

DIAMOND MINE

Diamond Elementary School
DECEMBER 2019



Dear Diamond Parents,

The winter and holiday season is upon us! We hope everyone enjoyed a wonderful, relaxing Thanksgiving with family and friends. We had a busy month of November with a variety of school events.

Parents and teachers met to discuss their child's progress during the Parent/Teacher conferences. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you to all of the parent volunteers who helped with a very successful Book Fair!

On behalf of the Diamond Elementary staff, I would like to wish you and your family a happy holiday season and a safe, relaxing winter break. Each year you graciously entrust your most precious gifts with us— your children. Our staff continues to work hard in providing each and every child with rigorous learning experiences. As we all look forward to the holiday season and winter break with family and friends, we have an opportunity to celebrate on all the great things we have accomplished during the past year. We also have an opportunity to reflect and appreciate all that goes into making our school and community a great place for our children.

Highlights for the month of December include STEM Day on December 13th.

Once again, have a happy holiday, and joyous winter break with your family and friends. If you have any questions, please contact the school office at 240-740-2120.

Sincerely,

Daniel Walder
Principal

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Tuesday, December 3

3rd Grade Field Trip to Imagination Stage
Hearing & Vision Screenings

Wednesday, December 4

Pictured Day for Missed and Retakes—
9:30—11:30 a.m.
Hearing & Vision Screenings

Thursday, December 5

Hearing & Vision Screenings

Friday, December 6

1st Grade Field Trip to College Park Aviation Museum
Science Club Fair—6:00 p.m.—Gym

Tuesday, December 10

3rd Grade Mad Science Activities—in classrooms

Wednesday, December 11

3rd Grade Mad Science Activities—in classrooms
Pastries for Parents—Grades 4 & 5—
8:30 a.m.—APR

Friday, December 13

STEM Day!!

Thursday, December 19

Winter Chorus Concert—7:00 p.m.—
Quince Orchard H.S. Auditorium

Saturday, December 21-

Wednesday, January 1

Winter Break- No School

Thursday, January 2

Students return to school

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS:

Appropriate Dress For Winter Weather: As we enter the winter season, it is important that our children come dressed appropriately to school based on the weather. During recess, we plan to get children outside as much as possible, weather permitting, as long as the temperature is 28 degrees or higher, including wind chill, and the ground is not too wet/slippery. With outdoor recess, children should wear winter coats, hats, gloves, etc. Students should dress in layers.

Recognizing Teachers and Other Staff Members: If your student has teachers or other staff members who are especially meaningful to them, this season of the year is a perfect time for you to send an e-mail to the teacher/staff member praising his/her work. In casual conversations, many of you speak to a school administrator about teachers or staff members who you and your student think are outstanding, but staff members do not often hear those words of praise directly. If you choose to do so, you may send a copy to Mr. Walder, and he will print it out for the staff member's file.

MCPS Staff Gift Policy: MCPS Staff Ethics Policy related to accepting gifts: Gifts to staff are not expected nor solicited, however we recognize and appreciate that some parents have inquired about finding ways to celebrate our staff for their dedication and hard work. Occasionally, staff members will receive gifts from parents during the holiday season, at the end of the year, or for special occasions such as a wedding shower, a baby shower, etc. Please be aware of the MCPS ethics policy regarding gifts as you consider your recognition over the holidays and beyond. As a friendly reminder (or possibly new information for those new to the Montgomery County Public School System), the MCPS Ethics Policy states that staff may not accept gifts from parents/families exceeding \$20 in value or a series of gifts exceeding \$100 in value in a calendar year from any person or family. If parents/families decide to contribute to a class gift for the staff member, it must follow the MCPS policy and each parent/family contribution to the gift cannot exceed \$20 in value. For example, if 15 families contribute \$10 each to make the class gift value of \$150 or 10 families contribute \$20 each to make the class gift value \$200, then this will be in accordance with the MCPS gift policy.

Health Office Update: We want to keep the students and the school operating on a normal schedule and minimize any disruption to teaching and learning. You can help us in our efforts to prevent the spread of flu by:

- Knowing the symptoms of the flu. These include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired.
- Keeping children home from school if they are sick. Individuals who have been sick with the flu should stay home until they have been fever-free for 24 hours. Any children or staff who are sick at school will be sent home.
- Reminding your children to wash their hands often with soap and water.
- Encouraging your children not to share personal items like drinks, food, or utensils.
- Telling your children to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. If they don't have a tissue, they should cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve, not their hands.

For more information, visit the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org, the Montgomery County government website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/h1n1flu or call the County flu hotline at 240-777-4200. In addition, you can visit the DES Health page at <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/schools/diamondes/about/DES%20Health%20Room%20Information%202019.pdf> or contact the DES school health technician, Mrs. Sandy Honour, or our school nurse, Mrs. Julie Mowdy at 240-740-2122.

Safety Update and Tips: One of our commitments to the school community is to provide a safe and secure environment for all students, staff members, and families. As we have many students who walk to and from school each day, we encourage students to walk in groups. In addition, our bus drivers want to make sure our kindergarten students have someone who will meet them at the bus stop or that they have an older student to walk them home. In addition, develop and discuss an emergency plan with your children for what they should do on early dismissal days (whether it is scheduled or due to inclement weather, no heat, no power) or if they are dropped off at home and no adult is there.

Sledding Safety: Sledding can be a fun way to spend a snowy day this winter. It can also be dangerous if precaution is not taken. Stay safe sledding this winter with these tips. Please discuss these tips with your children: Don't go sledding alone. Use the buddy system or go with an adult.

- Never sled down a hill headfirst.
- Sit upright and face forward to avoid a head injury.
- Make sure the hill is safe and does not include a street, pond, trees or other dangerous obstacles.

For more information on emergency preparedness visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/oemhs or if you do not have access to a computer, contact 311 or 240-777-0311.

Request for Language Assistance Translation: If parents need oral interpretation services or sign language interpretation for school meetings, parent-teacher conferences, school events, etc., please notify your child's teacher or contact the main office. Oral interpretation requests need to be made at least two weeks in advance of the school meeting or event to ensure interpreter availability.

Visitors: All visitors must enter the building through the main entrance, stop at the main office to sign in, and wear a visitor's badge while in the school. For the safety and security of all individuals, we need to be aware of the presence and location of all visitors in the building. Any individuals without a visitor's badge will be asked to report to the main office. Please help us keep all students in our school safe by following this important procedure! We ask for your support in maximizing the instructional time for students.

MCPS UPDATES:

Know an Outstanding Teacher, Supporting Staff Member, or Principal?

Awards season has arrived! Nominations are open for several competitions to honor exceptional teachers, support staff, and principals. Visit news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/quicknotes/know-an-outstanding-teacher-supporting-staff-member-or-principal/ to see the full list of awards and deadlines.

Staying in Touch with MCPS

Winter weather is coming soon. MCPS offers numerous ways for parents to learn about school closures, delayed openings, and early dismissals due to inclement weather. Sign up for AlertMCPS and receive text messages or e-mails from MCPS during weather-related emergencies and other major events that impact school system operations. Parents can also sign up to receive alerts specific to their child's school by visiting www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/alertmcps.aspx.

You can also follow MCPS on Twitter and on Facebook:

- twitter.com/mcps
- www.facebook.com/mcpsmd/
- www.facebook.com/mcpsespanol/

Winter Coat Drive Under Way

The Prekindergarten/Head Start Programs is seeking donations to provide students with new winter coats. They are collecting coats for boys and girls in sizes 5, 6, and 7, along with other winter wear, such as hats and gloves. Monetary donations are welcome. Donations can be sent to Rocking Horse Road Center, 4910 Macon Road, Room 141, Rockville, Maryland 20852. For more information, please contact [Lisa Conlon](#), social services specialist, at 240-740-4530.

Join the MCPS Family Engagement Advisory Team

Parents, guardians, and members of the community are invited to apply to be a part of the newly formed MCPS Family Engagement Advisory Team. The purpose of the Family Engagement Advisory Team is to provide opportunities for MCPS families to learn about and provide input and feedback on the district's programs and initiatives.

MCPS is committed to improving students' school experience and academic success and ensuring equitable learning opportunities by engaging families in decision-making and program review. The Family Engagement Advisory Team will meet at least seven times during the school year and members will be required to serve a two-year term.

Applications are due by **Friday, December 13**. Applications are available at each school, by calling the Division of Student, Family and School Services at 240-740-4620, or online at news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Family-Engagement-Advisory-Team-Application.pdf.

The cars and computers are refurbished and reconditioned by the students as part of their classroom and lab studies. The sales provide students with the opportunity to practice their sales skills, earn Student Service Learning hours, and develop a deeper appreciation for community involvement. A list of available cars for purchase will be posted online at www.cars2purchase.org/ in mid-November.

Districtwide Boundary Analysis Meetings

The MCPS Districtwide Boundary Analysis is an initiative designed to provide a comprehensive assessment of Montgomery County Public School boundaries by analyzing factors such as:

- School facility utilization and capacity
- Student demographics
- School assignment
- Travel patterns

This initiative will result in an analytical assessment and a summary of the community engagement process. It will not make recommendations on potential boundary revisions.

As part of this assessment, a series of regional public meetings will be held in six locations around the county in December and January. All residents of Montgomery County are invited to attend to learn more about the Boundary Analysis process and give feedback on opportunities and challenges with our public schools. Each meeting will have the same format and content. The dates and locations of the meetings are as follows:

December 4 at Gaithersburg High School
December 11 at Julius West Middle School
December 14 at White Oak Middle Oak
January 7 at Walter Johnson High School
January 11 at Montgomery Blair High School
January 14 at Northwest High School

Each meeting will have the same format and content. Learn more at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boundary-analysis.

MCPS Launches United We Learn Contest

Montgomery County Public Schools is launching the fourth year of its student contest, United We Learn. This year's contest, United We Learn: Innovative Communication Challenge, encourages students to think about how communication affects their daily lives, and how technology can be used to enhance communication.

Middle and high school students are challenged to conceptualize an [Amazon Alexa Skill](#) (or series of skills) that shares information of importance about the school district, addresses communication barriers, strengthens the home-school connection, and positively impacts the MCPS community. Alexa Skills uses voice to access and share information. The contest will take place in two phases and MCPS will publish the winning skill(s) and make it available for use.

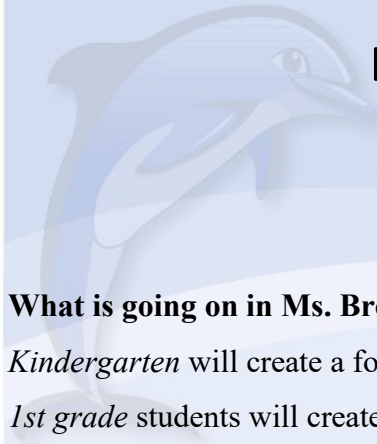
Elementary school students are challenged to design a web page that shares information of importance about their school, addresses communication barriers, strengthens the home-school connections and positively impacts the MCPS community. The contest will take place in two phases and the winning proposals will be developed into web pages by MCPS Web Services on the students' elementary schools' websites. Winners will have the opportunity to participate in the development process.

To learn more about the contest, visit www.mcpsunitedwelearn.org.

Save the Date: Annual Used Car, Computer Sale Coming December 7 (English and Spanish)

Students in the Montgomery County Students Automotive Trades Foundation (ATF) and Information Technology Foundation (ITF) will be selling used cars and computers that they have refurbished on Saturday, December 7 at Gaithersburg High School, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Gaithersburg High School is located at 101 Education Boulevard in Gaithersburg.

The cars and computers are refurbished and reconditioned by the students as part of their classroom and lab studies. The sales provide students with the opportunity to practice their sales skills, earn Student Service Learning hours, and develop a deeper appreciation for community involvement. A list of available cars for purchase will be posted online at www.cars2purchase.org/ in mid-November.



Diamond Elementary Arts Program Grade Level December Newsletter

What is going on in Ms. Brooks' Art class during December?

Kindergarten will create a folk art landscape using multi-media art techniques.

1st grade students will create cityscapes

2nd grade students will practice printmaking and watercolor techniques.

3rd grade students will finish creating cards for their house of cards collaborative project.

4th grade students will finish sewing their sugar skulls using embroidery stitches.

5th grade students will be using clay techniques to create clay tiles for a cultural landmark mural.

What is going on in Ms. Kazemzadeh's Art class during December?

Kindergarten will be expanding their knowledge of line, shape, and color by creating works with different materials such as tempera paint and paper sculptures.

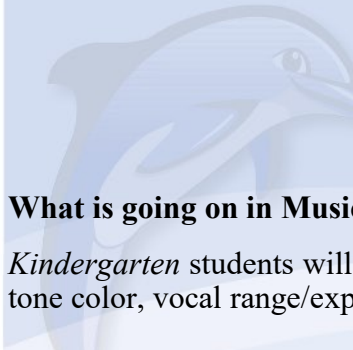
1st Grade will experiment with different painting and printing methods to stamp an architectural form.

2nd Grade will observe and describe radial symmetry. They will demonstrate their knowledge by painting a mandala.

3rd Grade will experiment with creating a winter landscape through paper collage. Students will manipulate paper into various shapes to illustrate different parts of their landscape.

4th Grade will brainstorm and experiment with various stitching techniques to sew together a animal plushie.

5th Grade will begin their collaborate relief tile mural project by working together to brainstorm various landmarks to sculpt out of clay.



Diamond Elementary Arts Program

Grade Level December Newsletter

What is going on in Music class during December?

Kindergarten students will be working on the steady beat, long/short sounds, same/different, vocal and instrumental tone color, vocal range/exploration, and movement to music.

1st grade students will be working on identifying high/low, and long/short sounds in music. Students will imitate rhythmic and tonal patterns, and maintain the steady beat through movement and on instruments. Students will identify classroom instruments and instrument families. Students will also identify the number of sounds on a beat.

2nd grade students will be working on playing a bordun with proper technique on barred instruments, identify strong vs. weak beat and simple vs. compound meter; reading the pentatonic scale, singing with proper posture and breath support; developing criteria for classroom performances and audience behaviors.

3rd grade students will be working on singing within an octave range, in two part rounds and with correct posture and breath support. Students will sing songs of varied repertoire and read music using the pentatonic scale with pitches of low so and low la, while identifying music symbols for pitches G, A and B, the staff, bar lines and the treble clef.

4th grade students will be working on singing with expression, in three and four part rounds. Students will identify repeating and contrasting phrases along with various musical symbols. Students will sight read rhythms and pitches using solfege and given syllables. Students will perform singing games, songs and dances from various cultures.

5th grade students will be working on singing with appropriate technique while identifying various musical symbols. Students will perform music of world cultures, including songs and dances from various periods and cultures. Students will sing partner songs and descants with clear diction and expression.

What is going on in Physical Education class during December?

Kindergarten students will be working on self tossing and catching.

1st grade students will be working on the underhand throw and catching.

2nd grade students will be working on the overhand throw and catching.

3rd grade students will be working on throwing and catching at different levels.

4th grade students will be working on throwing and catching to a partner moving across their face.

5th grade students will be working on throwing and catching to a partner moving away from them.