A MESSAGE FROM DR. BAIER

Dear Fort Garrison Families,

If it seems as though you just received a newsletter, you are right! We have decided to change the date of the newsletter to the beginning of each month rather than in the middle in order to make you aware of upcoming events. We hope this new change will help you in planning the months ahead.

Thank you to everyone who was able to visit Fort Garrison during American Education Week. It was a great success and we received very positive feedback from families who came to observe instruction.

Speaking of success, our annual Family Reading and Innovation Night was a wonderful evening filled with creative and fun activities. We hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we did!

We look forward to seeing you at our Winter Concert taking place on Thursday, December 7th. On December 22nd our students will have an assembly, “Christmahanukwanzam” which spotlights the many different holidays and customs that occur in December. 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,
Dr. Hope Baier
Principal

We Are TEAM Fort Garrison!

Technology
Environment
Accessing Tomorrow
Motivated students & teachers

Upcoming Events

Dec 5 – Career Day
Dec 7 – Winter Concert @ 7:00 p.m.
Dec 8 – School Banking
Dec 15 – 5th Grd. Vocal Ensemble at North Oaks, Pikesville
Dec 22 – Christmahanukwanzam Assembly
Dec 22 – Winter Break Begins at End of Day
Dec 23 - Jan 1 – Winter Break Schools Closed
Jan 2 – Schools Reopen
INNOVATION STATION – NOTES FROM Mrs. Ziegler

Our Deconstruction Unit is fast approaching. If you have any old, small appliances that are not working and you would like to donate them to the Innovation Station, we would greatly appreciate it - toasters, coffee makers, PCs, clock radios, fax machines, old phones, just to name a few. Please send them in. The students guestimate how many parts their item has and then take them apart to see if they are correct. After the Deconstruction, they divide up the parts and make Recycle Art. Thank you for sending in your broken or old appliances. The only thing we cannot take apart are televisions. The students love this activity.

READING CORNER – NOTES FROM READING SPECIALIST

Thank you for supporting our Read-A-Thon! Congratulations to 2nd and 3rd grade who raised the most money and won a DJ party, extra recess, and time in our Innovation Station. We are looking forward to our Second Book Exchange! Last year was a huge success! Keep on Reading!

Fort Garrison Elementary’s Book Exchange

Each homeroom will begin collecting books for our first Book Exchange. In order to participate, each student must donate one K-5 level book. In good condition, to their homeroom teacher. The books will then be collected and organized. We will gladly accept as many K-5 level books as you would like to donate. On Tuesday, December 19, the students will have a chance to visit our book exchange and pick out ONE new book. Any books left over will be saved for another book exchange or donated.

*A special thank you to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Shapiro for helping. If you are available to help set up on Monday, December 16 after school, please email me at stacy@bcpis.org. Thank you!

Thank you,
Stacy Siegel
BIG NEWS! Checking out books from the public library just became easier! No library card needed!

BCPS and Baltimore County Public Libraries have teamed up to allow BCPS students access to materials at their local branch of the public library. Students can use their One Cards (or look up their BCPSOne student identification number with the help of library staff) to check out up to 5 items at a time from the public library with no late fees! Students can also now access the public library’s online resources, such as OverDrive (Maryland’s Digital eBook Library), Rosetta Stone and Mango languages.

Gift Ideas

December is the month of giving. Why not give the gift of reading! Check out the suggestions below for some fun reading gifts for kids.

- **Magazines:** Kids love getting mail, and they love reading about their favorite things. A magazine can be a win-win for a reluctant (or enthusiastic) reader. Here are some top picks:
  
  o Ranger Rick and Ranger Rick Jr. – Perfect for the animal lover in your family! Both the regular Version and the Jr. Version (for kids aged 4-7) feature high interest stories and photographs of animals.
  o Lego Club – This magazine is fun for girls and boys. Each issue has comics, stories and building instructions. Best of all, IT’S FREE!
  o Owl magazine (ages 9+) – A magazine to inspire the pre-teen set to explore topics of interest that relate to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) - includes comics, quizzes, interviews, and cool tech news.

- **Popular Series:** Here are some popular series that kids may enjoy owning.

  o Raina Telgemeier Graphic Novels – Realistic Fiction graphic novels for the middle grades that feature characters dealing with problems such as getting braces and moving to a new town.
  o I Survived Series – High interest historical fiction that shows a kids’ perspective of surviving an important event in history such as the sinking of the Titanic or the Great Chicago Fire.
  o The Chicken Squad Series by Doreen Cronin – Perfect beginner chapter book series about a group of mystery-solving chickens and their sidekick dog detective
  o Elephant and Piggie by Mo Willems and Fly Guy by Ted Arnold – Proven favorites for brand new independent readers.
Looking for some games to keep your kids engaged (and learning!) on cold winter days? Check out some of these top picks for educational family games and activities that reinforce the skills your children are learning at school and, most of all, BRING THE FUN to learning.

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<tr>
<th>STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) games/activity sets</th>
<th>Games That Reinforce Math Skills</th>
<th>Games That Reinforce Reading/Critical Thinking Skills</th>
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| o Legos  
o Learning Resources Playground Engineering & Design STEM Set  
o Osmo Coding Set  
o Scientific Explorer: My First Mind Blowing Science Kit  
o K'NEX Education – STEM Explorations: Roller Coaster Building Set  
o Growing Crystals  
o Ozobots  
o Makey-Makey  
o Code and Go Robot Mouse  
o Dash and Dot Robot | o The Allowance Game  
o Payday  
o Clumsy Thief  
o Monopoly Jr.  
o Battleship  
o Uno  
o Dominos  
o Qwirkle  
o Trouble  
o SET: The Family Game of Visual Perception  
o Karma Card Game  
o Math for Love Prime Climb  
o Phase 10 | o Guess Who  
o Connect Four  
o Wordplay for Kids  
o Hedbanz  
o Sequence/Sequence for Kids  
o Quiddler  
o Memory  
o Scrabble/Scrabble Jr.  
o Play on Words  
o Word Around |

**NOTES FROM THE MUSIC TEACHERS – Mrs. Case & Mr. Stojak**

- **Parents of Fourth and Fifth Grade students:** Don’t forget our first concert of the year is THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7th, at 7:00. Students should arrive between 6:30 and 6:45. They should report to their classrooms. Please hold their coats for them.
  - There is no specific concert attire. Dress your “best”!

- **Parents of Third Grade students:** Please keep in mind the following:
  - A study tool will be coming home next week to assist students in preparing for the final treble clef notation assessment that will be given the third week in December.
  - Please log onto OSP at https://osp.osmsinc.com/baltimorecountymd/ and purchase a recorder for your student by Friday, December 8th. 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 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 First and Second Grade students:** A winter musical is planned for Tuesday, February 6th! Please check take-home folders and email for information about volunteering to help with costumes, scenery and props. Thanks!

- **Recorder Ensemble:** Students in Fourth and Fifth 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.
Medical 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 chapstick (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 go 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.
Many of you are vigilant in checking your student’s heads 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.

Catherine Caulk, RN
School Nurse

NOTES FROM BETH GRAPES – PHYSICAL ED

Student Banking

Our banking program is in full swing and we are always looking to open new accounts. Please see Mrs. Grapes to get an application. Students that make a deposit each month and have an account are entered in a drawing for a variety of prizes. Congratulations to Rowan S. for being the winner of the drawing for November. Please bring your deposits to the lobby in the morning between 9:05-9:20 on the upcoming banking dates:

Dec. 8  Jan. 12  Feb. 9  March 9  April 13

PE NEWS

We almost did it FGES! The final numbers are in for the STACKUP2017 and unfortunately we fell short of the number we needed, but there were still 578,704 people that took part in the attempt to set a new world record. We look forward to trying again next year.

Over the next several weeks students will be taking a closer look at three areas of fitness which are: aerobic capacity, muscular strength and endurance and flexibility. By the end of December students should be able to identify and perform activities/exercises they can do in each category to improve their overall level of fitness levels. They will also be working on improving their hand-eye coordination by learning how to juggle and begin work on the magic ball skills club which is an individualized, progressive throwing and catching program.

We will be participating in Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart programs this year so be on the lookout for information being sent home later this month. This is a fundraiser for the American Heart Association that helps teach the students about how to take care of their heart and benefits the school by providing some funds to purchase new equipment. Online fundraising is so easy and effective for this program that we raised almost $12,000 in 2016! Information will be included in the packet to set up those online accounts. If you have any questions please contact me at bgrapes@bcps.org
We are halfway through the second quarter! Ms. Cohen, the school counseling intern, is working alongside me to conduct classroom counseling lessons, support students in small group counseling, and work with students individually as needed. We are also available to consult with parents about anything that comes up in terms of your child’s academic, or social/emotional development and we often consult with teachers as well. School counselors are a regular education support for all students.

December Counseling Lessons

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 FGES. 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.

Career Day is COMING Tuesday December 5, 2017!

In December we will be hosting a College and Career Week! On December 5, 2017 we will host parents who will come to school to share their careers with our students. Please consider signing up to be a presenter at our Career Fair! Kindergarteners will learn about careers in their classroom. Grades 1-5 will come to the gym at selected times to visit tables where parents will be set up to share about their careers. We are looking for parents who can bring exciting artifacts and items to help bring their career to life for our students when they visit your table!

This is the LAST CHANCE to sign up to volunteer at the link here: http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0c4aa8a723abf94-fges

Special thanks to all of the parents who have committed to attending and helping us to make this day special for our students!

Kate Lepley
School Counselor
FROM THE FORT GARRISON PTA

Thanks to everyone who came out for our latest restaurant night at Rita’s! It was a chilly night but still fun and we are already talking about planning another one in the spring. We hope to see everyone at the Green Turtle (Owings Mills) on December 14th!

The Yankee Candle Fundraiser was a success and we look forward to the orders coming in and getting them out to everyone. If you still want to make a last minute order it’s still open online at www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and search for Fort Garrison. You can also use the code 999974884 to find our school.

Keep turning in those box tops! We so appreciate it and are halfway to our goal of raising $1,000 for the year! Our new contest will run until the end of January and we will award the top 10 families. Thank you so much!

Don’t forget it’s never too late to become a member of the PTA! We would love to have the highest number of members ever! Lastly, if you are not a member and want to buy a beautiful printed directory let us know. They are only $15.00!

See you at the Fort!

Amanda and Ashley
www.fortgarrisonpta.com
Middle School Matters—Student Forum
All You Wanted to Know About Middle School (But Were Afraid to Ask)!

Wednesday, December 13
6:00—7:00 p.m.
Pikesville Middle School Cafeteria

Join us for:
- Student Q&A Panel
- Short Video Presentation: A Day In The Life
- Meet the Administration
- Honors Choir Performance
- Student Meet & Greet

All parents and students are welcome to attend! Light refreshments will be served (kosher)

RSVP not required, but appreciated:
brheingold@chaibaltimore.org