

240-740-1420

January, 2019

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## Greencastle Gazette

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Happy New Year! We hope everyone enjoyed their Winter Break and got to spend some great time with friends and family. A new year is an exciting time to reflect on where we have been and think about where we are headed. I am hopeful that 2019 will be a year of growth, learning, and enjoyment for all of our Noble Knights.

During the break, our building services team was hard at work making the school look even better than usual. The team has scrubbed and buffed floors, dusted nooks and crannies, and detailed classrooms. When you're in the building, if you see members of our building services staff, please be sure to thank them. They work incredibly hard to make Greencastle a clean and welcoming learning environment that we can all take pride in.

As we have shared in our ConnectEd messages, we would love to increase the number of attendees at parent education opportunities and school events. Please take a few minutes to respond to this brief survey as we gather information about what days and times would be optimal to consider when scheduling events: [Parent Meeting Survey](#).

### STAFFING UPDATES

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We are excited to welcome a number of new Knights to the community!

Please join me in welcoming **Ms. Soshana Pierre-Louis** to our second grade team! Ms. Pierre-Louis comes to us from New York, and is excited to begin her teaching career. Ms. Pierre-Louis began at Greencastle on January 3<sup>rd</sup>. We plan to hold meet-and-greet opportunities for the parents in her second grade class soon. Please also join me in thanking **Ms. Isama** for her continued dedication to the students in that class while she was there as a long-term substitute.

We are also pleased to welcome **Ms. Mariajosep Hickerson** to our paraeducator team. Ms. Hickerson will be supporting kindergarten in the classroom, as well as supporting various grades during recess and lunch. Ms. Hickerson is expected to begin on Tuesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### FOND FAREWELL

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We want to wish a fond farewell to **Ms. Marchelle LeBlanc**. Ms. LeBlanc will be leaving Greencastle to explore other opportunities. We truly appreciate all the support she has provided our students and their families over the years, and she will be greatly missed. Please join us in wishing Marchelle the best. She has meant a lot to this community.



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## **WINTER WEATHER**

As we move into winter, please ensure your student(s) come to school with warm clothes. Our goal is to have the students outside for recess as often as possible to allow them time to run and play with their friends. Bringing warm coats, gloves, hats, etc. is strongly encouraged so our students can stay warm during recess.

November's unexpected weather is a good reminder for all community members to check local media for school delays and closures. All updates can always be found directly on the MCPS website. Families are encouraged to sign up for MCPS alerts through [Alert Montgomery](#). The Alert Montgomery System provides accurate and immediate emergency notifications from Montgomery County to your cell, work, or home phones via text, email, or voice message.

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## **WINTER TESTING**

Winter assessments begin this month. Students will have their mathematics and reading assessed using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments. Students in kindergarten through second grade will take the MAP for mathematics, primary, as well as the new MAP-RF (Reading Fluency). Students in grades three through five will take the MAP for mathematics and reading as usual.

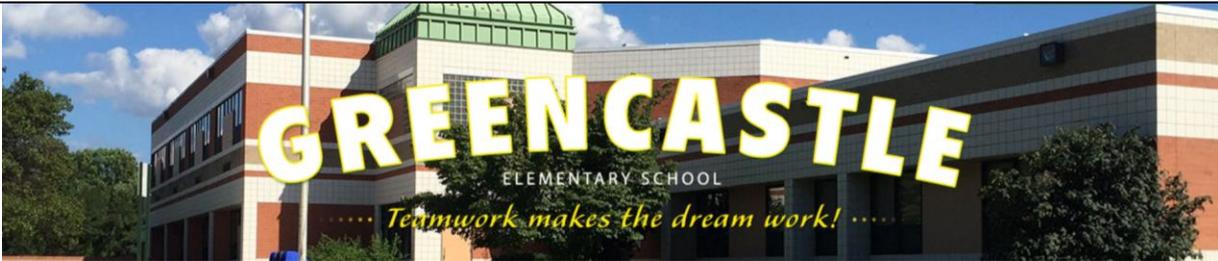
Students in kindergarten through second grade will have their reading assessed using the Montgomery County Public Schools Assessment Program – Primary Reading (MCPSAP-PR). These assessments will help teachers assess student growth and analyze what additional instruction students may need to be successful with grade level indicators. This will also help teachers ensure they are meeting students' instructional needs at their grade level while also knowing how to support them to access challenging grade-level texts.

Students receiving ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) services will also soon take the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners). This assesses students' progress in listening, reading, writing, and speaking English. Its purpose is to measure student growth while also helping our staff determine students' current instructional needs.

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## **CURRICULUM UPDATE**

As you know, Greencastle will begin to use a new curriculum for English/Language Arts next year. It is anticipated that the elementary ELA product will be recommended by MCPS to the Board of Education on February 12, 2019.



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## **PARENT ARTICULATION NIGHT AT BANNEKER MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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Save the date for Thursday, January 24<sup>th</sup> when Benjamin Banneker Middle School (BBMS) will hold their rising 6<sup>th</sup> grade parent articulation night from 6:00-8:00 p.m. The snow date in case of inclement weather is the following Wednesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>. Further information will be forthcoming from BBMS.

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## **GENERAL MUSIC CURRICULUM AND GRADING UPDATE**

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Montgomery County Public Schools is in the process of shifting to a new curriculum for all general music students. While the content presented in each grade level has not changed dramatically, it has been reorganized into Performing, Responding, and Creating processes, with Reading and Notating Music learned through Performing and Creating. The curriculum is being implemented county-wide for students in grades K-2 this school year. The report card for students in grades K-2 has been changed so that the measurement topics in each marking period align directly to the processes noted above.

For students in grades 3-5, Greencastle is part of a cohort of schools starting the new curriculum this year. However, since the curriculum for these grades is not being used county-wide until next year, the report card for those students still reflects the old curriculum. As such, there are some differences between the measurement topics assessed and the measurement topics listed on the report card:

- **Marking Period 2:** Students are being assessed on Creating Music, which will be reported under Responding to Music, and on Reading Music, which will be reported under Performing Music.
- **Marking Period 3:** Performing Music will be reported as Reading and Notating Music
- **Marking Period 4:** Performing Music will be reported as Reading and Notating Music, although some grades under this measurement topic will reflect notation through the Creating process.

If you have any questions about the new curriculum or grading process in general music, please contact Ms. Claire Dubas at [Claire\\_M\\_Dubas@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Claire_M_Dubas@mcpsmd.org), or Mr. Dakota Slay-Vincent at [Dakota\\_C\\_Slay-vincent@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Dakota_C_Slay-vincent@mcpsmd.org).

If your fourth or fifth grade student is enrolled in instrumental music, those grades are reported separately on the report card. Any questions about instrumental music should be directed to Mr. Phil Collins at [Philip\\_C\\_Collins@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Philip_C_Collins@mcpsmd.org).



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## **COUNSELORS' CORNER**

Happy New Year Greencastle Parents and Guardians! This month, the Greencastle School Counselors are focusing our guidance lessons on the prevention of bullying. According to [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov), “Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.” Students are being taught to stand up to school bullying by inviting a victim of bullying to play, speaking up for the victim, and reporting bullying behavior to an adult. If you are concerned that your child is being bullied, please contact one of the Greencastle School Counselors at [Sarah B Dommu@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Sarah_B_Dommu@mcpsmd.org) or [Claris A brock@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Claris_A_brock@mcpsmd.org).

Students are also being taught the “DEBUG” strategy that they can use anytime they are being bothered by another student. DEBUG stands for **D**ecide to ignore, **E**xit or walk away, **B**e Kind, **U**se firm Language, **G**et adult help. As always please contact one of the school counselors with questions.

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## **CLUB ADVENTURE**

The East County Community Recreation Center offers after school activities until 6:00 p.m. Monday-Friday for students in grades K-5. This includes sports and games, arts and crafts, as well as special events. The cost is \$75/month. For more information, please call the center at 240-777-8090 or visit [www.activemontgomery.org](http://www.activemontgomery.org).

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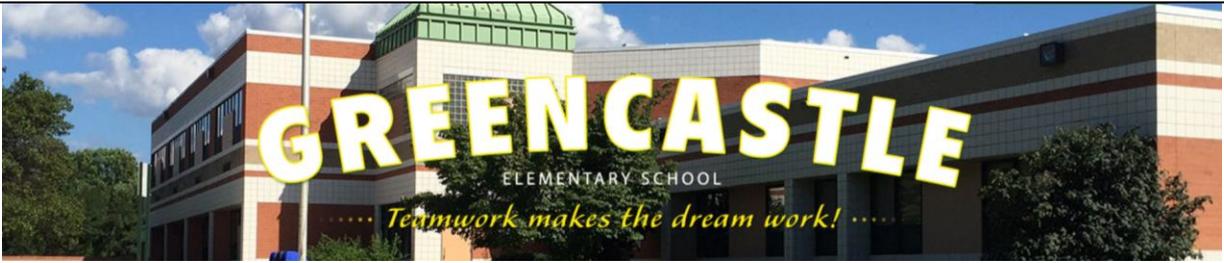
## **BUNDLES OF LOVE**

The East County and Gwendolyn E. Coffield Community Recreation Centers are collecting charitable items to be donated to the Interfaith Works organization. They are collecting clean and gently used coats, gloves, scarves, hats, and blankets. They are also collecting new socks, travel size toiletries, and feminine products in new and/or original packaging. The collection runs until February 2, 2019. For additional information, please call the East County Community Recreation center at 240-777-8090 or visit them at 3310 Gateshead Manor Way in Silver Spring.

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## **BOARD OF EDUCATION ELECTS NEW OFFICERS**

Shebra Evans was selected by her colleagues on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 to serve as president of the Montgomery County Board of Education. Patricia O’Neill was elected as vice president. Both officers will serve a one-year term. Ms. Evans was elected to her first four-year term in 2016. For the past year, she has served as the vice president of the Board and a member of the Board’s Fiscal Management Committee. Mrs. Evans serves on the Maryland Association of Boards of Education’s Resolution Committee, as well as the Policies and Procedures Committee.



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Ms. O’Neill, a resident of Bethesda, is serving her sixth term on the Board of Education and is currently the longest serving member of the Board. She has served as vice president and president of the Board several times, each. For the past year, Ms. O’Neill has served as the chair of the Policy Management Committee.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date	School Events
January 3, 2019	Hearing & Vision Rescreening
January 3, 2019	Town Hall Meetings - MPR Grades 3-5 – 9:15-9:40 K, Grade 1, Grade 2 – 9:50-10:15
January 15, 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Budburst Scientist Visit (2 classes)
January 16, 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Budburst Scientist Visit (2 classes)
January 17, 2019	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Budburst Scientist Visit (2 classes)
January 21, 2019	No School – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
January 22, 2019	Banneker Articulation Concert – 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> Grades – 10:10-11:50 - Gym
January 23, 2019	Center for Enriched Studies Informational Meeting – Richard Montgomery High School – 6:30-7:30 p.m.
January 24, 2019	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Articulation Night – Benjamin Banneker Middle School – 6:00-8:00 p.m.
January 25, 2019	Early Release – Dismissal at 12:55 p.m. No PEP Classes AM Pre-K dismissal at 10:50 a.m. End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period
January 28, 2019	No School for Students – Professional Day
January 30, 2019 – February 1, 2019	Class Portraits (Ask your child about when their class is scheduled!)
January 30, 2019	Snow date for Banneker Middle School articulation night
January 31, 2019	Family Math Night – 6:30 p.m.
February 6, 2019	Report Card Distribution
February 7, 2019	Green & Gold Assemblies Grades 3-5 – 9:15-10:15 a.m. – Gym Grades 1-2 – 2:05-3:05 p.m. - Gym
February 12, 2019	PTA Meeting – 7:00-8:30 p.m. – Media Center
February 18, 2019	No School – Presidents’ Day