

College Gardens Elementary School

Principal's Updates from School: 9-30-11

This is one in a series of updates from College Gardens ES. Our "Principal's Updates from School" are scheduled for distribution weekly on Friday afternoons.

Staff & Parents; Have you joined the PTA?

College Gardens enjoys a strong partnership between home and school. Together, we work to support the education of our students, providing resources, modeling volunteerism, building our strong community and much much more. I encourage both our College Gardens Staff and our College Gardens Parents to join our PTA today.

Superintendent's Listen & Learn Event Rescheduled

On Wednesday, October 19, Montgomery County's new Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Joshua Starr, will be holding a "Listen and Learn" event from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Thomas S. Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Parkway, Rockville. This event, rescheduled from September 8, is an opportunity for parents and community members to meet Dr. Starr and to offer their views and perspective on what is working well in MCPS and what the school system can do to improve.

Dr. Starr has a keen interest in hearing directly from parents as he sets his priorities for the school system. This is also an opportunity for parents to learn more about his educational philosophy and leadership style.

I encourage all of you to attend the upcoming "Listen and Learn" event. Childcare and interpretation services will be provided. If you are not able to attend the event on October 19, Dr. Starr will be holding additional meetings throughout the fall. Times and locations are available on the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org.

Board of Education Community Conversations

The Community Conversations are an integral part of our strategic planning and budget processes as we confront challenging issues ahead.

Register to participate in one of the two events by calling 301-279-3617 or by email Ms. Martha Sequeira at martha_sequeira@mcpsmd.org

Wednesday, October 12, 2011, 7 – 9 p.m.

Northwood High School, Cafeteria
919 University Blvd. West
Silver Spring 20901

Thursday, October 27, 2011, 7 – 9 p.m.

Watkins Mill High School, Cafeteria
10301 Apple Ridge Road
Gaithersburg 20879

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Parents Invited to ‘ASK MCPS’ on Oct. 6

Drop by Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville on Thursday, Oct. 6 to talk with MCPS central office staff. Bilingual staff will be available for coffee, conversation and to answer parents’ questions about programs and services in the school system. The event runs from 4–7 p.m. at 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 50, Rockville. Call 301-279-3100 for more information.

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Free Seasonal Flu Clinics

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services will be conducting free, seasonal flu clinics in all Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) elementary schools and at two MCPS high schools.

The clinic at College Gardens Elementary School is scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2011 from 1:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m. The clinic will only serve students who are enrolled at College Gardens Elementary School.

Parents or Guardians must sign up for appointments for their student to receive the nasal spray flu vaccine (FluMist) at the clinic by contacting our school health room at 301-279-8470.

On or before October 7, 2011, a consent form will be sent home. The consent form must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian before the student can be vaccinated.

Superintendent Starr Releases Transition Report

The transition team organized by Montgomery County Public Schools Superintendent Joshua P. Starr has delivered its report, highlighting strengths it found in the system and areas where additional focus is needed. Dr. Starr plans to use the report, along with the information he obtains from his “Listen and Learn” sessions, to shape his strategy in the coming months to help MCPS reach the next level of success.

“I am grateful for the tremendous work the transition team did over the last three months to provide me with some expert analysis of what we do well in MCPS and, most importantly, what we can do better,” Dr. Starr said. “It is always helpful to have a fresh, outside take on an organization to better understand what makes it work. MCPS is a system that believes in continuous improvement so it is no surprise to anyone that we know that we have a lot of room for growth. This report confirms that and provides us with some key areas where we need to focus greater attention.”

The [45-page report](#) from the team, led by Dr. Robert Peterkin, Professor Emeritus at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, focuses on four areas: teaching and learning, professional learning, culture and context, and operations. The team included a mix of outside experts and current and former MCPS staff members. Over the last three months, the team reviewed system data, documents and plans; conducted focus groups with a variety of stakeholders and interviewed numerous community and elected leaders. As the team prepared its recommendations, both near-term and long-term, five broad themes emerged:

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- Differentiation within and among schools, classrooms, and students
- Communications and relationships with stakeholders
- Implementation of vision, mission, and policies in practice
- Design and delivery of professional development initiatives
- Issues of race and equity

“MCPS is one of the highest performing school systems in the nation and is poised to achieve even greater success for its students under Dr. Starr’s leadership,” said Dr. Peterkin. “Our goal in this report is to provide Dr. Starr with a candid assessment of where the organization needs attention and to offer some recommendations that we believe will help him shape his strategy going forward.”

You can access the transition plan at;

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/superintendent/transitionplan/>

MCPS Parent Academy Nights for Curriculum 2.0

The MCPS Parent Academy is holding 9 information nights to answer parents questions about the new and exciting Curriculum 2.0 that is being implemented in all kindergarten and first grade classes and in some second grade classes.

Curriculum 2.0 has been developed to create a more exciting learning experience for our students in Grades K-5. Built upon the existing Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) curriculum, Curriculum 2.0 blends reading/language arts and mathematics instruction with lessons in science, social studies, music, art, and physical education in a way that spurs creativity and critical thinking skills. Come learn about the new curriculum at one of the following sessions:

Thursday, September 15—7:00-8:30pm

Spark M. Matsunaga ES, 13902 Bromfield Rd., Germantown 20874

Thursday, September 22—7:00-8:30pm

Gaithersburg ES, 35 North Summit Ave., Gaithersburg 20877

Thursday, October 6—7:00-8:30pm

Bells Mill ES, 8225 Bells Mill Rd., Potomac 20854

Thursday, October 20—7:00-8:30pm

Sherwood ES, 1401 Olney-Sandy Spring Rd., Sandy Spring 20860

Thursday, October 27—7:00-8:30pm

College Gardens ES, 1700 Yale Pl., Rockville 20850

Thursday, November 17—7:00-8:30pm

Arcola ES, 1820 Franwall Ave., Silver Spring 20902

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Thursday, December 1—7:00-8:30pm

Sligo Creek ES, 500 Schuyler Rd., Silver Spring 20910

Thursday, December 15—7:00-8:30pm

Roscoe R. Nix ES, 1100 Corliss St., Silver Spring 20903

Important Dates to Remember

- September 28 Early Release Day; Report Card Preparation & Planning, Dismissal at 12:55 p.m.
- September 29 Rosh Hashanah; Schools Closed
- October 3 Individual Student Portraits; All Purpose Room Stage, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- October 4 PTA Meeting; All Purpose Room, 7:00 p.m.
- October 5 Walk to School Day
- October 5 Volunteer Orientation; Media Center, 2:00 p.m.
- October 5 NAACP Parents' Council Dinner; All Purpose Room, 7:00 p.m.
- October 7 IB Americas Visit with Visitors from Buenos Ares; College Gardens, 9:00 a.m.
- October 7 Grandparents Day; College Gardens ES, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
- October 10 Columbus Day Open House for Parents; 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

John D. Ewald

Principal

College Gardens ES

An International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) World School

1700 Yale Place

Rockville, MD 20850

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