



Celeste King,
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DOLPHIN PRIDE

SOUTH LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Principally Speaking

Dear South Lake Families,

Happy New Year! The South Lake staff wishes you and your family the very best for 2012! The beginning of a new year is an ideal time to reflect on the past and plan for the future. We are pleased with the first half of our school year. Many of our kindergarten students know all twenty-five word wall words; our first and second grade students are learning how to compose and decompose numbers and our students in grades three through five are writing proficient responses to reading questions. That's not all! All of our students are becoming critical thinkers. None of this could have been done without you! You play a vital part in the success of our students.

Let's start the new year with a book club! Selected students in grades three, four and five are participating in lunch time book clubs. They are excited about the opportunity to read and discuss books with fellow readers. Our goal is to promote a love of reading by experiencing a variety of literary genres. Students who participate in book clubs also strengthen their reading comprehension skills. Why not provide your child with the opportunity to share his/her reading skills with you? Plan a family book club. Both you and your child will enjoy the time you spend together reading and talking about books.

You can also stay involved in your child's education by:

- ◆ Setting a regular place and time for homework which is free of distractions
- ◆ Demonstrating your interest by monitoring their assignments
- ◆ Providing guidance in helping your child get organized
- ◆ Keeping in contact with your child's teacher and working together for your child's success

As you and your child review the first semester grades, you are encouraged to have a discussion with your child about how to improve grades. If you feel that your child would benefit from additional academic support outside of school, I recommend that you consider Saturday School at The George B. Thomas, Sr. Academy. This is an MCPS program where county curriculum is reinforced by MCPS teachers on Saturday. The nearest sites are Gaithersburg or Watkins Mill High School.

The third grade staff and students would like to thank Mrs. Ramos, her family and friends for their generous donation to the third grade students. Donations were collected from family members, friends and local businesses so that each third grader at South Lake could receive a gift for the holiday. These gifts from the heart are the true meaning of the holidays. We appreciate all the work that went into making this possible.

May peace and love surround you now and best wishes for a prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,
Celeste King

HAPPY NEW YEAR

JANUARY 5, 2012

VOLUME I

Important Dates:

1/5 Vocelli Pizza Fundraiser
1/18 Chuck E. Cheese Fundraiser
1/16 MLK, Jr. Holiday -
School Closed

1/20 End of 2nd Marking Period
1/23 Professional Day for
Teachers - No school for
students
1/31 Music Concert 7 - 8 p.m.

SOUTH LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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*Nurturing a
Community of
Thinkers*

PTA

Join us for PTA meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 5:30 p.m. in the Media Center. The PTA will not be meeting in January. The next meeting is February 7th. Childcare is provided.

The South Lake staff provides information on various topics during the PTA meetings. The next two presentations will be on test preparation and discipline.

Testing

Students in MCPS take a variety of tests. Testing can be stressful and students often benefit from taking practice tests to become more comfortable. In January and February third, fourth, and fifth grade students will take practice tests in preparation for the MSA in March. The second grade students will also be practicing in preparation for their test, the TN/2, in April. You can help your child(ren) by:

- Motivating them to do their best.
- Ensuring they get enough sleep each night. Pediatricians recommend that school-age children get 8 - 9 hours of sleep a night.
- Checking that they are doing their homework.

- Providing them with breakfast or reminding them to eat breakfast at school.
- Bringing them to school on time every day. Students should arrive before 8:55 a.m.



Lunch

A full price lunch costs \$2.50 each day. A reduced price lunch costs \$0.40 a day. If your child does not have money in his/her account he/she will not receive a hot lunch.



Winter Concert

Join us 7 - 8 p.m. on January 31



Online resources

This week your child will bring home a list of usernames and passwords for online computer resources available through MCPS. These resources will be helpful for homework, projects and skill practice.

Please look for the pink sheet with this information on it to come home in your child's Thursday Folder this week. Follow the directions at the bottom of the page to access the resources from the MCPS website.



What are critical thinking skills?

Analysis - Breaking down a whole into parts that may not be immediately obvious and examining

the parts so that the structure of the whole is understood.

Evaluation - Weighing evidence, examining claims, and questioning facts to make judgments based upon criteria

Synthesis - Putting parts together to build understanding of a whole concept or to form a new or unique whole

Lost and Found

Please write your child's name on each item he or she brings to school. Our lost and found is full of unclaimed articles of clothing. These items will be donated to charity in a week.

