

Bannockburn Elementary School

6520 Dalroy Lane
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
301-320-6555



September 6, 2009

Dear Bannockburn Families:

Our first day of school and first week of school was a great success! We welcomed 365 students into the doors of Bannockburn Elementary School for a new school year. Earlier last week, we welcomed many new families to the Bannockburn community during our New Family Coffee. During the first week of school, our teachers and students were working on establishing class routines and expectations for academic success for all students, and getting familiar with the layout of the building. The staff has been busy setting up their classrooms and preparing activities that will have your children actively participating during the learning process. In addition, we held a school-wide Welcome Back Expectations Assembly which was well received by our students and staff, where we introduced our staff to our student body and reviewed our school expectations that consist of shine with respect, shine with responsibility, and shine with cooperation. I have enjoyed reading all of the children's letters to me about their summer vacations. It sounds like everyone enjoyed their summer break with fun activities ranging from swimming to sightseeing and traveling to the beach and some had the opportunity to visit other states and countries. We have posted all of the summer letters on a bulletin board located across from the all-purpose room.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our PTA Co-Presidents, Mr. Scott Sherman and Mrs. Jennifer McCarthy for their continued support for our students and staff. Bannockburn ES has consistently been successful due to the productive partnership with our PTA. In addition, I would like to thank our building service team, consisting of our new building manager, Mary Thompson, Tyrone Jones, our new assistant manager, and building service workers Nan Cho and Jose Fuentes, for their diligent work throughout the summer to ensure all classrooms and hallways were thoroughly clean and shiny.

Many parents were able to join us at our first PTA meeting last Tuesday evening. They received information from Dr. Denise Greene, director of school performance for MCPS, on process of allocating school staffing. In addition, I shared information regarding the math program and school-wide behavior management program. Additional informational regarding these programs will be sent home in the next few weeks. Right before the PTA meeting, we held our Parent Volunteer Training, which had a great turn-out. Bannockburn ES prides itself on working together as a community. This is clearly evident through the partnership with the teachers and parents. We greatly appreciate parent volunteers who are able to assist in their child's classroom, media center, main office, or during lunch and recess. All parents new to BES or needing a refresher, who were unable to attend last week's parent volunteer training, need to check out the Parent Volunteer video which is located in our school media center. In addition, you need to complete the parent volunteer registration form that ALL parents must sign prior to volunteering at our school. Please contact the main office to receive this information.

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We look forward to seeing all of our Bannockburn families on the playground area for our annual *Back to School Picnic* on Friday, September 11th, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. This is traditionally a great time for all families and children to interact with others and enjoy great food.

Back to School Night will be held on Wednesday, September 16th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Our goal is to provide parents with specific information that helps you learn the instructional program that is planned for your children at each grade level.

You will receive information regarding the grade-level instructional program and have a chance to sign up for Parent-Teacher Conferences. We will begin with a presentation in the gym from 6:30-7:00 p.m. We will then move into two consecutive 30 minute sessions, when parents can go to their children's classrooms to visit with the teachers and receive information on the instructional programs. We do the two identical sessions to give parents that have more than one child at Bannockburn ES an opportunity to visit at least two of their children's teachers. The first session will be held from 7:00-7:30 p.m. and the second session will be held from 7:40-8:10 p.m.

Later this month, we will have our monthly *Principal's Coffee* on September 23rd from 9:30-10:30 a.m. in the media center. This is open to all parents as an informal forum where we share current information and answer any questions or concerns that you may have regarding the school program and community.

Last week you received a number of important documents and information from the school. Please read, complete, and return these important forms to help ensure the safety and well-being of your children. Forms you should have received included:

1. **Student Emergency Information**- These yellow sheets have contact information from previous years enrollment. Please verify the information and make corrections if needed. These emergency forms play a critical role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our students and are our primary source of contact information. Please remember to notify the office when there is a change in email addresses, and home, work, or cell phone numbers. Weekly and frequent email and phone messages are sent via Connect-Ed system. This system is sent out to all families through the phone numbers and emails that are listed on your yellow sheets. Please make sure the information is up to date.
2. **Applications for Free/Reduced Lunch**- Complete and return immediately. See the eligibility chart on the back page and if your family does not qualify, discard the information. New applications must be completed every year.
3. **MCPS Authorization for Releasing Students**- (Release of a student to an adult other than the parent/guardian) you must complete one form per family surname, list each child on the form, complete form and return immediately. Your children will only be released to the names listed on this form.

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4. **Bannockburn Homework Policy (Complete one for each child)-** This document should be reviewed carefully with your child, signed by you and your child and returned to school. If you have any questions about homework, please discuss them with your child's teacher.

Earlier last week you should have received information regarding Montgomery County Public Schools offering a free seasonal flu vaccination in all MCPS elementary schools. **The scheduled date for vaccinations at Bannockburn Elementary School will be Wednesday, September 30th, 2009, between 9:30-12:30.** FluMist (nasal vaccine) is the vaccine that most students will receive in school. It is a gentle spray that is administered in each nostril. It is well tolerated by children and has minimal side effects. Detailed information about FluMist was included in the information sent home earlier last week. If you need an extra copy, please contact or stop by the main office or it can be found on the MCPS website. School nurses and other registered and/or certified health professionals will administer the vaccine.

Just a reminder that if you want your child to be vaccinated at school for seasonal flu, please sign and return the consent form to your child's teacher with all questions answered by September 11, 2009. Students who do not participate in the local school vaccination program are encouraged to seek vaccination from their family physician or community clinic. If you have any questions regarding the vaccinations and/or procedures, please contact Marie Goldsmith, our health room technician at 301-320-6555.

Dates to Remember:

Monday, September 7th: Holiday, Labor Day, Schools and Offices Closed
Tuesday, September 8th: School Improvement Plan Meeting, 3:45 p.m. in the media center
Thursday, September 10th: Walt Whitman HS Back-To-School Night
Friday, September 11th: Back-To-School Picnic, from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, September 16th: Back-To-School Night, 6:30 p.m.-8:10 p.m.
Thursday, September 17th: Character Education Assembly at 2:30 p.m. and Pyle MS Back-To-School Night
Friday, September 18th: PTA Bike Ride Fundraiser
Wednesday, September 23rd: Principal's Coffee at 9:30 a.m. in the media center.
Wednesday, September 30th: MCPS FluMist seasonal flu vaccinations between 9:30-12:30

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me via email Daniel_walder@mcpsmd.org or 301-320-6555.

Sincerely,

Daniel Walder
Principal