

November 2009

Albert P. DuPont, Ed.D, Principal  
Stacey F. Rogovoy, Assistant Principal

Dear Parents,

Can you spare 20 minutes a night to make a huge impact on your children's learning? Do you know what is the absolute best thing you can possibly do to stimulate learning for your children? **Read to them!** All it takes is 20 minutes a night. That's it. Twenty minutes! Whether your child is an infant, a 1<sup>st</sup> grader, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader...if you read to them (or with them) every night, you are going to make a HUGE impact upon their learning. What happens when you read to them? They hear rich, vivid language used by the author, they might fall in love with a great character, they create images in their mind of what is being read, they laugh, and...best of all...they get to spend time with you.

The books you read with your child do not necessarily need to push the child's reading skills. The emphasis should be on enjoyment and the appreciation of a great story. You might choose a simple picture book with great illustrations or perhaps a favorite series of books such as Curious George, Cam Jansen or Clifford. Research clearly shows that to become a better reader, you need to read.

You may find conversation with your child comes naturally while you are reading together. They might ask a simple question about what is happening or make a connection to their own life from the book. You may also find they want to read the book over and over again, which is okay. Frequent readings of the same titles enhance comprehension it becomes familiar. Twenty minutes. That is all you need to make a huge impact on your children's learning. It may soon be your favorite part of the day.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Albert P. DuPont, Ed.D.  
Principal

## **PYP Corner**

International Baccalaureate fast facts, did you know?

### Mission:

**The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.**

To this end the IB works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

### Main activities:

The IB works in four areas:

1. the development of curriculum
2. the assessment of students
3. the training and professional development of teachers
4. the authorization and evaluation of schools

### Size:

The IB works with 2,741 schools in 138 countries to offer the three IB programmes to approximately 756,000 students.

### Programmes:

The IB offers three programmes for students aged 3 to 19. The programmes can be offered individually or as a continuum by IB World Schools.

- The Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged 3-12 started in 1997 and is now offered by 583 IB World Schools.
- The Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students aged 11-16 started in 1994 and is now offered by 738 IB World Schools.
- The Diploma Programme for students aged 16 to 19 started in 1968 with first examinations in 1970 and is now offered by 2,006 IB World Schools.

### What makes the IB unique:

1. The IB offers a continuum of education, consisting of three programmes for students aged 3 to 19.
2. The IB is proud of their reputation for high-quality education sustained for over 35 years.
3. They encourage international-mindedness in IB students. To do this, they believe that students must first develop an understanding of their own cultural and national identity.
4. They encourage a positive attitude to learning by encouraging students to ask challenging questions, to critically reflect, to develop research skills, to learn how to learn and to participate in community service.

## **Chinese Immersion News**



Mr. Dushel is still seeking parent volunteers to chair the following committees:

Lunar New Year

Translation and Materials

Communication and Publicity

### **Dates to remember:**

February 1, 2010 - Immersion Interest Lottery forms will be available from the DCCAPS

February 23, 2010 - CGES Open House for interested Families at 10:00 a.m.

Families with students currently enrolled in Chinese Immersion who wish for their incoming kindergarten students to be part of Chinese Immersion must enter the lottery for the 2010-2011 school year.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

November 11 and 12 have been scheduled for parent/teacher conferences. If you have not yet signed up for a conference with your child's teacher, please contact the teacher to set up a time to meet.

Go in to your conference expecting success. A good attitude and a spirit of cooperation are the keys to successful parent-teacher conferences.

Before the conference, talk to your child, ask questions. For example, what subject does he/she like best? What is his/her opinion of the teacher? Is there something that your child would like you to discuss with his/her teacher? Explain to your child that the conference is designed so parents and teachers can work together to help them succeed. If there are any home situations that could be affecting your child, knowing about them can help the teacher better understand your child.

Create a list of questions or topics. Ask the most important questions first, in case time runs short. Some possible questions: What can we do to help our child succeed? What are our child's strengths and weaknesses (both academic and social)? How is our child evaluated?

Remember respect and cooperation are keys to creating an environment where your children learn that teachers and parents are working together to communicate that the success of the children is the top priority.

## **From The Health Room**



As you know, flu is spreading easily from person to person and school-age children are among the groups most affected. As a result, student and staff absences from school will fluctuate. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that flu is widespread in Maryland, and that almost all of the flu viruses identified so far are of the H1N1 strain. Although the school is unable to verify whether sick students and staff have H1N1 (swine) flu, we do know that people are reporting or exhibiting flu-like illness. Be assured that we are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu in our school. Students and staff who exhibit flu-like symptoms are staying home or being sent home in accordance with guidance from the CDC. Staff continues to model and encourage students to practice good hygiene-washing hands frequently;

coughing into a tissue or sleeve; and avoiding touching the eyes, nose, and mouth-and our school is being routinely cleaned following guidelines approved by county health officials.

We want to keep the school operations on a normal schedule and minimize any disruption to teaching and learning. You can help us in our efforts to prevent the spread of flu by:

- Knowing the symptoms of the flu. These include fever (100 degrees or greater), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired.
- Keeping children home from school if they are sick. Individuals who have been sick with the flu should stay home until they have been fever-free for 24 hours. Any children or staff who are sick at school will be sent home.
- Reminding your children to wash their hands often with soap and water.
- Encouraging your children not to share personal items like drinks, food, or utensils.
- Telling your children to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. If they do not have a tissue, they should cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve, not their hands.

Please be sure the office has a current phone number and e-mail address in order to reach you if necessary.

## **Great Opportunities**

### **The George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. Saturday School Program Enrolling for 2009-2010 School Year**

Give your child a jump-start on school by enrolling in the George B. Thomas, Sr. Learning Academy, Inc. (GBTLA) Saturday School Program! The Learning Academy is a tutoring and mentoring program that enhances the academic performance and achievement of Montgomery County students in grades 1 through 12. This program helps children reach their academic potential through small group support in reading, mathematics, and test-taking skills.

The program runs from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday mornings. During this time, certified teachers and volunteer tutors work with students in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and learning/studying strategies. Secondary students also have access to computer labs to assist them in researching information for assignments and learning valuable technology skills.

The GBTLA is open to all students who desire to improve or enhance their academic growth and achievement. Centers are located in twelve high schools throughout the County. Students can enroll at any of the twelve centers, however, students typically enroll at the center that is in their home school cluster – in this case, the Rockville High School Center.

Once enrolled, students must meet high academic and behavioral expectations, including regular attendance. They are required to share quarterly report cards with tutors, who use the information to plan tutoring activities and monitor student progress.

Registration and Opening Day information is below and the GBTLA encourages parents to register their students at the beginning of the year. However, if students aren't able to enroll at this time, parents may enroll them at any time throughout the year by coming to one of the centers listed above on any Saturday morning. Parents must complete a registration form (including student ID number), pay a \$30 registration fee, and provide a copy of their child(ren)'s most recent report card. Registration forms are available in the main office of all cluster schools and online at [www.gbtlearningacademy.org](http://www.gbtlearningacademy.org). If you have questions about the program, please call the GBTLA's main office at 301-320-6545.

## **LEARNING ACADEMY CENTERS**

Sherwood High School  
Springbrook High School  
Paint Branch High School  
John F. Kennedy High School  
Northwest High School  
Montgomery Blair High School  
Gaithersburg High School  
Wheaton High School  
Albert Einstein High School

Watkins Mill High School  
Col. Zadok Magruder High School  
Rockville High School

## **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemorative Celebration**

Montgomery County's Office of Community Partnerships in the Office of the County Executive and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Committee announce the Talent Call for individuals and groups interested in performing in the 2010 Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. Commemorative Celebration. The event will take place on Monday, January 18, 2010, at the Strathmore Music Center, 5301 Tuckerman Lane, North Bethesda. Auditions will take place on Saturday, November 14, 2009, from 2-4 p.m. in the Executive Office Building lobby-level auditorium, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville. Audition material should be based on this year's theme of "Honoring Heritage, Inspiring Change, with performances lasting between 3-5 minutes. Those selected to perform will be notified by letter or e-mail in December 2009. For more information contact Sean Gibson at 240-777-1227 or via e-mail at [Sean.Gibson@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Sean.Gibson@montgomerycountymd.gov).

## **School Procedures**

### **Tardies and Absences**

The following recordings in attendance are being implemented in accordance with the Maryland Student Records System Manual, by the Maryland State Department of Education.

- Students will be recorded as a.m. absent, if they arrive at school more than two hours late.
- Students will be recorded as p.m. absent, if they leave school more than two hours early.
- Students will be recorded as either a.m. absent or p.m. absent, if they are absent from school for more than two hours, but less than four hours during the school day.
- Students will be recorded as full-day absent, if they are present for less than two hours of the school day.
- Student will be recorded as full-day present, if they are present for more than four hours of the school day.



## Dismissal

Please make all afternoon arrangements prior to the beginning of the school day.

The end of the day is a very busy time as we want to be sure all children go to the proper after school location. If your child is going to have alternate arrangements, please be sure to send a note to the teacher in the morning. If your child is to ride the bus home with another student, a note is required for the bus driver.



## School Closure

When schools are closed systemwide, all instructional programs and extracurricular activities in schools are cancelled. Private day-care providers in school buildings may elect to stay open if the schools are closed but the administrative offices are open. In extreme conditions, administrative offices also may be closed. If this occurs, private day-care programs located in school buildings are closed as well.

## Delayed Opening

A delayed opening means that schools open two hours later than scheduled. For College Gardens that means school begins at 11:15 a.m. Therefore, the school buses will be running two hours after the scheduled pick up times. When elementary schools open on a delayed schedule, there will be no Head Start program or field trips. Please continue to check for radio, television, or Web announcements in the event a decision to delay the opening of schools is reconsidered and a decision to close schools for the day is made at 7:00 a.m.



## Early Dismissal

An early dismissal means that schools will close 2.5 hours earlier than scheduled. College Gardens will close at 1:00 p.m. All buses operate on that same early schedule and, therefore, drop-off times are 2.5 hours earlier than normal. Head Start students will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.

## Public Announcements

Information about school operations is announced publicly as soon as possible on area radio and television stations, Montgomery County Cable Channel 6 or Cable Channel 34 – MCPS TV, on the Internet at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org), and on a taped telephone message service at 301-279-3673. Emergency e-mail announcements are available by signing up for MCPS QuickNotes on the school system's home page. If schools are closed or delayed, the announcement is made no later than 6:00 a.m. (or the night before if possible). If schools are closing early, the announcement is made by 11:00 a.m.



## Weather Conditions and Decisions

The school system uses a variety of sources of information to determine whether to close schools, delay the opening of schools, or dismiss schools early. These sources include actual physical inspection of road and school conditions by transportation officials, and an analysis of independent reports from the National Weather Service, Accu-Weather, and the news media. The most severe weather conditions within the county are used as the basis for decision-making. Consistent procedures are maintained in order to respond quickly to emergency weather conditions and protect the safety and well being of students.

All public schools within Montgomery County adhere to the same schedule concerning emergency weather conditions. The decision to change school operations is made by the superintendent of schools or his designee and affects all schools within the school system.



## **Make an Appointment Please**

We do value your input and we understand that you know your children best. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, please be sure to make an appointment or write a note if you would like to give them information about your child.



## **Lost and Found**

There is a large amount of student misplaced personal items in our lost and found. To minimize student loss of personal property, we ask that parents please label all student lunch boxes, backpacks, and outer clothing garments. This would greatly expedite and enhance the ability of school personnel to return items left in the cafeteria or playground to the student. Thank you for your cooperation. If these items are not picked up by November 24, 2009, they will be donated.



## **Giant and Safeway Registration- Earning Our School Money**

It is time again to register for Giant A+ bonus bucks and Safeway eScrip.

We are encouraging all parents to bring their Giant and Safeway card information to your conference. We will be signing parents up that day in the classrooms. So, don't forget to bring your Giant and Safeway numbers with you. You can also sign up your friends, relatives, and neighbors, who are willing to support CGES!

## **Bus Information**



## **Ride by the Rules**

Ride by the Rules is a safety campaign to insure safe bus activity. Nearly 100,000 students ride an MCPS school bus every day and MCPS school buses travel more than 100,000 miles a day. As with all of our safety initiatives, this is a "team effort." Please help us foster safe and positive behavior at the bus stop and on the bus by reminding your children about being respectful, responsible and safe. Students should stand at the bus stop, no running, climbing trees or fences, and be sure to remain on the sidewalk. When the bus arrives they should line up single file so no one gets hurt trying to board the bus.

While on the bus, there is to be no eating or drinking. All students are to be seated properly, keeping hands, feet, and head inside the bus at all times. Remember, for the safety of all students on the bus, these rules are to be followed. Riding the bus is a privilege and we do not want to have to revoke anyone's privilege for not observing safety regulations and standards.

## **Bus Reminders**

### **At the bus stop, students are expected to:**

- Arrive five minutes before the scheduled time.
- Maintain an orderly line in preparation to board the bus promptly, without shoving or pushing.
- Stay out of the roadway.
- Be considerate of nearby yards, driveways, houses, buildings, and private property.
- Move toward the bus only after it stops and the driver has signaled that it is safe.

### **On the bus, students are expected to:**

- Behave appropriately, just as if they were in a classroom.
- Keep the aisle and emergency door clear of obstructions.
- Keep their arms, feet, and head inside the bus at all times.
- Be seated and make room for others to sit as well. Once ridership has been adjusted at the beginning of the school year, standing is not permitted.
- Discard trash in appropriate containers.

### **On returning home, students are expected to:**

- Walk 10 feet in front of the stopped bus, if they must cross the road, and cross only

after the bus operator has indicated that it is safe.

- Refrain from trying to direct traffic upon leaving the bus.

**At all times, students may not:**

- Bring animals, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, glass containers, or explosives on the bus.
- Use vulgar language or gestures, fight, or engage in sexual harassment or other improper and/or illegal conduct.
- Throw any papers or objects in the bus or out the windows.
- Operate the emergency door without permission.
- Smoke, drink, eat, or play radios without headphones.
- Damage or deface any part of the bus.
- Ride a different bus than the one they have been assigned to, unless they have written permission from a parent and permission from the principal.

Large objects that cannot be held on a student's lap, such as some musical instruments, class projects, etc., should not be transported on the bus. Parents should make other arrangements to transport such items to and from school.

Bus operators and attendants may assign specific seats to students.

**Consequences of Misconduct**

The bus operator notifies the principal of details pertaining to a disciplinary problem with a student on the school bus. A bus operator may return a student to the school, or call the police, if the student poses a serious threat to the safety and health of other riders.

Students who violate the behavior and safety rules may have bus-riding privileges denied temporarily or permanently by the school principal in accordance with the following procedures:

- The principal will warn the student of the possibility of denial of bus-riding privileges.
- If the disciplinary problems continue, the principal will confer with the parent/guardian and student prior to the suspension of riding privileges or, depending on the severity and nature of the behavior problem, suspend riding privileges immediately. The principal will notify the parent/guardian in writing of complaints

received and the suspension of the student's riding privileges.

- The student's riding privileges may be restored by the principal after a conference with the student and/or parent and consultation with the transportation supervisor. The principal will notify the bus operator in writing of the reinstatement of the student's riding privileges.

In addition, students may be suspended from school as a result of misconduct on buses or receive lengthy bus riding suspensions for serious infractions.

**ESOL Language Lines**

MCPS has made available phone lines for parents needing translation service. Parents may call the following phone numbers:

- Spanish 301-230-5403
- Cambodian 301-230-5427
- Chinese 301-230-5428
- French 301-230-5429
- Korean 301-230-5430
- Vietnamese 301-230-5432

**Special Events**

**Saturday Discoveries**

Montgomery College Workforce Development & Continuing Education Youth Programs is offering enrichment courses for Gifted and Talented students in grades 4 & 5. Courses cover a variety of topics, including art, reading, writing, technology and much more. Class will be held on November 14, 2009 at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. Register through the website at [www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth) or call 240-567-7917.

**The Lunch Room**



Remember to check your child's account regularly. A low balance letter is sent home weekly. If your child borrows money from the main office, it must be returned to the main office in cash. A check

made out to the cafeteria does not reimburse the main office for money borrowed.

## **Dates to Remember**

### **November**

- 3 PTA meeting 7:00 p.m.
- 6 PTA Book Fair and Movie Night 7:00 p.m.
- 9-13 PTA Book Fair
- 10 Grade 3 Cosmic Adventures  
Picture Make-up day
- 11-12 Early Release – Conference Days
- 12 Grade 1 Math Chat 7:00 p.m.
- 17 Grade 2 to Strathmore
- 18 Grade 4 to St. Mary's City
- 18 Grade 5 to Philadelphia
- 20 ½ Kindergarten Mad Science
- 23 ½ Kindergarten Mad Science
- 25 Early Release – 12:55 p.m.
- 26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday