

The Parent Communicator

January 2018

News from the Parent Community Coordinator, Magda Sobalvarro-Ochoa
Serving the communities of Strawberry Knoll and Judith Resnik Elementary Schools
A newsletter to keep you inspired, informed and connected to community resources.



GREAT ADVENTURES IN PARENTING

As we start a new year, it is traditional to make resolutions with the goal of making a positive change in our lives. As parents, one of the most rewarding things we can do is to support our children's education at home and at school. Teachers play a key role in our children's educational lives so it is important that we build an alliance with them and work as partners in our kids' success. Here are seven ways suggested in a recent **Washington Post** article. 1. **Be present.** Attend parent nights, parent-teacher conferences and volunteer. If you can't, send an email just to say hello and check in. 2. **Question before intervening.** Remember teachers are human and mistakes are inevitable. Intervene only after your child has tried handling a difficulty on his/her own. This teaches resilience, empathy and problem-solving. 3. **Approach the Teacher First.** If a problem or concern arises, start with the teacher before going to the principal or discussing your frustrations with other parents. 4. **Ask Questions.** To facilitate a productive outcome don't make demands or use absolute language. Give time for the teacher to respond. When meeting start with "Can you help me understand x?" 5. **Pick your battles.** Complaining often, or about minor issues, dilutes the impact. Your restraint helps your credibility. 6. **Respect policies.** While truly unfair policies require a parent to advocate for their child, there's a difference between annoying and unjust. It is important to discern the difference. 7. **Remember emotional dividends.** Most teachers teach because they love children, are passionate about a subject and want to make a difference. Make them feel appreciated and successful with a quick email acknowledging their efforts or a longer note detailing how they made a difference. Best of luck with your efforts in 2018!

COMMUNITY RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT



This month we would like to share with our military families a resource made especially for them. If you are in need of a tutor for your child in grades K-12, visit www.tutor.com/military for free tutoring support. Online tutoring and homework help is available 24/7 at no cost by the US Department of Defense and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

With winter in full swing and the extreme weather it brings, remember to sign up for MCPS emergency information to learn about weather closings, delays etc. There are a variety of ways to receive information:



MCPS Quicknotes at www.mcpsquicknotes.org

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/mcps> Alert MCPS at <http://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov/> or by calling a recorded message line at 301-279-3673.

You may also watch MCPS TV on Comcast Cable Ch. 34, Verizon Ch. 36 and RCN Ch. 89. There are also announcements on your local TV and radio stations. Don't be left out in the cold when it comes to weather related school closings or delays!

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is on January 15, 2018. If you or your family would like to honor Dr. King with a day of helping others, visit the following website for volunteering opportunities in your community. A great way to make the dream a reality!

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/volunteers/MLK.html>