



September 16, 2011



STRAWBERRY KNOLL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Strawberry Knoll News

18820 Strawberry Knoll Road
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20879

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Happy Third Week of School!

Our first three weeks of school have been productive. Our focus remains on teaching and learning. Teachers are using individual student data collected from recent computer generated reading and math assessments to engage our children in meaningful instruction. As you may already know all elementary schools in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are implementing *Curriculum 2.0*, an upgrade to the system's already rigorous curriculum in kindergarten and first grade. We, at the Knoll, are pleased to be among a cadre of schools that are using *Curriculum 2.0* in second grade! If you're a kindergarten through second grade parent, you'll hear more about *Curriculum 2.0* at "Back-to-School Night", Thursday, September 22, 2011 starting at 7:00 p.m. in the gym.

We have included for your review, our upcoming "Back to School Night" agenda. Please make every effort to attend. Learn more about your child's instructional program. See how much of the curriculum we've already "uncovered." We suggest families either walk or carpool to school as parking will be at a premium next Thursday evening.

Clearly, our students have embraced the importance of working hard and following the rules. There's a healthy competition within our grade level teams and among our classrooms to see which grade/class can earn the most Red Knight Cards. These esteemed cards are given to classes whose students demonstrate stellar hallway etiquette. This means students are in line and quiet.

We want to thank those of you that attended last Friday's annual "Welcome Back Picnic." Even though the grounds were too soggy for us to picnic outdoors, we picnicked indoors. It was a pleasure to see many of our new Strawberry Knoll families at last week's event. We extend our gratitude to those staff and families that grilled, worked the serving line, and helped clean up. Needless to say, our Noble Knights and families enjoyed dancing to the tunes played by our disc-jockey, the brother of Ms. Lehrer, kindergarten teacher.

Finally, we took time on Monday, September 12, 2011, to assemble on the black-top as a school family and recite the Pledge of Allegiance and speak to the children about the love and care that keeps them safe, especially during world changing events. All 500 of our kindergarten through fifth grade students and accompanying teachers, staff, and Strawberry Knoll parents joined Mr. Smith, kindergarten teacher/team leader in singing, "You're a Grand Old Flag." Students followed their teachers back into the building. Parents went on their way, and so began our third week of school!

"Parents in the Know" is Available

We are happy to inform you "Parents in the Know" is available online. Go to our homepage and click on the "Parents in the Know" button. As you'll see there's a wealth of information that pertains to this first month of school. We certainly thank Dr. Handy-Collins, principal of Gaithersburg High School for bringing this great resource to our attention!

Congratulations, Mr. and Mrs. Matesa!

Our Mr. Matesa, physical education teacher and his wife, Mrs. Matesa became proud first-time parents of a baby boy, Brendan Julius Matesa. Brendan was born on Thursday, September 8, 2011. Mr. Matesa will remain on child-care leave through the end of this month. We wish Mr. and Mrs. Matesa all the best!



Happy Trails, Mrs. Weber

Our Mrs. Weber, ESOL teacher will retire at the end of this month. Mrs. Weber taught for MCPS 24 years and was a teacher here at the Knoll for the past five years. We wish our very best to Mrs. Weber and her husband as they enjoy their retirement. Mrs. Weber has already promised to volunteer at our school!



Listen and Learn

Montgomery County's new Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Joshua Starr, will be holding a "Listen and Learn" event on Monday, October 3, at Watkins Mill High School, 10301 Apple Ridge Road, Gaithersburg, and another on Tuesday, November 1, at Damascus High School, 25921 Ridge Road, Damascus. Both events will be held from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. These events are opportunities for parents and community members to meet Dr. Starr and to offer their views and perspective on what is working well in MCPS and what the school system can do to improve. Dr. Starr has a keen interest in hearing directly from parents as he sets his priorities for the school system. This is also an opportunity for parents to learn more about his educational philosophy and leadership style. I encourage all of you to attend an upcoming "Listen and Learn" event. Childcare and interpretation services will be provided. If you are not able to attend the event on October 3 or November 1, you are welcome to attend any of the other Listen and Learn events Dr. Starr will be holding throughout the fall. Times and locations are available on the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org.

Escuchar y Aprender

El nuevo Superintendente de las Escuelas de Montgomery County, Dr. Joshua Starr, estará presentando un evento para "Escuchar y Aprender", el lunes, 3 de octubre, en Watkins Mill High School, 10301 Apple Ridge Road, Gaithersburg; y otro evento el martes, 1 de noviembre, en Damascus High School, 25921 Ridge Road, Damascus. Ambos eventos serán de 7:00 a 8:30 de la noche. Estos eventos ofrecen una oportunidad para que los padres y los miembros de la comunidad conozcan al Dr. Starr y para que ofrezcan sus opiniones y perspectivas en cuanto a lo que les parece que está funcionando bien en Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) y qué se puede hacer para mejorar el sistema escolar. El Dr. Starr, tiene gran interés de escuchar directamente la opinión de los padres mientras establece sus prioridades para el sistema escolar. Esta es también una oportunidad para que los padres conozcan más acerca de su filosofía de educación y su estilo de liderazgo. Les animo a todos a participar en el próximo evento para "Escuchar y Aprender". Se proveerá servicio de cuidado infantil y de interpretación de idiomas. En caso que usted no pudiese asistir a los eventos del 3 de octubre ó 1 de noviembre, el Dr. Starr estará realizando reuniones adicionales durante todo el otoño. El horario y lugares de los eventos están a disposición en el sitio de Internet de MCPS, www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW STAFF

Mrs. Rago—Pre Kindergarten

Mrs. Rago was born and raised in Delaware. She earned her BS in early childhood development at the University of Delaware. Before coming to Strawberry Knoll Elementary she taught at Jackson Road Elementary School. She wanted to be closer to home and heard Strawberry Knoll was a great place to work. "The Knoll is full of very friendly and hard working people." Mrs. Rago looks forward to spreading a smile to her colleagues, students, and their parents. "I am happily married with a cutie pie toddler of a daughter."

Mr. Bowden—General Music

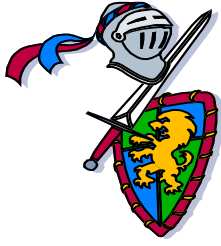
Mr. Bowden was born in Towson, Maryland and grew up in Bel Air, Maryland, Harford County area. He attended West Virginia University for undergraduate studies and earned a Masters degree in Music Education from Towson University. He has taught high school, middle school and elementary school in Montgomery County and started his career teaching middle school in Anne Arundel County. He currently teaches at Strawberry Knoll and at Stedwick Elementary 2.5 days a week. He has also taught at Greencastle Elementary, and for 7 years at Shady Grove Middle School. "Everyone at SKES has been extremely helpful in my getting acclimated to the school. The parents seem nice and supportive while the students seem respectful and ready to learn." Mr. Bowden would like to share his enthusiasm for music and showing students what a broad, unique and wonderful subject it is. He is a big fan of the Baltimore Ravens, Baltimore Orioles and WVU Mountaineers fan. He is currently living in Catonsville MD and enjoys spending time at the beach with his wife, his two kids and his parents.

Ms. Newman—Art

Ms. Newman was born and raised in Maine, "where the oceans are beautiful and the snow is bountiful." She received her BS degree from the University of Maine, and her Masters of Fine Art from The American University. She has been teaching at Greenwood Elementary for 19 years, and is delighted to be able to come on Friday afternoons to teach kindergarten and first graders at the Knoll. "I love your staff, they are so friendly and very helpful. I am happy to be getting acquainted with your students. I already feel that I am making a difference by having respectful conversations with your students. One of my goals is to get to know, enjoy, appreciate your youngsters, which I believe will enhance and enrich our teaching and learning together."

Special Point of Interest:

*Si usted quiere tener las noticias del
Knoll en español por favor llame
Senora Stevens 301-840-7112.*



**Strawberry Knoll Elementary School
Back-To-School Night
Thursday, September 22, 2011
7:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.**

Mission Statement: We are a caring, hardworking community of learners and leaders who motivate and encourage each other to set and meet high expectations.

Vision Statement: "SKES is a premier school that strives for knowledge, excellence, and success!"

Welcome to Strawberry Knoll's "Back-to-School Night."

"Back-to-School Night" will consist of two sessions. During each session, teachers will provide an overview of their grade specific programs and curriculum. You will have an opportunity to visit your child's classroom, preview instructional materials, and learn about routines and expectations. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to meet many of our staff's specialists.

At the close of tomorrow evening's program, we will invite you to sign up for your November conference. Conference sheets will be posted in the cafeteria.

Your presence at "Back-to-School Night" will reaffirm the productive partnership we have with you. Our goal remains for every child to succeed and learn to the highest degree. Together we will create a quality education for our students!

"BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT" AGENDA

7:00 - 7:20 p.m. P.T.A. General Meeting - Gym

7:20 – 7:25 p.m. SKES Greetings!

7:25 - 7:35 p.m. Break

7:35 – 7:55 p.m. Session One

Kindergarten – Classrooms	Third Grade – Classrooms
First Grade – Classrooms	Fourth Grade - Classrooms
Second Grade – Media Center	Fifth Grade – Classrooms
Speech Articulation – Speech Room	

7:55 – 8:00 p.m. Break

8:00 – 8:25 p.m. Session Two

Kindergarten – Classrooms	Third Grade – Classrooms
First Grade – Classrooms	Fourth Grade - Classrooms
Second Grade –Media Center	Fifth Grade – Classrooms

8:25 – 8:45 p.m. Sign-Up for November 11th and 12th Parent Teacher Conferences – Cafeteria



Upcoming Dates

September 22	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. "Back-to-School" Night
September 28	12:35 p.m. Early Release Day
September 29	Rosh Hashanah No School for Staff and Students
October 7 - 14	P.T.A. Book Fair - Media Center
October 10	9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Open House 4th Grade Classes (Riley and Doherty) to the Smith Center
October 11	4th Grade Class (Owen) to the Smith Center
October 13	7:00 p.m. Literacy Night
October 20	Individual Pictures 7:00 p.m. International Night - All-Purpose Room
October 21	State Conference for Teachers - No School for Staff and Students
October 28	First Marking Period Ends 2:00 p.m. Halloween Parade/Parties
October 31	Professional Day for Teachers - No School for Students
November 10, 11	12:35 p.m. Early Dismissal Day Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 11	9:00 a.m. Town Hall Meeting - Gym
November 23	12:35 p.m. Early Release Day
November 24, 25	HOLIDAY - Thanksgiving
November 30	10:00 a.m. Makeup Picture Day