Dear Arcola Families,

With the holiday season upon us, our students and staff continue to work together to make Arcola a safe and positive place for learning. As a community we continue to heal in the wake of the recent tragedy involving the Harley children. Both parents continue to recover and our thoughts and well wishes are with them. We continue to be sensitive to the various needs of all Arcola students and staff while we support the processes of grieving and healing. We continue to accept donations on behalf of the Harley family that may be made payable to Arcola Elementary School, care of the Harley Family Fund. All donations received will be provided to the parents of the Harley children. Thank you to everyone who has supported our school by your actions, thoughts and prayers. The acts of kindness and expressions of love to the Harley family and school have meant a lot and are examples of why the Arcola Community is extraordinary.

As we have mentioned gratitude, thank you to everyone who attended parent conference and/or supported our Scholastic Book Fair during the month of November. We greatly appreciate your support. A special thank you to Ms. Amy Weathers for ensuring our Book Fair is successful each year. We hope to see everyone during the month of December at our Winter Concert, performed by our Fifth Grade Chorus and Instrumental Music Program on Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m. Our next Parent Coffee is on Friday, December 20th beginning at 9:30 a.m. We will discuss local family-friendly activities to do over the winter break and a great resource that supports reading. These are two opportunities that support parent engagement and involvement.

Our Fall Fundraiser was a resounding success. Thank you to everyone who participated in our Fun Run sponsored by the PTA at Arcola! We raised a total of $5,186.34. Ms. Datta’s, Kindergarten class raised the most money with a total of $494.00. Ms. Olewack’s, 2nd Grade class had the highest percentage of participation. These two classes will have pizza parties in the near future as rewards for their success. A special thank you to Mr. Herron for his work to organize the activities on the day of the run. The PTA is already planning additional projects that will motivate and support students’ learning with the balance of the funds. We look forward to everyone’s support and participation in future events sponsored by our PTA. Go PTA at Arcola!

On another note, parents are invited to attend Superintendent Jack Smith’s Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget Presentation at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13. It will be held in the auditorium at Gaithersburg High School, 101 Education Boulevard in Gaithersburg. Free child care for children at least 4 years old, and interpretation services will be provided. Overflow parking will be available at the Bohrer Park Activity Center, 506 S. Frederick Avenue in Gaithersburg.

As a reminder, the weather is changing, so please be sure your child is dressed appropriately. Students will be going outside for recess as long as the temperature outside is 32° or above.

On behalf of the entire Arcola Staff, Happy Holidays and a healthful, prosperous New Year to you!

Sincerely,

Emmanuel Jean-Philippe
Principal

Jessica Blasic
Assistant Principal

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**Important December Dates**

- **December 8**
  Last day of Gator Club Resumes January 9th
- **December 9**
  Last day of InView testing 2nd grade
- **December 13**
  Gr. 2 Fieldtrip to Baltimore Aquarium
- **December 14**
  Winter Concert 7pm
  Daytime performances:
  Grades K-2: 9:50am
  Grades 3-5: 10:35am
- **December 15**
  5 week Progress Reports sent home
- **December 20**
  Parent Coffee 9:30am.
- **December 23**
  Full Day of School
- **December 26-30**
  No School
- **School resumes on January 2nd, 2017**
Thank you to all who attended our last coffee where we heard from school counselors and psychologists about how to deal with loss. Attached to this month’s newsletter is a sheet with suggestions for parents when discussing death with children.

Join us next time, on **December 20 at 9:30am**, to learn about fun, free, local activities over Winter Break. Everyone in attendance will receive a free book to read over the break and a reading chart. Students who complete it during the break and return the chart to Ms. Arocho in the main office will receive a new free book. We will also create two reading comprehension games and learn about *Storia—School Edition*, the eBook library from Scholastic that Arcola is using this year thanks to Title I funding. Learn how to access this resource at home. Finally, we will raffle off prizes!

**Parent Community Coordinators:**
Ana Nava (Wed & Thurs.8:00-4:00pm) &
Vicmarie Arocho (Monday – Friday 9:00-3:30pm)

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**FROM THE HEALTH ROOM**

Please make sure you have updated your phone numbers with the school in case your child becomes sick while at school and we need to contact you. Also, have a plan in place should your child become sick at school and need to be sent home.

When do keep your child home from school:

⇒ Fever greater than 100
   (note students must have no fever for 24 hours **without** medication to return to school)
⇒ Vomiting or nausea in the past 24 hours
⇒ Diarrhea in the past 24 hours
⇒ Red eyes with discharge

If you have any questions- please call the health room at **301-287-8544**

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December 13th is the 2nd grade Fieldtrip to the Baltimore Aquarium!

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**Would you like to chaperone a field trip? Volunteer in a classroom?**

**VOLUNTEERS MUST COMPLETE AN ONLINE TRAINING VIDEO**

MCPS now requires all volunteers to complete the training and provide proof of completion. Please visit the [MCPS home page](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/) or go directly to:

- **http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/**

⇒ **Make sure to indicate ALL the schools where your children attend, including ARCOLA.**

⇒ **When you complete the training you will be given a certificate of completion by email. Please keep this email. If you print a copy, please bring it to the school.**

⇒ **If you cannot print or do not have email please write down the 9-digit validation code.**
COMMUNITY RESOURCES

WINTER CONCERT

Please join us for an evening celebrating the winter season through music! On Wednesday, December 14, 2016, Arcola ES will be holding its annual Winter Concert. Our performers have worked hard to learn a variety of beautiful and diverse pieces of music, and we are excited to be sharing them with you. We invite ALL Arcola families and friends to attend!

WHO IS PERFORMING: 5th Grade chorus, Zimbabwean Marimba Ensemble, and the Instrumental Music. With special guest performer Sawinder Singh who will play the tabla drums while the chorus sings a song from India! ATTIRE: Performers should wear white shirts or blouses, black pants or skirts, and black socks and shoes. Daytime assembly performers should come to school dressed in concert attire.

DATE and LOCATION: Wednesday, December 14, 2016 in the Arcola ES All-Purpose Room.

EVENING PERFORMANCE TIME: 7:00 pm; Students in Beginning and Advanced Strings will need to report to the instrumental music room at 6:30 pm. Zimbabwean Marimba Ensemble members can report at 6:45. All other performers should arrive at the music room at 6:30 pm.

DAYTIME PERFORMANCE TIMES (Chorus and Zimbabwean Marimba Ensemble only):
This year we will perform for students in Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade at 9:50 a.m. and for students in grades 3, 4, and 5 at 10:35 a.m. If you are unable to attend the evening concert, we hope you can attend one of the daytime concerts.

Thank you all for attending the Arcola Family Math Night last month. The teachers would like to share the list of websites that the children enjoyed that evening. Just type in the name of the math website into your search engine and you will be directed to that website.

Happy Holidays!

Wonder-ful Thinking!
Attention Kindergarten Parents! Since October your child has participated in an exciting module entitled A Sense of Wonder. Have you ever flown a kite together when either the intensity or lack of wind made it a challenge? A Sense of Wonder will invite your child to explore, examine, and question this type of experience within their natural world. The module is part of the Primary Talent Development Early Learning Program curriculum which models and promotes higher level thinking strategies. While your child is engaged in this experience, we will be looking for inquisitive and persistent behaviors. Being inquisitive involves curiosity and the desire to explore and investigate. Persistence is the ability to stick with something until it is completed.
CTE Road Shows Coming This December
Parents and students are invited to learn more about Career Technology Education (CTE) programs that are offered in MCPS during upcoming CTE Road Shows. During each event, parents will—
- Find out about the essential 21st century skills students need to succeed in high school, college, and the workplace;
- Hear the latest news about MCPS’ upcoming Career Technology Education (CTE) summer camps; and
- Get details on how students can earn industry-recognized certification in several fields before they graduate.

Saturday, December 10
9 a.m.–11 a.m.
Thomas Edison High School of Technology
12501 Dalewood Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20906

Careers in Automotive Technology, Construction, Information Technology, and Computer Science

MLK Literary and Visual Arts Contest Open to MCPS Students
Students at all grade levels are encouraged to participate in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Literary Contest and Visual Arts Show. The 2017 theme is “Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere.” The essays and artwork should reflect an understanding and appreciation of the ideals of Dr. King’s life, achievements, and aspirations.

Literary entries should be 150 words or less and are due by Friday, December 23. Submit them to the MLK Essay Contest, c/o Montgomery County Office of Human Rights, 21 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

For visual arts entries, the contest is open to prints, posters, collages, murals, photographs, and all other two-dimensional visual art forms. Group projects are welcome. Send entries to Linda S. Adams, supervisor, Pre-K-12 Fine Arts, Carver Educational Services Center, Room 256, 850 Hungerford Dr., Rockville, MD 20850. The deadline is Friday, December 23.

Plan Ahead for the 2017–2018 School Year
It’s never to early to start planning! The Board of Education has approved the start and end dates for the 2017–2018 school year. The school year will begin on Tuesday, September 5, 2017, and the last day of school will be no later than Friday, June 15, 2018.

In August, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan issued an executive order that mandates all Maryland public schools start after Labor Day, conclude by June 15, and include 180 days of instruction. The Board had approved a resolution on October 10 stating its preference to adopt a calendar for the 2017–2018 school year that would begin prior to Labor Day and asked Superintendent Jack R. Smith to apply to the State Board for a waiver of the start date before Labor Day. However, MCPS is not likely to be eligible for a waiver due to Governor Hogan’s amended executive order that has further restricted the conditions under which local school boards could apply for and be granted a waiver of the time frame.

There are many specific components, including professional days and make-up days for emergency or inclement weather school closings, that MCPS staff will need to further analyze to determine how best to implement the instructional and operational aspects of the 2017–2018 school year in the required time frame.

MCPS staff will continue to work through the implementation issues for the structure of the school year and bring one or more proposed calendars to the Board for action at the December 13, 2016, meeting.