



PTA TIMES

Takoma Park Elementary School

School address 7511 Holly Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
Phone 301.650.6414
School Hours 8:45 am - 3:30 pm
School website: <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/takomaparkes/>
PTA website <http://www.tpespta.org>
Join the PTA listserv Send an email to
TPES-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.
Join the PTA Visit our website, mail the form to
our school, or send it in the Dolphin folder.

School Principal: Zadia T. Gadsden, Zadia_T_Gadsden@mcpsmd.org
PTA President: Shruti Bhatnagar, shruti_bhatnagar@yahoo.com, 301.949.8006

January 13, 2011



Message from PTA President, Shruti Bhatnagar



Dear TPES Families,

Wish you all a very Happy New Year!

I request all families to take the time to read the newsletters carefully. It is our constant effort to share information from school, PTA, MCPS and MCCPTA (Montgomery County Council of PTA) and MD PTA to keep you well informed about what is happening in our school system that affects the education of our children. This is very important as MCPS is going through many changes. Hearings for next year's budget, the search for a new community superintendent, and the development of a new integrated curriculum that will be implemented starting next year are some of the important issues in progress. Please be informed and get involved. There are forums for parent participation, public hearings, and websites where parents can contribute to these topics. I make sure that I share all information with parents at the PTA meetings, through the listserv and the newsletter. Please do read the information and feel free to contact me with any questions or to request more information. I will be happy to help you.

Indoor recess: At our monthly General PTA meeting on January 4th 2010, we discussed with Mrs. Gadsden policies concerning indoor recess, in particular when the decision is made to move recess indoors. Some parents shared concerns that children do not have the opportunity for adequate active play during indoor recess.

Mrs. Gadsden discussed constraints to both outdoor and indoor recess, including lack of staff, lack of large available indoor rooms, and other factors. She emphasized that the school is open to ideas to improve the situation and willing to try any that can be implemented within the constraints of staffing and school space limitations.

To find ways to either provide more outdoor recess or to provide more active indoor recess, we agreed to form a temporary committee that will come up with ideas and send them to me so I can work with Mrs. Gadsden to discuss implementation. I will also work with the committee chairs to keep them and the community informed on the committee's progress. The committee is planning to have a meeting on Tuesday, Jan 18th to get started reviewing ideas.

Any interested parents in getting involved please contact the committee chairs:

Danielle Levitan (dlevitan@thinkabout.com)
and Stacey Palosky (palosky@gmail.com)

New Award Nomination Committee forming: A new committee is forming to ensure that teachers eligible for awards are nominated in a timely manner and that the required support from parents is gathered in time to support the nominations. The committee will be chaired by a school representative (Mrs. Toya Wade, Staff Development) and by the PTA Executive Committee Secretary (parent Mary Hanisco). Be on the lookout for notices in the newsletter and on the listserv for ways parents can express support for particular teachers. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Hanisco (hanisco_family@mac.com).

Communication and use of proper terms: Use of proper terms when communicating with the school is very important to avoid miscommunication and unnecessary added work for the people involved. Please be careful when complaining to the school about issues that are of concern.

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation are serious and not tolerated in the MCPS system. When parents complain to the school administration about their child being bullied at school, the school is required to submit paperwork to report this incident— as a result of which, the school can be labeled as an unsafe school. If an incident occurs at school while your child was playing with another child during recess please do not

refer to it as the child being bullied by another child without getting complete details of the incident from the school staff. Approach the principal first with your concern and request more information.

Positive communication and working together with the school administration are very effective ways to resolve any situation.

Thanks and have a great day.



January 2011 Events

Please mark your calendars for upcoming events!

Jan. 17	NO SCHOOL	MLK, Jr. Day holiday
Jan. 21	8:45 am 7:00 pm	Principal's coffee Bingo night at PBES
Jan. 24	NO SCHOOL	Professional day

"For the third straight year, **Maryland's public education system received number one rankings in 2011** from Education Week; the College Board for Advanced Placement performance; and, once again, Newsweek for the highest percentage of rigorous high schools in America. We should all be truly proud for these consistent and remarkable accomplishments."

—Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools

<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE>

<http://www.wtop.com/?nid=25&sid=2230235>

Principal's Coffee

Save the Date! The next Principal's Coffee is Friday, January 24, at 8:45 in the Community Room. Join Mrs. Gadsden and other parents for an informal gathering to discuss the school issues of the day. The PTA will provide coffee, juice, fruit, and bagels. Additional food contributions are welcome but not required. Younger siblings are welcome, provided they are supervised.

Volunteer Request

Parent helpers in the cafeteria: The PTA is looking for volunteers to help cut fruit for children in the cafeteria during lunch. If you are willing to help with this effort, please contact Shruti Bhatnagar shruti_bhatnagar@yahoo.com

TPES Book Fair:

The TPES PTA is excited to announce the **2011 Scholastic Book Fair** **February 4-11th, 2011**

Buy Great Books at Great Prices!
Help our teachers earn money for books & supplies!

Help ALL children receive books of their own to treasure and read!

The Book Fair will be located in the Community Room. Children will visit the fair during class visits with their teachers to browse and create wish lists; they can return later in the week (with or without their grownups) to purchase books. **NOTE: The TPES PTA Listserv will have a schedule of when classes will visit the Book fair and a sign-up form for volunteers to assist with the Book Fair.**

Book Fair Hours:

Friday, February 4th – 8:15-4:00 PM
Monday, February 7th – 8:15-4:00 PM
Tuesday, February 8th – 8:15-4:00 PM (**B&B Event!**)
Wednesday, February 9th – 8:15-4:00 PM
Thursday, February 10th – 8:15-4:00 PM and 6:30-8:30 PM (**Pajama Party!**)
Friday, February 11th – 8:15-12 noon

Books and Breakfast (B&B) Event:

Tuesday, February 8th – 8:30-10:00 am – Visit the book fair and join us for some refreshments with donations from Starbucks, McDonald's and Einstein Bagels!

Pajama Party & Story telling:

Thursday, February 10th – 6:30-8:30 pm – Enjoy an evening out with your children and entertainment by local heroes. Takoma Park Librarian Karen McPherson will reading to your children and Michelle Koopman will host a parent workshop on how to select books for your children. Dinner is on us!! Donations from Pizza Movers, Starbucks, and Subway.

Stay tuned for more information. If you would like to volunteer at the Book Fair please contact the committee chair:

Sally Chaupiz : Sally.Chaupiz@marriott.com

Public forum on MCPS superintendent search

Montgomery County citizens are invited to attend a series of public forums designed to gather community comments on the educational priorities and desired leadership qualities of the next superintendent of the Montgomery County Public Schools.

The forums will be held throughout the county on three consecutive evenings at two locations each evening. Representatives of the executive search firm Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA), employed by the Montgomery County Board of Education to assist in the superintendent search, will facilitate the forums and receive community comment.

Below is the schedule of public forums and the availability of translation/ interpretation services:

Monday, January 31, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
· Northwest High School, 13501 Richter Farm Road, Germantown
(Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese)
· White Oak Middle School, 12201 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring
(Spanish)

Tuesday, February 1, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
· Bethesda Elementary School, 7600 Arlington Road, Bethesda (accessible from Bethesda Metro station) (Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese)
· Montgomery Village Middle School, 19300 Watkins Mill Road, Montgomery Village (Spanish)

Wednesday, February 2, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
· Wheaton High School, 12601 Dalewood Drive, Silver Spring
(Spanish)
· Carver Educational Services Center, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville
(Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese)

If child care or translation/ interpretation services will be required, please contact the Board of Education office at 301-279-3617 by January 24, 2011. For sign language interpretation, please call 301-517-5539 by January 24, 2011.

Community members who are unable to attend one of the public forums are invited to provide input on the attributes and characteristics desired in the next MCPS superintendent by completing an online superintendent profile survey, which will be available mid-January

through early February 2011. Information from the public forums and surveys will be shared with the Board of Education members.

The Board has employed the executive search firm to help in its nationwide effort to identify and employ a new superintendent. Dr. Jerry D. Weast will complete three terms as superintendent with his retirement at the end of the current school year. The Board plans to name a new superintendent this spring to ensure a smooth transition.

For additional information about the search process and to access the online survey, please refer to the Board's search web site at ww.montgomeryschool.smd.org/boe/superintendent-search/index.shtm.

2nd Annual Spelling Bee

Jack and Jill of America Incorporated Montgomery County Maryland Chapter Presents their 2nd Annual Spelling Bee:
Saturday, February 26, 2011 (1:00pm - 4:00pm)

The Johns Hopkins University
Montgomery County Campus
9601-05 Medical Center Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Open to all 1st through 6th Grade students living in Montgomery County, Maryland

featuring:
- Benjamin E. Mayes (Oratorical Contest) by JJMCMC Middle School Students
- Poetry Reading by JJMCMC Senior Teens
- Allison Seymour (Mistress of Ceremonies) Anchor, WTTG-TV

Participation in the Spelling Bee is limited to 30 students for each grade. So register early!

To register, please contact:
Candace Ross, crossgalvin@gmail.com

Registration Form and \$5 Participation Fee are due by January 31, 2011.

Upcoming MCPS Parent Academy Workshops

Our upcoming workshops include:

-Tuesday, January 18—Understanding the MCPS

Operating Budget in Tough Economic Times
7:00-8:30pm
John T. Baker Middle School, 25400 Oak Drive,
Damascus 20872

-Wednesday, January 19—Boost Your Child's Self-Esteem (Spanish)

7:00-8:30pm
Gaithersburg Middle School, 2 Teacher's Way,
Gaithersburg 20877
Get tips on how to help your child feel great in school and personal life and encourage positive decisions. In addition, learn how to take advantage of community resources that will help you help your child.

-Thursday, January 20—Understanding the MCPS Operating Budget in Tough Economic Times

7:00-8:30pm
Carver Educational Services Center, Auditorium, 850
Hungerford Drive, Rockville 20850

-Thursday, January 20—Getting Kids Up and Out: Mastering the Daily Routine

7:00-8:30pm
White Oak Middle School, 12201 New Hampshire Ave.,
Silver Spring 20904
Stressed out by the time you leave for work? Explore simple ways to add structure to your family's day, help with getting up and out, homework, chores, dinner and bedtime. Presented by YMCA Youth & Family Services.

Childcare and interpretation services are provided at all workshops. To register, see the full list of Winter Parent Academy workshops, or for questions, visit <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy/> or call 301-279-3100.

Development and Implementation of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum

On November 23, 2010, the MCCPTA Delegates adopted the following resolution.

Resolution on Parent Involvement in the Development and Implementation of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum

Whereas:

A. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has

begun developing an Elementary Integrated Curriculum;

B. MCPS expects full implementation of the new curriculum in kindergarten through second grade in the 2011-2012 school year and in third grade to fifth grade in the 2012-2013 school year;

C. Teachers will access the curriculum online via the mymcps portal, rather than through printed curriculum guides that had been previously used;

D. Printed curriculum guides had been available in school libraries to any parents who wished to review the curriculum;

E. MCPS hopes to eventually provide parents access to the mymcps portal, but currently has no plans for when it will happen;

F. Parents have the need and expectation to be able to review curriculum guides;

G. The Montgomery County Board of Education has granted preliminary approval of the MCPS Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework, which combines existing elementary curriculum, Common Core State Standards, and Thinking and Academic Success Skills;

H. The Elementary Integrated Curriculum Framework has been posted as a single 154 page pdf on the MCPS website along with a four question feedback form;

I. MCPS will be working with Pearson Education in the development and assessment of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum.

Therefore be it resolved

1. MCPS should provide continued opportunities for parents to provide meaningful feedback in the development of the elementary integrated curriculum throughout the development and implementation process.
2. By the time schools are required to implement the curriculum, all parents in all schools should have regular access to the curriculum if they wish to review it.
3. MCPS should develop a reasonable timeline for parent access to the myMCPS portal.
4. In the future, when Curriculum Frameworks are put out for review on the MCPS website, there should be options to provide feedback on individual

recommendations in the document. Furthermore people reviewing the document should be able to see what comments other people have left and be able to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the comments.

5. MCPS should make a concerted effort to educate, inform, and share with parents and the rest of the community any and all information about the effectiveness of the Elementary Integrated Curriculum. That information should be shared with the parents and the community before that information is shared with any other entity outside of MCPS.

Questions on the resolution can be directed to Ted Willard at twillard@aaas.org

Here is an article from Washington Post that sheds more light on what is being proposed and where the thinking is coming from:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/11/04/AR2010110407825.html>

And, here are two links on the MCPS website that give some further explanation of the new Integrated Curriculum and the Common Core Standards.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/integrated>
<http://www.corestandards.org/>

Spring Camp information: The manager of the Little Bennett Campground has requested us to share this information with TPES families. The campground is part of Montgomery Parks with the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission. This spring they are offering a special camping event to the families of the elementary schools in Montgomery County. They are inviting families from our school to participate as a group. That group will be able to choose a special activity they would like to do together on their night of camping. Please read the information forwarded by them and anyone interested in participating, please contact:

Shruti Bhatnagar shruti_bhatnagar@yahoo.com

The new "Let's Go Camping!" program at Little Bennett Campground in Clarksburg, Maryland offers fresh air, Good, clean fun, Real-world nature education, Physical activity, Quality time together and more to your students and their families, at a very affordable price. We created this program to give

families a personalized group camping experience at one of Montgomery Parks' most beautiful sites.

Here's how it works:

Nine (9) Friday nights in April, May and June* are reserved at the Campground for this special program. Once you've picked and reserved your group's date, choose any one of the special activities (see flyer) to do together that night. Possibilities include a Naturalist-led Nature Hike, Family Scavenger Hunt, or a Classic Campfire Cookout, and five other great options. Most of these activities are free; a few incur a modest additional per person charge for supplies. All activities will be led especially and only for your group by the wonderfully accommodating and experienced staff of Little Bennett Campground.

Here are the particulars:

- Each beautiful, wooded tent site can accommodate six (6) people, two (2) tents, and two (2) cars.
- Each tent site features a two-car parking pad, picnic table, lantern post, and campfire grill. Families should bring their own camping equipment (tents, sleeping bags, etc.).
- Campground bathhouses offer hot water, showers, sinks, toilet facilities, and drinking fountains. Water spigots are located randomly on each camping loop.
- The campground also features playgrounds, volleyball courts, a basketball court, and other recreational possibilities. Visit www.LittleBennettCampground to learn more.
- Camping fees are \$21 a night for a tent site, and \$31 per night for a site with electricity (available on Loop D only). Rates apply to both Montgomery and Prince George's County residents.
- We'll need your reservation and activity choice no later than one week prior to your campout date.
- Cash or credit card payment is due at the time of reservations.

If you have any questions about this program please contact:

Rosemary Nichols, Campground Manager
Montgomery County Department of Parks
Little Bennett Campground
23701 Fredrick Road
Clarksburg, MD 20871
Tel: 301-528-3452
e-mail: Rosemary.Nichols@mncppc-mc.org

