

SEVEN LOCKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
9500 Seven Locks Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
301-469-1038

PARENT BULLETIN
October 23, 2009

Vision

Our vision, at Seven Locks Elementary School, is to create a caring and positive learning community where all are valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential in a changing world.

Mission

Seven Locks Elementary School provides a rigorous instructional program for all students to become independent thinkers, problem solvers, and life-long learners who are prepared for the challenges they face in a changing and complex world.

Halloween Parties

Each year at Seven Locks we mark Halloween with a schoolwide parade (weather permitting) and class parties. This year our school celebration will be held on the afternoon of Friday, October 30. Under the guidance of the room parents, we will need some parent assistance with these parties. We appreciate the parent assistance to make the events run smoothly. We know that room parents put a lot of care into planning these events. Our goal is to make the classroom festivities enjoyable, yet calm. We know that your children will have a good afternoon on the 30th. As always, we appreciate your continued support of our efforts on behalf of your children.

Parade at 1:30

For our Halloween celebration, we are hoping for clear weather so we will be able to have our costume parade in back of the school. If it is raining, the parade will be inside in the all-purpose room. Our parade will begin at 1:30. Parents and younger siblings are invited to come to our parade. At 1:30, classes will go directly outside when they are called. They will walk counterclockwise around a marked-off area outside. Parents are asked to stand in the middle of the blacktop, while the students parade around them. Parents will be able to see better from the middle, as their children walk around the perimeter of the blacktop. There will be a clear view for good photos. Classes will go several times around the blacktop and then will return to their classroom. After the parade, only those parents who have arranged with the room parent to be assisting with the parties will go to the classroom. Parents who are not attending the parties may pick up Sally Foster orders in the All-Purpose Room before they leave.

Costumes

Students should wear their normal clothes to school on Friday without makeup. We are asking that students wear costumes that they can put on without assistance after lunch. If your child has a costume that requires assistance to put on, please send only those parts of the costume to school that he/she can put on alone. Students will not be permitted to wear face paint at school or to bring swords, guns, or other items of violence. If your child has a question about whether

something is appropriate, he/she should talk to the teacher or to Mrs. Gordon to get clarification beforehand.

Parties at 2:00

We will be having parties in the classroom. We are asking that the parents who are assisting with the parties return to the classrooms with the students. We want children to have a good time with the activities planned and to enjoy the refreshments and decorations. We also want to ensure that at all times students will be able to hear directions from the teacher.

Refreshments

If you are providing refreshments that can be brought in by your child, please send them with your child in the morning. If your refreshments are too difficult for your child to transport to school, you may bring them to school (labeled with the teacher's name and your child's name). We will have a table in the front hall where you can put these refreshments. We will make sure that the refreshments get to the classroom for the party.

Safety of Personal Belongings in the Parking Lot

The Pumpkin Patch was a wonderful event, despite the rainy days beforehand. However, there was one unfortunate incident. The car of one of our parents was parked in the bus loop almost on Seven Locks Road (the part of the bus loop nearest the traffic light) with a pocketbook partly obscured inside. The rear side window was broken and the pocketbook was removed. The Police Department reports that there continues to be a high incidence of theft from autos in the Bethesda/Potomac area (and elsewhere in the county). Please make sure not to leave valuables visible in your car !!! This is not the first time that something has been stolen from a car at Seven Locks.

Flu Message

As you may 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 many states, including Maryland, and that almost all of the flu viruses they have identified so far across the country 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.

Please be assured that we are taking steps to prevent the spread of flu in our school. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) continues to work closely with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to monitor student and staff absences due to illness. 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 Fahrenheit or greater), cough, sore throat, a 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 don't have a tissue, they should cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve, not their hands.

For more information, visit the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org, the Montgomery County government website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/h1n1flu, or call the County flu hotline at 240-777-4200.

In order to ensure that the school can reach you should it be necessary, please notify us of any changes to the phone number(s) and email address that we have on file for you. We will continue to keep you informed.

Applications for the Highly Gifted Centers

Parents of third grade students should have received a mailing about the Highly Gifted Centers within the last two weeks. If you are interested in having your third grader considered for the Centers for the Highly Gifted program at Cold Spring Elementary School for grades 4 and 5, the application for this program **MUST BE POSTMARKED by November 9**. This application should be mailed to Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services, 11721 Kemp Mill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20902. In mid-November, parents whose children applied will receive a letter of receipt of application and the test date. Students who apply will be tested in January. Please call Mrs. Gordon at 301-469-1038 if you have any questions about this program or about the application process.

Connect-ED

Seven Locks School is able to use a computerized telephone calling system to notify parents and staff about important events and issues of concern to our school community. The system, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Connect-ED, is designed to enhance school communications and increase parent participation in school activities. MCPS Connect-ED allows principals to telephone parents and staff quickly and efficiently by sending a recorded message to the home phone of families and staff members and to send a duplicate information to your email address. You should have already received several such messages this school year. Should you wish to opt out of this service, please call our school office at 301-469-1038.

The speed with which MCPS Connect-ED can provide information to families throughout our school community is an important feature of this system. MCPS Connect-ED can provide reliable and timely information to parents and staff in case of emergencies. Also, it can enhance

communication about school events and important issues relating to our school and our school system. In order to keep our contact information current, please notify our office if you have any change in phone numbers or email addresses so that we can update your contact information in Connect ED.

If you have any questions about MCPS Connect-ED, I will be glad to answer them.

Saturday Discoveries: Discover Science, Humanities, The Arts!

Saturday Discoveries, a special one-day enrichment program for gifted and talented students in grades 4 and 5, will take place on Saturday, November 14, 2009 from 8:30 – 2:50 at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus of Montgomery College. Montgomery College and the Montgomery County Public Schools are cooperatively presenting this enrichment opportunity for interested and able students to explore topics outside the school curriculum. Students attend four small group sessions on topics of their choice. Instructors are from the Montgomery College faculty and staff, Montgomery County Public Schools, and the Montgomery County community. Small group sessions include: *A Persuasion Game, Creative Writing and Speaking, Gaming Industry, Kid's Boot Camp!, Model Animation 101, Physics FUNdamentals!, Putting it Together – Collage and Assemblage, and Think Quick*. There is an optional morning workshop for parents, *Your Child's Self-Esteem: What Can a Parent Do?*

Brochures are available in the front hallway of Seven Locks in the brochure rack to the right of the main office door or on the web at www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth. *Saturday Discoveries* accepts students on a first-come, first-served basis. Since programs fill quickly, please register as soon as possible. **The deadline for receiving registrations is Monday, November 9.** For further information, please call Sharon Wolfgang at 240-567-7264 or 240-567-7917.

Rebecca T. Gordon
Principal

Upcoming Dates to put on your calendar:

***indicates dates/events added or changed since the last Parent Bulletin**

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| Thurs., Oct. 22 | 9:30 – 1:30 | Grade 4 trip to Agricultural History Farm Park |
| Oct. 26 to Oct. 30 | | PTA Book Fair at Seven Locks |
| Fri., Oct. 30 | | First Marking Period ends for students in grades 1 - 5 |
| | 1:30 | Halloween Parade |
| | 2:00 | Class parties |
| Mon., Nov. 2 | | No School for Students – Professional Day for Teachers – Report Card Preparation |
| Tues., Nov. 3 | *7:50 | Math Olympics First Practice in Room 7 |

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| | *Individual Photos to be taken |
| | 7:00 PTA Meeting in Media Center |
| Sat., Nov. 7 | PTA sponsored Fall Clean up – time TBA |
| Sun., Nov. 8 | Rain Date for PTA sponsored Fall Clean up – Time TBA |
| Wed., Nov. 11 | 12:35 Early Release Day for Parent Conferences. Report cards distributed for grades 1 – 5 |
| | 6:30 PTA Reflections Art/Literature Show |
| Thurs., Nov. 12 | 12:35 Early Release Day for Parent Conferences *Informational flyers from approved outside organizations will go home today (this is the only date in the second marking period for outside organizations to send material home through the backpack) |
| Fri., Nov. 13 | 9:30 – 1:30 Grade 4 to Seneca Schoolhouse |
| Tues., Nov. 17 | *7:50 Math Olympics First Competition in Room 7 |
| Fri., Nov. 20 | 9:30 – 1:30 Grade 4 to Seneca Schoolhouse |
| Wed., Nov. 25 | 12:35 Day-Before-Thanksgiving Early Release K – 12: Planning |
| Thurs., Nov. 26 | Holiday – Thanksgiving |
| Fri., Nov. 27 | Holiday – Thanksgiving |
| Tues., Dec. 1 | *7:50 Math Olympics Second Practice in Room 7 7:00 PTA meeting |
| Fri., Dec. 4 | Make-up Day for Individual photos |
| Mon., Dec. 14 | *7:00 Grade 4/5 Concert |
| Tues., Dec. 15 | *7:50 Math Olympics Second Competition in Room 7 |
| Thurs., Dec. 17 | *8:00 PTA Holiday Breakfast |
| Thurs., Dec. 24 – Fri., Jan 1 | Winter Break |
| Mon., Jan. 4 | School resumes after Winter Break |
| Tues. Jan . 5 | *7:00 PTA Meeting in Media Center |