Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday
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This week | 10/10 Open House | 10/11 | 10/12 1st Grade Field Trip | 10/13 | 10/14 International Parent Coffee—9:45 a.m. in the Staff Lounge
Next Week | 10/17 Kids Helping Kids Food Drive Opens | 10/18 4th Grade Field Trip | 10/19 | 10/20 NaNoWriMo Club begins, 8:15 in the media center | 10/21 Book Fair Opens International Parent Coffee—9:45 a.m. in the Staff Lounge

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Open House

Monday, October 10 is a federal holiday, but MCPS schools will be open. This allows us to host Open House. Parents are welcome to come to school and observe in their children’s classrooms. We are excited for the opportunity for parents to see the outstanding instruction that takes place every day here at Singer.

We ask parents to plan to visit between 9:30 am and 11:30 am. That way, we will be able to complete the arrival process before your visit. 11:30 is when we start getting busy with lunch and recess. If there is a subject that you wish to observe that takes place in the afternoon, please contact your child’s teacher so that we can accommodate you.

Mental Health Awareness Week

MCPS and the Montgomery County School Psychologists’ Association (MCSPA) will host a free virtual event October 10–15 to give youth and families the opportunity to hear from mental health experts on issues that are important to them. The weeklong expo will feature daily themes, dynamic speakers and informational videos, as well as two live events: a Waymaking Special on Student Mental Health, and a Resource Fair and Q&A session on Saturday, October 15, 2022. Sessions will be available in multiple languages.

Mental Health Awareness Week is open to students, parents/guardians, and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff members, to learn about resources that schools and families may access or to which referrals may be made to support students’ physical, social, and psychological well-being. For details and announcements about daily topics, speakers, resources and how to join us, please visit www.MCPSmentalhealth.org.

Mental Health Awareness Spirit Week
Semana del Espíritu de Conciencia de Salud Mental
Each day this week, we will talk about a different strategy to promote mental health. Consider participating in the county wide events and activities outside of school as well. For more information about these events, visit www.MCPSmentalhealth.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday, October 10</th>
<th>Tuesday, October 11</th>
<th>Wednesday, October 12</th>
<th>Thursday, October 13</th>
<th>Friday, October 14</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lunes, el 10 de octubre</td>
<td>Martes, el 11 de octubre</td>
<td>Miércoles, el 12 de octubre</td>
<td>Jueves, el 13 de octubre</td>
<td>Viernes, el 14 de octubre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of Belonging</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td>Gratitude</td>
<td>Rest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sentido de Pertenencia</td>
<td>Nutrición</td>
<td>Ejercicio</td>
<td>Gratitud</td>
<td>Descansar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luce tu púrpura y blanco y muestra tu espiritu Singer. Pertenecer a una comunidad te ayuda a sobrellevar los momentos de estrés.</td>
<td>Usa el color de tu fruta o verdura favorita. Si te gustan muchos, pone el arcoíris! Comer alimentos nutritivos ayuda a su salud física y mental.</td>
<td>Es el Día Nacional de ir en Bicicleta o Caminar a la Escuela! Incluso si necesita viajar en autobús, puede usar ropa deportiva o ropa para hacer ejercicio. Mover tu cuerpo todos los días no solo es bueno para tu cuerpo, también es bueno para tu mente.</td>
<td>Felicitaciones a la gratitud. Use un sombrero en la escuela y lleve una nota de agradecimiento para un amigo, maestro o cualquier miembro del personal. Mostrar gratitud a los demás aumenta la alegría en su comunidad.</td>
<td>Ponte lo que te haga sentir cómodo! Tal vez un pijama, tal vez tu camiseta favorita. La relajación es importante.</td>
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Rock your purple and white and show your Singer spirit. Belonging to a community helps you cope in times of stress.

Wear the color of your favorite fruit or vegetable. If you like a lot of them, wear the rainbow! Eating nutritious food helps your physical and mental health.

It's National Bike or Walk to School Day! Even if you need to ride a bus, you can wear sports gear or exercise clothes. Moving your body every day isn't just good for your body, it's good for your mind too.

Hats off to gratitude. Wear a hat to school and bring a thank you note for a friend, teacher, or any staff member. Showing gratitude to others grows joy in your community.

Wear what makes you comfortable. Maybe pajamas, maybe your favorite shirt. Relaxation is important.
**Kids Helping Kids Food Drive**

Each October we partner with Manna, our local food center, to raise money and resources for our community. This year there are two ways to participate.

1. Beginning now: Visit our fundraising page to donate money directly to Manna. [https://secure.qgiv.com/event/khk22/team/907826/](https://secure.qgiv.com/event/khk22/team/907826/)
2. The week of October 17th: Students can donate shelf stable items at school. **If donating from your own pantry, PLEASE CHECK EXPIRATION DATES**

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**Novel Writing Club**

NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) Club is a **free** extracurricular activity offered to Flora Singer students in **2nd through 5th grade**. NaNoWriMo is a national program in which students are challenged to write an entire novel in just one month! The emphasis is on good creative storytelling rather than on grammar or spelling.

Club meetings will be Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:15-9:00 in the media center from October 20 to December 1. Please contact club sponsor Lauren Whitney at [lauren.e.whitney@mcpsmd.net](mailto:lauren.e.whitney@mcpsmd.net) with any questions or to register your child.

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**Singer Needs Group**

The Singer Needs Group connects families and school staff who work with students with educational disabilities. Our first meeting will be held in person at the park next to Flora Singer ES (McKinney Hills Park) on October 6 from 6:30-7:30. We plan to have pizza/drinks, playground time, and opportunities for reconnection. We will also discuss our meeting structure. For those who have been around, we are adjusting our meeting schedule. It will continue to be monthly, but a different date/time from the school PTA meetings.

Please visit the PTA website to join the member hub email group to receive more
updated information about activities planned. Please reach out to Kara Tymon @ Kara_T_Tymon@mcpsmd.org with any questions.

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Middle School Magnet Consortium

5th grade parents, please review this flyer or view the presentation linked below for more information about the optional choice lottery process for middle school.

Program overview presentations:
  - English Presentation
  - Presentación en español

If you are interested in applying, this link will go live on October 14th: http://bit.ly/choiceMSMC. Your child must be logged into their MCPS account to access the link.

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Rainbow Club for Students in Gr. K-5 (Virtual Activity)

Rainbow Club is a safe and supportive place for LGBTQ+ students and allies to connect and build community. During our time together we'll engage in activities like playing games, picture book-read alouds, and discussions about identity, diversity and inclusivity. Click here to learn more.

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Holiday Help for Thanksgiving and December Holidays - Holiday Giving Project

***Late Registration Deadline for Thanksgiving - October 26th***
***Late Registration Deadline for December Holidays - November 16th***
If you and your family are in need and would like to be referred for possible assistance for the holiday season, please complete the referral form to provide the required information. Resources are limited: please apply only if you and your family are truly in need. While a referral is not a guarantee of assistance, the Project helps as many families in need as donations allow.

The Holiday Giving Project has provided Thanksgiving and December holiday assistance to low-income households for over 30 years. A network of social workers, school counselors, and human service professionals refer families in need of assistance. Local non-profits, faith-based organizations, and public agencies serve Holiday Giving recipients, as donations are available.

Click Below to Complete the Request Form

https://forms.gle/7Z89WpK7Uk24cWbX6

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Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival begins at 9:00 am. Students may enter the building at that time and go to line up. Kindergarteners and 5th graders go to the gym. Everyone else goes to the lunch room. **Do not drop your child off prior to 9:00 a.m. They will be unsupervised.** Dismissal begins at 3:50. You may arrive prior to 3:50 to wait for dismissal. Kindergarteners are dismissed through the doors by the gym. Walkers, car riders and bus riders are dismissed from the front doors. **Parents must contact the main office before 3:00 p.m. with any dismissal changes for the day.**

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Immunizations and Medications

It is very important that your child is up-to-date on his/her immunizations. If you are not sure, please check with your doctor. **The state law mandates that children not be admitted to school without the proper immunizations.** Medications must be brought to school in the original container by an adult along with **MCPS Form 525-13** (Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication) completed by your physician.
Medication will not be administered without proper authorization. Please contact our Health Technician if you have any questions.

School Lunch Application and SchoolCash Online
Please see this document. It outlines how to apply for free and reduced-priced lunch & for SchoolCash Online. Breakfast is free for any Flora M. Singer Elementary student who would like it. **However, lunch is no longer free for everyone.** The full price is $2.55 per lunch.

PTA Update

Volunteer for the Book Fair!
Save the dates for the 2022 Flora Singer Book Fair! It’s an exciting celebration of reading with hundreds of books to discover. We are looking for volunteers to help with this incredible event. Please sign up here: [https://bit.ly/SingerBookFairVolunteer2022](https://bit.ly/SingerBookFairVolunteer2022)


Ledo Pizza Dine Out — TUESDAY
Tuesday, October 11th, 4:00pm - 9:00 pm at 2638 University Blvd. W location. 20% of sales will be donated to the PTA. Order online or by phone. Dine in or carry out. Please mention the Singer PTA Fundraiser when you order by phone, online or in person.

Teacher Wish Lists
Do you know that each year, teachers buy much needed classroom supplies with their own money? Let’s help them out, and support our Singer community, by purchasing items they need from their teacher wish lists.
MCPS Shift to Structured Literacy

On Tuesday September 20th, Ms. Ragin presented to the PTA about MCPS’s shift to structured literacy. Here are the responses to the questions from the community.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tr>
<td>Can we see the documents those in the room are seeing?</td>
<td>The Really Great Reading materials and decodable books that were available for the PTA membership to review during the meeting will be on view in the staff lounge through the 31st. In addition, you can also view the Really Great Reading materials at <a href="https://www.reallygreatreading.com/">https://www.reallygreatreading.com/</a>.</td>
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| How much training have teachers had and how much they have going forward? | Structured Literacy training began in Summer 2022. Training will continue throughout the school year on professional days and during grade-level team meetings. Here are all of the trainings that have occurred, so far:  
  ● *The Shift to Structured Literacy (K-5 teachers, reading specialists and staff development teachers)  
  ● *Leading the Shift to Structured Literacy (Core leadership teams)  
  ● *DIBELS Assessment Training (K-2 teachers, reading specialists, staff development teachers and special education teachers)  
  ● *Really Great Reading Training (K-2 teachers and reading specialists)  
  ● Collaborative Planning for Structured Literacy (K-5 teachers)  
  ● The Shift to Structured Literacy for Paraeducators (K-5 paraeducators)  
  Upcoming trainings include:  
  ● Structured Literacy and Benchmark  
  ● Decodables  
  ● Planning for, Collecting, and Using Formative Data  
  ● Small Group Instruction  
  ● Sound Walls  
  ● The Writing Rope |
<p>| How is the school supporting the teachers, and how are they providing oversight and assistance to the teachers? | Ms. Ragin will model lessons for teachers and provide feedback about instruction. Teachers will also receive routine support from both Ms. Ragin (Reading Specialist) and |</p>
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<tr>
<td>Can you comment on why the approach changes over time and if this is evidence-based, what was the previous approach based on?</td>
<td>The change to a structured literacy approach comes in response to the most recent research called the Science of Reading. This science consists of brain-based research that shows how students best learn how to read and write in all grades. Previously, a balanced literacy approach was used in MCPS and in school systems across the country. Students were taught using leveled texts and lessons focused on comprehension. Phonics instruction focused on the skills needed to read a particular book instead of systematic phonics instruction that would help readers apply decoding skills to any text. The balanced literacy approach has been refuted by the body of research known as the Science of Reading. It is not effective for students in marginalized populations, including Emergent Multilingual Learners, students of color and students with dyslexia.</td>
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<td>If our students are starting this program in 2nd grade, how will they catch up in the program that is typically taught in K &amp; 1?</td>
<td>In grades K-2, teachers will use data from the Benchmark curriculum Foundations &amp; Routines lessons, along with data from the DIBELS assessments to determine students’ literacy needs. In addition, the Really Great Reading curriculum for second grade contains 4 weeks of supplemental units that give students additional practice with skills and concepts from 1st grade.</td>
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<td>Is there a discussion or plans to switch away from Benchmark to a curriculum that is fully rooted in structured literacy? Or how will you make sure there’s enough class time spent on structured literacy when teachers also have to use Benchmark?</td>
<td>The instructional schedule includes 120 minutes daily for literacy instruction. This allows for the time to teach all components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension in the sequential and systematic way that is aligned with a structured literacy approach. At this time, no announcements have been made about plans to adopt a new curriculum.</td>
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<td>Does this new approach extend to middle school?</td>
<td>Yes, secondary is also moving towards a Structured Literacy approach by emphasizing content and linking literacy skills in the content areas, emphasizing vocabulary, and explicitly teaching comprehension strategies within content area reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>How can we support our kids when they’re reading at home to stop guessing and do more sounding out/decoding?</td>
<td>Decodable texts give students an opportunity to practice the phonics skills they are learning in class without having to guess.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does this mean the school is moving away from Lucy Calkins?</td>
<td>At Singer, teachers used the writing workshop model included in the <em>Lucy Calkins Writing Units of Study</em> before the Benchmark Curriculum was adopted. Teachers can still use the <em>Lucy Calkins Writing Units of Study</em> as a supplement to the writing lessons in the Benchmark curriculum if they would like to.</td>
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<td>You stated “SL (structured literacy) has been shown to work for nearly all students.” For which students does SL not work well?</td>
<td>SL does not work for about 5% to 10% of the population; these are students with profound learning differences. There is a small part of the population for whom any approach to instruction will not result in functional literacy, but we can't identify those students until they have been afforded the opportunity to engage in research supported literacy instruction.</td>
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<td>How does structured literacy approach enrichment? Specific examples? (My assumption was that small group reading groups = enrichment.)</td>
<td>Data will be collected routinely to determine students’ needs, including needs for enrichment opportunities. Groups can focus on enrichment of language skills, word study skills, vocabulary learning, close reading of complex text, reading comprehension at a deeper level and student-facilitated groups known as literature circles.</td>
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