

Good Evening SFES Families,

We desperately need a parent to chair Heritage Night in order for this event to happen this month! Please reach out to Mrs. Fortune or the PTA as soon as possible if you are able to help serve our school in this important role!

Exciting Milestone: 100th & 1000th Day of School!

Tomorrow, Monday the 10th, marks the 100th day of school this year! But that's not all—we're also celebrating a major milestone for our 5th graders, who have now reached 1,000 days of school (including Kindergarten through 5th grade).

Even more special, our current 5th graders were Snowden Farm's very first Kindergarten class, which means tomorrow is also Snowden Farm Elementary's 1,000th day of school!

- To celebrate, we encourage all to wear Snowden Farm spirit wear (if any of our students were planning on dressing for the 100th day theme, that is also fine).
- We can't wait to see all of our Stallions on Monday to celebrate 1000 days of Snowden Farm excellence! :)

Afternoon Car Rider Reminder

Students must wait inside the building until their numbers are called for car riders.

- Please have your number visible in your car to help the caller and speed the process along.
 - If you need an extra number, please let your child's teacher know and we can provide another for you.
- Once you have picked up your child, you must turn right out of the school onto Sweetspire Dr. (towards Grey Squirrel) to exit the campus.

This will help with allowing the waiting cars to pull in easily. Please see the image below to assist.

New: Online Kindergarten Enrollment Now Open!

Do you, a neighbor, or a friend have a child who will be 5 years old by September 1? MCPS kindergarten online enrollment is now open! Early enrollment helps us plan for the upcoming school year, so please register as soon as possible. Click the link below for step-by-step instructions. Simply create a ParentVUE account (or log in if you already have an MCPS student enrolled) and upload the required documents. Thank you for enrolling early. We appreciate your support!

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/enroll/kindergarten/>

Valentine's Day Party on 02/14

If you are planning on participating in Valentine's Day on Friday, please review the check in and check out procedures so we can get families in and out of the building in a timely and safe manner.

- Times for the parties
 - K- 2:30 PM-3:15 PM
 - 1 - 1:15 PM - 2:15 PM
 - 2- 2:20 PM – 3:20 PM
 - 3- 2:15 PM-3:15 PM
 - 4- 12:00 PM-1:00 PM
 - 5- 1:40 PM-2:30 PM
- Our classrooms will be crowded for the parties, we are asking **a maximum of 2 visitors per student** and **visitors must be school age or current students.**
- As always, it is imperative that you bring a valid driver's license to check in to the building.
- Having your ID out and ready is extremely helpful.

Dismissal is at 3:20.

- If you plan on taking your student out early, you must sign them out with the teacher in the classroom.
- If you are taking more than one student home early, you must check each student out with each teacher.
- Each student must have a 'check out' sticker on their person to leave the building.
- Please note that fifth grade classes will be going to their special's class after their party.

New: COSA/Student Transfer Application Season Schedule from the first school day in February through the first day in April 2025

ROCKVILLE, Maryland – Montgomery County parents/guardians who wish to request a Change of School Assignment (COSA) for their children from their home school may begin the process during the upcoming transfer season; from February 3 through April 1, 2025.

Students in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are expected to attend the school within the established attendance area in which they reside (home school) or assigned in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students may apply for Change of School Assignment (COSA) from the home school, or the school of assignment through the IEP process, based on the following criteria:

- When a documented unique hardship is shown: Students may apply for a COSA when extenuating circumstances related to their specific physical, mental or emotional well-being or

their family's individual or personal situation could be mitigated by a change of school assignment.

- When a family moved within Montgomery County who wish to continue attending their former home school may request a COSA without demonstrating a unique hardship. Such requests may be considered for a remainder of the current school year only, with the exception that students in Grade 11 or 12 may be granted a COSA to stay through high school graduation.
- When a student seeks to attend the school where a sibling will be enrolled in the regular/general school program, or a special education program, during the year the students wants to enroll.
 - ▶ When a sibling attends a magnet, language immersion or other application program at elementary level, a COSA may be approved to the regular school program for other sibling on a case-by-case basis. Such approval requires consideration of available classroom space, grade-level enrollment, staffing allocations, or other factors that impact the schools involved.

The criteria above regarding siblings do not apply if a boundary change has occurred or if the sibling is in PreK.

Consideration will be given to school capacity and other issues that impact the ability of the requested school to admit new students.

The transfer process begins in the home school, where parents/guardians may request the Change of School Assignment (COSA) Information Booklet through ParentVue. The booklet describes the process, and provides useful information. Beginning the first week of February 2025, the COSA booklet will be available in both English and Spanish. Exempt countywide programs that do not fall under the transfer guidelines are listed in the booklet.

New for the 2025-2026 school year, parents must submit their request for a change of school assignment (COSA) online through their ParentVue portal. The parent making the request will be copied on an email notification sent to the administrative team of the student's current school shortly after the submission; this will serve as their "receipt" of request and will be sent to the email they entered when completing the online form.

For information about assignments for students residing in the Northeast, Downcounty or Middle School Magnet Consortium areas, please contact the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services
240-740-7800 or visit the website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/schoolchoice.

For more information about the transfer process, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the principal at their home school. Non-english speaking students and parents/guardians who may require assistance may contact ASK MCPS to get the information they need by telephone at 240-740-3000. Telephone operators who speak English and Spanish are available from 7:30am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday. Parents who speak languages other than English or Spanish who call the ASK MCPS telephone line and identify their language will have their questions answered through a telephone interpreter.

New: Questions about Immigration

We have had some families ask for additional Immigration resources, please visit the MCPS website for additional resources, [Immigration Supports | Montgomery County Public Schools | Rockville, MD](#).

MCPS and SFES believe our schools are and will always remain safe places where every child—regardless of immigration status—is welcomed, valued, affirmed, validated, respected, and loved.

Building administrators have a strict protocol to follow if an ICE agent or any other non-local law enforcement agent comes to a school to inquire about a student(s). Families will be contacted in the event of such an inquiry or occurrence. Families with immigration status concerns should have an emergency plan in place and designate a trusted family member who can care for their children in case of an emergency. Please read the **Standby Guardianship** to learn how to create an Emergency plan.

New: Input Needed from the Clarksburg Cluster

We Want to Hear From You!

Families, please take three minutes to fill out this [Clarksburg Cluster Input Form \(English\)](#) to help inform the ongoing collaborative efforts of Clarksburg Cluster Coordinators and our cluster schools. [Clarksburg Cluster Input Form \(Spanish\)](#).

Hearing and Vision Screenings on 02/25, 02/26, and 02/27

In compliance with Maryland state law, Montgomery County Public Schools conduct vision and hearing screenings for students. Trained screeners will assess the following students:

- Those new to MCPS
- Kindergarten and First Grade students
- Students referred by teachers due to possible vision or hearing concerns

Screenings at Snowden Farm Elementary will take place on February 25th, 26th, and 27th.

Clear vision and good hearing are essential for learning. If your child does not pass the screening, you will receive a referral form by mail to take to their doctor for further evaluation.

If your child is already receiving care for a vision or hearing issue, or if you do not wish for them to participate in the screening due to religious beliefs, please notify the school nurse in writing.

If your child wears glasses or contacts, please ensure they wear them daily and bring them to the screening.

School based vision screenings may not detect every vision problem. To learn more about possible vision problems and symptoms or health conditions that may require additional evaluation go to Montgomery County Government's website at this link:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/PHS/SchoolHealth/HearingVision.html>

Contact your school's nurse if you have questions about your child's screening.

Read Aloud Day on March 6th

Hi Snowden Farm Families! Our third annual Read Aloud Day will be held on March 6, 2025. I am going to run it a little differently this year and have our readers come in during a portion of the literacy block in each grade level rather than all at one time. I have invited community members from various roles within MCPS the past two years and would love to have some parent volunteers this year as well! I choose the read aloud books from the Black-Eyed Susan Award nominees each year and plan a short little lesson to go with each book for each reader so all of that work is done (and I promise it will be very simple to follow!) I will need one reader per class in the following time blocks:

- Grade 1: 9:45-10:15 am
- Grade 2: 10:15-10:45 am
- Grade 3: 10:45-11:15 am
- Grade 5: 11:15-11:45 am
- Kindergarten: 11:45 am-12:15 pm
- Grade 4: 12:15-12:45 pm

If you are interested in being a guest reader that day, please complete [THIS GOOGLE FORM](#) and I will contact you in the coming weeks if I am able to use you and provide more details! Thank you for your consideration!

Kids Heart Challenge

This February 2025, all Snowden Farm Elementary School students will participate in our annual Kids Heart Challenge where we help to raise funds to support the American Heart Association's efforts to fight cardiovascular disease. This annual event is sponsored by our Physical Education Department in conjunction with the American Heart Association.

Your child will participate in heart healthy activities during **all** PE classes the week of Feb.10-14th to celebrate our fundraising efforts. This is a free program for **all** students at our school to participate in and all donations to the American Heart Association are voluntary. Please consider helping us as it is a great way to show community service and to help promote an increased level of physical activity.

To sign up, your child can register at heart.org/KHC Once there, they will have the opportunity to choose a daily health challenge and to earn thank-you gifts from the American Heart Association based on the amount of money they collect online.

All thank-you gifts will be given to your child approximately 3-4 weeks after the event is completed.

If you have any preliminary questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Benco at the following email address: thomas_m_benco@mcpsmd.org

Thank you in advance for being a heart hero!

From the Cluster PTA

- Please take three minutes to fill out this [Clarksburg Cluster Input Form](#) to help inform the ongoing collaborative efforts of MCCPTA Clarksburg Cluster Coordinators and our cluster schools.
- Want to learn key strategies to save for college?
 - Join the Clarksburg community and the College Funding Coach for a free online webinar on 2/6 @ 6:30 p.m. about the "Little Known Secrets of Paying for College".
 - See [flyer](#) here to register.

Yearbooks for Sale

Yearbooks are now for sale, \$25 for soft cover and \$30 for hard cover. Please visit shop.yearbookmarket.com/snowdenfarmelementary to purchase one.

Volunteers Needed to Support Our PTA

We need volunteers to chair many of our PTA sponsored events this year. Please visit our [Committee/Volunteers site](#).

Below is a tentative listing of our events for the year, but we need your help! We need chairs and volunteers to organize and execute our events. Without your help, we simply cannot offer the beloved events that our students look forward to.

Please send an email to info@sfspta.org to chair an event or non-event.

You will have the support of the PTA board to assist you every step of the way!

Events: Grandparents Day; Spelling Bee; Heritage Night; Geography Bee; Pastries with Parents; STEM Fair

Volunteer Opportunities to Strengthen Our Community:

- **Communications** - Communications are critical in seeking event volunteers and keeping our Stallion families informed of upcoming events and opportunities. We are specifically looking for someone to manage our membership email listing and monthly newsletter.

- **Yearbook** - The Stallion yearbook is a treasure each year to our students and a hot commodity. The PTA needs a yearbook coordinator starting at the beginning of the year. Much of the yearbook work is done at home at a time that's convenient.
- **Photography** - We need photographers to attend PTA and school events throughout the year to take pictures for our yearbook.
- **Teacher Appreciation**- We need a coordinator for those times where we show our teachers and staff how much they are appreciated. Coordinating breakfast and lunches throughout the year

Other Reminders

- Please remember that classroom instruction begins at 9:00 AM. Our doors open at 8:45 AM and we ask that students enter the building no later than 8:55 AM so they have time to unpack.
- If your student is a walker, we need you to please wait at the bottom of the ramp to allow enough room for students to come down the ramp.
 - In addition, please make sure that you are using the crosswalks to go across the street.
- Please remember to send your child with a winter jacket, hat, and gloves as needed for arrival, recess when the temperature allows, and dismissal.
 - If your child needs a winter coat, please reach out to Ms. Pena or Ms. Lockett.

Key Dates:

- 2/14- Valentine's Day Parties (please see information above)
- 02/17- No School for Students and Staff
- 02/21- 3rd Grade Mad Science Field Trip (in classrooms) and Movie Night
- 02/24- Family Life Meeting via Zoom
- 02/27- Hearing and Vision Testing, Kindergarten Field Trip to Imagination Stage, and Heritage Night 6-8
- 02/28- Early Release

With Gratitude,

Mrs. Fortune