

GERMANTOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2009-2010

ABSENCES

Please call our school at (301) 353-8050 before 9:00 A.M., if your child will be absent. The answering machine will take your message between 5:00 P.M. and 8:30 A.M. In addition, a written explanation of each absence is required from the parent or guardian when the student returns to school.

Please note, a monthly list of students' tardiness or absences is generated by the school system and sent to the principal. Students who are late and/or absent more than 3 times each month will receive a letter from the principal. Students who are absent 20% or more days of school are considered habitually absent and may be referred to the Truancy Review Board.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

The school and PTA offer various clubs for students to participate in after school. Information is sent home via student backpack and updates on the registration process are listed in the parent newsletter. Fees must be paid for club participation.

ARRIVING LATE TO SCHOOL AND LEAVING SCHOOL PRIOR TO DISMISSAL

Students arriving late for school, after 9:15 A.M, need to be signed in by a parent, guardian or designated adult. If it is necessary for a student to leave the building during the school day, the student must be signed out by the parent, guardian or adult designated in writing before the student will be released. No student will be permitted to leave unaccompanied for any reason. This policy is for the protection of our students.

ASSIGNMENT BOOKS

Assignment books are distributed to each student in grades 3-5 at no cost (thanks to the financial support of our wonderful PTA). This helpful instructional tool provides an area for students to record their HW assignments. Parents should initial the assignment book each day to inform the teacher that you have checked your child's assignments.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH COSTS

Breakfast and lunch prices are listed below and have not increased this year. We continue to encourage parents to put money in their child's SNAP account (via cash or check). Items from the "share table" are also available.)

Breakfast:	\$1.30	Reduced Breakfast (eligible students)	.30
Lunch:	\$2.50 (includes milk)	Reduced Lunch (eligible students)	.40
Milk (bought separately):	\$.60	Ice Cream	.50

Breakfast will be served to students at 8:50 A.M. beginning the first day of school. *(Please note - breakfast will not be served on days when there is a two-hour delay.)*

Students eligible for free and reduced meals (FARMS) during the 2008-09 school year are eligible to receive it again until October 13th while new applications are being processed. Once the 2009-2010 applications are processed, that eligibility determination will continue for the rest of the year or until a new application is processed. When a parent's income level changes, during the school year, the family is encouraged to resubmit a free and reduced meal application.

CLASS PARTIES

If your child would like to share a small treat such cookies or cupcakes with classmates on his/her birthday, please send in a note a few days before to inform the teacher. Treats will be distributed during your child's lunchtime (only) so classroom instruction is not interrupted. With the nationwide focus on reducing childhood obesity, please think about sending in healthier treats as much as possible. Please arrange your child's private parties through your own resources as **party invitations are not allowed to be distributed in the classroom**. MCPS allows two parties to be held during the school day - for Halloween and Valentine's Day. Room parents and/or teachers will be sending information home concerning these parties. A staff member provides an alternative for students who prefer not to attend these events. A note requesting the alternate activity should be sent in to the teacher.

COMMUNICATING WITH SCHOOL STAFF

All GES staff can be reached by telephone or in writing (letter or email). If a staff member is not available at the time you call, the office staff will take a message and your call should be returned within 24 hours. If you are experiencing some difficulty communicating with a staff member, it is most appropriate to address your concern with the staff member first. If the issue can not be resolved, you should then contact the staff member's immediate supervisor in order to help resolve the issue in a positive manner. Please note - email is not always the best form of communication when discussing "difficult" issues or topics. Since miscommunication often occurs in these instances it may be best to schedule a telephone or face-to-face

conference in an effort to resolve any issues in a positive manner.

"CONNECT ED" TELEPHONE CALLS

Recorded messages are often sent out to the entire school or selected school community members via a computerized telephone calling system. The home telephone number will receive these calls unless the school office staff is given an alternative or multiple numbers to include in the call receipt list. If your main contact number changes during the school year, please inform the school as soon as possible so we may update our records.

DISCIPLINE ISSUES

Misunderstandings between children occur from time to time. Our school staff works to resolve issues in a quick and efficient manner when these issues are brought to our attention. If your child is involved in a situation in class, a parent should notify the teacher. If there is an issue that occurs on the bus or at lunch/recess or any other areas of the school (and its grounds) please contact the principal.

A thorough investigation (with witnesses if applicable) will take place to determine the series of events and follow-up/consequences. Please note, the staff or principal can not inform parents of another child's consequences due to confidentiality concerns. A comprehensive discipline plan is sent home at the beginning of each year.

EMERGENCY CLOSING/DELAYED OPENING/EARLY DISMISSAL OF SCHOOLS

If schools are to be closed all day, radio and television stations will be notified no later than 6:00 A.M. Please check the media outlets instead of calling the office. We are more than happy to help you, but the volume of calls during the early morning hours can be too much for our small office staff.

ALL EMERGENCY CLOSINGS, LATE OPENINGS, OR EARLY DISMISSALS ARE ANNOUNCED PROMPTLY AND REGULARLY ON RADIO AND TV STATIONS (WHICH IS ALSO THE WAY OUR SCHOOL STAFF IS INFORMED).

Parents must provide students with breakfast on delayed opening days for it will not be served at school. Parents should plan to make arrangements for their children to cover emergency dismissal, etc. when no one is home to receive students. Students should know what these arrangements are ahead of time. Please fill out the emergency pink forms (distributed at the beginning of the school year or when your child enrolls) so the school staff is also aware of your emergency plans. Please update this information and/or your contact numbers as soon as there is a change. This is in the best interest of your child and his/her safety.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an extension of the instructional program. Teachers plan these trips months in advance and we encourage all students to attend. Parents are asked to chaperone on most trips. Sometimes we are limited on the number of chaperones that can accompany a field trip. Siblings are not allowed on field trips due to safety concerns. We also request that parents refrain from smoking during field trips. If you are experiencing a financial hardship, please contact Ms. Bryant about a field trip scholarship.

H1N1 VIRUS

This virus was originally referred to as "swine flu" because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs (swine) in North America. But further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia and bird (avian) genes and human genes. Human infections with the H1N1 virus are ongoing in the United States. Most people who have become ill with this new virus have recovered without requiring medical treatment. Spread of novel H1N1 virus is thought to occur in the same way that seasonal flu spreads. Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something - such as a surface or object - with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

Public health officials are concerned that, in the fall, the H1N1 flu virus might cause more serious illness than it did this spring. All schools are developing plans in case they have to close for some period of time and, if they do, for ways to continue teaching and learning. The school system staff will use a variety of methods to communicate information about any changes in school operations. These include Connect-ED, the MCPS website and school websites, letters, and PTA listserves. To be sure that you receive these messages, it is very important that you provide your child's school with your most up-to-date contact information, including telephone number(s) and email address, and let the school know right away if any of that information changes. In

addition, you also can receive important school system messages by signing up for the MCPS QuickNotes e-mail service and Twitter messaging service through the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org.

HALF-DAY DISMISSAL

Certain days throughout the school year are designated as half-days for students, to provide time for professional days and special conferences with parents. Lunch will be served at school prior to dismissal. The half-day lunch times (without recess) are as follows: 11:30 Grades K, 1 & 3 and 12:10 - 12:40 Grades 2, 4 & 5

HEALTH ROOM INFORMATION

The direct phone number to the health room is 301-353-0898. Please keep this number for your records.

No medication, including over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or aspirin or cough medicine, will be administered in school without the parent's/guardian's written permission and a physician's statement. The medication must be presented to the office/health room by the parent/guardian in the original container bearing the student's name and the name of the medication.

Medical forms are available in the school office and are required for each episode of illness requiring each medication ordered. MCPS policy does not permit staff persons to administer any medications without appropriate medical/parental authorization. If you are contacted to pick up your child because of illness/injury, it is imperative that you come to school immediately.

HOME/SCHOOL FOLDERS

These folders should go home and be checked by parents daily. The Home/School folders may contain HW, corrected work, a note from school staff, newsletters, fliers, etc. New folders will be distributed in early February. (Thanks, PTA for purchasing these valuable communication tools for our families!)

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Please be alerted to the Maryland State law concerning immunization requirements. *"Beginning with the 1993-94 school year, students entering kindergarten, first, sixth and seventh grade are required to show proof of having two doses of the measles vaccine and one dose of the mumps vaccine after their first birthday."* These vaccines are usually given together as Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine. The second dose of MMR is to be given no less than one month after the first. Additional vaccinations must include the following: DPT (Diphtheria-Pertussis-Tetanus), TD (Tetanus-Diphtheria), OPV (Oral Polio Vaccine), Mumps, and Rubella. Dates for these immunizations must be provided. Immunizations for children of all ages are available at the Germantown Health Center, 12900 Middlebrook Road, Monday through Thursday; 1 to 3:30 P.M. Call (240)777-3380 for further information.

The Maryland State Law states that children enrolled in Kindergarten will have **ALL REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, AUGUST 31, 2009**. Please make sure that your child's immunizations are completed and that the school has a copy for the complete record.

SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS - There are some children who have very specialized health needs that require a written health care plan. This plan is developed in a conference with you (the child's parent or guardian), the school nurse, and your child's teachers. Every person working with your child in the school will be made aware of the plan. If you believe that your child has such a condition (i.e., severe allergic reactions, recurrent infections requiring medication, juvenile diabetes), please alert Mrs. Lyons, Administrative Secretary, and we will have the school nurse contact you. If your child had a health care plan last year, you will be contacted to update it. It is very important that you alert the teacher to changes in your child's health status to assist us in monitoring what is happening in the learning process.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE - Forms for Student Accident Insurance are included in this newsletter. **Do not return the forms to school**, but please follow the directions within the insurance application. A prompt return of these forms using the US mail system will be greatly appreciated by the agency.

LOST AND FOUND

All stray articles are placed in the Lost and Found Collection which is located between the cafeteria and gym. Inquiries may be made at the school office regarding articles lost or found. Occasionally, unclaimed articles will be displayed at school functions. It is recommended that all coats, hats, gloves, boots, and lunch boxes be **labeled with the child's name**. This will reduce the amount of unclaimed articles in the Lost and Found. Unclaimed articles are donated to a charitable organization at the end of the winter and at the end of the school year.

LUNCHROOM AND RECESS

Lunchroom/playground aides supervise lunch and recess so that professional staff may have a duty-free 30-minute lunch. Parents can help us by volunteering in these areas and/or by regularly reviewing expectations for appropriate cafeteria/playground behavior and following up with students when there are problems at lunch or on the playground. Lunchroom and playground aides will be proactive in managing student behaviors. Incentives for excellent student behavior will be offered.

Lunch and recess times are as follows: **Grades K, 1 & 3: 12:05-12:35** **Grades 2, 4 & 5: 12:45 - 1:45**

One playground aide (or parent volunteer) will try to lead students in organized activities such as relay races, kickball, etc. while the others will be responsible for supervising a section of the playground on a rotating basis.

NEWSLETTERS

The PTA publishes a bimonthly newsletter called the *Patriot*. The principal submits articles and information to the PTA newsletter. (Copies can also be found on the school's website and in the main office.) Important information, as well as a calendar for upcoming events is listed in this weekly publication.

Grade level newsletters will be distributed on the last Monday of each month. If that date is a holiday, the newsletter will go home on the following day. Math unit information will be attached to grade level newsletters at the beginning of each unit. A summary of science and/or social studies units should be included as well as the focus for reading/writing. A section on volunteer opportunities and a section from the Principal's Advisory Council grade level liaisons will also be included.

OBSERVING YOUR CHILD IN A LEARNING SITUATION

Parents may wish to see their child in a learning situation. We are proud of our program and are happy to have you observe for a short period of time. Please contact the office or your child's teacher to arrange the observation.

PRINCIPAL'S ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

Two parents from each grade level will serve on the PAC. This group will meet a few times each school year. The group will discuss topics of interest to the parent community concerning the education of their children. Parents will be expected to bring topics of discussion as well as report out information to other grade level-alike parents (via grade level newsletters).

PRINCIPAL'S CHATS

This will be a monthly assembly program for grades K-2 and 3-5. During these monthly meetings Ms. Bryant will recognize the Students of the Week/Month, Honor Roll and On a Roll students, and students who are successful with completing their Mad Minutes quizzes. The specialists recognize Classes of the Month. The school counselor leads a skit on demonstrating various good character traits. Ms. Bryant will also discuss other important information on an as needed basis.

PTA MEETINGS

PTA meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday of the month from 7:00-8:30 PM. Reports from PTA board members, committee chairs and the principal are shared during each meeting. Some staff may share presentations on various topics at PTA meetings as well. All GES parents/ guardians are welcome and encouraged to attend. The PTA often provides child care during meetings.

REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

Kindergarten report cards are distributed twice each year at the end of each semester. Report cards for grades 1-5 are distributed four times each year in nine week cycles. (Non-custodial parents may submit self-addressed stamped envelopes to receive copies of their child's report card.)

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first marking period for each student in grades K-5. A sign-up will be available during Back-to-School Night. It is requested that appointments for other conferences with teachers and/or the principal be scheduled in advance.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS (SIP)

Each school in the state of Maryland has a School Improvement Plan. This plan documents academic goals as measured by the Maryland State Assessment (MSA) and the Terra Nova 2. Each school must meet AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) to be in keeping with the No Child Left Behind legislation. Germantown has met and continues to meet AYP. Our SIP focus is balanced literacy (reading and writing). We meet, as a school team, to discuss our progress toward meeting goals 3-4 times each school year. Parents are invited to join the team each school year. Please contact Ms. Bryant if you are interested in serving on the team.

SPANISH TRANSLATION SUPPORT

A new weekly support will be in place to provide Spanish translations for our Spanish speaking families. Each Wednesday morning between 9 and 11 am, a bi-lingual Spanish speaking GES parent will be on hand to answer phone calls or meet in person with Spanish speaking parents who are unable to communicate with school staff. I am also working on a possible weekly afternoon time for Spanish translations. Please note, if a parent wants to set up a conference to have a brief meeting with the teacher while translation support is there, the conference should be set up in advance to ensure appropriate classroom coverage is found for the teacher.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

We recognize students for a variety of positive behavioral and academic behaviors. The criteria for each are as follows:

Student of the Week: The student must follow school rules and behavioral expectations; put his/her best effort into work; demonstrate excellent or improved social skills; and additionally the teacher will obtain student in-put.

Student of the Month: The student must show long-term, consistent effort to follow the school rules and behavioral expectations; goes above and beyond the call of duty; and additionally the teacher will obtain student in-put.

Honor Roll: In quarters 1-3 students are recognized during the Principal's Chat for their outstanding scholastic achievement. They must receive mostly A's with a couple of B's on the report card. A child can receive a 'N' for handwriting but all other work study skills should reflect a high level of commitment and scholastic achievement.

On A Roll: In quarters 2 and 3 students are recognized for their improved academic performance. Students must either show a two letter grade increase in one academic area or show a one letter increase in two academic areas.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL/VOLUNTEERISM

Montgomery County Public Schools Policy and Procedures COA-RA requires that all parents, visitors, and volunteers report directly to the school office any time they arrive at school during the day. There is a sign-in sheet in the office for visitors and badges for each. **You must stop in the office when you enter the building to sign in and wear one of our badges.** Please make every effort to inform your child's teacher of your visit in advance.

If you're on an "I forgot" errand for your child, please leave the article in the office and we will see that it gets to the classroom. It is not appropriate for parents or visitors to "drop in" on a classroom when teachers are instructing and students are learning in order to deliver messages, lunches, medications, etc. or to "ask a quick question." Your complete cooperation with this policy is essential. The consistent use of these procedures is an important component of our school's ability to maintain a safe and secure learning environment.

We look forward to and need the support of parent volunteers. Parents should let the teacher (or other staff member) know, in advance, that s/he is available for volunteer work. This will ensure that the teacher is ready to utilize the parent's skills in the most productive way. Please also consider signing up for the "10 for Excellence" Program! If you only contribute 1 hour of support, each month in the school year, you will achieve your goal of giving 10 hours of support to GES! Once you achieve your goal you will become eligible for a prize!

YELLOW "CARDS"

Within the first few days of school, you will receive a pre-printed form with your last known contact information. Please make corrections/revisions to those cards and return to the school as soon as possible. Please return these cards promptly. In order that we may bring our records up to date, **please notify the school of any changes in address, telephone numbers, and emergency information as soon as the change occurs.** If you designate that there are custody concerns on your contact information sheet, court documentation must be brought to the principal. Without court documentation, the school may not keep a child from being picked up by a non-custodial parent.