

Dear Cloverly Families:

I am so excited to see so many content, relaxed, and rejuvenated students and staff upon their return to school from winter break. I am certain that 2010 will be yet another productive year and an opportunity to celebrate our successes.

I'm inviting all parents to join me for an open discussion about our instructional program. Grade-level Parent/Principal Coffees will be held from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. followed by a grade-level walk-through on the following dates:

- January 8 – Kindergarten
- January 11 – 1st grade
- January 12 – 2nd grade
- January 13 – 3rd grade
- January 14 – 4th grade
- January 15 – 5th grade

Bring all of your grade-level concerns and questions. Refreshments will be provided.

Study Circles has been cancelled for this school year.

When students are absent, we make every effort to provide missed work. However, please allow teachers **at least 24 hours** to prepare work to be sent home. If students will only be absent for one or two days, they may obtain missed work when they return. If a student is absent for more than 2 days, notify the office so that the classroom teacher may be informed of the extended absence and may collect the work as appropriate. Please be aware that in the case of an extended absence, a teacher may choose to modify and adjust the work to be completed.

Mark these dates on your calendars. The Maryland Schools Assessment (MSA) will be administered to all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students during March 8-17. Science MSA will be administered to all 5th grade students between April 21 and May 11. Terra Nova (TN/2) will be administered to all 2nd grade students between April 26 and April 30. It is important for all students to be present during the administration of these tests. I am urging you not to schedule vacations or make appointments for your children on these important dates.

May all of our Cloverly families have a healthy, prosperous, and enjoyable new year.

Sincerely,

Melissa Brunson

Melissa Brunson
Principal

Regarding the Superintendent's Budget Proposal for the 2010-11 school year....

Our Superintendent, Dr. Jerry D. Weast, has released his proposed operating budget for next school year. The recommended budget proposes no new initiatives but allows our school and our school system to maintain the services and programs we are currently providing. The only increase – about 1 percent – is to help fund MCPS' continued growth in enrollment.

Given the economic challenges at the state and county levels, the future of Dr. Weast's proposal is very uncertain and before the budget receives final approval from the County Council and the Board of Education, the district could be forced to make some very difficult cuts. With his recommendation, Dr. Weast and the budget team – which included our employee associations and PTAs – released a list of areas that could be impacted should cuts to the budget need to be made. These are not final recommendations and we are hopeful that we will not need to make any reductions. We want to maintain the high level of service to our students that has yielded such outstanding results in our school and our system. However, we must be prepared.

With all of this uncertainty, it is more important more than ever that our parents and community members are fully informed about the budget and know exactly how to make their voice heard. A budget website has been created that includes a video presentation by Dr. Weast; the full budget book, as well as a summary; frequently asked questions and much more. Please take the time to learn more about Dr. Weast's proposal and make sure the members of the Board of Education and the County Council know your priorities and your concerns. You can visit the website at <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget/>.

As we all know, even in difficult times, we must continue to invest in education to secure the future of our children and our community. Thank you for your continued support!