As you read this newsletter, we will have already celebrated the arrival of 2016. Did you make your New Year’s Resolution? At Dogwood, our faculty and staff are looking forward to the start of a new year. We continue to be committed to work together to create meaningful, challenging, and engaging instruction for our wonderful Dogwood students. Your encouragement and support make a huge difference in what we are able to accomplish.

Thanks to everyone who supported and participated in our fundraisers during the first half of the school year. What a success! Your ongoing support makes it possible for us to purchase resource and supplemental materials for our teachers and students in order to provide the very best instructional program for your child(ren). I would also like to thank our car rider staff and participating families! Traffic flow within the car loop has greatly improved. This program was initiated by your PTA in collaboration with your Dogwood staff. The PTA is your voice to provide change and support for your child and the school community. If you would like to join the PTA, even though you may not be able to attend the meetings, you may contact our school secretary at 410-887-6808, or email dogwoodpta@gmail.com. Membership fees are $10 for individual members and $15 for a family membership of two adults.

We also want to thank all of you who supported our Thanksgiving and Christmas food drive; it was a great success. A special thank you goes out to our friends at New Psalmist Baptist Church, Life Bridge Church, Baltimore County Chapter of Les Gemmes, Security Plus, Woodlawn Volunteer Fire Department, and the Epworth Church for adopting many of our families for Christmas. Their outpouring of love and generosity was greatly appreciated by our families. In addition, it was great to see so many of our families attend the Winter Concert. The students had a ball performing for family and friends! We would also like to congratulate the Dogwood PTA on a successful Movie Night. There was excellent turnout, and students had a ball dressed in their winter pajamas! So goodbye to 2015...and hello to 2016; a year...
that promises to be even better than the year before, as we continue to move our school towards a 21st century learning environment.

Once again, thank you for sending your child(ren) to us each day ready to learn. We can not do this job alone. As parents, you are your child’s first teacher. In today’s global community and economy, a world class education is so important for every child. Our teachers and staff are honored to teach your children!

On behalf of the Dogwood staff, we wish all of our families good health, happiness and a prosperous 2016!
Parent Corner

Happy New Year and welcome back Dogwood Family! We hope everyone had a wonderful and exciting winter break. The second half of the school year is well underway with staff and students once again actively engaged in teaching and learning.

Here are a few tips and reminders for getting back into the swing of things:

• Get back into your daily routine! It’s time to break away from the video games and cartoon network shows. Let’s get back into those regular homework schedules, balanced mealtime regimes, and bedtime routines. These are all pertinent to successful days at school.

• Restock those important school supplies and get organized. Start the New Year off on the right foot with sufficient materials and organization.

• Review skills learned in previous units at home (i.e. math facts, phonics skills, sight words, reading for fluency, and reading for comprehension).

• Check students’ folders daily for homework and essential messages from teachers. In addition, check students’ folders every Wednesday for important school wide correspondence.

• Please check BCPS One regularly to monitor student grades and assignments. If you need access to BCPS One, please contact Mr. Connelly at nconnelly2@bcps.org.

• OUR LENDING LIBRARY IS OPEN!! Please visit Parent Services or contact Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org for more details.

• Please dress children for the weather. We will be going outside, weather permitting. Students need coats, scarves, hats, mittens, etc.

• Flu season is in full swing! If possible, please send in extra boxes of tissues and hand sanitizer. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE☺.

JOIN THE DOGWOOD PARENTS LISTSERVE!!!
*Please email Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org. Please include your name, student’s name, grade level, and email address.

Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter 😊.

Facebook: Dogwood Elementary School BCPS

Twitter: @Dogwood_ES
Mark Your Calendars

➢ Jan. 8th: **Ident-A-Kid Card pictures will be taken**
Please submit all forms and monies by this date.

➢ Jan. 8th-15th: **Vision & Hearing Testing**
Pre-K, 1st, 4th, and any Kindergarteners not screened in Pre-K. Also for students new to BCPS.

➢ Jan. 14th: **BCPS Blue Pride Day!!**
Wear your royal blue and show your BCPS pride!

➢ Jan. 14th: **Dogwood Reading Night at the Woodlawn Library (6pm-8pm)**
There will be scavenger hunts, read alouds, crafts for students, LEGO Mindstorm building, parent workshop, giveaways, and more. Come out and support!!

*Parent Workshop Presentation by Dr. Lennox Graham: Empowering students to Master Reading Through Critical Thinking*

Light Refreshments provided. Please RSVP with Mrs. Jones for this event at tjones19@bcps.org.

➢ Jan. 18th-19th: **School Closed for students**
Observation of MLK Jr. Day (1/18)
Professional Development for teacher (1/19)

➢ Jan. 22nd: **Dogwood Family STEM Night (6pm-8pm)**
*Lakeshore Store Towson*
1620 E Joppa Rd, Towson, MD 21286
Come enjoy interactive STEM activities for students and parents, giveaways and prizes. The top classroom with the highest attendance will receive a $150 for their teacher, and a $75 certificate for second highest attendance. For more information contact Mrs. Jones at tjones@bcps.org.
Dear Kindergarten Families,

The Kindergarten Team hopes you had a wonderful winter break and a happy New Year!

During the month of January:

**During Phonics:**
We will continue to work on letter sounds in isolation and blending them together to create words. We will also continue to work on recognizing our sight words (high frequency words) and writing.

**During Reading:**
We will answer the following essential questions: What kinds of things grow on a farm? How are the seasons different? What happens in different kinds of weather? How can you stay safe in bad weather? In addition, we will discuss the importance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and how his dream changed the world. We will continue to develop our reading skills, such as asking and answering questions, using picture clues, and making personal connections. Please continue to work on these skills at home as you read with your child.

**During Math:**
We will work on measuring and counting various objects. We will be using unconventional tools to help us measure such as connecting cubes, popsicle sticks, etc. Please reinforce one to one correspondence, rote counting to 100, and number recognition at home.

**Helpful Reminders:**
- Please bring in a snack DAILY.
- Check DAILY for important papers in your child’s communication folder
- Please be sure to send in clothing that is weather appropriate.
- If you have any changes to your contact information, please make certain that you provide your child’s teacher with the updated information.
- Please check your child’s lunch account often and add money as needed. If sending money, we ask that you place it in a sealed envelope with your child’s name, teacher’s name and the amount. Please place the envelope in your child’s folder to ensure that the teacher is receiving the money.
-If your child is absent from school, please send an absence note with the child when they return to school.

**Important Dates:**

- January 4th - Schools reopen
- January 14th - Woodlawn Library visit
- January 18th & 19th - No school
- January 29th - Field trip money is due today
1st Grade News…

Language Arts: We are just about finished with Unit 3, our Folktales unit. We read many folktales including The Little Red Hen and the Gingerbread Man. We discussed elements that are found in a folktale such as repeating phrases, animals that act like humans and how it has changed over time.

In unit 4, Animals Everywhere, we will explore non-fiction stories about animals. We will identify the distinct features of different kinds of animals, examine how animals work together in teams and develop an understanding of how animals survive in nature.

Math: As we continue learning in Unit 3, we will develop more strategies for counting on and counting backwards with totals up to 20. We will use addition and subtraction to solve word problems using objects, drawings and equations. We will examine the meaning of the equal sign, and determine if equations involving addition and subtraction are true or false.

In unit 4, data analysis, we will develop skills to sort, classify, represent and interpret data. We will begin to tell time to the hour.

Don’t forget that we will go outside for recess, even in the cold (if it ever gets cold). Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately!
News from the 2nd Grade Team...

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful Winter Break and enjoyed spending time with family and friends. We have just begun a new unit in Language Arts called “Unique” where we will explore literary and informational texts and discover the qualities of uniqueness. We will make text connections and compare and contrast the unique qualities of two texts. In math we have begun our fourth unit called Data Analysis. We will be collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. We are doing very well using our devices on a daily basis. There are many resources on BCPSOne and the students are learning more about how to research and express themselves digitally. Please let us know if you have trouble accessing BCPSOne. The students also love playing on DreamBox. Please encourage your child to play on DreamBox whenever possible.

Important Notes:
*Please dress your child for the weather. We will be going outside, weather permitting. Students need coats, scarves, hats, mittens, etc.
*Flu season is here! Please send in extra tissue boxes and hand sanitizer, if possible.
*Please make sure your child is on time to school each day. Instruction begins at 8:50am.
*Please make sure your child wears tennis shoes on P.E. days.
*If your child is sick, please make sure to send in a note so it is an excused absence.
*If you need to change the way your child goes home, please remember to send a note or call the school (410-887-6808).

Thank you for all of your support and encouragement!

-The Second Grade Team
Ms. Regan- kregan2@bcps.org
Ms. Silver- jsilver@bcps.org
Ms. Talerico- mtalerico@bcps.org
Ms. Torrence- atorrence@bcps.org
Mrs. Weil- aweil@bcps.org
Welcome back 3rd Grade!

This month in Reading we are focusing on cause and effect relationships, sequencing (putting events in time order) and identifying the main idea of a text along with 3 details to support it. At home, when reading with your child, please ask questions like “What do you think will happen next?” “What happened in the beginning, middle and end of the story?” and “Why do you think that happened?” These questions will help improve your child’s understanding of a text. In math we are continuing to work with multiplication and division. We will be focusing more on division as the quarter progresses. Please continue working on multiplication facts with your child every night as well as reading for 20 minutes! Please continue to check BCPS One for updates with your child’s grade!
HAPPY NEW YEAR & WELCOME BACK FROM YOUR 4th Grade Team!!

Here’s What’s New:

ELA: Our 4th graders will be completing the culminating event for the unit, “We are the Stories we tell”. The students will be writing a fictional piece about one of the memorable people from the unit. After we will be beginning our 3rd reading unit, “Taking A Stand”. Please continue to have your child read for 15 minutes a night.

Math: Our 4th graders have been doing really well using the new strategies and skills in the division unit. We will spend the next few weeks working on sharing, partial quotients, and the algorithm. Again, the students understanding of subtraction and multiplication carries over into this unit so please continue to work on prior skills. Also, continue to work on basic multiplication facts to help improve student fluency with facts.

Social Studies/Science: The 4th grade is now currently working on their 3rd unit of either social studies or science. We are going to switch in the next week so Ms. Sutton and Mrs. Putnam’s classes will be taking the science course, “Fossil Detectives” and Mrs. Kuhn and Mrs. Linehan’s classes will be in the S.S. unit, “Earliest Americans”.

BCPSOne: All students and parents should have access to BCPS One. Again, this is an online tool for students and parents. Parents can use this tool to check the teacher’s gradebook. Please access this gradebook weekly to monitor your child’s grades. We will NOT be sending home progress reports for second and third quarter. It is the expectation that you check the grades online. Thanks for your continued support!
What’s Happening In 5th Grade...

Happy New Year!!! We are at the point in the school year that I refer to as the cup half full point. We have completed half of the school year and we are half the way closer to being middle schoolers. Fifth grade is a very unique grade in that we’re still in elementary school but our focus is preparing our students for middle school. Fifth grade is metaphorically a bridge. You may wonder why fifth grade and its teachers appear or seem to be more demanding. It’s not your imagination. We are and the curriculum is. When exploring the data of test scores of sixth grade students, their scores drop tremendously from fifth grade. One of the contributing factors is the lack of preparation for the rigor, discipline, and routine of middle school.

We can’t accomplish our goal of preparing our students for middle school without your help and cooperation.

Please help us by:

1. Stressing the importance of doing the absolute best on all assignments when they are assigned.

2. Checking for completion of homework each night.

3. Reminding your child to turn in home and classwork assignments every day when they are due.

4. Checking BCPSone weekly and discussing grades and assignments with your child.

5. Not asking for extra credit especially when daily required assignments are missing. Extra is beyond what’s needed. When daily assignments are not completed, giving another assignment is not extra.

Our former Dogwood students have received numerous compliments from their middle school teachers and administrators for being ready for middle school. Let’s continue that tradition.
Counselor’s Corner

The character trait of the month is:

RESPECT

Respect means treating others the way you want to be treated. Showing respect means following directions, using polite manners, sharing, listening, helping others, showing kindness and following the Dogwood Dream!

Parents: Ask your child to give you examples of how they can show respect both in school and at home. Always make sure to model appropriate behavior! Show your child you have teamed up with their teacher to make this year the best one yet!

Reminders: Fifth grade parents – please make sure you attend all magnet school assessments! 😊
Counselor’s Corner

The character trait of the month is:

**KINDNESS**

Kindness means being nice to others! Students can show kindness by being thoughtful and showing compassion towards others. Students can be caring, giving, helpful, and generous by helping others in need.

**Parents:** Have your child pick out a small toy to donate to a local shelter and/or church for the holidays! Discuss the importance of giving and thinking about others!

**Reminder:** Please contact Mrs. Purcell if you would like to discuss Villa Maria counseling services for your child! 😊
A note from your nurse:

It is too cold to play outside and no doubt about it—TV, video games and the Internet can be excellent educational resources and entertainment for children. But too much screen time has unhealthy side effects. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under age 2 have NO screen time and children older than 2 are limited to 1-2 hours a day of quality programming. Kids in the US watch TV an average of 4 hours a day.

It is good to make sure children have a variety of free time activities like reading, playing with friends, and activities that get them moving helping them develop a healthy mind and body. Keep your screen time productive. Limit the number of screen hours, but when you watch TV or use the Internet together discuss what you are viewing with your children.

Children are very creative and the possibilities for fun without the tube are many—so turn off the TV and play.
All grade levels are starting a unit in Duck pin bowling. Intermediate classes will learn the four step approach to releasing a bowling ball, which should end in opposition. Primary classes will learn a few techniques that will allow them to be successful in knocking down the pins. Intermediate classes will also learn how to keep cumulative score and primary classes will keep score by individual frames.

Parents please continue to support your child with wearing tennis shoes. Please allow students to bring their tennis shoes in a bag when they want to wear more fashionable shoes.

Thank you,
Mrs. Fleishell & Ms. Brewster
FROM INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

-Band Lessons will start up this week on January 5th.

-5th Grade Students who are not in band, but would like to learn how to play an instrument may still have an opportunity to do so. Please see Mr. Berkey to complete the proper paperwork and for more information.

LIBRARY!!!!!!

A lot of students have over due books bring them in please - all late fines will be forgiven
You are talking on the telephone. Before the conversation has ended, your child has asked you one or more questions.

You are talking to a friend in a store and your child is pulling on your clothes.

Many children attempt to get attention by constantly interrupting parents, other adults, or other children. Sometimes they do this by asking questions or making some type of physical gesture, such as pulling on one’s clothing or hand. When children interrupt, they are almost always attempting to get attention. This usually gets reinforced when the parent tells the child to stop or responds to the interruption by answering the question. When parents do this, it teaches children interrupting is acceptable.

To stop interruptions, parents must ignore the behavior. If clothes are being pulled, ignore the action and walk away. If questions are being asked, develop a “deaf ear.” Treat interruptions as if they didn’t exist. When handled this way, the behavior usually doesn’t last very long. When the child does not get the desired attention, the behavior does not get reinforced.

THE CONTINUING INTERRUPTION

Sometimes interruptions persist for so long that the parent’s nerves are becoming frazzled. This is the time to revert to time out. Send the child to a room or chair for a period of time. If the parent isn’t able to use a time-out procedure for the child, then it is time for the parent to escape. Walking away from the child or turning up the radio or television will enable the parent to ignore the child’s interruptions.

BEHAVIOR CHANGES TAKE TIME

Don’t expect ignoring the child’s behavior to produce immediate results. It will probably take two or three weeks before improvement is apparent. It will also take being consistent and not giving in to your child. Every time you give in, you reinforce the interrupting behavior. Parents must be strong.

GIVE ATTENTION FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Children need attention, but they have to learn how to get it in an appropriate fashion. Most children’s bad or inappropriate behaviors occur as a result of their attempts to get attention and recognition. When a behavior, whether good or bad, is recognized, it is likely to be repeated and used the next time children want attention. Therefore, it is important to reinforce only desirable behaviors. Select a time when the child has been good to initiate some special interaction, such as: reading a story, playing a game, or making something with the child.

No matter how often you engage in these positive attention activities, there will probably be times when your child will attempt to get your attention by using inappropriate interruptions. Just don’t give in at those times.

REMEMBER...

☑ Interruptions are designed to get attention.
☑ Don’t let yourself become frazzled.
☑ Ignore, ignore, ignore.
Many times, parents try to get their children to behave in a certain way by pointing out what the children are not doing properly or by criticizing them.

"Because you didn’t pick up your clothes, your room looks like a garbage dump."

"Will you ever learn that you are supposed to do your homework right after school?"

Unfortunately, this common tactic does not work. Psychological research has repeatedly shown that only a small percentage of children actually improve their behavior as a result of this type of interaction.

Encouraging children is a better approach. This means finding whatever good there is in a situation and mentioning only that. This may seem impossible when the child’s bedroom is an embarrassing sight and his/her grades are falling because homework isn’t being turned in on time. However, recognition of good qualities motivates children to try harder. This, in turn, enables them to improve.

**EXPECTING TOO MUCH TOO SOON**

It is important not to expect too much from your child. If you do, you might not provide the encouragement that your child needs to improve his/her performance. Remember that you can break any skill into small segments and work at accomplishing each small part until your child learns the desired behavior. Begin by expecting the child to either make his/her bed or pick up his/her clothes. When the first task has been accomplished, add another. It is important to encourage children by giving them tasks that they can perform. If parents expect too much, it stops development.

**SHAPING**

Shaping is a technique used by animal trainers. The same type of procedure, on a higher level, works well with children.

An animal trainer who wants to teach a dog to dance on its hind legs might wait until the dog lifts its body weight off its front legs. Then, even if the dog isn’t actually dancing, it is rewarded with a treat. This process continues until the dog learns to keep its front paws in the air. Sooner or later, the dog will be dancing.

It takes a little more skill and ability to know how to successfully apply behavior shaping principles to children. If a parent wants a child to do homework immediately after school, then he/she must pay attention every time the child comes home, sits down, and gets the work done. In order to motivate the child to complete all his/her homework, parents can ask the child to show them what has been accomplished after 10 minutes of work, then lengthen the time span to 15 minutes, and so forth until the child is able to complete the task without interruption.

**REMEMBER...**

- Criticism discourages performance.
- Encouragement fosters performance.
- Shaping is an excellent way to foster skill development.
We are hoping that all of our families had a wonderful and restful Winter break and are ready to jump back in with full swing to finish out the second half of our 2015-2016 school year. If you haven’t done so already, it’s not too late to join the PTA! Membership fees are $10 for individual members and $15 for a family membership of two adults. Remember, the PTA allows you the opportunity to make your voice heard in a professional and productive environment. Also, School Uniforms are still in full affect!!! We need your continued support of this school-wide initiative! Uniforms help to promote a safe and focused learning environment for our children.

✓ Our next PTA meeting will be held on Monday, January 11, 2016 @ 6:00 p.m.

✓ Also, please join the PTA once again for FIT FRIDAY on Friday, January 29, 2016. Learn great ways to stay fit and eat healthy during these cold winter months! More information will be forthcoming.

✓ THE PTA is looking for an energetic, motivated, organized and professional individual to assume the role of Corresponding Secretary. The job description for this position is as follows:

1) Maintaining an accurate roster of the names of the PTA members
2) Issue PTA membership cards notifying Treasurer of paid memberships
3) Creating and maintaining an accurate list of the names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of the executive board members; ensuring that the information is shared with the MD PTA and Baltimore Council
4) Notifying PTA membership of meetings at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.
5) Creating and distributing notices to the membership.
6) Responding to all incoming correspondence from PTA membership, including Parking Lot questions.
7) Recording minutes if the recording secretary is not present at a meeting.
8) Creating and distributing thank you notes to volunteers
9) Creating and distributing a PTA newsletter (if applicable)
10) Distributing flyers for teacher mailboxes
11) Creating donation letters
12) Chairs the Award Committee (if applicable)
13) Updates and manages PTA Social Media pages

✓ The PTA is also seeking an individual to serve as our Special Education Liaison. This person must have a child with a documented IEP and be willing to attend the monthly BCPS
Special Education meetings and report information back to the General Body during our monthly meetings.

Please submit inquiries for either position to the PTA via email at dogwoodpta@gmail.com.