



Snowden Farm Elementary School
22500 Sweetspire Drive
Clarksburg, MD 20871
(240) 740-5800

August 9, 2023

Dear Snowden Farm Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! I am beyond excited to meet all of our students and their families. Our first day of school is August 28th, and we are working hard to make sure everything is ready.

MCPS Priorities

Our academic, behavioral and social emotional program is aligned to the priorities of Montgomery County Public Schools: Academic Excellence, Well-Being and Family Engagement, and Professional and Operational Excellence. It is our mission to provide students with a positive learning environment to ensure that they achieve their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. During Back to School night you will hear about how we have aligned our PBIS, Restorative Justice and Leader in Me programs to foster a community of learners who recognize their leadership abilities, and develop skills that include problem solving, visioning, stewardship, etc. that will prepare them to have a positive impact at SFES and in the future. We will also discuss adjustments to the instructional program that will cultivate stronger reading and writing skills among our students.

How to Be Active In the SFES Community

You are your student's first teacher and an essential component of their education. I encourage you to become active in our school community through volunteering, joining our PTA, or attending and supporting school events. We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential.

Welcome to Our New Stallions!

We are delighted to welcome the following new Stallions to embark upon this journey with us:

- Ms. Alizabeth "Jordan" Brookes, Part-Time Art Teacher
- Ms. Hannah Coll, 4th Grade SESES Teacher
- Ms. Aparna Dixit, Para Educator
- Ms. Stacy Figueiredo, Art teacher
- Ms. Kayla Gross, Assistant Principal
- Ms. Kienna Saah, 5th Grade SESES Teacher

- Ms. Ayanna Trought, Building Service Team
- Ms. Vinita Thouri, Para Educator
- TBD, Speech Pathologist

Goodbye to Our Departing Stallions!

While we are thrilled about the new year and the onboarding of new staff, we will miss our Stallion family members who have moved on to other opportunities.

We would like to extend well wishes to:

- Ms. Stephanie Broderivk, Hallie Wells Middle School
- Ms. Sarah Hoffman, Woodfield Elementary School
- Ms. Stephannie Hunter, Infants and Toddlers program
- Ms. Khaing Khaing, Summit Hall
- Ms. Karen Oakley, Cabin Branch Elementary School
- Ms. Paige Niemeyer, Flower Hill Elementary School
- Ms. Angela Smith, Goshen Elementary School
- Ms. Kayleigh Thomas, Greenwood Elementary School
- Ms. Ashley Wasser, Fallsmead Elementary School

We know that you all will do amazing things for students and your communities in the future. Once a Stallion always a Stallion!

Our Daily Schedule

Our day begins with morning announcements and instruction promptly at 9:00 a.m., therefore, all students should arrive no later than 8:55 a.m., so they have time to unpack and prepare for the day. Keep in mind that supervision of students is not available prior to 8:45 a.m. Please monitor the time that walkers leave for school and ensure that car riders remain in your vehicle until an adult is on duty to prevent students from being unsupervised. The traffic pattern is included in the Parent Handbook (link below) for your convenience. Bus schedules, school lunch prices and the first week menu will be posted on the school's website, [Snowden Farm Elementary School](#)

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- Change in Date and Time

Open House is a time to visit the classrooms, 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 Family Orientation

Our *New Family Orientation* will occur on Tuesday, August 15th from 3:00-4:00 PM or Friday, August 18th from 10:00-11:00 AM. This meeting will be facilitated by our counseling team, Ms. Pena and/or Mrs. Luckett serves as an opportunity for families (**in grades 1-5**) new to Snowden Farm Elementary School to get acclimated to the building prior to Open House. This is for new families of students in grades 1-5 as we have welcomed our Kindergarten families through a separate orientation.

School-Home Communication

We look forward to getting to know all of our Stallion families as the year progresses. We recognize the importance of consistent and varied school-home communications and we are making a concerted effort to enhance our methods this school year. I will be encouraging students and parents to keep the lines of communication open in regards to both celebrations and concerns.

While email continues to remain the easiest and most efficient means of communication, you can also leave a message with your name, phone number, and your student's name.

- Blackboard Connect Ed Messages:
 - This newsletter will be sent home every Sunday evening through email and posted in the principal corner on our webpage to keep you informed of what is happening at the school.
- ParentVue:
 - Please make sure that you have updated the emergency information and ensure to include your email.
 - Please click here to log in, [ParentVUE](#)
- Also, I will be tweeting about our school accomplishments so please follow me by searching Twitter for [@SFES_Principal](#)
- Join the PTA!- The PTA is a great way to stay connected and support the school!

Monthly Celebrations

Each month we will take time to honor and recognize the diversity of our community. Our first celebration is Hispanic Heritage Month. Families of Central American, South American, Spanish, and Caribbean backgrounds: we would love to celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of your families.

- Please send in photos that showcase your amazing culture. We will share it on the screen hanging in the main entrance of the school building.

In closing, we extend a special welcome if you are new to our school community. We look forward to establishing a partnership with your family. Please let us know how we can support you and your family during this transition. We pride ourselves on building an inclusive environment where all students and families feel welcomed, establishing positive relationships, delivering high quality instruction and having a commitment to continuous improvement.

Family Preparation for August 28th

- Please begin talking with your child(ren) of how they will go home after school (walk, bus, car rider, or BAR-T). If your child typically takes the bus, please have them ride on the first day of school.
- Label your child's supplies.
- Please label any donations for the grade level with the teacher's name.

FERPA Annual Notice

Each year, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is required by law to inform parents/guardians of the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA), P.L. 93-380, and its implementing regulations, as well as their rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. 1232h and its implementing regulations 34 C.F.R. Part 98 (PPRA). PPRA requires educational institutions to notify parents/guardians of their rights concerning the district's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

- The PPRA notice for distribution to parents/guardians can be found [online](#) and is available in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Amharic, and Portuguese.
- FERPA requires MCPS to give parents/guardians the opportunity to request that directory information be withheld.

- MCPS Form 281-13, Annual Notice for Directory information and Student Privacy, contains the appropriate information and is available online in English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Amharic, and Portuguese.
- Parents/guardians may direct the principal not to release any or a specific part of the directory information if they return the completed form by **Monday, September 11, 2023**.
- If parents/guardians choose to change their decision at a later date, they must contact the school directly.
- Parents/guardians and school staff must understand that if they withhold directory information, the decision affects all lists of or references to students distributed or used outside MCPS, whether prepared by the school, organizations, or any combination of parents, teachers, and students of a school, or central services.
- The form remains in effect until the end of the school year on Friday, June 28, 2024. See More information [HERE](#).

Upcoming Important Dates

- Tuesday, August 15th from 3:00-4:00 PM or Friday, August 18th from 10:00-11:00 AM for New Family Orientation Grades 1-5
- Open House- Thursday, August 24th from 4:00-5:00 PM
- Monday, September 4th- Labor Day—Schools And Offices Closed

Please click on the link for our school supply list for this year, [23-24 Supply List](#) . Please enjoy the remainder of the summer and we hope to see you at Open House on August 24th.

With Gratitude,

Mrs. Michelle Fortune, Principal and Ms. Kayla Gross, Assistant Principal

Register for SchoolCash Online today

It's fast, easy & free

Activate an account today so you will be notified via email and pay for your child(ren)'s school activity fees online.

Why register?

- 24/7 shopping convenience
- Secure, contactless & easy-to-use
- Receive email notifications as new items are available for purchase
- Manage all of your child(ren)'s school activity fees from a single account
- Check your account history at any time
- View & print receipts as needed
- Eliminates the need for your child(ren) to carry cash

How to register

- Go to <https://mcpsmd.schoolcashionline.com/> and click Register.
 - Enter your first name, last name, email address, and create a password
 - Select a security question
 - Select Yes to receive email notifications (note that you will not receive any promotional emails)
- You will receive a confirmation via email. Check your Spam folder if you don't receive it.
- Use your email address and password to log in to your account.

How to add children to your account

- Sign in to SchoolCash Online: <https://mcpsmd.schoolcashionline.com/>.
- At the top of the page, navigate to **My Account**.
- From the dropdown menu, select **My Students**.
- Click to add a child:
 - Type your school board name.
 - Choose your school from the list.
 - Enter your child's details.
 - Click **Confirm**.

How to make a payment

- Select the item which you would like to purchase & click **Add to Cart**.
- Once you have finished adding items to your cart, always review the cart.
- Click **Continue** to make a payment.

