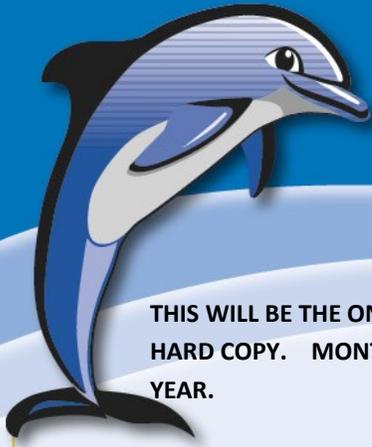


DIAMOND MINE

Diamond Elementary School
September 2019



THIS WILL BE THE ONLY HARD COPY GOING HOME THIS YEAR UNLESS YOU COMPLETE FORM ON P. 9 REQUESTING HARD COPY. MONTHLY DIAMOND MINE NEWSLETTERS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ELECTRONICALLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school for the 2019-2020 school year. September is filled with many new learning opportunities and fun activities for students to get to know their classmates and their teachers. We are excited for our first week of school as we welcome students to a new school year. On September 3rd we welcomed 800 students through the Diamond Elementary doors. During the first week of school, our teachers and students are working on establishing class routines, toured the school building, and established expectations to ensure academic success for all students. In addition, your children have been participating in a variety of team building activities in their classrooms to help build a sense of classroom community and getting to know more about their classmates and teachers. Furthermore, last Friday, we had a school-wide Welcome Back Expectations Assembly. During the assembly, we reviewed our school-wide expectations which consists of *Respect, Responsibility, and Safety*.

Back to School Night will be held on **Wednesday, September 18 at 6:30 p.m. for grades 3-5 and on Thursday, September 26th at 6:30 p.m. for grades 1-2.** Our goal for this event is to provide parents with specific information about the instructional program your child will receive this year. Information will include grade-level instructional topics, classroom routines, and you will have an opportunity to sign up for Parent-Teacher Conferences (scheduled for November). BAR-T will be providing child care on both evenings for students ages 5 and older for a cost of \$5 per child. You can RSVP for your child by sending BAR-T an email at diamond@bar-t.com or you can call Mrs. Rollins, BAR-T Director at 240-388-6151.

The Diamond Mine newsletter will be sent out at the beginning of each month electronically throughout the school year. The September newsletter will be the only hard copy being sent home to all families unless you complete the form on page 9 requesting a hard copy each month.

Thank you for all your support in helping to make our first week of school a great success!

Sincerely,

Daniel Walder
Principal

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Monday, September 2

No School- Holiday
Schools and Offices are Closed

Tuesday, September 3

First Day of School for Students

Friday, September 6

PTA Back to School Social
5:00-7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 18

Back-To-School Night for grades 3-5 (Parent only meeting) @ 6:30 p.m.
Instrumental Music Parent Meeting @ 5:45p.m. (4th & 5th Grade Parents Only) - in the All Purpose Room

Thursday, September 26

Back-To-School Night for grades 1-2 (Parent only meeting) @ 6:30 p.m.

Monday, September 30

Holiday—No school for students

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Morning Line-Up Procedures: Morning line-up for students in grades 1-5 beginning at 9:05 am will be lining up outside of their classrooms waiting for the 9:10 a.m. bell. Kindergarten students who are walkers and car-riders should be dropped off between 9:05-9:25 a.m. at the playground area in the rear of the building near the kindergarten doors. Students proceed to line-up by walking along the school sidewalk to the temporary main entrance area and then proceed to their classrooms. On inclement weather days, morning line-up will occur in the gym. Students can begin arriving to school no earlier than 9:05 a.m. The late bell rings at 9:25 a.m., and students are expected to be in their classrooms at that time. If your child is a car-rider in grades 1-5, you may drop your child off in the parking lot at the designated student drop off area for car-riders and school staff will direct your child to proceed to morning lineup. Cars are not permitted in the bus circle during arrival as this driveway is for Diamond staff members and MCPS buses only. Marquis Drive becomes very congested during arrival. Consider using the designated car drop off location instead of parking along Marquis Drive. No parking is permitted during school hours along the bus lane or car drop off lanes in front of the school. Signs are posted from Montgomery County with a \$250 fine if parked in this area). For your child's safety, please do not leave your child unattended in front of the school building prior to 9:10 a.m., when Diamond staff coverage is not available. When children are lining up for arrival, children are not permitted to play in the playground area or walk around. They must stay in their assigned grade level lines. Students who arrive to school at 9:25 a.m. or later, are considered tardy, and their parent must sign them in the main office and students must get a late pass.

Dismissal Procedures: Students are dismissed at 3:50 p.m. each day. Kindergarten parents with students who are walkers/car-riders must meet their students on the Kindergarten recess playground blacktop area at 3:50 p.m. in the back of the building. Use the outside stairs to the left of the school building. If you are carpooling, please park your car and walk up to the recess playground blacktop area, which is located in the back of the school building at the kindergarten doors by the recess playground area in back of the school, and go to the kindergarten suite doors to meet your child. Children riding buses will be dismissed once their bus arrives. For Students In Grades 1-5: If you are carpooling, please meet your child at the designated car-rider pick-up location. Cars are not permitted in the bus circle during dismissal as this driveway is for MCPS buses only and Diamond staff. Marquis Drive becomes very congested during dismissal. Consider using the designated car drop off location, rather than parking on Marquis Drive. For student walkers in grades 1-5 we request that the parents wait for their child(ren) outside in front of the main entrance. Please do not use the main foyer as a meeting place due to the small space and busy traffic of dismissal. We request that once you reunite with your child, please leave the outside main entrance area so that the bus-riders can proceed to their buses in a timely fashion. If you forgot to send a note in the morning to change dismissal procedure, or in the event of last minute changes to a student's dismissal plans, please call the main office prior to 3:15 p.m. Any adults who come to pick up a child will be asked to show documentation to verify identification and ensure student safety.

End of Day Plan Policy- Changes to Normal Dismissal Plans: Students will be sent home using the daily routine communicated by the parent with the school at the beginning of the school year. If a student's plans require a change from their normal dismissal (play date, child care changes, after school club, etc), all changes must be made in writing to the school. Play dates should be prearranged in advance of the school day. If there will be a variation/change in your child's dismissal routine (e.g. change in after-school care/activity or play-date with another child), your child must have a signed note addressed to the teacher explaining this particular change. A student who is going with another student on a different bus, cannot ride the bus unless he/she has a written note from his/her parent. If you forgot to send a note in the morning, or in the event of last minute changes to a student's dismissal plans, please call the main office prior to 3:15 p.m. Any adults who come to pick up a child will be asked to show documentation to verify identification and ensure student safety.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Meet Our Health Room Team:

Mrs. Julie Mowdy, School Community Health Nurse (SCHN)

Ms. Sandra Honour, School Health Room Technician (SHRT)

The health room direct phone line is 240-740-2122. Any health questions, please contact the health room staff or visit the link for more information: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/diamondes/about/healthroom.aspx>

Lunch Account: The Board of Education set meal prices for the 2019-2020 school year. School lunch prices for the paying student remain the same at \$2.55. Eligible low-income students will continue to receive meals that are either free or reduced price. Applications for free and reduced priced lunches were sent home to all students the first week of school. YOU MUST REAPPLY EVERY YEAR. Applications can be done online. It is not necessary to return a paper copy of your application to the office, if you have applied online. If you do not receive an application, please call the main office by September 15th to let us know. Menus for the upcoming month will also be sent home with students. You will receive a Cafeteria Lunch Account Statement when your child's lunch account is \$20.00 or lower, to ensure parents have time to make an additional payment. When payments are made to your child's account, the money will be first applied to the negative account. MCPS is providing a service, mySchoolBucks.com, which allows parents to make prepayments to their child's cafeteria account with a credit/debit card using the internet. Once the account is established, you can check balances, view student purchases, set up recurring payments, and receive low balance e-mail notification. Prepayments will generally be available at the school the next day. Go to www.myschoolbucks.com and click on "enroll now." If you choose not to use mySchoolBucks services, you can still send checks into school for any particular amount. Please make sure to put your child's name and student id on the check. Returned checks are subject to recovery for the face value and Maryland State allowed fee of \$25 through an electronic debit or paper draft to the same account. Any questions concerning the MCPS check acceptance policy, please call CHECKredi at 1-800-1222.

If you have any questions about your child's lunch account, please contact Mrs. Sonia Umanzor, Diamond ES Cafeteria Manager at (240) 740-2124.

Forgotten Homework/Lunch/Instrument Policy: When parents/guardians bring in a forgotten item (instrument, lunch, homework), please bring it to the main office. There is a table the main office to place forgotten lunch items, instruments, homework. We prefer not to interrupt the instructional periods, so we will have your child pick up the forgotten item at the earliest transitional time during the day.

Contacting Teachers: In order to maximize instructional time, teachers will only be available to speak by telephone before or after the student day. Calls for teachers should be made between 8:45 a.m.- 9:00 a.m. and 3:50 p.m.- 4:15 p.m. In addition, teacher email addresses may be found on the Diamond ES website. We will do our best to return all phone or email messages within 24 hours. All requested meetings with your child's teachers should be scheduled in advance. Just a reminder, teachers have limited access to their emails and phone calls since they are in the classroom working with students.

Early Dismissal/Late Arrival Policy: If you plan to sign your child out of school early or arrive late, (especially during long-weekends, holiday breaks, doctor appointments), please send a note to your child's teacher and to the main office in advance.

Pet/Dog Policy: Should you choose to walk your dog/pet to school when walking or picking up your child, the dog/pet must be on a leash, under close control as per Montgomery County Policy. For the safety of all people, especially the students and your dog/pet, you may not walk/carry the dog/pet in major traffic areas including the front main entrance of the school building during arrival. To accommodate our friendly companions, you may wait with your dog on the sidewalk area of Diamond Elementary School and Marquis Drive or by the bike rack located on the right side of the front of the school building. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Visitors: Starting at 9:00 a.m. each day 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.

Student Absences: Parents have a number of options available to report a student's absence, travel plans, tardiness, appointment, or early/change in dismissal plans:

- go to the Diamond Elementary website, click on "**Report a Student Absence,**" and fill out the form with the specific details, including the reason for the absence (We'll forward a copy to his/her teacher.);**
- send an email to the teacher (please copy Mrs. Lentz and Ms. McCaffrey);
- call the Attendance Secretary, at 240-740-2121, on the day of the absence/appointment;
- write a note and put it in your student's backpack to take to his/her teacher.

**This is a convenient, quick way to notify the school. You don't need to take the time to call, write a note, or send an e-mail. You can fill in all the details under "Anything else?" Here is the link:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/diamondes/about/absenceform.aspx>

If we do not hear from you, you will get an automated message reporting your child's absence. Parents should keep children at home when illness is suspected, a communicable disease has been diagnosed or lice nits have been found. After five consecutive days of absence, or chronic absences during the school year a physician's note will be required.

Absence Policy

AM absent, if a student arrives more than 2 hours late

PM absent, if a student leaves more than 2 hours early

If a student is absent for more than any 2 hours during the school day, it is considered a half day absence.

If a student is present for less than 2 hours of the entire school day, it is considered a full day absence.

Access Control Security System: The access control system (ACS) consists of a surveillance camera installed at the school's main entrance. Signs will direct a visitor to push a button to communicate with main office staff. A remote locking system, controlled by the main office staff, will allow entry into the building during the period between students' arrival and dismissal. When a visitor arrives to the school, they will be prompted to press an alert button at the main entrance. All visitors will be instructed to report to the main office to sign in. Thank you for your understanding with this important safety measure.

Student Birthday Celebrations: Birthday treats are not permitted at school for students in grades K-5. Birthdays in grades K-5 are recognized on the morning announcements on the day of the child's birthday, and they receive a birthday pencil. An alternative arrangement is made for students whose birthdays fall on weekends, holidays, and during the summer so they can be recognized during the school year.

*The following items are due from every student on **September 27, 2019**:*

Parent/Child Emergency Information and Reunification Authorization Form: (Release of a student to an adult other than the parent/guardian) Your children will only be released to the names listed on this form. The information included on this form is required as part of our School Emergency/Crisis Plan. Please be sure to include as many contact names/numbers as possible, and indicate who is authorized to pick up your child in the event of an emergency. This form will be sent home during the first week of school.

Diamond Behavior Discipline Policy: The 2019-2020 Diamond Elementary Behavior Discipline Policy will be sent home to every student during the first week of school. Please review this policy with your child, sign and return the form on the bottom portion of the cover letter to your child's teacher by **September 27th**.

*(Optional) If you choose to complete the following items, please return them no later than **September 27, 2019**:*

Applications for Free/Reduced Lunch: Complete online or return paper application immediately. See the eligibility chart on the back page of the form and if your family does not qualify, discard the information. New applications must be completed every year. Please review the form to see if your child is eligible for free and/or reduced meals. If your child was eligible last year, you must still complete the form for the 2019-2020 school year. Only one form per family is needed.

Consent and Release Form: Only complete this form if you DO NOT give permission for the use of your child's likeness and/or voice to be used by Diamond ES or MCPS beyond the school setting. Examples may include student pictures on the Diamond web page, the MCPS Film or Art Festivals and the MCPS Bulletin.

Request for Withholding Directory Information: This form was distributed with the summer information. Return this form only if you do not want directory information released through the county and the PTA. If you want your information included in the PTA directory but choose to withhold information from the county you must check the box "Release for PTA Directory" in order for the PTA to include your information in the PTA Directory.

Student Accident Insurance: Information regarding online applications was sent home on the first day of school. This is to be completed online as indicated on the flyer.

Monthly School Newsletter Preference: Monthly School Newsletters will be sent electronically via email each month based on the email addresses you provided on your student's yellow emergency card. September is the only month we send home a hard-copy of the newsletter to all Diamond families. Please complete the attached form on page 9 and return to school by September 25th if you prefer to receive a paper copy of the monthly school newsletter starting in October.

The following items were sent home for information purposes only:

- Pest Management Notice
- Annual Notification of Asbestos Management Plan Availability

2019-2020 A Student's Guide to Rights and Responsibilities: The 2019-2020 Students Guide to Rights and Responsibilities is available electronically. This guide is an overview of the rights and responsibilities students enjoy in MCPS and a summary of the laws and regulations that affect students. www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/rights/index.aspx

School Counselor Corner September 2019

Hello! I'm Christie Meuer, the full time counselor at Diamond Elementary School. This will be my 16th year as a school counselor in MCPS. Outside of school I enjoy hiking with my 2 daughters, ages 9 and 13, and our dog. I also enjoy reading and Sudoku puzzles.

Hello! I'm Kate Musser, the part time counselor. This is my 18th year in the county 4th as a school counselor). Outside of school, I enjoy attempting to keep up with my 3 young sons, running, and reading. Together we will work to implement a Comprehensive School Counseling Program. Through our program we provide services for all students (individually, in groups, or in class). We collaborate with teachers and administrators and meet with parents and families.

Our program includes the following prevention and intervention services: guidance curriculum, support services, responsive counseling, and individual planning. As school counselors, we address how student concerns and needs impact the ability to access education and to succeed in the learning environment. We focus on the 5 key developmental areas: academic, personal, interpersonal, career, and health.

At the elementary school level, we meet regularly with students through school wide programs and classroom guidance lessons to help students develop knowledge and skills to achieve academic success, college and career readiness and social/emotional development appropriate to their age and grade level. In addition, all elementary school counselors in MCPS are mandated to teach Personal Body Safety Lessons.

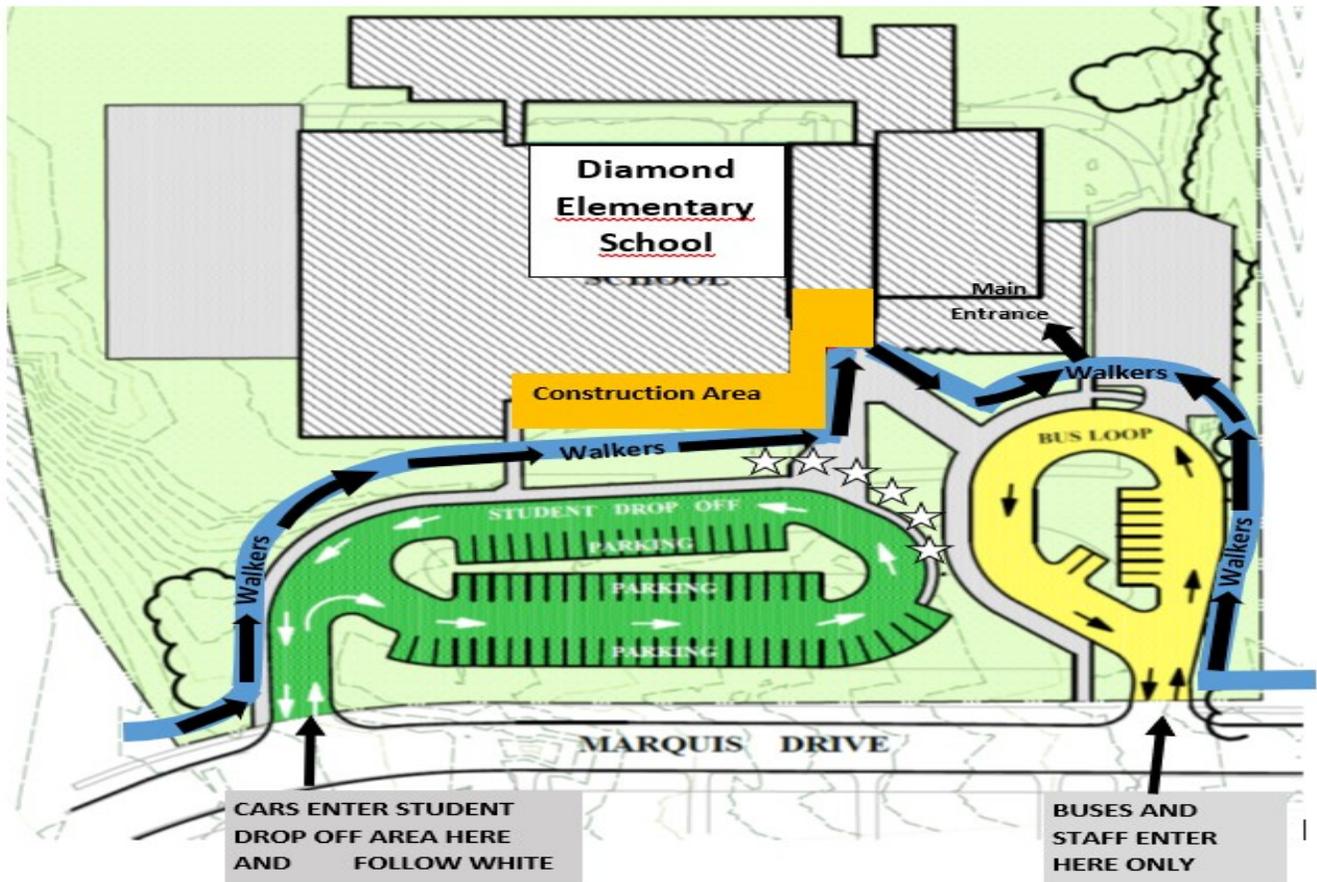
If you have any questions about our program or your child, please contact us. We look forward to meeting you during the upcoming school year

What You Should Know About Riding An MCPS Bus: Please review the information on the link below and discuss with your child about riding the MCPS school bus.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/schools/diamondes/news/What%20you%20should%20know%20about%20riding%20the%20bus.pdf>

Diamond Elementary School Drop-Off/Pick-up Procedures August 2019: Diamond Elementary School Drop-Off/Pick-up Procedures August 2019 For Bus-riders, Walkers, Bicyclists and Carpoolers <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/schools/diamondes/news/2019-2020%20DES%20Drop%20Off%20and%20Pick%20Up%20Procedures.pdf>

Diamond Elementary School Traffic Flow for Arrival and Dismissal



The student drop-off and pick-up area is designated in green. The flow of traffic is one-way and is indicated by the white arrows. The white stars indicate the location where students should be let out of the car (using the back passenger side to enter/exit cars via the sidewalk). Cars should pull all the way up to the student drop-off sign in front of the school building.

- The bus loop is designated in yellow. Cars should NOT enter the bus loop during arrival or dismissal.
- Walkers should follow the sidewalks and use the route indicated in blue, following the direction of the black arrows. Students should never walk through the parking lot or bus loop.
- The orange shaded area is the construction area for the construction of the new main entrance and main office area. This area is fenced off to staff, students, and parents.

Student School Supplies: Students will not be asked to pay for or provide textbooks, supplementary readers (such as anthologies, atlases, or workbooks), most materials of instruction, audiovisual aids, stationary items not commonly found in the home and required for the student to demonstrate mastery of course objectives, or building or office materials needed to operate schools.

Students may be asked to pay for materials of instruction that primarily fit into three categories as follows:

- Items eaten by the student as part of the course (example: bread baking ingredients).
- Component parts of a product that will become student property (example: sculpting clay).
- Materials of instruction or items of personal use that become the school property of the student (example: recorder)

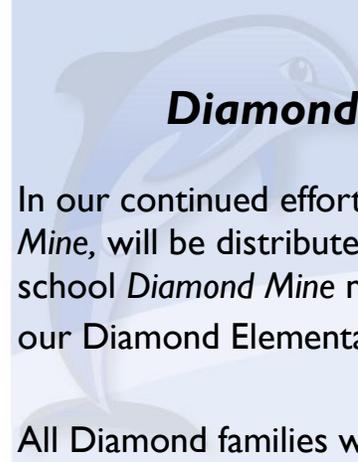
Students are still expected to bring individual organizational tools and personal supplies from home. In addition, there are student fees which are not course-related but local school decisions made by the principal in collaboration with the school and parent leadership. These may include fees for special grade-level assemblies, etc. There also may be fees related to field trips, but these will be shared each time there is a field trip and not in advance as a school fee.

We are committed to providing all students, regardless of their economic circumstances, with full access to the instructional program. If you need assistance for any requested expense, or with providing the organizational tools and personal supplies, please contact your child's teacher, or our counselor.

Parent donations of items that enhance the classroom experience are still welcomed, either as donations from individual parents or organized by class parents or the PTA. They are not required donations and no student will be expected to provide these items, but if you care to contribute, it will be appreciated.

MCPS UPDATES:

How to Receive Emergency Information from MCPS: MCPS parents can receive emergency information from the school system in a variety of ways including *MCPS QuickNotes*, Alert MCPS, Twitter, the MCPS website, MCPS TV, and a recorded telephone information line. Please visit www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency for more information on how to keep in touch with Montgomery County Public Schools and stay informed in times of emergencies.



DIAMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Diamond Mine Monthly School Newsletter Preference

In our continued efforts to support a “green environment”, our school newsletter, *The Diamond Mine*, will be distributed electronically to each family at the beginning of each month. All monthly school *Diamond Mine* newsletters for the 2019-2020 school year will be posted electronically on our Diamond Elementary School website as well for parents to access.

All Diamond families will receive a connect-ed email at the beginning of each month with a link to the newsletter. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the school newsletter each month, please fill out the form below and have your child return it to the main office, or send an email to Mrs. Donna Lentz, attendance secretary, at Donna_J_Lentz@mcpsmd.org.

Diamond Elementary School Diamond Mine Monthly School Newsletter Preference Form

If you would like a paper copy of the monthly school newsletter sent home to you each month, please complete this form and return it to the main office by September 27th. Please print legibly.

Please send me a paper copy of the school *Diamond Mine* newsletter each month.

Student's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____