



Dear RICA Families and Students,

We are almost through the first quarter of the 26-27 school year with interim grade reports coming out in early October. As the weather starts to get cool, let's remember to take care of our physical and mental health by getting the appropriate amount of rest, drinking fluids and monitoring daily screen time.

Look out for an invitation to the Principal/Parent Breakfast on Monday, October 12th in the conference room. ☕

Ms. Khadija Mitchell
Acting Principal
RICA

MCPS Upcoming Calendar Reminders:

Friday, October 2 - Interims Due

Thursday, October 8 - Interims Distributed

Wednesday, October 14 - PSAT

Friday, October 16 - Professional Day - No school for students

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Important Information to Share with Families!

Get Involved: Closure & Consolidation Engagement Meetings Begin in October

MCPS will hold engagement meetings across the county this fall for upcoming school closures and consolidations. **No decisions have been made, and community input is an important part of the process before developing any recommendation.** With multiple in-person and virtual meetings offered in two rounds, families can choose the location and time that works best for them. You do not need to attend every meeting, as sessions within each round will cover the same information. Interpretation and language support will be available. We encourage families, staff, students and community

members to participate and make their voices heard.

Learn more and see the [schedule here](#).

Regional Center High School Center Programs: Fall Showcases Begin in October

MCPS is expanding access to specialized **regional high school Center programs**, giving 8th grade students more opportunities to pursue programs connected to their interests while continuing to offer rigorous programming at every local high school.

Center programs span five areas: **Medical Science; International Baccalaureate, Humanities & Languages; Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM); Leadership & Public Service; and Visual & Performing Arts**. Additional Middle College dual-enrollment opportunities are being explored in partnership with Montgomery College.

Eighth grade families can start exploring this fall! High schools across all six MCPS regions will host **Fall High School Showcases throughout October**, beginning Thursday, Oct. 1. These events are a great opportunity for students and families to visit schools, learn about programs and courses, meet staff and begin thinking about the high school experience that best fits their interests and goals.

As a reminder, the six regions Showcases are scheduled at schools throughout the Southern, Eastern, Central South, Central, Central North and Northern regions.

Learn more and get ready:

- [Watch: Now You Know — Center Programs: The Basics](#)
- **Watch:** *MCPS High School Opportunities Presentation* — available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
- [See the full Fall High School Showcase schedule](#) and find the event near you.

Now You Know (Video Series)— Attendance Matters Every Day

There's nothing more important than being in school every day. Being at school every day gives students opportunities to learn, build friendships, connect with trusted adults and get involved in activities they enjoy. Most importantly, being present helps them feel like they belong — and gives them opportunities to reach their potential. Parents and families, please ensure your student is in school every day, ready to learn.

Learn more: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Amharic](#) | [Chinese](#) | [French](#) | [Korean](#) | [Portuguese](#) | [Vietnamese](#)

[Family Quick Guide: Social Media](#) — Think Before You Post

Social media can be a great way to connect and share—but what happens online can quickly become very real. Help your child make smart, safe choices.

Before they post, encourage them to pause:

- **Is it true?** Don't spread rumors.
- **Is it helpful?** Words have an impact.
- **Is it necessary?** Not everything needs to be shared.
- **Would I be OK if everyone saw it?** Screenshots can last.

Keep the conversation going: Ask what your child is seeing online, what makes them uncomfortable and what they would do if something feels wrong. Remind them to block, report, save the evidence and tell a trusted adult.

Find more practical resources for families on the [MCPS Family Quick Guide page](#).

Discover Enrichment, Acceleration and Gifted Education Opportunities

Families are invited to join the Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI) Family Webinar Series this fall. The four-part virtual series will provide families with information and resources to better understand enrichment and acceleration opportunities, gifted and talented identification, the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and parent advocacy.

Learn more: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Amharic](#) | [Chinese](#) | [French](#) | [Korean](#) | [Portuguese](#) | [Vietnamese](#)

New SSL Forms Are Here: What Students Need to Know

All MCPS students need 75 [Student Service Learning \(SSL\)](#) hours to graduate. MCPS has updated its SSL forms, with critical new deadlines and revised links.

Key Form Changes

- [MCPS Form 560-51 \(SSL Activity Verification Form\)](#)
 - In the updated form, organizations must provide academic preparation and service action details. Additional space is available for more thoughtful student reflection.
- [MCPS Form 560-50 \(Individual SSL Request\)](#)
 - Required for students to complete service with any community organization that is not listed as an MCPS SSL organization on the [Montgomery County Volunteer Center website](#). Organizations must provide academic preparation and service action details.

SSL Coordinators will accept the old SSL forms for service completed through Friday, Sept. 25. Any service completed after Friday, Sept. 25, should be documented using the new forms.

Stay in the Game with MCPS Athletics!

Stay connected with MCPS Athletics with the [R.A.I.S.E. Report](#), packed with updates for the 2026–2027 school year! Get the inside scoop on the launch of JV girls' flag football, sportsmanship and spectator safety initiatives, student-athlete leadership, sports medicine, coaching opportunities, new athletic coordinators and more. Whether you're a student-athlete, coach, parent, guardian or fan, there's something for everyone who believes in the power of interscholastic athletics.

Additional, but Good to Share

Help for College: Fairs, Financial Aid and FAFSA Support

Reminder that MCPS, Career Council, Inc. and College Fairs USA are hosting an in-person College Fair from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 9 at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg for high school juniors and seniors. Students, who will

attend the fair during the school day, will receive a link that will allow them to complete an online profile. For more information, students should contact their school counselor.

Fair Flyer: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Attention high school seniors and families: As the college admissions and scholarship season kicks off, remember that MCPS College and Career Navigators are available to answer questions about the college application process and financial aid. High schools are hosting a variety of in-person and virtual workshops to provide guidance to families on finding the right college path, writing essays and understanding the Common App. [See what's being offered!](#)

Montgomery College is also offering FAFSA Day from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 3. [Learn more.](#)

Wear Your MCPS Pride—and Make a Difference!

Show your MCPS spirit with official gear for the whole family! From sweatshirts and pullovers to shirts and more, there's something for every MCPS fan. **Best of all, every purchase gives back—all proceeds help offset student meal debt.**

Shop the [MCPS Gear Store](#) today!

Reminders

- [Saturday School](#): Tutoring sessions begin THIS SATURDAY, Sept. 26, from 8:30-11 a.m.! **But it is never too late to join.** Programs run on Saturday mornings for students in grades K–12, focusing on reading, language arts, math, test prep and STEM enrichment, such as coding and robotics. The cost is \$100/year (\$50 for FARMS recipients) and MCPS buses are available to center sites. [Learn more and register.](#)

Stay Connected to MCPS

- **VISIT** the [MCPS homepage](#).
- **CALL** 240-740-3000. Staff take calls from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, in English and Spanish (240-740-2845). Visit the [AskMCPS website](#).
- **READ** news and information sent via email and text message and on the [MCPS News](#) page.
- **FOLLOW** the MCPS social media pages:
[x.com/mcps](#) / [facebook.com/mcpsmd](#) / [instagram.com/mcps_md](#)
[facebook.com/mcpsespanol](#) / [x.com/MCPSEspanol](#) /
[instagram.com/mcpsenespanol](#)
- **SIGN UP** for [emails and text alerts](#) and make sure your [ParentVue](#) information is up to date.
- **WATCH** the MCPS cable channels Comcast 34 (1071 HD), Verizon 36 or RCN 89

More MCPS Resources

- [School calendar](#)
- [Parent resource page](#)
- [News and Information page](#) / [Noticias en Español](#)
- [Latest photo galleries](#)
- [MCPS TV videos](#)
- [MCPS TV español](#)