

# Stephen Knolls Newsletter

Information for Parents of Stephen Knolls Students

October 2008

## Curriculum and the Alternate-Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA)

### State of Maryland's Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC)

*"The voluntary state curriculum has been developed by hundreds of educators from across the state. These educators were committed to the development of clear, concise, well-articulated documents that would afford every student access to a rigorous and meaningful education."*

— Dixie Stack, Director of Curriculum

The State of Maryland's Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC) defines what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in academic related areas. The VSC is the document that aligns the Maryland Content Standards and the Maryland Assessment Program and is available in a number of formats for teachers, central office staff, students, parents, and the other stakeholders. The curriculum documents are formatted so that each begins with content standards or broad, measurable statements about what students should know and be able to do. Indicator statements provide the next level of specificity and begin to narrow the focus for teachers. Finally, the objectives provide teachers with very clear information about what specific learning should occur.

### Alternate-Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA)

The Alternate-Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA) is Maryland's assessment program designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Alt-MSA measures a participating student's progress on attainment of Mastery Objectives in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and 10. Beginning in 2008, Alt-MSA now includes Mastery Objectives in science for those students in grades 5, 8, and 10 (2009 Alt-MSA Handbook). Mastery Objectives are written on the student's instructional level and are aligned with grade level Maryland Content Standards.

Dear Families:

I am honored to be the coordinator of Stephen Knolls School. When the Board of Education appointed me to this position starting on July 1, 2008, I was excited to be able to come to a school with such a nurturing and educational environment. One of the things I was told by staff was that "...coming to Stephen Knolls is like walking into a great big hug". What a wonderful way to describe the staff, students and families of Stephen Knolls School!

We have some exciting new activities and areas planned for the school. The Grants Committee is hard at work looking for funds to assist in a variety of ways around the building. Please let us know if you are aware of any community supports that would be able to help us improve our school. Also, if you know of anyone who would like to volunteer time or services, we are more than willing to accept the offers. We are always looking for ways to improve our school for our students!

Staff have been busy attending training, planning with teams, developing lessons, and learning how to use the new Tech Mod 09 equipment. I was thrilled to be part of the modernization of the technology. This is an untapped area that we are just beginning to explore. Along with the computers and LCD projectors are new software programs that will enhance all of the students' lessons. Boardmaker 6+ is interactive and in each classroom! We now have a mini-computer lab with the capability of expanding the lab when we want to train staff.

The Educational Leadership Team met over the summer to address the updating of the School Improvement Plan. We have opened the membership of this committee to all staff and parents who have an interest in working toward improvement of Stephen Knolls School. We encourage all stakeholders to be involved with the school. The next meeting of the ELT/SIP committee will be held in the IEP Conference Room on Monday, October 20th 3:30 to 4:15 PM. Please let me know if you are coming so we can have enough chairs for everyone!

Back-to-School Night was a success! The feedback from everyone was very positive. The slide show of the beginning of the year activities, the cookies the students baked, the samples of Claire's Fundraiser, the interpreters, the speakers and, of course, the classroom presentations were all well received. We are now planning with the Parent Staff Association our next big family activity...November 11th Veteran's Day Family Movie Night. We hope to see everyone comes out to support the PSA and enjoy the family time with our school.

Sincerely,  
Tina Shrewsbury  
Coordinator

### Curriculum Endeavors at Stephen Knolls School

Stephen Knolls School students are very busy learning in the following areas: Reading/Language Arts, mathematics, science, social studies, music, physical education, art, aquatics, media and vocation! Instructional lessons in these areas are grade level and age appropriate, presented using adapted materials, and taught with assistive technology and augmentative communication devices. Student progress is measured by a variety of formative and summative assessments.

In addition to providing instruction aligned with the VSC; teachers are embedding the Individual Education Program (IEP) goals and the Fundamental Life Skills (FLS) curriculum within each student's instructional day.

Please visit the following web sites for more information:

**Montgomery County Public Schools:**  
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum.cfm>

**Maryland State Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC):**  
<http://mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/>

**Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE): Testing ALT-MSA**  
[http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/alt\\_msa/](http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/alt_msa/)

## The Classroom Corner

### New Staff in the Preschool Wing

#### **Diane Rosenfeld, Preschool Education Program (PEP) Classic Teacher in Room B-3**

Ms. Rosenfeld has been teaching in MCPS for 14 years. Ms. Rosenfeld has been Speech Language Pathologist, Kindergarten/1st grade Learning and Academic Disabilities (LAD) teacher at Kensington Parkwood Elementary and a K Language Class teacher at Twinbrook Elementary. For the past 3 years she was an Itinerant Resource Teacher with the Division of Special Education. She is married and has two children. She received her Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree from the University of Maryland, and a master's in Speech Pathology from The Catholic University of America and an additional Special Education Certification from Trinity College.

#### **Janerish Browne-Reynolds, PEP Speech-Language Pathologist**

Ms. Browne-Reynolds is new to MCPS. She has worked in PG County for the Pre-School speech program and North Carolina's public schools in Charlotte in a Language Academy where one of 5 languages (Spanish, French, German, Japanese, & Chinese) were being taught to children in grades K-8. She moved back to the area in December 2007. Her undergraduate degree is from George Washington University and her master's from Howard University. Along with her degree in speech and language pathology, she also has three degrees in "Motherhood."

#### **Susie Menke, PEP Speech-Language Pathologist**

**Ms. Menke** has been employed by MCPS as a speech pathologist at Highland View Elementary since January of 2005. This school year, she will continue to work at Highland View for three days a week, and she will work at Stephen Knolls on Wednesdays and Fridays. She received a bachelor's degree in Communicative Disorders and a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Northern Iowa. In her free time, she enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, and kayaking. Her husband and she are excited to be expecting their first child in November.

### Pre-School Update

Students have been learning about the literacy topics of "self," "school," and the "school bus" and are now beginning to study the concept of "home."

### Elementary Update

In **Mrs. Rowe's** class the students have literally started the year "up and running" as they use their gait trainers everyday to go to "math classes" in the school's workroom. They visited Brookside Gardens in support of their Science unit on "Living Things" and participated in a scavenger hunt for both living and non-living things. Their continuing author study on Eric Carle also related to their Science unit as it involved caterpillars and spiders. In Social Studies, they are learning about "spatial thinking skills" and how that relates to the places they visit in the school building. Presently, they are mapping all the specials they attend.

In **Mrs. Riffles'** class, they are identifying shapes and numbers in Math class, and they like to walk around the inside and outside of the school building finding examples of these different shapes and numbers. They are learning what it means to be a good citizen, both at school and in our country during their Social Studies classes. In reading they are learning to make predictions and will start reading *Charlotte's Web*. They have been working in the greenhouse to learn about plants and how they grow for their Science class.

In **Ms. Weiss'** class, they are starting many interesting projects for the 2008-2009 school year. In Science, they are learning about force and motion; in Social Studies they are studying the great state of Maryland; in Reading they are reading *Number the Stars*; and in Math they learning about counting and geometry shapes. They love their new LCD projector and the big screen they received as part of the technology modernization this summer. Using this equipment really helps to capture and sustain the students' attention and makes the lessons more meaningful for them.

### Middle School Update

**Mr. Tarloff's** class began the school year reading a mythological story about Hercules and his legendary strength. Students learned to write hieroglyphics and build a pyramid as part of their Social Studies lessons, and in Math the lessons have involved rounding numbers to the nearest tens. In Science they demonstrated the scientific properties of force and friction by rolling balls down a ramp. The new Promethean board in their room is being used to support all their class work and it is a wonderful addition for use in instruction.

### High School Update

At Back-to-School Night, many of you were able to experience firsthand the delicious project that they have been working on this month as part of their transition program—the baking and selling of Otis Spunkmeyer Cookies. Proceeds from the sales will be used for Senior Activities throughout the school year. The delicious cookies are decorated with pink M&Ms in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The students will be involved in math, science, and reading lessons based on this project. Also, they are happy to announce that the American Plant company has donated some lavender plants for the greenhouse. They will make wonderful additions to our Sensory Garden that we will be starting with the students this year.



## A Healthy Perspective

Flu season is right around the corner. *My Wellness Matters* will hold a "Flu Shot Clinic" at Stephen Knolls School on Thursday, October 30, 2008, from 2:30-3:45p.m. The cost per shot is \$25.00 (cash) or \$26.00 (check). The flu shot is available for staff and parents. If you wish for your child to get a flu shot, please contact their healthcare provider. If you have any questions, please call the school's health room staff.

## The Supporting Arts

### Spotlight on Pre-school Art

Pre-school students have been working on practicing the painting process (the proper use of paint, water and paper), exploring cutting and tearing paper, and investigating how much glue is required to make something stick. They have also been practicing putting on and taking off their smocks as well as learning how to access and store their art supplies. At home, parents can support their children's work in art by working with them on identifying their colors and shapes and helping them to practice using their scissors safely.



### Music

Stephen Knolls Music Department has acquired audio compact discs that support the 6th and 8th grade music curriculums. Music supporting the curriculum is being used in all the

appropriate classrooms to support instruction. To ensure that all our students have the opportunity to enjoy music, they are presented with a varied repertoire of music, instruments, and movement activities.

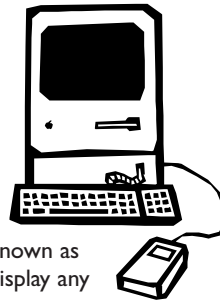
### Spotlight on Pre-school Physical Education

So far this school year the students have been getting acclimated to their new school. They are becoming familiar with setting personal activity goals. They monitor their progress through the completion of an obstacle course. It consists of: following directions; climbing, running, and jumping in, on, through and around various obstacles; sharing; and taking turns. As the year goes on, they will be spending more time on the course. The students' individual goal setting is vital to their making the connection between personal effort and personal achievement. The students are also using balls to balance, catch, throw, and roll. They are also working on their locomotor skills of running, skipping, hopping and galloping. All of these are adapted to their different skill levels.

## The Media Connection

While some of us were relaxing at our local pools or vacationing at our nearby beaches this summer, MCPS technology staff were hard at work bringing Stephen Knolls School into the twenty first century of educational technology. We became a "technology modernization" school. We received new upgraded computers with DVD players, flat screen monitors, and printers. In addition to two classroom computers, an LCD projector is in each classroom so that teachers can project computer images onto a large screen and share the image with the entire class. Two of our classrooms received Promethean

Boards (large interactive screens/boards with which students can interact to work on their lessons). We also received the latest generation of overhead projectors known as "ELMOS" which can display any material on a large screen whether the printed word taken from a book or even a three dimensional object. Imagine the possibilities for interesting and unique



classroom lessons. We have set up a mini-computer lab with four brand new computers. Classes visit on a weekly basis for such purposes as using interactive websites such as, "One More Story," Discovery Education, online videos, etc to support and further enhance their lessons.

## The Therapeutic Touch

The staff has been working very closely with the classroom teachers and the administration to integrate students' therapeutic goals into the curriculum. For the first months, they are focusing on the topic of length and measurement in math and how parents can support this learning at home. As a team, staff have measured the lengths of the school's hallways so that when students walk or use equipment to move about, staff can track how much the students have actually traveled. For students who cannot walk, staff have developed the estimate that for every 10 minutes the students spend in the adaptive equipment, it is equivalent to one lap around the school. The students plot their individual mobility by marking on a chart the number of laps they have completed. Then, throughout the year, a student's progress is assessed, and he or she is shown what has been accomplished. Parents are encouraged to keep track of and report to the teachers how their children move and how far they move so that an accurate record can be developed and maintained.

## Parent Staff Association (PSA) News

**Save the Date: Tuesday, November 11, 2008 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.**  
(Special note: 11/11 is an early dismissal day)

### Family Movie Night/Veteran's Day Recognition



Join other Stephen Knolls families and staff for a movie night in the school's gymnasium. The Parent Staff Association will be showing an entertaining family film. Pizza, popcorn and other refreshments will be available for purchase at a small fee. If possible, please wear patriotic colors such as red, white and blue. We plan to invite and honor some local veterans as part of our Veterans' Day celebration. It is part of a lesson for our students to give back to the community by honoring the men and women who have served to preserve our national security. Please mark your calendars and plan to come to meet and greet other parents and students, and interact with school staff in an informal setting. For more information, please call or email Mrs. Sam Campbell, the PSA president, at (301) 530-2353 or [samcampbelldesign@comcast.net](mailto:samcampbelldesign@comcast.net).

## Community Connections

### Upcoming Workshops

**Oct. 6, 7:00 - 9:00 PM. Raising Responsible Children: Teaching Accountability through Chores and Allowance.** Parenting workshop addressing getting children's cooperation with chores, instituting a plan for allowance and setting limits that hold kids accountable. Spanish translation available (traducción en español disponible). White Oak Library, 11701 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring. Offered by the YMCA Bethesda Youth & Family Services, 301-229-1347.

**Oct. 6, 7:30 PM. MCCPTA Special Education Committee Annual Kickoff Meeting.** Various special education advocacy groups will present information about their organizations. Come hear how advocates from around the county provide support for the various special needs populations. 850 Hungerford Rd., Rockville. Sponsored by the MCCPTA Special Education Committee, Jeanne Taylor, FRTJMT@aol.com, <http://www.mccpta.com/specneeds.html>.

**Oct. 7, 6:45 - 8:45 PM. Behavioral Strategies, Childcare & Respite Care. One of the Educational Seminars for Family Members Caring for Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities.**

Overview of behavior strategies and childcare and respite resources. Rockville Library, 21 Maryland Ave. Rockville. Sponsored by the Collaborative Outreach & Training Committee - JSSA, Mont. Co. Dept. of HHS Aging and Disability & the Arc of MC, register at 240-777-1216 (also Dec. 3).

**Nov. 5, 6:45 - 8:45 PM. DDA Basics: State, Regional & Local Overview. One of the Educational Seminars for Family Members Caring for Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities.** Overview of DDA, eligibility process, accessing services, types of services offered, rolling access fund, the Community Pathways Waiver, and Resource Coordination. Rockville Library, 21 Maryland Ave. Rockville. Sponsored by the Collaborative Outreach & Training Committee - JSSA, Mont. Co. Dept. of HHS Aging and Disability & the Arc of MC, register at 240-777-1216 (also Dec. 3).

**Nov. 5, 7:00 - 8:15 PM. Planning for The Future: Legal Issues and Special Needs Trusts.** Workshops focused on planning for family members with disabilities. JSSA, 200 Wood Hill Rd., Rockville. Offered by the Jewish Social Services Agency, Kate Wissman, LCSW-C, 301-610-8360.

## Parent Academy

The Parent Academy offers free workshops for parents and other family members. Choose from topics including: helping your child succeed in middle school; managing your finances; navigating the school system; computer skills; bullying prevention; high school graduation requirements; and many more. Some of the upcoming workshops are listed below. To register for these workshops download a registration form from this website <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy/register.aspx> and then you can submit it any of the following ways:

1. Mail the completed registration to: Parent Academy, C/O DFCP, 451 Hungerford Drive, Suite 508, Rockville, MD 20850 2. Fax the completed registration: 301-279-3815 3. Call to register by phone: 301-517-5940 or 301-279-3100

### October 2008 Workshops

Date:	Workshop:	Location:	Time:
Monday, 10/13/2008	Special Education: Digital Reading at Home	Center for Technology Innovation 4 Choke Cherry Road, Suite 120, Rockville, MD 20850	6:00-8:00pm
Wednesday, 10/15/2008	Special Education: Advocating for Your Child (Session 1 of 4)	Col. E. Brooke Lee MS 11800 Monticello Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902	7:00-8:30pm
Wednesday, 10/15/2008	Parent Involvement Policy – Provide Input for the Board of Education	Earle B. Wood MS 14615 Bauer Drive, Rockville, MD 20853	7:00-8:30pm 7:00-8:30pm
Wednesday, 10/22/2008	Special Education: The IEP Process (Session 2 of 4)	Col. E. Brooke Lee MS 11800 Monticello Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902	7:00-8:30pm
Wednesday, 10/29/2008	Special Education: Problem Solving (Session 3 of 4)	Col. E. Brooke Lee MS 11800 Monticello Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902	7:00-8:30pm

### November 2008 Workshops

Date:	Workshop:	Location:	Time:
Wednesday, 11/5/2008	Special Education: Monitoring Your Child's Progress (Session 4 of 4)	Col. E. Brooke Lee MS 11800 Monticello Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20902	7:00-8:30pm
Wednesday, 11/5/2008	Communicating with Your Child's Teacher	Montgomery Knolls ES 807 Daleview Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20901	7:00-8:30pm
Monday, 11/10/2008	Special Education: Educational Materials on the Home Internet	Center for Technology Innovation 4 Choke Cherry Road, Suite 120, Rockville, MD 20850	6:00-8:00pm
Monday, 11/17/2008	ADHD in Children	Tilden MS 11211 Old Georgetown Road, Rockville, MD 20852	7:00-8:30pm
Wednesday, 11/19/2008	Introduction to Microsoft Excel	Silver Spring International MS 313 Wayne Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910	7:00-8:30pm

### Upcoming Preschool Education Program Parent Group Meetings

Topic	Presenter	When	Where
Social Skills	Jamell White	Thurs, Oct 23, 7:00-9:00 pm	7361 Calhoun Pl., Ste 400 (Maple Room), Rockville, MD 20855
Behavior	Elizabeth Tsakiris	Wed, Nov 19, 7:00-9:00 pm	7361 Calhoun Pl., Ste 400 (Maple Room), Rockville, MD 20855

If you have any questions regarding the PEP Parent Group Meetings, please contact Carrie Smith, PEP Parent Educator, at 301.962.5991

# Parent Resource Centers



## Locations and Hours

Opening Day: September 2, 2008

Closing Day: June 12, 2009

Location	Hours
Children's Resource Center, Room D-4 332 West Edmonston Drive Rockville, MD 20850 (301) 279-8497	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Millian Memorial United Methodist Church 13016 Parkland Drive Rockville, MD 20853 (301) 933-3646	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Emory Grove Family Resource Center 8107 Morningview Drive Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 990-6438	Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Gwendolyn R. Coffield Community Center 2450 Lyttonsville Road Silver Spring, MD 20910 (202) 359-9918	Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

## Openings & Closings

Center programs will open and close according to posted schedules. The Resource Centers follow the **Montgomery County Public Schools** closings for snow or other inclement weather, including heat.

If in doubt, call the center.

In cases of Montgomery County Schools opening late, the Parent Educator will make every effort to arrive at the Center as soon as possible, and as close to the posted opening time as feasible.

In addition, the Parent Resource Centers will be closed the following days:

November 4	Election Day
November 26 - 28	Thanksgiving
December 24 - January 2	Winter Break
January 19	Martin Luther King Day
February 16	President's Day
April 6 - 13	Spring Break
May 25	Memorial Day
June 12	Closing Day

# Centro de Apoyo para Padres



## Posiciones y Horas

Septiembre 2008 a Junio 2009

Posiciones	Hours
Children's Resource Center, salón D-4 332 West Edmonston Drive Rockville, MD 20850 (301) 279-8497	Martes, Miércoles, Jueves, y Viernes 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Millian Memorial United Methodist Church 13016 Parkland Drive Rockville, MD 20853 (301) 933-3646	Martes, Miércoles, y Jueves 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Emory Grove Family Resource Center 8107 Morningview Drive Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (301) 990-6438	Martes, Miércoles, y Jueves 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Gwendolyn R. Coffield Community Center 2450 Lyttonsville Road Silver Spring, MD 20910 (202) 359-9918	Lunes, Martes y Viernes 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

## Aperturas y Cierres

Los Centros de Apoyo siguen las normas de las Escuelas Públicas del Condado de Montgomery para cierres por nieve o mal tiempo incluyendo exceso de calor. En caso de duda por favor llamar centro.

Los Centros de Apoyo para Padres estarán cerrados los siguientes días:

Noviembre 4	Día de Elecciones Presidenciales
Noviembre 26 - 28	Acción de Gracias
Diciembre 24 - Enero 2	Vacaciones de Invierno
Enero 19	Martin Luther King Día
Febrero 16	Día del Presidente
Abril 6 - 13	Vacaciones de Primavera
Mayo 25	Día de Remembranza
Junio 12	Ultimo Día