: Local Stations**

Tune in to local TV and radio stations for news about changes in school operations due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

**Make sure that your school has your current contact information (e-mail address and home, work, and cell phone numbers), so that you can be reached in an emergency.**

NOTE: MCPS will no longer post closing messages on School's Out ([www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com))

Montgomery County Public Schools  
Department of Public Information & Web Services/Office of Communications  
301-279-3853

December 7, 2010

## PEP (Pre-School Education Program)

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year!  
Our New Year will  
begin with the  
entire month of  
January dedicated  
to a Winter



Wonderland theme. We will be exploring fun topics such as snow, snowflakes, snowmen, winter clothing such as jackets, hats, mittens, and gloves, and winter animals such as polar bears and penguins.

### VOCABULARY:

Winter, New Year, snow, snowman, snowflake, snowball, jacket, hat, mittens, gloves, scarf, boots, polar bear, penguin, raccoon, badger, rabbit, hedgehog, fox, mouse, owl, bear, hot/cold, summer/winter, north pole/south pole, ice, icicle, white, freeze/melt, skating, sledding.

### 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
- Froggy Gets Dressed by Jonathan London
- When Winter Comes by Nancy Vann Laan
- 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

### SONGS/FINGER PLAYS:

“Two Little Funny Birds”  
“Five Little Snowflakes”  
“Snowman”

### ACTIVITIES/CRAFTS:

- Sequence and act out Jan Brett's The Mitten with props such as character masks and blanket.
- Sequence clothing in Shirley Neitzel's rebus story The Jacket I Wear in the Snow with clothing and clothes line (great fine motor activity).
- Discuss differences in seasons; clothing appropriate to seasons and weather.
- Sequence pictures from short stories. Ex: building a snowman, a snowman melting.
- Variety of craft ideas related to winter...paper plate snowmen and penguins, paper bag snowmen and penguins, cardboard tube snowmen.
- Shaving cream sensory activities.



### SNACK/COOKING IDEAS:

- Melted Snowman...vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup and chocolate chips.
- Pancake Snowmen: small, medium, large pancakes sprinkled with confectioner's sugar (snow) and decorated with chocolate chips and M & M's.
- Snowman Soup...hot chocolate with mini marshmallows
- Shaved ice “snow cones”...good sensory experience
- Penguins: dates with cream cheese bellies, raisin eyes, carrot feet and beaks

### SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME:

- Checkout some 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).
- Checkout other books that are on the suggested reading list.
- If you haven't already done so, switch out summer/fall and winter clothing in your child's closet and talk about different clothing for different seasons.
- 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. Compare these sensations to what you experience in other seasons.
- Take a picture of your child in front of your home or in a special place in the snow. Start a collection of photos taken in the same place each season, so you can talk with your child about how the landscape changes with the seasons and also keep track of how much he/she has grown!

#### NOTES and REMINDERS:

NO SCHOOL on Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>-Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
 NO SCHOOL for PEP on Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>  
 - Staff Professional Day

As always, thank you for your continued support.

The PEP Team



## January Happenings In Kindergarten

### Reading

This month we will be giving our winter reading test to check each child's progress in sounds, word recognition, and their reading level. We will continue to work hard in our small reading groups on a variety of topics such as re-telling, problem and solution, story maps, and answering written comprehension questions. Please continue to practice the kindergarten sight 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 that we learn in non-fiction texts.

### Math

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

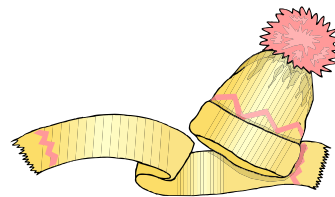
Your child should be able to:

- Count numbers up to 30
- Read and write numbers up to 30
- Count back from ten
- Match numerals to sets up to 20
- Use objects to make equal sets and sets that have more or less
- Use ordinal numbers *first* through *fifth*

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

### Science

We will learn about the natural world around us, as the weather changes to winter this month. We will use our five senses to describe winter and we will discuss how living things adapt to their environment in the cold winter months.

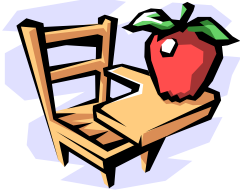


### Social Studies

We will continue to look at many different human-made features and discuss the different ways that people change their environment to adapt to certain situations.

Happy New Year!

--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 and Writing:** First graders will be reading at their own level and continue to progress at their own pace. We have been reading literary text and retelling stories using story elements. We are also beginning our author study on Eric Carle! In addition, 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!!*

In writer’s workshop, we will finish up the quarter by writing opinion pieces. You can help at home by asking your child to express an opinion about various topics, and support their opinion with facts.

**Math:** In math, we are continuing to learn how to answer word problems that have missing addends, and where 2 numbers are compared. Please continue to practice strategies for solving addition and subtraction problems.

**Science:** We are finishing up our study of motion and magnets. Ask your child to share with you some of the things we have learned! Also check out the following website for some fun science games:  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/scienceclips/ages/6\\_7/forces\\_movement.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/scienceclips/ages/6_7/forces_movement.shtml)

**Social Studies:** We really enjoyed learning about each student’s country and culture through our poster project! As the quarter ends, we will finish up our history unit where we look at things from then and now.



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're already busy finishing up second quarter and preparing to enter quarter three. We have an exciting start to 2012 planned!

### Reading

We will finish up second quarter on informational text including text features and finding the main idea. One way we show what we know is through BCR's, which are short written responses to what we've read. You can help by ensuring that your child is completing the reading log each week carefully and with support from the book which was read.

Third quarter will take us back into literary texts. We'll begin by looking at how characters respond to challenges in a story.

### Writing

We are finishing up our original version of a folktale this month. Additionally, we're integrating

informational writing into science class, where students will be learning how to use descriptive details they discovered through observation to write to inform about the characteristics of fabrics, paper and wood.

Marking period three will then lead us into opinion writing.

### **Science**

We will complete our conversations of minute pieces of larger objects by observing a variety of fabrics, coins, papers and woods to discover what smaller pieces they're made up of.

Students will learn about scientific observations and how to record the detailed observations they are making.



In quarter three we will begin observing and describing the day and night sky. Students will observe the sun, moon and plants over time.

### **Math**

Students will continue adding and subtracting money through word problem scenarios. They will show a given amount of money in multiple ways and a way to show a set amount of money with the least number of coins possible.

Our next unit will be measurement. This unit begins with an exploration of centimeters and meters. We will be discussing when to use each unit as well as practice measuring objects using both centimeters and meters.

### **Social Studies**

For the rest of quarter two we will be finishing our unit on culture. Students will be discussing their own family cultures and traditions as well as how culture changes over time.

Next we'll be exploring how technology affects daily life and how transportation has changed over time.

### **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 2012!

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

-Ms. Ashin, Ms. Bouquet, Ms. Canard, Ms. Fox, Mrs. Melendez & 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 2012. 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. Please make sure that your third grader 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 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 continue 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 determining how media affects culture. Students will be looking at news media and comparing it to print media. We will also be discussing how commercials influence our society. At home, you can identify different types of media (print, internet, television, radio) and discuss why companies use commercials and how news travels.

**Reminders:**

In January, your student will be receiving weekly MSA packets in reading. 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.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support!

The Third Grade Team

**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 stayed in the area and did new and exciting things. Please check for the

Friday Folder and the learning skills charts on Fridays. Discuss with your student celebrations written on the learning skills chart. 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 use 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 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. If you need more resources to assist with the learning of basic math facts, see Mrs. Brenner or Mrs. Imhof.

**Science:** We are wrapping up our unit on the Chesapeake Bay! As the New Year begins, so does the newest 4th 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, Mrs. Imhof,  
Ms. Leiser, and Mrs. Weaver

## *Fifth Grade's Fabulous News*

Happy New Year! It's 2012 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

Fifth grade math students will continue working on Unit 3A, whole numbers and decimal fractions. Students will review multiplication and division strategies and extend that knowledge to be able to multiply and divide decimals, as well as whole numbers. We will then transition to Unit 3B where students will apply their knowledge of decimals to make connections to both fractions and percents. Just as the students compared and ordered decimals, they will work to compare and order fractions as well. Students also will learn to add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers. Through all of this, it is important to have a strong hold on the basic facts. This is a great concept to continue to practice at home through flashcards or online math websites.

Sixth grade 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. This often helps when trying to add, subtract, multiply, and/or divide. Students will also focus on using computational estimates to produce approximate results.

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

### Reading

Students have completed their study of poetry in reading. For our next genre of study, 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. During the feature article unit, we will revisit text structures. Students will also be working with analogies.

We will begin reviewing concepts and test-taking strategies for the reading portion of the MSA. Students will receive weekly reading review materials in a packet. The packet 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 BCRs (Brief Constructed Responses) in response to readings, and making inferences to answer test questions.

### Writing

The fifth graders are putting the finishing touches on their phenomenal poetry anthologies, compiling their original works and, in their poets' notes, sharing the inspirations for their poems and elaborating on the techniques they chose to use. After celebrating their accomplishments as poets, the students will return to writing to inform. As they did earlier in the quarter, they will work on their informational writing skills in connection with what they are learning about Colonial America in Social Studies.

### Science

The students will complete the Electricity and Magnetism Unit by observing and analyzing the properties and forces of magnets. They will extend further their understanding of electricity by observing and investigating the effects of combining electricity and magnetism in electromagnets.

The science classes will begin their study of astronomy at the beginning of the new term, at the end of January, by looking first at our home planet and identifying the conditions that make life possible here.



## Social Studies

We are at the point in our historical timeline where the Revolutionary War has begun! We talked about the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, and the writing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. This month, we will focus on some major battles of the Revolutionary War, the support given by the French and Spanish allies, and the conclusion of the war with the Treaty of Paris.

We will then get started on the next unit "Economics: Creating a New Nation". 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 ESOL program is aligned with the English language standards and the



*Elementary Integrated Curriculum* philosophy of integrating content with language skills. We provide opportunities for our students to learn in meaningful contexts, across all content areas.

Our **Kindergarten** unit focuses on helping students develop language to express the idea of traveling. This includes vocabulary for map and globe skills, destinations, and items (such as clothing) that they would need to visit particular locations. 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 are having fun choosing a pretend destination, as well as "packing" our pretend suitcases with needed items.

**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 "You Did It Again!" They will be writing about their homes and their favorite toys in January.

The **second graders** are reading informational 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. Other language functions focused on this marking period have included locating information using key words, summarizing information about a topic, and explaining details about a topic, both orally and in writing.

The students in the **three through five beginner group** have been studying how to communicate with others in school. This quarter students are reading The New Boy is Lost! and 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. Some fifth graders are receiving support in understanding and using various poetic devices in their writing class. They have been working on writing poems about feelings and nature this month. 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 24<sup>th</sup>. Have a happy and healthy New Year!

Mrs. Glick, Mrs. Golden,  
Mrs. Blankinship, Mrs. Kim

## Guidance Greetings!

Happy Holidays!! I can't believe how quickly this year has been flying by. I hope you were able to have a nice and stress-free winter break. With all the stress surrounding the holidays, testing, homework, friendship issues, and changes around school, I have had many parents ask me how they can help their child deal with all the stress of the fast paced society that we live in today. Children can experience stress just as adults do, but often it goes unrecognized. What may cause stress for one child may not be a stressful situation for another child. It is important to be able to recognize the signs and signals that your child may be experiencing undue stress.

Some signs and signals may include:

- Recurring headaches, tummy aches, or neck pain

- Increased irritability, sadness, panic, or anger
- Trouble relaxing or sleeping
- Withdrawal from activities
- Excessive energy or restlessness
- Reverting to less mature behaviors
- Nervous habits such as thumb sucking or hair twisting
- Trouble getting along with peers

Just like adults, there are ways that we can help children cope with stress. Some ways to help alleviate stress in children are:

- Listening-ask the child what is bothering them and how they feel
- Encouragement-Help children to find something they are good at and tell them how proud you are of them
- Honesty and Openness-Encourage children to express their feelings openly
- Consistency-Try to be consistent with morning and afternoon routines
- Physical exercise-Exercise can help burn off stressful feelings
- Humor-Help the child to see the funny side of things
- Quiet-Allow for quiet and rest time
- Journaling-Encourage the child to write or draw things that are bothering them

As always, if your child is experiencing stress or any other difficult situations, please do not hesitate to contact me at

[Andrea S Gillespie@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Andrea_S_Gillespie@mcpsmd.org) or 301-571-6959.

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 would like to take advantage of these services. Beginning at the start of the new semester (end of January), 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, by Friday 1/13/12. 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

## PTA Insider

# Happy New Year!



### *From the PTA Board*

January 2012

### Upcoming Events

- January 4 PTA Meeting – CANCELLED
- January 10 Dine-Out Nite at CPK in Montgomery Mall
- January 16 MLK Holiday – No School
- January 23 Professional Day – No School
- February 3 New date for Family Bingo Night
- February 7 Special Speaker from Suburban Hospital – Topic: Nutrition & Healthy Eating (the importance of healthy snacking and how to get your kids to eat a healthy meal) – Media Center, 7pm
- March 6 Family Science Night, 6:30pm

Happy 2012! We hope this January finds each and everyone of you healthy and happy as you start the new year! What are your New Year's resolutions? Perhaps you really want to make some lasting changes for yourself and your family? Ahhh the beginning of a new year really does motivate us into thinking about change, however, it's the next part that we all seem to have difficulty with - changing our way of thinking and/or behavior to accomplish our goals. Here is an interesting excerpt from an article I read on how to keep a New Year's resolution.

Anyone who has ever made and broken a New Year's Resolution can appreciate the difficulty of behavior change. Making a lasting change in behavior is rarely a simple process, and usually involves a substantial commitment of time, effort and emotion.

Whether you want to lose weight, stop smoking, or accomplish another goal, there is no single solution that works for everyone. You may have to try several different techniques, often through a process of trial-and-error, in order to achieve your goal. It is during this period that many people become discouraged and give up on their behavior change goals. The key to maintaining your goals is to try new techniques and find ways to stay motivated.





## *From the PTA Board (cont'd)*



### Stay Informed!

Want to get up-to-date Ashburton Community information? Wondering how to find a good reading tutor? Want to find a sports team for your child? Interested in this information and more? Then sign-up for our new Ashburton Community Listserv at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AshburtonESDiscuss/>  
Questions, contact Rachel Yang.

Psychologists have developed a number of ways to effectively help people change their behavior. Many of these techniques are used by therapists, physicians, and teachers. Researchers have also proposed theories to explain *how* change occurs. One of these theories, known as the 'Stages of Change' model, has been used to help people understand the change process. This model demonstrates that change is rarely easy and often requires a gradual progression of small steps toward a larger goal. Understanding the elements of change, the stages of change, and ways to work through each stage can help you achieve your goals. In order to succeed, you need to understand the three most important elements in changing a behavior:

- Readiness to change - Do you have the resources and knowledge to successfully make a lasting change?
- Barriers to change - Is there anything preventing you from changing?
- Expect relapse - What might trigger a return to a former behavior?

For more information on this topic, you will find the rest of this article on About.com Psychology Stages of Change – "How to Keep a New Year's Resolution," by Kendra Cherry.

To tie into this theme about change, have you thought about how you can contribute more to your children, family and school? How do you spend more time with your family and make it count? Well, the PTA at Ashburton offers you, as well as your family, many opportunities to come together as a family AND contribute to your school. Whether it's volunteering to help with an activity by setting up or running a station or cleaning up after an event or chairing a committee that impacts the families of AES. These PTA activities and chair positions are designed to help you connect with your family as well as others that share your common interests. So if you are searching, look no further! Inquire today about how you can help with the AES PTA!

Wishing all Ashburton Families a healthy and happy New Year!

Have Fun, Make Memories, Get Involved!

All the best,  
**Kathy Rose**  
Ashburton PTA President on behalf of the PTA Board

## Looking Back on December...

We started off the month with a very informative PTA Meeting, Tues. Dec. 6th. During the course of our brief meeting, the Board and AES parents passed the 2011/2012 PTA Budget. Now we can look forward to a new year of PTA sponsored activities-yeah! We also had a wonderful turnout for our special speaker from Peer2Peer on the topic of "Homework skills and strategies." What a great presentation! Parents participated in a question/answer exercise and were given specific skills/strategies to use at home in order to help their child(ren) with their Homework routine. THANK YOU Peer2Peer!

## Ashburton Dine-Outs Continue to be Successful!

THANK YOU to everyone who joined us at Ledo's pizza on Tuesday evening for the dine-out. We raised \$409.10 for the school! As always, these funds go right back to our students in so many different ways (community events, technology, scholarships for field trips, etc.). Mark your calendars now for our next dine out on Tuesday, January 10th at California Pizza Kitchen in Montgomery Mall.

Wendy Calhoun, Dine-out Chair



## Suggestions for the PTA? Let us know!

Kathy Rose, President		
Sonali Arurkar, Co-Administrative VP		
Marci Norton, Co-Administrative VP		
Wendy Calhoun, Co-Membership VP		
Veronica Walgamotte, Co-Membership VP		
Mark Schuloff, Treasurer		
Jen Luna, Secretary		

### Submit Content for the PTA Insider!

If you have information you'd like to share in future issues of the PTA Insider, please submit to Lien-Anh Van Wagener. Content is due by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of each month for review.



Join us for Dine-Out Nite

California Pizza Kitchen

Montgomery Mall

January 10<sup>th</sup>

