

# Stedwick Elementary School

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August 12, 2025

Dear Stedwick Parents, Caregivers, and Families:

It is with overwhelming joy that I welcome you to Stedwick Elementary School (SES) for the 2025-2026 school year!

As I reflect on my first year as the proud principal of SES, I am full of gratitude for the hard work of our staff and students, and pride for all that we accomplished. During this past school year, I invested significant time and attention to developing genuine relationships with students, staff and families. Last year, we laughed together, we cried together, we mourned together, and we GREW together as a community. We learned to live and learn as #OneStedwick, a cohesive and collaborative community of leaders and learners, and our end of year climate data was a reflection of that. Parent/caregiver and staff participation in the climate survey increased by double digit percentages. The data told us that Stedwick is a school where our staff look forward to coming to work each day - that they feel seen, valued and respected. The data told us that parents and caregivers trust us with the education, safety and well-being of their most precious assets, their children. Our student achievement data provided us with tangible proof of our commitment to student learning, with significant growth in foundational reading skills, reading and math proficiency in the primary grades, and the acquisition of English Language Proficiency for 23 of our students' whose home language is not English. With all of that being said, the data told us clearly that we still have significant work to do. While I am so very proud of our growth and gains, my vision is for EVERY Stedwick Star to demonstrate proficiency in both reading and math at the grade level standard or to be meeting the goals of their alternative learning outcomes. And so we must get to work so that we can get there.

As I embark upon my second year as the proud principal of Stedwick, I remain committed to cultivating meaningful relationships with students, staff and families, because it is these relationships that fuel our resolve to do the hard work of teaching and learning. As a community of lifelong learners, we will continue to grow the capacity of our staff, so that we can all do our part in growing our babies into the best readers, thinkers, mathematicians, classmates, friends, and citizens that they can possibly be.

As we get closer to the start of the new school year, you can expect to receive communication directly from your child's teacher. During the week of August 18th, as teachers prepare to welcome your children, they will send each child a postcard via mail, welcoming them to the class. The postcard will contain pertinent information, including the teacher's name, classroom number, and information about Open House.

To that end, we invite you and your children to attend Open House from 2:30-3:30 p.m. on Friday, August 22, 2025. Open House is a wonderful opportunity for you and your children to meet their teachers, explore the building, practice walking to the classroom, and prepare mentally for the start of school. There will be a **special meeting for parents of kindergarten students from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.** During this meeting, parents of all kindergarten students will be given a general overview of the kindergarten program and have an opportunity to ask questions.

## TRANSITION DAY

This year, all MCPS schools will host a Student Transition Day on Monday, August 25, 2025. This is a non-instructional day designed to welcome and foster a sense of belonging and preparedness for students who are new to our school. At Stedwick ES, this includes ALL KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS and any students in grades 1-5 who are NEW TO STEDWICK ES THIS YEAR. The day will begin at 9:25 a.m. and end at 3:50 p.m. Students should arrive no earlier than 9:10 a.m. Students who will be bus riders should ride the bus as they normally would in the morning and in the afternoon. On Transition Day, our new students will have an exclusive opportunity to learn about our school and get to know their teachers. They will have a day to acclimate to the demands associated with new surroundings and new expectations, without having any academic demands. **Students who are not in kindergarten, or new to Stedwick ES WILL NOT report to Stedwick ES on Student Transition Day. The first instructional day for all returning students will be Tuesday, August 26, 2025.** Grade 5 Safety Patrols will also attend on Transition Day, as they will provide peer support to our new students.

## STAFFING CHANGES

As is often the case, a number of staff members made the decision to retire or to pursue new opportunities at other schools and offices in MCPS. We were sad to say farewell to the following members of the Stedwick community:

Mr. Jason Snyder	Assistant Principal
Ms. Elizabeth Humphry	PreK Teacher
Ms. Shannon Dorsey	Special Education (Learning for Independence)
Ms. Allison Castel	Special Education (Home School Model)
Ms. Kathy Thomas	Counselor
Ms. Nadiyah Ali	Reading Specialist
Mr. Chris Callisto	Community School Liaison
Ms. Sandra Woods	Parent Community Coordinator

I would also like to welcome our new staff members as well as those staff members who are returning in new positions:

Ms. Beatrice Gray	Health Technician
Ms. Chloe Banks	PreK Teacher
Ms. Lucie Marin	Special Education (Learning for Independence)
Mr. James Carmichael	Part-Time Physical Education Teacher
Ms. Danii Carmichael	Speech Teacher
Ms. Rinese Dixon	Special Education (Home School Model)
Mr. Jesse Forbes	Part-Time Music Teacher
Ms. Galy Jackmakjian	Part-Time Art Teacher
Ms. Reeshemah Robinson	Part-Time Special Education (Home School Model)
Ms. Madeline Wodaski	Community School Liaison

Additionally, the following staff will be taking on different roles this year:

Ms. Daniela Santana	Grade 1 Teacher
Ms. Shannon Klein	Reading Specialist

## FIRST INSTRUCTIONAL DAY LOGISTICS: AUGUST 26, 2025

Again, Stedwick staff members are excited to receive our students on the **first instructional day of school, Tuesday, August 26, 2025**. As a reminder, the Stedwick Elementary School day begins at 9:25 a.m. and ends at 3:50 p.m. **Students should arrive no earlier than 9:10 a.m.**

When students arrive on the first day of school, they should enter through the main entrance. Once in the building, students from grades K-3 will be met by their teachers and escorted to their classrooms. Students in grades 4 and 5 will walk directly to their classrooms, where their teachers will be waiting to greet them. There will be plenty of staff members in the hallways to assist them in finding their way on the first day. When students arrive on the second day of school, they will come directly into the building and report to their classrooms. This will be the morning routine for the remainder of the school year, so we ask that you say your good-byes at the exterior door and allow your child to enter the building on their own. Once again, there will be staff members available to direct children to their classrooms, as needed.

Please note, students who will ordinarily ride the bus to and from school should ride the bus to school on the first day. Students will be greeted by a staff member at the bus and identified as a rider of that bus. The teacher will use this information to dismiss children.

Here is the link to our [Stedwick Elementary School website](#), where you can find the links to our bus schedules, school supply lists, and attendance reporting. Please discuss appropriate bus behavior with your children before the beginning of the school year. I encourage you to review [What You Should Know About Riding the Bus](#), a helpful guide provided by our colleagues in the transportation department. If you have any questions regarding the transportation schedule, please call our Department of Transportation at 240-740-6220.

If you will transport your child to school, please use the left lane, which is the car lane and follow the instructions of the staff members who will be directing traffic. **Do not drive in the right bus lane, do not drive beyond the cones, and do not leave your vehicles unattended at any time, for any reason.** In addition, there is a **sign which prohibits left turns from Stedwick Road, into the school parking lot.** You should plan an arrival route that will allow you to adhere to that signage and to avoid incurring traffic citations. For more detailed information, please review the [Stedwick ES Arrival and Dismissal Procedures](#) prior to the first day of school so that you know what to expect and can govern yourself accordingly. We know that pick-up and drop-off can be stressful, as we are all focused on making it to our next destinations; however, **abusive language, lewd gestures, and aggressive driving will NOT be tolerated on our school grounds.** Please remember that our first priority is to keep our students and staff safe. We are all carrying precious cargo, so **DRIVE SAFELY and BE COURTEOUS.**

## BACK TO SCHOOL

Back to School Night will take place here at Stedwick ES, on Wednesday, September 17th, from 6:30-8:30. Come out to hear about what your children will be learning this year and how we plan to support their growth and achievement. You will also have the opportunity to learn about the ways that you can support our PTA this year. We strongly encourage all families to join our PTA. Feel free to preview the [PTA webpage](#) where you can join today!

I am so excited and optimistic for what is to come. As we embark on this new school year, our theme will once again be, *One Band, One Sound, One Stedwick*. As a cohesive community, we will continue to celebrate the joy of learning, the power of growth, and the boundless potential that lies within each child.

Once again, welcome to the new year! We look forward to partnering with you and supporting you.

Sincerely,

*Natasha Davis Bolden*

Principal