

Good Evening Stallion Families,

We are officially a week away from the start of school! The staff at Snowden Farm has been working hard to get the building ready for your children.

Homeroom Teacher Announcements

Students are very excited to find out who their homeroom teacher will be for the upcoming year. Each teacher will send a postcard to the students based upon the address on file. Postcards should arrive no later than Wednesday, August 23rd.

Open House - August 24th

Open House is a time to visit classrooms and meet teachers as well as classmates for the 2023-2024 school year. At that time, families will have the option of taking a tour of the building.

- Our Open House takes place on Thursday, August 24th from 4:00-5:00 PM, with students ending their visit with the administrative and counseling teams on the playground for a popsicle.

If you are unable to come to the Open House, signs will be posted as well as staff members stationed throughout the building with class lists to ensure that students know where to go on the first day of school.

New: Kindergarten Parent Meeting on 08/25 at 3:30 PM

We are excited for you and your child(ren) to join the Snowden Farm community. We will have a brief meeting to share information about the first week, arrival/dismissal, snack/lunch, and supplies in the APR (cafeteria) at 3:30 PM on Thursday, August 25th before Open House.

New: Back to School Night on 09/06 from 6:00-8:00 PM

We hope to see you at Back to School Night on Wednesday, September 6th from 6:00-8:00 PM. We will be trying a new format this year where families will have the opportunity to choose from three different sessions in the evening. We will offer a session with the administrative and core team, time with your child(ren) teachers, time with the specialists, and an opportunity to visit various school/ community groups. The evening will end with the staff versus parent kickball game! Please email, Mrs. Fortune if you are interested in playing!

New: Girls On the Run Sign-Up for 3rd-5th grade

Girls on the Run is coming to Snowden Farm Elementary! GOTR is a physical activity-based positive youth development program for girls in 3rd-8th grade. The program teaches life skills through dynamic interactive lessons and running games. The goal of the program is to unleash

confidence through accomplishment while establishing a lifetime appreciation of health and fitness.

- Starting the week of September 11th, the team will meet every Monday and Wednesday from 3:30-5:00 pm.
- The program culminates in a celebratory 5K, at the Westfield Mall in Bethesda, at the end of the season!
- The standard program fee is \$187.50 and includes 20 lessons/practices, a t-shirt, a water bottle, entry into the 5K, a 5K medal, and more.
 - Financial assistance is available for anyone needing it, with the lowest program registration cost of \$20 for the season.
- Registration opens August 17th at <https://www.girlsontherunofmoco.org/>

New: MCPS Back to School Fair

MCPS will host its back-to-school fair on Saturday, Aug. 26, from 10 a.m.–1:00 p.m. We want to ensure that all of our families attend this wonderful free event and take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy family-friendly activities, entertainment, information and resources from the school system and from county programs and services.

- The fair will take place at [Westfield Wheaton](#) at 11160 Veirs Mill Rd, Wheaton, MD.
- Please see the link to additional information, <https://www2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/community-engagement/fair/>
- MCPS will offer free shuttles to the event from the following MCPS high schools:
 - The first shuttle will depart from high schools at 9 a.m. and the last shuttle will depart from Westfield Wheaton at 2 p.m.
 - Montgomery Blair High School, 51 University Blvd E, Silver Spring
 - Paint Branch High School, 14121 Old Columbia Pike, Burtonsville
 - Gaithersburg High School, 101 Education Blvd, Gaithersburg
 - Richard Montgomery High School, 250 Richard Montgomery Drive, Rockville

New: Bus Information from MCPS

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) provides bus service for:

- Elementary school students living more than 1 mile of walking distance from the school.
- Middle school students living more than 1.5 miles of walking distance from the school.
- High school students living more than 2 miles of walking distance from the school.
- Students who face hazardous walking conditions regardless of distance from school (multilane highways, construction areas, etc.) as determined by the MCPS Department of Transportation.
- Students in special education, magnet, gifted/talented, and some vocational/education programs that are not offered at the student's home school.
- A tenth of a mile may be added to establish a reasonable boundary.

Student Information

Students are responsible for their behavior and self-control on the bus and at bus stops at all times.

- Disorderly students can threaten the safety of all riders by distracting the bus operator making the bus ride to and from school an unpleasant and even intimidating experience for other students.
- Students are expected to obey the instructions of the bus operator just as they would follow instructions of teachers and school administrators.

Parent Information

Parents can help further the safety of all students by making sure their children know the bus rules and etiquette that help ensure safe, orderly, and pleasant bus trips.

- **For elementary and middle school students, it is recommended that a parent or other adults wait at the bus stop with the students to monitor and supervise their behavior and help with any problems, such as a late bus.**
- Many routes are designed so that students do not need to cross a major roadway to use the bus.
- This is indicated on route descriptions by “RSO” (right side only) next to the bus stop notation.
- Parents should not allow their children to circumvent this safety measure by crossing the road to use a different bus stop if there is one on their side of the street.
- Parents should contact their depot manager if no bus stops on their side of the street.

Community Information

Parents/guardians are responsible for their children on the way to the bus stop, at the bus stop, and on the way home from the bus stop.

- Children should arrive at their bus stop at least 5 minutes before the established pick-up time.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for their children once they arrive at the afternoon bus stop and should plan to meet the bus or arrange for a caretaker or other responsible adult to accompany the children safely home or to the child care provider.
- Parents/guardians should 2 instruct their children where to get off the bus and familiarize them with unique aspects of the bus stop or landmarks so that, prior to the first day they will ride the bus, the children will clearly know the stop where they should get off the bus.
- Please note:
 - Bus operators do not know all of the possible caretakers who might be picking up a student on a particular day, and are unable to match each child with a specific adult.

- When students get off the bus, they are entirely in the care of the parent/guardian or other caregiver.
- They are on their own to walk home if no parent/guardian or caregiver is present.
- If you usually meet your child at the bus stop and cannot make it on a given day, call the school well before dismissal time and ask that your child be kept at school to be picked up rather than placed on the bus at the end of the school day.
- The kindergarten teacher will discuss bus safety in detail during the first week of school. Following safety rules when boarding, riding, and getting off the bus is very important.
- Reviewing safety rules with your child will help to ensure bus safety.

If you want your child to be supervised by an adult while walking home from the afternoon bus stop, we recommend the following:

- Plan for you or another caregiver to be at the bus stop ahead of the normal drop-off time, as the bus may arrive early on any given day.
- Plan in advance for another adult who is normally at the bus stop to care for your child if you are not there.
- If you have an emergency and cannot make it to the bus stop, call the school well before dismissal time, so your child will be kept at school for pickup rather than put on the bus
- Be sure you always have the school phone number with you in case of the emergency.
- Be sure your child knows and can identify the proper bus stop and understands not to get off the bus at any other stop.
- Arrange for an older student “buddy” to walk home with your child, or allow your child to stay at the older student’s house until you are able to pick up your child
- Be sure to work with the other student’s parent/guardian when arranging this plan.
- **Be sure your child knows to tell the bus driver, before getting off the bus, if something is “not right.”**
 - This includes a parent/guardian or caregiver who is usually at the stop not being visible; missing the stop; or getting on the wrong bus and not recognizing any stop or familiar adults.
 - Once the student gets off the bus, only you can ensure your child is appropriately supervised.

At the bus stop, students are expected to:

- Arrive 5 minutes before the scheduled time.
- Maintain an orderly line in preparation to board the bus promptly, without shoving or pushing.
- Stay out of the roadway.
- Be considerate of nearby yards, driveways, houses, buildings, and private property.
- Move toward the bus only after it stops and the driver has signaled that it is safe.

On the bus, students are expected to:

- Behave appropriately, just as if they were in a classroom.
- Keep the aisle and emergency door clear of obstructions.
- Keep their arms, feet, and head inside the bus at all times.

At all times, students may not:

- Bring animals, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, glass containers, or explosives on the bus.
- Use vulgar language or gestures, fight, or engage in sexual harassment or other improper and/or illegal conduct.
- Throw any papers or objects in the bus or out the windows.
- Operate the emergency exits without permission unless it is an emergency.
- Smoke, drink, eat, or play radios without headphones.
- Damage or deface any part of the bus.
- Ride a different bus than the one they have been assigned to, unless they have written permission from a parent and permission from the principal.

Upcoming Important Dates

- Open House- Thursday, August 24th from 4:00-5:00 PM
- Monday, September 4th- Labor Day—Schools And Offices Closed
- Wednesday, September 6th, Back to School Night and Kickball game from 6:00-8:00 PM

Links to Important Information

- [Welcome Back Parent Packet 2023-2024](#)
- [23-24 Supply Lists](#)

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to the school, 240-740-5800.

With Gratitude,

Michelle Fortune