



# THE GREENCASTLE Gazette



Volume 1 Issue #6

The bi-weekly newsletter from Greencastle Elementary School

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Visit our website! <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/greencastles/>

**Our Mission: The students, staff and families of Greencastle Elementary School will work together as a community of learners to provide high expectations and successful learning experiences for ALL!**

## Important

### Upcoming Events



- 12/6 PTA Meeting
- 12/13 Kindergarten Gingerbread Activity
- 12/16 4th & 5th Grade Chorus to White Flint Mall
- 12/16 KAH Kids' Night Out
- 12/21 PTA Friendly's Night



- 1/3 PTA Meeting
- 1/12 5th Grade Science Fair Parent Meeting
- 1/16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No School



Dear Parents:

It's the holiday season! The staff and I would like to wish you a peaceful holiday with lots of time to rest, relax, and enjoy the company of friends and family. We thank you for all your good wishes and support!

**Have you heard about GNIS?** Our TV studio, GNIS, started broadcasting in October. I was very impressed with the TV Studio Crew's effort. Each Friday morning, our TV Studio Team will manage the entire news broadcast, including:

- Report the latest school news and share featured individuals' interviews
- Manage the TV cameras, microphones and other equipment during broadcast
- Give the day's weather and share Lost and Found items

If you get a chance to see this "live" broadcast, you will be in for a treat. I would like to recognize the efforts of Mr. Proctor (technology teacher), Mr. Glynn (media specialist) and Ken Leary (MCPS TV Production Tech) for making this a reality.

It has come to our attention that not all of our families have been receiving the GES Gazette twice a month. This issue is being sent home via backpack mail and email to let you know that we would like to keep the Castle green and save paper. Therefore, we will continue to send home the newsletter via email and we will continue to post a copy to our website. If you would like to get a "hard copy," please notify your child's teacher and they will send it home twice a month. Have a wonderful weekend!

*R. Kevin Payne*

### TESTING SCHEDULE

The 2011-2012 testing schedule has been finalized and is as follows:

Maryland School Assessment (MSA)	Reading	March 12-13 (Grade 3, 4) March 15-15 (Grade 5)
	Math	March 16-19 (Grade 3, 4) March 20-21 (Grade 5)
Maryland School Assessment (MSA)	Science	April 30– May 4 Window (Grade 5)
Terra Nova 2 (TN/2)		April 16-20 (Grade 2)

Please put these dates on your calendar to avoid scheduling doctor's appointments during the testing window. For more information on the Maryland School Assessments, go to the Maryland State Department of Education website at: [www.mdk12.org](http://www.mdk12.org). At this website, you can look at the data and compare us to other schools in county and in the state.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS

When it is necessary to close schools because of inclement weather such as snow or other emergency conditions, announcements will be broadcasted on local radio and TV stations. **Parents are urged NOT to call the school.** Parents can call 301-279-3673 for an MCPS recorded message. If you have internet access, you can sign up for free e-mail messages regarding school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/>.



**Delayed Opening:** A county decision about a two-hour delayed opening is made by 6:00 a.m. If there is a two-hour delayed opening, classes start at 10:50 a.m. **Please do not drop off students before 10:30 a.m.** Students will have lunch at their normal scheduled time. Buses run on a two-hour delayed schedule.

**Early Dismissal:** A county decision about an early dismissal is made by 11:00 A.M. If it is necessary to close school two and half hours early, students are dismissed at 12:35 p.m. Students will have lunch before their normal scheduled time. Buses are expected to arrive at the bus stops two and half hours before their normal scheduled time.

Because this decision affects every school in the county, students will be released as normal (walkers, car riders, bus riders), so special permission for dismissal will not apply in this situation. Therefore, parents should have a back-up plan for someone else to pick up their children in the event that they are unable to. Please go over this plan with your children so when school is dismissed early unexpectedly, they will know what to do. **Students will only be released to individuals on the MCPS student emergency form.**

## No Peer Pressure

Gradually teaching a child to be a self-sufficient person is one of a parent's most important tasks. Here are some suggestions to help you:

- **Teach brainstorming.** When there is a problem, have children come up with solutions. Then help them choose one.
- **Encourage kids to take responsibility.** Let them know they have to do their homework. Show them how to organize their schedules so they can plan for music lessons, field trips, and tests. Use a calendar, a Smart Phone or a Palm Pilot.
- **Teach bargaining skills.** Show kids how to resolve arguments. Teach them to walk away until they are calm. Show them how to negotiate. Flip a coin to see who goes first—then set a timer for three minutes and let them make their case. Make sure each one listens to the other. Create a penalty for not solving the argument, such as not watching TV today.
- **Explain how to weigh decisions.** Michele Borba, author of *Don't Give Me That Attitude*, says that when a child wants you to make a decision, show him or her how to weigh the pros and cons so he or she can make his or her own decision.
- **Demonstrate how to deal with failure.** Acknowledge hurt feelings and show that failure isn't fatal. Teach them sayings such as "nobody's perfect," "everybody makes mistakes," and "you win some, you lose some." Have him or her practice these statements so he or she can easily say them to friends.
- **Teach kids to make choices based on their own reasoning rather than fear of friends' disapproval.** Encouraging this independent thinking is important to a child's development and provides an important skill that will help them avoid later peer pressures related to drinking, smoking, and drugs.



### Homework Help Available on MCPS Web:



MCPS has a variety of available homework resources to help students. Many of these resources are subscription-based and accessible with a user name and password. Students can get this information from the media specialist.

The public libraries also have a wealth of useful resources, such as homework help websites for students in kindergarten through Grade 5 and for students in Grades 6–12. Students can get a free library card on the public libraries website: [www.montgomerycountymd.org/library](http://www.montgomerycountymd.org/library).

### NEW PARENT WEB SITE

Montgomery County Public Schools has a new parent-focused website developed for parents of students who require special education services or parents who are in the beginning stages of the special education process.



The website has information and answers to questions often asked by parents. The link to the site is <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/special/parents/>