March has roasted into Maryland like a lamb. There must be some truth to Punxsutawney Phil seeing his shadow as a predictor of weather. There is finally a hint of spring in the air.

As we begin what some may call March madness, our teachers are continuing to prepare students in grades 3, 4, and 5 for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers assessment known as (PARCC.) This set of assessments will measure whether students are on track in their learning and for success after high school. The results from the assessment will be used to help teachers customize instruction to meet students’ needs. Please encourage your children to do their very best on this assessment which is an important measure of our students’ achievement and Dogwood’s academic program. Certainly children benefit from school in many ways, but our main job is to provide our students with a rigorous, engaging, and meaningful instructional program that will enable them to reach their optimal potential and prepare them for the future.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our staff members, students, and families for their efforts and support leading up to… and during…. this most important assessment. The PARCC assessments are aligned with the new, more rigorous Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and measure student proficiency in Mathematics and English Language Arts. We will continue to administer the Science portion of MSA until a replacement is found.
Parents, let’s mark your calendars! Our annual Math Night will be hosted Thursday, March 10th from 6pm-8pm at the Food Lion in Owings Mills. Food Lion is located at 9251 Lakeside Boulevard in the Lakeside Shopping Center. Come enjoy interactive math activities, store scavenger hunt, math “Make & Take” segment for students, giveaways, and more! RSVP is required for this event by Wednesday, March 9th. Please return all RSVP forms to students’ teachers, or RSVP via email by contacting Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org. We look forward to see everyone at this event.

Parents and Grandparents! We need your help! We are seeking volunteers to work with students in the classroom and in our cafeteria. Our classroom hours are between 8:50-3:00 and our cafeteria hours are from 11:00 - 1:30. We would appreciate any time you have to spare to support our school needs. Please contact the office if you would like to volunteer.

Reminder! Our school day begins at 8:30 to 3:10. We are asking parents to ensure students arrive on time daily so they will not miss out on direct instruction that begins at 8:50, and student assessment at 3:00.

Happy Spring!
Parent Corner

This school year is “Marching” along Dogwood Family! Literacy is one of the major building blocks in education. Encouraging children to read is an important factor in student growth and achievement. Reading creates an educational advantage that will last a lifetime. Research shows that children who are encouraged to read do better in school daily.

This month, the National Education Association, in addition to millions of schools across the country celebrate Read Across America Day. This event is hosted annually on March 2nd, the birthday of renowned children’s author Dr. Seuss. Parents are encouraged to motivate and promote reading awareness.

Here is a list of special tips, activities, and events in our local community:

http://www.seussville.com/parents/themes/tips-for-reading-with-your-children
http://www.seussville.com/#/games
http://www.bcpl.info/
https://www.barnesandnoble.com/account/kidsclub/ (Sign up of discounts)
http://stores.barnesandnoble.com/store/2166 (Pikesville Store activities)
http://stores.barnesandnoble.com/store/2831 (Ellicott City Store activities)

✔ Visit your local library for various literary activities and free resources.
✔ OUR LENDING LIBRARY IS OPEN!! Please visit Parent Services or contact Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org for more details.
✔ Utilize BCPS’s Parent University for numerous academic resources. Please visit http://www.bcps.org/parentu/academics/.
✔ Log into BCPS One under BCPS Digital Content for additional websites and resources.
   If you need access to BCPS One, please contact Mr. Connelly at nconnelly2@bcps.org.

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

- Mar. 4th: 3 hr. Early Dismissal for Students
  Teacher Professional Development

- Mar. 7th: March PTA Meeting (6pm)
  Your voice matters. Come out and support!

- Mar. 10th: Math Night at Food Lion (6pm-8pm)
  RSVP will be required for this event
  Food Lion Owings Mills
  9251 Lakeside Blvd., Owings Mills, MD 21117
  Come enjoy interactive math activities for students and parents. Enjoy our “Make & Take Session”, prizes, and special giveaways. Please submit RSVP forms or email Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org to RSVP for this event.

- Mar. 16th: Dogwood Variety Show Auditions (3:30pm or 6:30pm)
  Please contact Mrs. Fleishell for information on this event

- Mar. 18th: PTA Fit Friday (6:30pm-8:30pm)
  Fitness for the whole family!

- Mar. 2016: Raising A Reader Parent Workshop (TBA)
  RSVP will be required for this event
  Please email Mrs. Jones at tjones19@bcps.org to RSVP for this event

BCPS Spring Break (March 25th - April 3rd)
SCHOOL CLOSED 😊
Have an enjoyable and safe break!
*School will reopen April 4, 2016*
Can you believe third quarter is here already? And that means we are more than half way through the school year. As we tip toe into spring, the PTA is running full steam ahead with lots in store! In February, we hosted our third fundraiser of the year with our Heart to Heart Dance. Children and parents enjoyed the dancing, dance contests, face painting, puzzles, coloring, and guess how many kisses in the candy jar competition. Thank you to all who came out to support!

We kicked off March with our Pizza Hut fundraiser on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. We had a great time throwing down pizza and wings while celebrating Dr. Seuss’ birthday in grand style with Seuss hats and lots of reading of books from our beloved author! We appreciate all who came out to make this a fun evening!
Last month, we learned of some heartbreaking news that will drastically impact our school next Academic Year. During our February PTA meeting, we discussed the loss of our Title I funds and what this will mean for our children, staff and Dogwood Community. Title I funds are Federal dollars from the Department of Education to provide financial assistance to school’s with large numbers or large percentages of children from low income families. This information is determined based on Free and Reduced lunch data and the data is obtained through a federal document that comes home at the beginning of every school year to be completed by parents and returned to the school. Over the last few years, there has been a decline in the percentage of low income families in our school receiving free and reduced lunch. While this may sound like a positive for our school, the impact in fact is actually quite devastating. Through Title I funds, our school has been able to hire 12 Para educators (this includes the classroom assistants in the Pre-K and all Kindergarten classes), A Parent Service Coordinator, Technology in every classroom and an abundance of resources for our teachers to support authentic and engaging instruction in our children’s classrooms. In essence, our school will be losing $300, 000+ and several key positions and resources next year. Not only are we faced with this financial deficit, our school will increase to 700+ students, 2 Assistant Principals and 2 guidance counselors. Our school will also be impacted with trailer classrooms next year. With such a large increase in our student body and decreased manpower, we have to work together to provide support to our students staff and school. While we may be able to reclaim our Title I status in years to come, we must begin now planning and strategizing for next school year. For the remainder of the school year, each PTA meeting held will spend a portion of its time developing a potential support frame work for our school. WE NEED YOUR HELP!!! The PTA is developing a subcommittee focused specifically on finding money and resources to help our school next year while also working to get our Title I funds back. We need sponsors, donations, grant writers and volunteers to help us achieve this goal! More importantly, we need individuals with any types of skills, resources and services that can be offered in-kind to help support school programing and instruction. Attend our next PTA meeting on Monday, March 7 @
6pm and let your voice be heard! Or email the PTA at DogwoodPTA@gmail.com. For more information on Title I, please visit http://www.bcps.org/offices/titleone/.

**UPCOMING PTA EVENTS**
- Monday, March 7, 2016 PTA General Body Meeting 6:00p.m.
- Friday, March 18, 2016 Fit Friday
- March 7- March 21, 2016 Spring Basket drive (Be on the lookout for flyers to learn how you can support this program!)

**BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM AT DOGWOOD!!!** Please take a minute to complete a survey regarding the current before and after school program at Dogwood. This will help the school in planning a sustainable program for next school year. All responses are confidential. [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T82PL8G](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T82PL8G)

**DADS AND MALE ROLE MODELS NEEDED!!!!** The PTA is seeking dads or male role models to help with our *High Five from the Guys* initiative. The PTA is dedicated to kicking off the return from Spring Break on a high note. We are looking for Males to high five our students as they pull up in cars, get off buses and leave Dogwood Care in an effort to motivate and encourage them to finish out the year strong. This is an opportunity for our children to see males in a positive self-image and in support of them. We are also looking for Men to volunteer in classrooms, read to our students and volunteer during lunch shifts. Any interested males, please contact the PTA via email at DogwoodPTA@gmail.com

**LET’S FINISH THIS YEAR STRONG WITH ALL PAWS ON DECK!!!**
Dear Kindergarten Families,

The Kindergarten team hopes that you are ready for warmer weather and Spring activities!!

During the month of March, the Kindergarten classrooms will.....

**During Phonics:**
We will identify letter sounds, including long and short vowels and various consonants. The students will continue with discriminating, segmenting, manipulating, and blending sounds.

**During Wonders Reading:**
We will be reading several different texts, including Bear Snores On, When Daddy’s Truck Picks Me Up, Ana Goes to Washington D.C, and Bringing Down the Moon. Kindergarten is finishing up Unit 7 on Animals and is moving on to unit 8. Unit 8 focuses on visiting different places, our country, and what we see in our atmosphere. These stories will help build our literacy skills such as using picture clues, acting out new words, making personal connections, finding sentence patterns, singing or chanting words, identifying sight words, and filling in a word that makes sense. Please continue to work on these skills at home as you read with your child.

**During Math:**
We will continue to work on shapes, both 2D and 3D. Shapes we see around us and how we can identify them by sides, vertices, and points.

**During Science/Social Studies:**
The students will participate in a week full of Dr. Seuss activities and will be attending a field trip to see “Are You My Mother” on March 10th. We will also celebrate St. Patrick’s Day, and the start of spring!

**Helpful Reminders:**
-Please bring in a snack **DAILY**.

-Check **DAILY** for important papers in your child’s communication folder.

-The weather has changed very drastically since the beginning of the school year.

-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.

- When Dogwood has a two hour delay due to inclement weather, breakfast is **NOT** served.

**Important Dates:**

- Thursday, March 10\textsuperscript{th} – Kindergarten Field Trip
- Friday, March 25\textsuperscript{th} – Spring Break begins (No School)
- Monday, April 4\textsuperscript{th} – Students return to school.
Dear 1st Grade Families,

It's almost Spring! We are looking forward to a magnificent March. We are celebrating Read Across America and Dr. Seuss' birthday during the 1st week of March. Please try to read with your child for 20 minutes nightly. "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." - Dr. Seuss

In Reading, we have started a new unit. Students will explore the Essential Question, **What can we learn from the world around us?** They will read and write “How-To” books to figure out how to make things in their world.

In Math, we are developing ideas about linear measurement, telling time to the hour and half-hour, and partitioning a whole into equal parts and naming each part with a fraction.

Thank you for your continued support at home!
News from the 2nd Grade Team…

It is hard to believe it is already March! This school year is flying by! We will be beginning our Language Arts unit “Mysteries”. We will be looking at the story structure of mysteries and will be identifying how an author builds suspense. In math we have begun our fifth unit called “How Many Floors? How Many Rooms?”. We are learning about patterns, functions, and change. We are doing very well using our devices on a daily basis. The students love playing on DreamBox. This is a wonderful resource to support your child’s math progression. Please encourage your child to play on DreamBox whenever possible.

**Important Notes:**

*All students should be completing nightly math homework, weekly spelling homework, and reading every night.

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

* 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.

*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,

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 to Spring 3rd grade families!!!

In reading keep an eye out for books about history! We are in our 4th Reading Unit and we are focusing on historical perspectives. We are looking at Westward Expansion and how the pioneers felt when they moved to a completely new state! We are also looking at other aspects of history and are going to be reading biographies for a majority of this unit. In Math we are still working on multiplication and division but we are also beginning to look at fractions! We will be identifying fractions in picture form and on a number line! If you would like to work with your child at home please continue to work on their multiplication facts, counting money and reading every night for 20 minutes. Make sure to check BCPS One every other week for grade updates!
In 4th Grade News…

**STEM Fair:** In March, all teachers will be preparing students for their STEM fair projects. We are working on the Science Unit: Too Hot to Handle, which follows the process students will have to use for their projects. The students will be conducting an experiment in class and will also be expected to complete their own STEM experiment at home. Each teacher will send home information about STEM fair assignment and the steps we will take to complete the assignment.

**ELA:** The students just completed their “Take a Stand” unit in which they researched different social issues and created an infographic to share the facts they found. Now we are on to our next unit, “From Problem to Solution”. In this unit, students will be reading about peoples discoveries to complex problems. Also, we will begin to include more PARCC practice into instruction over the next two months to help prepare students for May. Please have students continue to read for 15 minutes a night at home.

**Math:** We will be continuing to work on fractions in the next month. We will also continue to work on our multi step problems and written explanations. At home, please continue to work on having your child talk about numbers!

**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!
5th Grade News…

Here are your March reminders:

- STEM Fair will be held April 14, 2016. Projects are due by Monday, April 4, 2016. Students are encouraged to do all projects at home. Poster board will be provided to each student.

- In reading, we are ending Unit 3: Historical Transformations. We will begin Unit 4: Transformative Discoveries.

- In math, we will be ending Unit 4: Fraction Operations at the end of March. During Unit 5, we will study Measurement Data & Geometry.

- Parents, let’s start saving for the 5th grade Philadelphia Field Trip in June.

- Continue to monitor student progress on BCPS One. Grades are constantly being entered into BCPS One. If there are significant drops in student’s grades, please contact your child’s teacher. Also, confer with students on daily assignments. In addition, all academic information is updated on Class Dojo daily. Please review Dojo points and messages daily.

- Please continue to monitor Class Dojo. In addition, please check student backpacks for any missing assignments that have not been turned in to the teachers. In addition, all academic information is updated on Class Dojo daily. Please review Dojo points and messages daily.

- In addition, please log onto BCPS One to have students log in to DreamBox.

-Your 5th Grade Team
Counselor’s Corner

The character trait of the month is:

**Perseverance**

Perseverance means never giving up! Students can show perseverance by always trying their best, working hard, completing class work even when concepts are challenging, getting a job done, having confidence in themselves, and making smart choices.

**Parents:** Talk with your children about the value of perseverance and not giving up as school work becomes more challenging. Give them examples of when you had to persevere through a challenge. PARCC testing is right around the corner!

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

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**MY BOOKS PROGRAM**

Dogwood has been chosen to participate in the Title 1 My Books Reading Program!
Your child will receive a packet of books which align with our science curriculum. These books are for your child to keep and add to your home library!

Feel free to contact Jamie Purcell or Katie Breden if you have any questions 😊

Jpurcell2@bcps.org   Kbreden@bcps.org

*Stay tuned for information regarding the spring edition of My Books!*
Instrumental Music News

Band Lesson Reminders: Brass lessons are on Wednesdays, String Lessons are on Thursdays, and Woodwind/Percussion Lessons are on Friday.

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MR. SMITH’S ART ROOM NEWS
Dogwood fifth grade students receive an informative message on art, life, and Black History Month by Baltimore Artist Larry Poncho Brown