

September 2017

Fort Garrison Elementary School

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Principal: **Dr. Hope Baier**
Assistant Principal: **MeLissa Powers**

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A MESSAGE FROM DR. BAIER

Dear Fort Garrison Families,

Thank you for your warm welcome as I transition to "The Fort" as the new principal. I have truly enjoyed meeting students and families over the summer and in the first weeks of school.

A special thank you to the PTA for sponsoring the ice cream social on Monday, August 28th. Everyone seemed to enjoy the chance to gather, play and eat ice cream! Back to School Night was also a huge success. We were happy to see so many families attend and be engaged in their child's education.

This year we will continue the exciting work in our Innovation Station, where students will engage in problem solving, creativity, collaboration and innovation. Ms. Ziegler will again lead this work developing lessons that extend the curriculum in partnership with the classroom teachers.

I encourage you to continue to utilize the BCPSOne system to regularly access the progress that your child is making in school. Teachers will be entering grades a minimum of once a week in academic subjects. Special area teachers only see their students once a week, so their grades will be entered less frequently.

Volunteer training continues to be available for you to complete online through the BCPS website. When you click on the parent link and scroll down, there is an additional link for the training. Please make sure to send in your completed volunteer training application as well as your certificate so that we can include your name on our list of approved volunteers. Your training is not complete until the form has been returned to school.

We Are **TEAM** Fort Garrison!

Technology

Environment

Accessing Tomorrow

Motivated students & teachers



Upcoming Events

Sept 2- NFL Play60 Challenge Begins

Sept 27- 5th Grade Field Trip

Sept 28- Picture Day

Oct 3- Laser & Bullying Assembly

Oct 6- Earth Day Every Day

Oct 13- Student Banking

Oct 20- Prof. Dev. Day – Schools Closed for Students

Students are beginning to settle into a routine and meaningful learning is taking place. We thank you for sending us such wonderful children each day. We also appreciate all of the support that you give to your child. Research reveals that positive parent involvement translates into strong student achievement. Working together this year, Fort Garrison will continue to soar!

READING CORNER – NOTES FROM OUR READING SPECIALIST

“Welcome back to the 2017-2018 school year! Our teachers have begun finding your child’s instructional reading level in order to provide more individualized instruction. You will be receiving a letter in the upcoming weeks letting you know the results. In addition, we will be focusing on building our Reading Stamina. Attached is an article about how you can help your child build their reading stamina at home! As always, thank you for your support!”

Starting in October, we will begin our Fall Reading Incentive where students can earn tickets to be used for yummy surprises, as well as the teacher auction at our Reading/Innovation night in November. More details will be sent home in the upcoming weeks!”

SAVE THE DATE!!

Reading/Innovation Family Fun Night

Tuesday, November 28

Food Truck Family Picnic 5-6:30 P.M.

Interactive Reading and Innovation activities for families, Teacher Auction, Fifth Grade Shark Tank and LOTS MORE! 6:30-7:30

“Parents, please follow us on Facebook and twitter to see the learning that is taking place each day at our school.”



FACEBOOK



TWITTER



Fort Garrison Parents,

Welcome back to the bustle of the school year!

DISCRETIONARY CONSENT FORMS

Thank you for taking the time to thoroughly complete the discretionary consent sheets that provide me with updated **contact information**, current medication and health issues, and indicating your preference about my ability to give your student **Tylenol, Benadryl, and cough drops**, in accordance with BCPS protocols. If your information changes through the school year, please be sure to contact me, as that information is crucial in an emergency, and essential for consulting with you about your child.

MEDICATIONS

Remember that **any medication (including over-the-counter medication) needed on a regular basis requires a Doctors' Order Form and a supply of the medication.** 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 the parent, and go directly to the health suite to be stored.

PREVENTING ILLNESS

As we approach the flu season, 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 your attentiveness for your child's sake, as well as the positive impact of reducing the transmission of illness in the school.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Sept. 20 through Sept. 27 Hearing and Vision screening will be conducted by the Baltimore County Health Dept. in the Health Suite. Students screened will be those in Kindergarten, 1st and 4th grade, and students new to Baltimore County. If your student does not pass the screening, you will receive a letter from the Health Dept. that includes a **form to be signed by the doctor and then returned to the health suite.** It is a significant service that the county provides, so please return the feedback forms as they are needed to keep the program going.

HEAD LICE

Also, **please remember to check your children for head lice at least once a week.** The eggs, "nits" are what you will see most frequently. They are firmly attached to the shafts of hair, usually an inch or two from the scalp, and are tiny whitish oval sacs. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for treatment options. Inform the health

suite so students who sit near your child can be checked, and so more information can be provided to you. They are no longer considered a health threat, but certainly are a nuisance!

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

I would also ask that parents provide a **change of clothing for each student**, which can be kept in their locker. "Things happen", such as bloody noses, spilled drinks, mud, and not making it to the bathroom in time. Students feel so much better when they can change into their own clothing.

The Health Suite is in need of gently used clothing. If you would like to make a donation please send the clothing in with your child.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Last, I would like to mention that we have students with **life threatening food allergies at every grade level**. Some of these students have allergies to multiple food ingredients. Because of this, I would ask that when you plan celebrations for school, please **consider non-food ways of celebrating, as that is the most inclusive, and most safe**. Consider a special song played for your child, a cartoon feature, a guest or a speaker that's special to the student, party bags with novelty pencils, erasers, stickers (rather than candy), or a short game. Use your creativity as you discuss it with your child's teacher!

Please also encourage your students to keep their food away from others, and to **clean their hands after eating so our food allergic students are not placed at risk**. Parents of children with food allergies. Please be sure that your children have **alternative snacks of their own stored with their teacher** for situations where they can't partake of what is being offered. Please also be sure to discuss and monitor food choices with your students. **No student is to have food on the bus**, as the bus drivers need to concentrate on the road, not potential problems related to food.

I wish a healthy year to all!

Catherine Caulk, RN, BSN
School Nurse

FROM THE LIBRARY- MRS. O'DONNELL

This Month's News

Attention 4th and 5th grade parents!

This year our school will be partnering with the Pikesville Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library to participate in the Battle of the Books. Teams of 4th and 5th graders will read the Black Eyed Susan nominated chapter books and compete against Summit Park in a book battle. We will need parent coaches to facilitate the teams and coordinate after school meetings. I will be sending out more information as it becomes available. If any parents are interested in being coaches, please contact me at lodonnell3@bcps.org. Thank you for your support!

What We're Learning in the Library

The 2017-18 school year is off to a great start! Grades 2 -5 kicked the year off with our Digital Citizenship units. We are learning about important topics such as keeping personal information private, cyberbullying, and

our digital footprint. Kindergarten and first grade are learning about book care and how to be responsible library citizens. Our K students will start checking out books soon. Please reinforce the idea of responsible book care at home with your students.

MUSIC NOTES - MRS. CASE & MR. STOJAK

Back to school greetings from the Music Department!

If you are the parent of a Fifth Grade student, please be sure you have completed Band and Orchestra enrollment forms and instrument rental agreements in a timely fashion. Lessons will begin NEXT WEEK! Students will be learning playing fundamentals and preparing a few selections for our first concert of the year on **Thursday, December 7th at 7:00 P.M.**

Fifth Grade students are participating in weekly Chorus rehearsals in preparation for our concert in December. Fourth Grade will be preparing four new recorder songs for the concert. They need their recorder each day they attend Vocal Music Class.

Nolan – Tuesday

Sanders – Thursday

For interested parents, the music department has received audition information for the 2017-2018 season from The Maryland State Boychoir. You may call 410.554.8644 to get more information or request an audition time. Feel free to visit their website, www.marylandstateboychoir.org, or email them: info@marylandstateboychoir.org. Mrs. Case is happy to speak to parents of boys about these opportunities and try to answer any questions they may have.

FROM THE GREEN TEAM

Students have been chosen to be a part of Fort Garrison's 2017-2018 Green team and permission slips have been sent home. Please fill in the form with your email address so you can be contacted for meeting reminders, and return to your child's homeroom teacher soon. Meetings will be held monthly before school starting October 18th.

Earth Day, Every Day will be held on October 6th. Parent volunteers are needed and you can help out by replying to the Sign-up Genius sent out to all families. Our theme this year is the Chesapeake Bay. We will have many organizations represented- Irvine Nature Center, Cromwell Valley Park, MD Dept. of Environment and Carrie Murray Nature Center to name a few. Hands-on activities, live animals and games will fill your child's day! The day will end with a performance by Billy B., a musical artist, who teaches about the Bay. Your student will be learning about how to save the Bay as well as about the native plants and animals that live near it.

Ask your child what they learned on Earth Day, Every Day!!

ART ROOM NEWS – MRS. HULSE

Again this year we will participate in the Square1 Art fundraiser. Students are busy creating masterpieces that can be printed on a variety of projects. Packets with student work, ordering information, and free stickers will be sent home in October.

Proceeds from this fundraiser help support special projects in the art room!

Mrs. Hulse

NOTES FROM BETH GRAPES – PHYSICAL ED

Fox Branch – Student Banking Program

This year we welcome back First Financial Federal Credit Union to again sponsor our student run savings program here at FGES. This is very exciting for our students to have the opportunity to deposit their money so they can save for their future. One Friday a month we have two fifth grade student tellers help collect the deposits from the students from 9:05-9:20. At that time they receive a receipt for their deposit and may select a gift to take with them. We only allow deposits at our location but you can withdraw the money at any of the various First Financial Federal Credit Union locations. If you are interested in signing your child up for this worthwhile program, please contact Mrs. Grapes at bgrapes@bcps.org and I will send the application information home with your child as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. The following dates have been selected for banking this year:

Sept. 22	Oct. 13	Nov. 10	Dec. 8	Jan. 12	Feb. 9
March 9	April 13	May 11	June 8		

Physical Education Class – **Sneakers Required**

Welcome back and we look forward to a movement-filled year in PE. Our 5th graders will be participating in the ballroom dancing program in October so parents of those students please look for information about that program coming home the end of September. The 4th and 5th graders will also participate in Fitnessgram testing this year to help them recognize areas in which they meet the healthy fitness zone criteria and to also see the areas they need to work on. We look forward to using our devices to help us understand how we move and then move better because of it.

It is extremely important for students to come prepared for PE class by wearing comfortable clothing that they can move appropriately in and more importantly, sneakers. These sneakers should also be closed-toe shoes because we will be kicking balls this fall and will be outside and this will help decrease the chances of injury and being stung by insects. These guidelines are put in place to help keep your student safe. I highly encourage you to have your student wear sneakers everyday so they are prepared for class all the time, and this would also keep them safe during recess since they will have it every day. Students should not be climbing on the playground equipment without sneakers. If wearing sneakers every day all day does not

work for you, then simply have them keep a spare pair of sneakers in their locker so they can change when necessary.

On **Monday, September 25th thru Sunday, October 22nd the NFL Play60 Challenge** begins and we want everyone to participate in the challenge so we have a chance to win a Baltimore Raven visit to our school! The Play60 challenge is a program encouraging moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes every day. Students have a game planner to keep track of their time over the next 4 weeks. On the back of the planner there are some suggestions on how to get your minutes and remember you don't have to do it all at once. A few minutes here and a few minutes there can really add up! One lucky student will be selected as our ambassador and students are eligible for this based on the following criteria: 60 minutes every day, parent signature all 4 weeks and finally turning in your paper on Monday, October 23. **All papers are due Monday, October 23** from all participants for a chance to win other prizes so even if you don't make 60 minutes every day, please still turn in your form so we may be eligible for a Baltimore Raven to visit us. Please contact me at bgrapes@bcps.org if you have any questions and let's get moving everybody!!

COUNSELOR'S CORNER- MRS. LEPLEY



Welcome Back! I am Kate Lepley, the school counselor here at Fort Garrison. I can be reached at clepley@bcps.org or by phone at 410-887-1203. I am pleased to be back for the 5th year here at the Fort and look forward to getting to know all of our new students and families this year!

This year I am lucky enough to have a student intern working alongside me until the end of December. Her name is Alexandra Cohen and she is finishing up her Masters' Degree at Loyola University. Please introduce yourself if you see her at the front door or around the building. She has included an introduction below.

From Ms. Cohen:

I would like to take a quick moment to introduce myself to all of you for those I have not had the opportunity of meeting yet. My name is Alexandra Cohen. I'm currently finishing up my Masters' Degree in School Counseling at Loyola University (go Greyhounds!). I love to do yoga and read in my spare time. I will be working alongside Mrs. Lepley, your school counselor, every day until December. I will be teaching classroom lessons with Mrs. Lepley, as well as running counseling groups and individual counseling sessions. I look forward to getting to know each of you as the school year progresses!

September Lessons

This month we will visit your child's class to explain the role of the school counselor and how he or she can be accessed. Students in second grade will also learn the steps to take when someone is bothering or teasing them. The students in third grade will discuss the role of the school counselor and learn the difference between small and big problems. Fourth graders will begin a two part lesson on what to do when you see that someone is teasing or using unkind words. Students in fifth grade will complete an activity about inclusions and exclusions. Students will develop a list of ways of how to include others and how to identify if they are excluding someone.

Coming Soon

In October, we will celebrate Kindness Week from October 2-6. In BCPS, this is also known as Bullying Prevention Week. We are choosing to rebrand this week to focus on the positive, desired behavior of treating others with kindness. We will be doing activities throughout the week to promote kindness both in school and out. During this week, each class will visit the Innovation Station to create Kindness Rocks—one for our school grounds, and one to take with them to 'hide' somewhere in the community. When people find the rocks, they use the hashtag #kindnessrocks to share when they have found the rock. A PTA sign up genius has been emailed and we would love to have a few parent helpers with this activity. Thanks for your support!

Kate Lepley

CLEpley@bcps.org

FROM THE FORT GARRISON PTA

We hope everyone has had a successful first few weeks of school! The PTA threw a wonderful back to school breakfast for the staff as well as the bus drivers on their first few days' back that was enjoyed by all.

The PTA is excited to see so many membership forms coming back! Thanks to everyone who has turned in their forms. If you haven't yet it's never too late to turn them in.

We also appreciate the families that have updated their information for our online school directory, www.myschoolanywhere.com. If you haven't gotten an email about how to add or update your information please contact us. Thank you to Deborah Katzen for her tireless work in putting it all together for us. Once you're in the system make sure to download the app on your phone and see how easy it is!

We are always looking for help for the PTA. Feel free to contact us for volunteer opportunities, tell us new ideas or just find out what we do.

See you at the FORT!

Amanda Shapiro and Ashley Smith

fortgarrisonpta@gmail.com

NORTHWEST AREA EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING ON SCHOOL SAFETY AND BULLYING



Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017

Time: 7:00 pm

At: Randallstown High School
4000 Offutt Road,
Randallstown, MD 21133

Northwest Area public school stakeholders and other interested community members are invited to our public meeting on School Safety and Bullying.

For additional information contact Clifford Collins, Chair, Northwest Area Education Advisory Council at 410-887-0766 or cjacob123@aol.com



Parent tips for raising strong readers and writers

Growing readers!

Brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorín Colorado and LD OnLine

Building Reading Stamina

Having stamina for something means being able to stick with something for periods of time. This stamina, or endurance, builds strength. Stamina can apply to lots of different areas, such as exercise or painting. It can also apply to reading.

Teachers often think about a student's reading stamina. Reading stamina is a child's ability to focus and read independently for long-ish periods of time without being distracted or without distracting others. Reading stamina is something that parents can help students develop. Here's how:

1. Vary the way the reading is done. Parents can think about this in terms of having their child "read to himself, read to someone, and listen to reading." Some combination of the three should make up the reading time, especially for new or struggling readers.
2. Choose "just right" books. If your child is at a stage of being able to read alone, help him choose books that he is able to read independently. This means he should be able to decode almost every word in the book correctly. In this situation, avoid using books that are too difficult to read alone. If your child will be reading with you, choose books that are lively and engaging.
3. Set reasonable goals. Most toddlers and preschoolers find it difficult to sit for long periods of time, even with the most engaging book! When starting out, limit book time to just a few minutes and work up from there. For elementary aged readers, consider starting with 10-15 minutes of reading time, and work up from there. Add a few minutes to your reading time every week or so.
4. Celebrate progress. Without getting too caught up on the number of minutes spent reading, celebrate the time that is spent reading. Share your favorite parts of books read, plan the next visit to the library, and share progress with other family members.

Spending longer periods of time reading means fewer interruptions and more time reading what you love. As your child moves into higher grades, having reading stamina will help your child navigate the longer texts and assignments. Using these tips can help develop more stamina in your reader.

Reading Rockets, Colorín Colorado, and LD OnLine are national education services of WETA, the flagship public broadcasting station in Washington, D.C.



