
December 2018

Fort Garrison Elementary School

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Dr. Hope Baier, Principal
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MESSAGE FROM DR. BAIER

Dear Fort Garrison Families,

Thank you to everyone who was able to visit our school during American Education Week and attended parent conferences in the month of November. We received very positive feedback from families who came to observe instruction and engaged in discussions about student learning.

This month Fort Garrison will host a STEAM Day focusing on Food, Waste and Sustainability through our partnership with Hot Spots and the Education Foundation. Students will be taught about alternative methods to grow vegetables to increase sustainability. All students will have the opportunity to grow and harvest hydroponic microgreens. Be sure to ask your child about the day!

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Winter Concert taking place on Tuesday, December 11th. Again this year we would like to spotlight the many different holidays and customs that occur in December with a display in the front lobby. If you have pictures of family traditions during the holiday season or would like to donate something that we could display, please send it in with your child.

However your family celebrates this wonderful time of year, I hope you are able to spend time together. I look forward to partnering with you for a terrific second half of the school year.

Happy Holidays!

We Are **TEAM** Fort
Garrison!

Technology

Environment

Accessing

Tomorrow

Motivated students
& teachers



Upcoming Events

- Dec 3 -** Steam Day Assembly
- Dec 7 -** Student Banking
- Dec 7 -** 3rd, 4th & 5th Grade Field Trip – BSO
- Dec 14 -** 5th Grade Chorus Field Trip – North Oaks Retirement Community
- Dec 24 – Jan 1** Winter Break – Schools Closed
- Jan 2 -** Schools Reopen



COUNSELOR'S CORNER – Notes from Mrs. Lepley

Happy Holidays!

As part of our School Counseling Program, your child's class will be participating in a counseling core curriculum lesson during the month of December on personal safety and decision-making. The lessons are based on Baltimore County Public Schools' Personal Safety Program K-5: Making Healthy Decisions curriculum. This program includes age appropriate information on body safety and neglect and abuse prevention strategies and highlights the importance of telling a trusted adult about uncomfortable situations. Our goal is to help children be better able to handle the issues of personal safety should they arise.

Keeping your child safe is a priority to all of us at Fort Garrison Elementary. It is our hope that these lessons will help to reinforce the information and strategies that you have already given your children, and that your family can discuss together the important information presented in these lessons. Please feel free to contact me with any questions about the program. I can be reached via phone at 410-887-1203 or via email at clepley@bcps.org.

Coffee with the Counselor:

I would love to invite you to a special Coffee with the Counselor event on Thursday, January 10, 2019 at 9:15 a.m. in room 22. You will need to sign in at the main office before joining me. We will be discussing the school counseling curriculum and ways to help your child gain resilience and grit in an era of helicopter parenting. We will talk about useful strategies and also common parenting concerns.

As a working parent, I realize that this time slot may not work for all parents. I will be hosting more opportunities for Coffee with the Counselor and will be sure to host an after school event for the next one.

Looking forward to seeing you there!! Please see the attached flyer.

Kate Lepley
School Counselor

READING CORNER – Notes from Mrs. Siegel

Thank you... thank you.... thank you for supporting our 2018 Read-A-Thon! We have raised over \$8,000. Our school gets to keep a little over \$6,000 after the students pick their prizes. This money will help purchase online subscriptions for students to use during their ELA time, language programs, Muffins with Mom/Doughnuts with Dad, fun incentives, Reading Night, books for the Book Challenge, new books for our students to use during their guided reading lessons, and lots more!

Our Reading/Innovation Night will be held on Tuesday, April 19, 2019. Please mark the date! We will be having a spectacular evening beginning with our Food Truck family picnic, an AMAZING LASER LIGHT SHOW sponsored by our wonderful PTA, followed by fun family games, teacher auction, green screen, our famous cotton candy, popcorn, and lots more!

Below is an article I found from Scholastic that has some wonderful ways to incorporate reading into Winter Break! <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/family-life/parent-child/keep-skills-sharp-during-winter-break.html>

Thank you for all of your support!

Stacy Siegel
Reading Specialist
Fort Garrison Elementary School
410-887-1203

Keep Skills Sharp During Winter Break

Help your child stay at the top of his learning game during the holiday vacation no flashcards involved!

Winter break means a well-deserved reprieve from homework and daily obligations. But before you know it, the holidays will be over and it will be back to the bus stop. To prepare for a smooth re-entry and a successful second semester, don't let school skills like reading, writing, and math slide completely during winter vacation. Try these family-friendly activities to keep skills sharp:

- Read for pleasure. Whether your child is in the mood for [holiday stories](#) like *The Night Before Christmas* or the newest installment from his favorite [series](#), winter break provides the perfect opportunity to stash schoolbooks and read for fun. Encourage relatives to give books as holiday gifts or gather in front of the fire (big kids too!) to take turns reading from [classic tales](#).
- Cook up an easy lesson. Invite your child into the kitchen to help you whip up a special dish — from Christmas [cookies](#) to potato pancakes. All of those half-tablespoon and quarter-cup measurements are great practice with fractions.
- Write thank-you notes. Penning notes of appreciation to gift-givers teaches gratitude and helps polish writing and spelling skills. Not sure what to say? Check out our [thank-you note template](#) for wording. One final tip: a mug of hot cocoa can make this task feel more festive!
- Make the most of car rides. Turn the [drive](#) to or from a holiday get-together into an opportunity to practice letters and numbers. You can look for license plates from different states, try to find the alphabet on the license plates, or count the number of red (or white or green) cars you see. For another take on this fun idea, you can have your kids play license plate bingo with [this free printable](#).
- Maintain reasonable bedtimes. With no school to get up for in the morning, it can be tempting to let kids become night owls. A few days before school starts up again, ease back into the regular bedtime schedule so your child can start the year bright-eyed.
- Ask for grocery list assistance. Have your child help choose what to buy, decide how much you need, check your supplies to see what you've already got, write or draw pictures on the list, and sort coupons.
- Let kids help with online shopping. Need a last-minute gift for Grandma or Uncle Joe? Log onto your favorite shopping sites and let your child help you select presents. This helps children work on their computer and research skills.
- Have a family game night. Chances are many of your family's favorite board and [card games](#) reinforce skills such as counting, reading, and drawing. Gather the group to play games you usually don't have time for on school nights.

MUSIC NOTES – Mrs. Case & Mr. Stojak



Important “Notes” from the Music teachers!

- **Parents of 4th & 5th grade students:** Don't forget: our first concert of the year is **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, at 7:00 p.m.** 5th grade students should arrive at 6:30 p.m.; 4th grade students should arrive at 6:45 p.m., and they should report to their classrooms. Please hold their coats for them.
 - There is no specific concert attire. Dress your “best”!
- **Parents of 3rd grade students:** Please keep in mind the following:
 - A study tool has been sent home to assist students in preparing for the final treble clef notation assessment being given the second week in December.
 - Please log onto OPS and purchase a recorder for your student by **Friday, December 7th**. You may also send in a check or exact change in cash, labeled with your child's name. An order will be placed by the school, and students who bought a recorder will receive it with a neck strap the first week of January. Students who are bringing their own from home **MUST** have had it examined by Mrs. Case, and should bring it to Vocal Music class following the New Year.
- **Parents of 1st & 2nd grade students:** A winter musical is planned for Wednesday, February 6th! An email was recently sent regarding help with costumes, scenery and props. Thanks!
- **Recorder Ensemble:** Students in 4th and 5th grade can find applications outside of the Vocal Music room. Mrs. Case will contact students/families being invited to participate in this group in late December.

The Music Department,
Stephanie Case
Brian Stojak

NEWS FROM BETH GRAPES – Physical Ed

PE News

Wow what an exciting day we had on November 26th celebrating with the Ravens for our PLAY60 challenge award! If you haven't done so, please check out our Facebook page and Twitter accounts to look at the great pictures and videos that helped to capture the event. Just because the challenge is over, doesn't mean you should stop moving. Remember in the assembly we made a promise to continue getting 60 minutes of movement every day. I encourage you to visit www.fueluptoplay60.com and click on the how to get involved and then the student link to create an account to get valuable information about fitness and nutrition with a change to earn prizes too! We will continue to work with this program throughout the entire school year.

All students are beginning to learn about the fitness component muscular strength and endurance in class and the 4th and 5th graders are getting prepared to take their next Fitnessgram tests, which are the curl-up and push-up. Students are learning the proper techniques to perform these exercises and it would be very beneficial for them to practice these at home, every day, to help build them up for the tests that will occur before winter break.

Our ballroom dance program was a success even though the weather messed with the schedule a bit. Thankfully our instructor was willing to get our full 5-day session in with minor adjustments. Students learned the Merengue, Cha-Cha, Swing and Tango during their week-long program. I'm very proud of the students' efforts to come out of their comfort zone to dance in a variety of ways with a variety of people.

Congratulations FGES, we helped to set a new Guinness Book World Record for our participation in STACKUP2018! Currently the verified stack total is 624,457 which beat the old record of 622,809. Not many people can say they ever helped set a record, but now you can!

Banking News

We have about 13 students that consistently take part in this program each month, by making a deposit into their account. With their monthly deposit they have a chance to win a prize donated by First Financial Federal Credit Union. We are always looking to open new accounts, so if you are interested please email bgrapes@bcps.org for more information. Our next few banking dates are as follows:

Dec. 7th

Jan. 4th

Feb. 1st

FROM THE HEALTH SUITE – Nurse Caulk

Health Suite Thoughts



Nosebleeds and other Dry Winter Air Distractions



Winter is here and the very cold air creates some difficulties for our students. The very dry air causes many students to experience **bloody noses, dry throats, chapped lips, and itchy skin**. These things are both uncomfortable and distracting for the students.

Using a **humidifier** in the bedroom at night can be very helpful in reducing these symptoms, as well as the use of **body lotion** and **chap stick** (No doctor's order needed). If your child tends to have recurring nose bleeds, review with them the need to apply **constant pressure for 5 full minutes, pinching** the nose between the thumb and index finger, in order to stop the bleeding. It can also be helpful for children with frequent nosebleeds to keep a **change of clothes** in their locker (**all children** should keep a change of clothes in their locker!). I find students who know how to handle their nosebleeds, and know they can change into their own clothes if needed, are much less upset or frightened by the bleeding.



Flu and Illness

Also, **flu season** is upon us, so in addition to getting your family immunized and keeping their immune system strong with adequate sleep and nutrition, here are just a few reminders below:

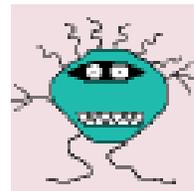


Remember that any **medication needed on a regular basis requires a Doctor Order form** and a **supply of the medication**, even over the counter medications. The Discretionary Consent form allows me to give Tylenol and cough drops for the occasional headache or cough, in keeping with the protocols. **Students are not allowed to carry medication**; it must be provided adult-to-adult. You may send in cough drops with a note if you have already given permission on the Discretionary Consent form, but they must be accompanied by a note from you, and taken directly to the health suite to be stored.

Vigilant Habits that Help

Be sure to review **hand washing** with your children, especially related to before and after eating, and after using the bathroom. Remind them to use tissues for **sneezing and coughing**, washing their hands afterwards, and to use their arm if there are no tissues nearby. Remember that students need to be **free of fever (temperature 100°F or above), vomiting, or diarrhea, for 24 hrs.** before returning to school. Most of you have been wonderful in responding to my calls quickly. Thank you for that attentiveness, for your child's sake, as well as the positive impact of reducing illness transmission in the school.

Germ Farm



Many of you are vigilant in checking your child's head at least once a week, looking for those tiny glued-to-the-hair-shaft white ovals that are nits – the eggs of lice. Although lice do no harm, they are distracting with the itchiness, and certainly a tremendous amount of work to eradicate. Therefore I ask that **all parents join in the vigilant head checking.** Thank you!

Catherine Caulk, RN, BSN
School Nurse

FROM THE FORT GARRISON PTA

It's an exciting time of year for us at the PTA! One of our favorite fundraisers at the FORT is the "Holiday Shop"! It will take place next week on December 3rd and 4th. Hopefully you have already sent in your money and order form and are ready for your child to shop! Thank you so much to Michelle Tepper for running it so effortlessly this year! Thanks to everyone who has signed up on the Signup Genius to help out for those days. There are only 3 spots left for Tuesday so feel free to sign up if you haven't already. Click on the link below to sign up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0949aba62eabfd0-holiday>

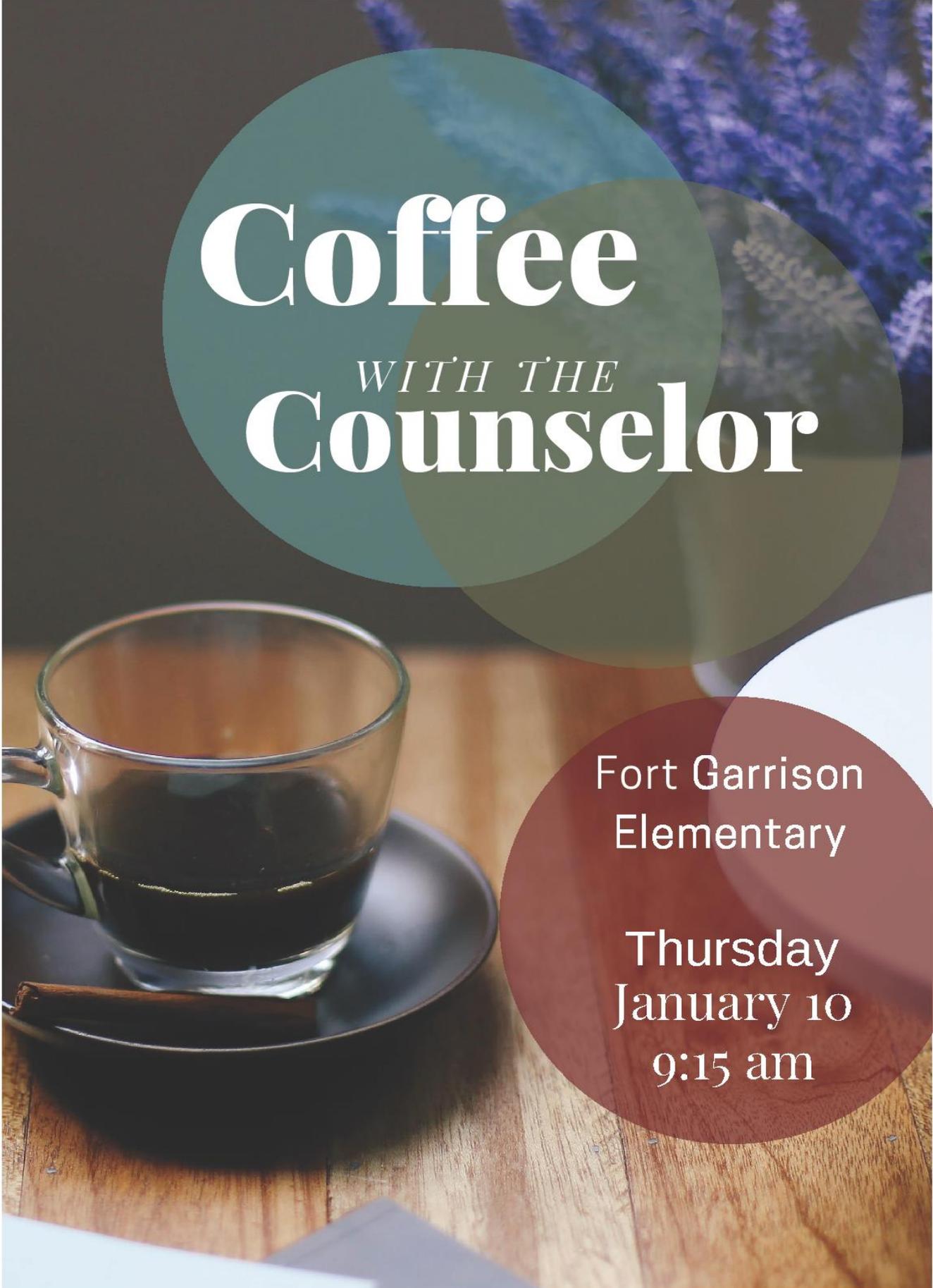
Thank you to everyone who placed orders this week for Joe Corbi's pizzas. This fundraiser is to raise money for our graduating 5th grade class for their t-shirts and party etc. Thanks to Robin Holt and Heather Crawford for organizing this.

Our December 17th PTA meeting has been canceled so we hope to see you at our next meeting on January 28, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. Our meetings are a place for you to learn more about committees, events at school and to get involved. Dr. Baier and Mrs. Denmyer are always at our meetings and this month our wonderful school counselor, Mrs. Lepley came and shared some goals she has for the year.

As always feel free to contact us with any questions or great ideas for the PTA. We love hearing from you!

See you at the FORT!
Amanda and Ashley

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Coffee

WITH THE

Counselor

Fort Garrison
Elementary

Thursday
January 10
9:15 am