

July 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It's hard to believe but it's that time of the year again - the beginning of a new school year. Welcome back! And while you aren't part of the teaching staff you are just as important to your children's education as we are. We want to extend a warm welcome to all of our new students and families--we are very excited to have our rising 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from Montgomery Knolls, our incoming Highly Gifted Center students from various schools across the Down County and other "new to PCES" students from across the county, state, country and even abroad. We are writing to inform you of the most recent news at Pine Crest and to give you some important information regarding the beginning of school.

As you might expect, the great summer news is related to our students' performance on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA). Our students continue to make remarkable progress. There are remarkable achievements of which we can be proud of for both our children and the school as a whole. When looking at our 2011-2012 data, Pine Crest is pleased to announce that we have successfully "reclaimed" our AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) status as a school which is making state standard. It was indeed a collaborative effort of our students, staff, and parents. I am proud of every one of you.

This leads us to the 2011-2012 school year. This year, our academic program will continue to focus on providing students with instruction that is challenging and exciting. In Reading/Language Arts, we will continue to implement our Junior Great Books and William and Mary programs. We will also ensure that all of our students are receiving math instruction that meets their individual needs and provides acceleration and enrichment. While doing all of this, we will be consistently analyzing student progress and making sure that all students are making progress. We have a great team of teachers and support staff that will be working together with administration to make sure all students meet standard.

We have been busy these last few weeks working on staffing positions at PCES. Several staff members have either retired or moved to other positions either within or external to MCPS. We send best wishes in their new assignments to: Jo Belyea-Doerrman, Katelyn Chiles, Donna Gregory, Bill Neal, Leigh Martinez, Jackie Phelan, Rana Spurlock, Megan Scanlon, and Patricia Swanson. Additionally, Jason Mack, assistant principal, has returned to Virginia to be closer to family. We are happy to welcome the following new members to our Pine Crest family:

Carlos Altamirano	UMD Intern (Albaugh)	Michelle Markow	Speech & Language
Elizabeth Beltethon	Paraeducator	Amra Nansimbi	UMD Intern (Logue)
Julie Bowers	UMD Intern (Brown)	Kelsey Raley	UMD Intern (Barbieri)
Arienne Clark Harrison	Assistant Principal	Elena Saavedra	UMD Intern (Andresen)
Gail Gleeson	Media Specialist	Carmen Vigil	UMD Intern (Walker)
Justine Hoke	UMD Intern (Harris)	Julie Whitehorn	Gr. 3 Teacher
Rosa King	Gr. 4 Teacher	Dora Yin	UMD Intern( Lowden)
Taylor King	UMD Intern (Merrill)	Vacancy	Special Education



We are all looking forward to working with the students, staff, and parents throughout the year.

Please be aware that as these tight budget times continue, we appreciate the funding and support the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has received from the County Council. We recognize that it is imperative to use our resources in the most efficient and effective manner. MCPS staffing allocations are based on projected enrollment. We certainly hope that at the beginning of the school year our actual enrollment matches the projected enrollment. Unfortunately, as a result of this current fiscal situation, it may become necessary for staffing changes to occur in some schools if enrollment comes in below projection and doesn't justify the staffing that was allocated. If there is a need to make an adjustment in staffing based on actual enrollment, we will do our best to minimize the impact of these necessary adjustments. We will keep you informed and alert you of any changes that may occur at our school.

### Getting Ready for School

- **ANNUAL SNEAK PEEK OPEN HOUSE** will be held Friday, August 26, 2011 between 2:15 and 3:15 p.m. This will give students and parents an opportunity to visit their new classrooms and meet their teachers prior to the first day of school. All class lists will be posted on the door immediately following our Sneak Peek for those who are unable to attend.
- **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL** is Monday, August 29, 2011. School hours are 9:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Students enter the building at 8:50 a.m. for breakfast or at 9:00 to proceed to homeroom. Staff will be available at 8:45 to assist students with the transition to school/classroom on the first day of school.
- **BUS SCHEDULE** showing a list of stops and times for pick-up is enclosed. Any questions regarding transportation should be directed to our Transportation Cluster Manager in the Division of Transportation, Robin Painter, at (301) 879-1060.

### Start of School

- **BUS COLOR ASSIGNMENTS** will be distributed to students as they leave the bus upon arrival at school. School staff will verify that all children know how to get home during the school day.
- **WEATHER REMINDER:** The weather might still be hot even in September. Parents, please ensure that students dress appropriately for recess as well as for the cooler classroom. A water bottle is recommended.
- **CAFETERIA/SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM:**
  - **Lunch:** The cost of lunch continues to be \$2.50 and 60 cents for milk. The reduced price eligible student's meal for lunch is 40 cents.
  - **Breakfast.** The cost of breakfast continues to be \$1.30.
  - **Free and Reduced Lunch:** If your child was eligible for free or reduced price meals in Montgomery County last school year, that eligibility will only continue until October 1, 2011. New applications for free/reduced meals will be sent home during the first week of school. **PLEASE COMPLETE THE NEW APPLICATION AND RETURN IT TO SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY.**
  - **FIRST DAY MENU:** Cheese Dippers (meatless) w/Mariana Sauce **OR** Hamburger w/Mixed Vegetables

### Throughout the School Year

- **BACK-TO-SCHOOL PARENT NIGHT** will be held on Wednesday, September 14, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Mark your calendars for this important night of introductions and discussion of the school's academic program. An overview of the instrumental program for students in Grades 4 and 5 will be held from 6:30 – 7:00 in the All Purpose Room. (Child care will be available for children between the ages of 2 and 11 through our day care provider. However, students are not encouraged to attend as this is a "parent to teacher" event).
- **BACK-TO-SCHOOL PICNIC** will be held on Wednesday, September 7 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Location to be determined based on construction at Montgomery Knolls.
- **BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE** will be available this year at Pine Crest for the MKES/PCES community. This service will be provided by **KidsCo**. Day care will be available before and after school with a start time and end time of 6:30. Opportunities for flexible scheduling and drop-in day care are also available. For more information, please call 301-740-9600 or email Jessica Crawford at [JCrawford@KidsCoOnline.com](mailto:JCrawford@KidsCoOnline.com).
- **CELL PHONES** Elementary students are not permitted to possess or use cell phones on MCPS school campuses during the instructional day. Written communication between parent, student and principal is required to request a waiver to the policy each year.
- **MEDICATION** is administered only from the health room. No medication will be administered in school without the parent's or guardian's written permission and a physician's statement. Medical forms are available in the school office or health room and are required for each episode of illness and for each medication ordered.
- **STUDENT PICK-UP:** Once students have arrived at school, they will **only** be released to individuals on their emergency forms. The person picking up the child should bring picture identification with them to the school office in order for your child to be released.  
**Note:** Students must be picked up by 3:15 for p.m. dismissal or after 3:30 as the school engages in a whole school dismissal procedure.

## Paperwork

- **FIRST DAY INFORMATION:** On the first day of school, your child will bring home a packet of very important information provided by the school system and your school. Please take the time to look over this packet. It will contain information that needs to be completed and returned including:
  - *EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION* for all children attending PCES.
    - **Note:** If information should change during the school year, particularly emergency numbers, please call the school office so that we can update the information.
  - *FREE AND REDUCED MEALS APPLICATION* – remember, if your child was eligible for free or reduced price meals last school year, you must apply again this year to maintain eligibility.
  - *PCES HOMEWORK AND DISCIPLINE POLICY* which outlines policies and procedures for your child.
  - *STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION* – parents can decide what directory information they want released to our school community.



## Dates At A Glance

### August:

- 26 Sneak Peek 2:15 – 3:15 p.m.
- 29 First Day of School

### September:

- 5 No School/ Holiday
- 7 Back-To-School Picnic (5:00 p.m.) - the location will be determined closer to the date
- 14 Back-to-School Parent Night (7:00 p.m.)
- 28 Half Day for Students (1:00 p.m. dismissal)
- 29 No school - Rosh Hashanah

### October:

- 10 Open House (9:30 - 11:45 a.m.)
- 28 Fall Harvest Celebrations (2:00 p.m.)  
Fall Harvest Dance (7:00 p.m.)/ PCES students only
- 31 No School - Professional Day

Lastly, as we work together during the 2011-2012 school year, we have no doubt that we will continue the academic excellence, the collaboration, and the climate of mutual respect that are the hallmarks of Pine Crest Elementary School. Working together, we will continue to go from Good to Great!

Thank you for your commitment to your child's education and I look forward to seeing you in the very near future!

Sincerely,

Meredith Casper  
Principal