

# CANDLEWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

7210 Osprey Drive Rockville, Maryland 20855-1999

Phone: 301-284-4200 Fax: 301-840-7171

*Office of the Principal*

August 21, 2022

Good evening Candlewood Family-

Tomorrow, August 22, we welcome back our teachers to the school building, and on Wednesday the whole Candlewood staff will be back together! This will be an exciting week at Candlewood Elementary School as the staff prepares for your family's return. On Thursday, August 25 from 2:00-3:00pm, we will be welcoming your child(ren) back to the building for our annual Open House! Feel free to drop by for any amount of time between 2:00 - 3:00pm, but do know we will be ending promptly at 3:00 for a staff meeting. Links will be sent by each teacher if you would like to join virtually. During Open House, students and families will be able to meet their classroom teacher, see the classroom and walk around the building. Just a reminder, that this is not a time to have a meeting with your child's teacher. We do want you to share any information that you feel is important for your child's teacher to know prior to the first day, either via email or phone call.

We will have our **first Safety Patrol Meeting** of the school year for those 5th grade students who were selected to participate, which will be held at **1:30 pm in the media center, prior to the start of Open House**. Patrols, please do your best to attend in order to get important information about the first day of school and to receive your safety patrol belt.

**(New) Back to School Night for Kindergarten and Extensions will also be this Thursday, August 25** at 6:30 pm. Grades first through fifth will have their Back to School Night on August 31 at 6:30pm. **Kids Adventure** will be providing free child care in the APR during both Back to School Night nights. Please note that our Back to School Nights are for parents only.

**(New) Cafeteria News:** MCPS will resume regular meal services during the 2022–2023 school year. Meal prices: Breakfast—\$1.30; Lunch—\$2.55 (Elementary), \$2.80 (Middle and High) Beginning this year, students in Maryland who qualify for reduced-price meals will not be charged for breakfast or lunch meals!

**FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEAL APPLICATIONS:** Apply online NOW so that benefits will be in place when school starts! Families who meet certain federal income standards are eligible for free or reduced price meal benefits. All children use their MCPS ID number at the register so confidentiality is maintained and no child is overtly identified as receiving free or reduced-price meals. Only one application is needed for all students in a household. A new application must be completed for any family requesting assistance this school year. The online application is now open for families to submit applications. [www.MySchoolApps.com](http://www.MySchoolApps.com)

For more information and How-To videos visit the Food Services website:

[www.montgomeryschools.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/meal-payments/#FARMS](http://www.montgomeryschools.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/meal-payments/#FARMS)



APPLY  
HERE!



MORE INFO &  
How-To Videos

[MCPS School Lunch Menu](#)  
[How to Make Meal Payments](#)

**Meal Accounts through SchoolBucks:** To set-up an account or make a payment to purchase breakfast or lunch please use the following link:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/meal-payments/>

**(NEW)** We have finalized our plan for the lunch time schedule that will provide students the opportunity **to eat outside, weather permitting**. It is **optional** for students to bring in a towel, with their name on it for when they are sitting outside for lunch. If your child brings in a towel it will be kept in your child's cubby. The towels will be sent home weekly for cleaning and should be returned on the first day of the week. Please note, that on inclement weather days we will be eating lunch in the cafeteria and students will be seated with their class.

**(NEW) Bus schedule link here:**

[Transportation Letter \(English\)](#); [Transportation Letter \(Spanish\)](#)

[School Bus Arrival Schedule](#)

[School Bus Depart Schedule](#)

We are truly looking forward to seeing you on Thursday, August 25 during our Open House.

Warmest Regards,

Carolynn Walsleben, Principal

[Carolynn\\_Walsleben@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Carolynn_Walsleben@mcpsmd.org)

Jaclynn Fowle, Assistant Principal

[Jaclynn\\_B\\_Fowle@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Jaclynn_B_Fowle@mcpsmd.org)

### PTA NEWS:

**NEW PTA WEBSITE:** The PTA would like to wish all of our Candlewood families a great new school year, and extend a special welcome to our new families! Please check out the [NEWLY REDESIGNED PTA WEBSITE](#) at [candlewoodpta.com](http://candlewoodpta.com) to learn more about us, find volunteer opportunities, enroll in afterschool enrichment programs, and join the PTA. Our volunteer opportunities and events are updated regularly.

**PTA PARENT FEEDBACK FORM:** Please take a quick moment to let the PTA know how we can serve you and our community most effectively this year by [filling out our brief feedback survey](#)

(<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe2EejDkxy08VzzeNegI62HDnNDgObq4aMkEYKuPwPD8dY4RQ/viewform>)

**JOIN THE PTA:** Please consider [joining the PTA](#) this year: [Join the PTA](#)

**PTA GENERAL MEETING:** The first general meeting of the 2022-23 school year will be on Tuesday, September 6 in the Candlewood APR. Mrs. Walsleben will be our guest speaker to discuss Candlewood's security plan. There will be free pizza for those who attend!

**BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC:** We look forward to your family joining us for a Back to School picnic on **Friday, September 9 6:00 - 8:00!** There will be food for sale and games. It will be a great time to meet and socialize with other Candlewood families. [Back to School Picnic](#)

### **AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS**

Enrichment programs will be returning to Candlewood this fall! Details are being finalized now, but programs will include:

- Sports: basketball, soccer
- Language: French, Spanish
- Arts: drawing
- STEM: Panda programming, chess
- Others: Young Chef, drama, Panda karate, hip-hop

Look for flyers and information on our website at the beginning of September! Registration will be open in mid-September and the programs will begin in the last week of September or first week of October.

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### **Previously Shared Information for the Start of the School Year:**

Please check out our [Candlewood Contact sheet](#) as an easy reference when you have questions and concerns! As an administrative team, we are here for all our students and families. For management purposes and your point of contact so that we can support you and your child in a timely manner please note the following:

Mrs. Walsleben, Principal	Mrs. Fowle, Assistant Principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grades 1, 3 and 5</li><li>● Extensions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grades K, 2 and 4</li><li>● Extensions</li></ul>

**School Supplies list:** Here is the [Candlewood 2022-2023 School Supply List](#) ; please contact Mrs. Walsleben, Principal at [Carolynn\\_walsleben@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Carolynn_walsleben@mcpsmd.org) or Mrs. Hetrick at [AnneMarie V Hetrick@mcpsmd.org](mailto:AnneMarie_V_Hetrick@mcpsmd.org), if you financially need support with purchasing school supplies.

**Lunch/Recess Schedule:**

We also would like to provide clarity on why there is a reduction of ten minutes for recess this year. At the end of the school year we received updated staffing allocations, which was directly due to a reduction of 60 students over the past two school years. Please note, while COVID staffing was not being reduced, we were actually considered “overstaffed” with additional classroom monitors and paraeducator hours. Please know that we always have the whole child in mind when making decisions, as a school and we are working as a school to ensure that students have brain breaks, and unstructured time to just be kids.

Grades	Recess	Lunch
Kindergarten/1st	11:00-11:30	11:30-12:00
2nd/3rd	11:40-12:10	12:10-12:40
4th/5th/Extensions	12:20-12:50	12:50-1:20

**Who is My Teacher?** The question on every student’s mind at this time of year. We will be sending out postcards with your child(ren)’s teacher tomorrow, Monday, August 22. Parents/Guardians will also be able to see assigned classroom teachers through **ParentVue**.

**ParentVue:**

- Link to the [Parent Vue Slide Deck](#) provides families with information about activating the Parent Vue Account.
- If you have more than one child in MCPS and would like to link their accounts, please complete this [form](#).
- Here is a website to help you get your Parent VUE Account set up: [bit.ly/synergyparent](http://bit.ly/synergyparent)
- We have also added slides in English and Spanish on our [Candlewood website](#) to walk you through the process of setting up on ParentVue. For additional support, call 240-740-7020.
- [Click here for the Parent VUE Support Guide](#)

**ATTENDANCE:** Daily, consistent attendance at school equates with school success. We urge students and parents to make school a priority and to schedule vacations around the school calendar. A dated note, stating the specific reason for an absence, signed by a parent or guardian, is required no later than one day following an absence. Excused absences from school include: illness, doctor or dentist appointment, death in the immediate family, observance of a religious holiday, or a court order. It is important that students are on time to maximize instructional time.

Students who arrive late to school (after 9:00 AM) are expected to be signed in by a parent using the QR code at the front door of the building. Students are expected to have a written excuse for tardiness from the parent or legal guardian. Students must have a tardy slip from the office. If a student arrives in the classroom without one, teachers are expected to send him/her back to the office to be signed in.

Students who need to leave school during the day must bring a written excuse to the main office in the morning for approval. The parent must sign the student out when they leave school, and sign in when they return to school. If a student needs to be dismissed early, the parent should report to the office to pick up his/her child. We also know that there may be times that you need to pick up your child(ren) without prior

notice, please call the office at 301-284-4200, so we can have your child(ren) ready for you upon your arrival.

**First Day of School Information:** We are asking that students arrive at school the same way they are going home, unless they are going to an afterschool program. We have found that this limits confusion and students receive the proper identification, such as a red tag for riding the red bus when they arrive in the morning. We truly appreciate your support in starting the school year off successfully.

If your family is new to Candlewood Elementary School, please join us at 9am in the APR for a **New Parent Meet and Greet**. This will be an opportunity for you to meet other new parents and the administrative team.

### **School Bell Times:**

- School hours are 9:00 am-3:25 pm-Official School day;
- Car riders and walkers can begin arriving at 8:40am-8:55am.
- Dismissal begins at 3:23 pm for walkers
- Early dismissal at 12:55 pm

For your planning, we have included the **2022--2023 School Calendar** link [here](#).

**Volunteering at Candlewood ES:** MCPS and Candlewood ES value the volunteers who work in our schools to enrich our students' experiences. As a community, we are mindful of our shared responsibility to create safe, nurturing environments for our students. This training provides guidance for volunteers to help keep students safe. Please click [here](#) to complete the Volunteer training. Candlewood is looking forward to welcoming volunteers back to the building, please note that we are awaiting additional guidance from MCPS on when we can have volunteers back in the classrooms.

**Bicycles at School:** We have a bike rack at school that can fit up to 10 bikes. Students may ride a bicycle to school. A lock is needed in order to properly secure the bike to our rack. The school cannot assume responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles. It is important that parents review bicycle safety and etiquette. Bicycles are to be "walked" on school property. Please remember that Montgomery County law requires that all children 18 years of age or younger wear bicycle helmets.

**Birthday Celebrations During the School Day:** Due to a growing variety of food allergies, edible birthday treats are not allowed for distribution at lunch/school. The school/main office will gift the students with a birthday pencil and receive a public "shout out" on or close to their special day. Parents that wish to send in a non-edible treat that the teacher could easily hand out in class, such as pencils or stickers, for the other students to celebrate their child's birthday, it would certainly be welcome. Candlewood Elementary wants to celebrate students' special days while we also ensure the safety and well-being of all students during the school day.

### **Fundraising Opportunities:**

**Clothing to Cash Collection:** Did you know we have a **Clothing to Cash Collection** box right in our Candlewood ES parking lot? In the month of June, this fundraiser earned Candlewood

Elementary School \$54.00 dollars based on the collection of clothing and shoes just in June. As you clean out closets, please drop off your donated items to the collection box and help us fundraise as well as support those in need! I have my donations ready to be dropped off for August. Thank you for your support.

**Posting Your Child's Birthday on Candlewood Sign:** Interested in a special way to celebrate your child's birthday? This year we will have an opportunity to share student birthday wishes on our electronic sign. Each birthday wish will be \$2 and will support Candlewood students. Please complete [this form](#) and payment at least two week prior to your child's birthday. We can't wait to see all the birthday wishes!

**Seasonal Roots:** Candlewood Elementary School is collaborating with Seasonal Roots to bring healthy, delicious food to our community, to support local farmers and artisans, and to raise money to support programs for Candlewood students. **The donations will be designated to having school enrichment opportunities, building our media center collection and well-being support, etc.**

**Seasonal Roots** is an online farmers market that delivers "dirt to doorstep" to families in Maryland and Virginia. Each week the market offers more than 150 items that are all grown and produced locally, sustainably, and ethically. Market items include fruit, vegetables, meat, dairy, baked goods, prepared foods, vegan specialties and more.

To access the Seasonal Roots market, you sign-up as a member and pay an annual membership fee. Through our collaboration, the fee is reduced by 50% - it's just \$25. For each Candlewood family that joins, the school receives \$20!

Once you are a member, what you order and when you order are up to you! There is no obligation. You can select exactly what produce and extras you want, skip or pause weekly deliveries, and cancel anytime.

The market opens Friday at 2:00PM and closes at midnight on Sunday. Orders are delivered on Wednesdays in Montgomery County.

To join Seasonal Roots and save 50% on membership, **use promotional code CANDLEWOOD** at [www.seasonalroots.com](http://www.seasonalroots.com)

Please see flier for details [Seasonal Roots Information and QR code](#)