A Message from Ms. Fladung and Dr. Ashton

We recently sent home interim reports on Friday, October 4th. The two-column report is similar to the new report card that will be distributed in mid-November. Please refer to the letter accompanying the progress report for information on how to read the document. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Elaraj or Mrs. King, our Teaching and Learning Representatives.

On another note, we are looking forward to our upcoming Halloween and Harvest Day celebrations. Both will be held on October 31st, beginning at 1:45. Students participating in Halloween festivities will begin changing into costumes at 1:45, with the parade beginning at 2:00. Students are NOT to wear costumes to school. Following the parade, students will celebrate with their classmates with a party! They will participate in games and activities, and enjoy a snack. The Harvest Festival is being offered as an alternative event for children who do not celebrate Halloween due to religious or cultural beliefs. This event will begin at 1:45 in the All Purpose Room. We are grateful to the parent volunteers for ensuring that our Harvest Festival is a success! If you are still interested in helping to organize and supervise this great event, please let me know.

Finally, don’t forget Math Night! The Stonegate Math Committee will be hosting our annual Math Night on Thursday, October 24th from 6:00-7:30! Children and their families are invited to join in the fun, as we provide access to math games, activities, and resources. There will also be a parent resource table with updates on math programming and recommended strategies for success. Raffles will be held and prizes will be awarded! We hope to see you there!
Flu Mist at Stonegate

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) will conduct a free flu vaccine clinic on November 12, 2013, for students enrolled at Stonegate Elementary School. Only nasal spray flu vaccine (FluMist) will be available. Students will not be vaccinated unless they are accompanied by a parent, guardian, or adult with a signed consent form. A letter is forthcoming with the specific details for scheduling an appointment. Other FluMist clinics for all school-aged children will be conducted on November 1, 2013, at John F. Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, and Seneca Valley High School in Germantown, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon. To make an appointment for the November 1st clinics, go to http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/flu or call 311.

Not all children are eligible to receive the nasal spray form of the seasonal flu vaccine. Children with asthma, some chronic health conditions, weakened immune systems, currently on long-term aspirin therapy, history of allergic reactions to eggs or a vaccine component, previous history of allergic reaction to the flu vaccine, or a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome may be eligible for the injectable seasonal flu vaccine and should consult with their health care provider.

Parent Conferences Coming Soon

Parent conferences are scheduled for Monday, November 11, and Tuesday, November 12. Parent conferences will provide an opportunity for you to learn more about your child’s successes and areas of need, both academically and behaviorally. Therefore, it is important that you attend. If you have not scheduled an appointment, please contact your child’s teacher in order to find a mutually convenient time to meet. Conferences are scheduled for approximately 15-20 minutes; therefore, please plan to arrive on time and to be considerate of the parent following your appointment time. As the conference date draws near, remember the meeting is an opportunity for you and the teacher to collaborate. You are the expert about your child, while the teacher is the expert on teaching and supporting children at his/her grade level. You'll both come to the table with ideas and opinions. Remember, too, that collaboration sometimes requires compromise; striking a balance of ideas is often in the best interest of your child.

Here are some general hints on how to have a successful conference:

- Ask your child if there is anything that he would like you to discuss with the teacher.
- Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
- Avoid lengthy discussions of topics that are not related to the purpose of the conference.
- Be open-minded to suggestions from the teacher.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Take notes about what has been discussed to share with your child.
- Express appreciation for the conference.
Don’t Miss Math Night!

We will host our annual school-sponsored Math Night on Thursday, October 24th, from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Our Math Committee has been planning for a night of exciting math games and hands-on activities! Students will explore math manipulatives, participate in solving problems, and engage in curricular content. Be sure to visit the Parent Resource Table, too! Valuable information on at-home math activities, math literature, and websites will be available. In addition, there will be MCPS Curriculum connections. Raffle prizes will be rewarded! It is always a fun-filled night and we are looking forward to seeing everyone there!!

After School Academy

After School Academy confirmation notices were sent home yesterday. We are so grateful to our teachers and Towson interns for volunteering to host after-school programs that focus on academics and social skill development! As a result of their planning and preparation, students will have opportunities to participate in writing a school newspaper, performing a play, practicing math skills, completing homework, and engaging in games related to curriculum learning and social skill development! Please note that some activities were “invite only”. Other clubs were open to grade level students on a first come, first serve basis. Only students receiving confirmation notices should plan to stay for after-school clubs. Session I clubs will begin the week of October 21st and run for approximately 8 weeks! Remember, clubs end promptly at 4:10. Students MUST be picked up on time. We regret that bus transportation is NOT available.

Open House

On October 14th, we will celebrate our annual open house for families. Parents are encouraged to visit their children’s classes anytime between 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to see your child engaged in learning and interacting with other students and teachers and to observe classroom routines and procedures. We ask that younger siblings not attend to limit distractions to the teaching and learning taking place and to make the day special for the child(ren) you are visiting. In addition, we ask that cell phones be turned off during your visit. We look forward to seeing you and hope that you will stop by the Scholastic Book Fair during your visit, too!
Curriculum 2.0 and Grading and Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions

• How are grades determined?

  Data is collected on student’s understanding of the content within a Measurement Topic in a variety of ways. Data is collected in multiple and varied ways, including anecdotal notes, discussions, and demonstrations, as well as written products.

• How are grades calculated?

  The report card grade for a Measurement Topic is determined by averaging the assignment and assessment scores that have been entered for that Measurement Topic.

• How do you know if my child’s work is proficient?

  Instruction is based on the curriculum. The curriculum is based on standards, which are consistent from class to class and school to school, hence making it a standards-based system. Teachers use the curriculum to determine exactly what instruction their students need on the content for a particular day. The teachers then use the standards in the curriculum to define proficiency. For example, in grade 3 social studies, students are expected “to identify and describe the location of major cities in Maryland.” A teacher would assess whether or not the student was proficient with this, based on the student response.

• How does my child earn an ES?

  ES means “exceptional at the grade level standard”. Students do not need to be working “above grade level” to earn an ES. During both instruction and assessment, teachers provide opportunities for students to demonstrate this exceptional understanding. As teachers are assessing whether or not a student is proficient with a given concept, teachers are asking the student to explain his/her thinking. Being able to do this is expected for a student to be proficient. However, it is through these explanations that students may demonstrate an exceptional understanding (ES). In other words, though a student may do something unexpected to score an ES, teachers are also providing opportunities during instruction. Often, these opportunities are when the students explain their thinking, either verbally or in writing.

• Why didn’t my child receive the statement saying that he/she received acceleration in math?

  The statement indicates that a student consistently received enrichment or acceleration throughout the marking period. Students who consistently, 70% or more of the time, receive instruction based on the enrichment/acceleration guidelines qualify for the enrichment/acceleration designation on the report card. Grades for the enriched/accelerated instruction are included in the grade book and are a part of the body of evidence to determine the student’s marking period grade.
Stonegate Elementary School will host our annual Help the Homeless Walk on Tuesday, October 29, 2013 from 2:15-2:45. This year’s walk will sponsor Stepping Stones Shelter, a local shelter that houses the homeless, supports independence, and provides ongoing support for those in need. Information regarding registration was recently sent home. ALL registration is ONLINE this year. Visit this link: http://www.hthwalks.org/site/TR/Walk/General?team_id=21512&pg=team&fr_id=1839 to register online.

If you would like a t-shirt, please register by October 16th at the latest. Please note: ONLY REGISTERED STUDENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE WALK. Check out Stonegate’s website for additional information and a link to register.

5th Grade Promotion Planning Meeting

Our 5th grade students will be promoted on June 11th at 10:00 a.m. in the gymnasium at Stonegate Elementary. To begin planning for promotion and other 5th grade events, there will be a promotion planning meeting for interested 5th grade parents on Wednesday, October 16th at 3:30. We hope you will join us!

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Core Values

Respect
Responsibility
Collaboration
Commitment

Mission Statement

Stonegate's mission as a caring community is to foster the growth of life-long learners by communicating high expectations and standards through respect, flexibility, and collaboration.

Vision Statement

The Stonegate Community will be committed to a multicultural learning environment that motivates and supports all learners to achieve their greatest potential. We will collaborate respectfully to develop a standard of excellence that promotes high expectations for all learners.
Curriculum 2.0 and Grading and Reporting

Frequently Asked Questions Continued

- How do you determine the grades for the Thinking and Academic Success Skills (TASS)?

  Through the marking period, teachers collect data on how the students are demonstrating two TASSs that are the focus for that marking period. This data is collected in authentic situations as students are working on the content in that subject. Student progress with the TASSs is reported using the terms Demonstrating (DEM), Progressing (PRG), and Not Yet Evident (N) to convey how the students are progressing with demonstrating the skills.

- Can my child earn a P if he/she is reading above grade level?

  Yes. A student who is reading above the marking period target is evaluated on his/her understanding of the grade-level reading content taught in a lesson. However, since the student is using higher level text, it may still be challenging to demonstrate grade level content understanding. While it is possible that your child would score an ES, it is not automatic. In fact, your child might score an ES, P, I, or N using above level text.

- Can my child be marked below grade level and earn a P?

  Yes. A student who is reading below the marking period target is evaluated on his/her understanding of the grade-level reading content taught in a lesson. The student may be proficient with demonstrating his/her understanding using text at their level. However, that level of text is still below the target for the marking period.

- How do parents work with their children at home to earn an ES?

  The rigorous instruction that is provided involves many opportunities for students to think critically about what they have learned. Answering critical thinking questions is expected of all students to demonstrate proficiency, but they also provide great opportunities for students to demonstrate exceptional understanding. Asking students critical thinking questions (such as to analyze, synthesize, evaluate or justify), in relation to books they read as well as to any conversations you have with them, will help them to be more skilled at that kind of thinking as they work on it during instruction in various content areas.

- Where can I go to get more information?

  One great source of information is the Curriculum 2.0 website. You can access it by searching “Curriculum 2.0” from the MCPS homepage. The Curriculum 2.0 website includes a variety of sources of information about the curriculum, including a link to additional information on the report card. Using that link, you will find the report cards and the How to Read My Child’s Report Card documents (available in 6 languages), as well as a short video explaining the new report card (available in English and Spanish).