

Gwynns Falls Elementary School Newsletter

Newsletter January 19, 2012
Volume 1, Issue 1

Anthony Felder, Principal

Nakeisha Savage, Resident Principal

DeShawn Williams, Educational Associate

Michelle Thornton-Lynch, Educational Associate

Kelly Holly, Educational Associate



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Gwynns Falls Afterschool Academy (GFAA)

January 10, 2012 was the official start date of the *Gwynns Falls Afterschool Academy*. The Afterschool Academy meets Mondays-Thursdays. The program provides remediation and/or enrichment opportunities for students in the areas of reading and math.

We received an overwhelming response to the applications for the Afterschool Academy. As a result, several students have been placed on a waiting list pending available spaces. Parents of students on the waiting list will be notified as space becomes available.

The Afterschool Academy does NOT meet on Fridays, half days, days that schools are closed, scheduled faculty meeting days (February 13th, March 5th and May 14th) or on days that are delayed or dismissed early due to inclement weather.

Additionally, parents of students accepted into the program are responsible for volunteering for two hours per child, per month for in order for the student(s) to remain in the program.

Dear Parents: A Letter from GFES Leadership

Gwynns Falls Elementary School is asking for **HELP** monitoring suspicious activity around the school after a string of recent break-ins.

The school, which has been a target since early 2011, has had thousands of dollars of equipment stolen from the media center and classrooms on both floors. Earlier this month, two classrooms were broken into and the burglars made off with important teaching equipment.

“It’s a shame,” said Denita Plain, 4th grade teacher, who had equipment stolen from her classroom. “The stuff they are taking is really important to our instruction and when it comes down to it, it is hurting the kids.”

Due to the break-ins, Gwynns Falls no longer has “GFK TV,” a student-run TV station that hosted the school’s morning announcements. Teachers who were once able to use technology

to engage and challenge students to meet their highest potential are now forced to use chart paper and chalkboards.

Despite a large investment into building security including video cameras and metal grates, the criminals have not yet been deterred. The school hopes that the addition of motion detectors and night-vision security cameras will be able to catch the thief in the act.

The break-ins have occurred between the hours of 9 p.m. and 5 a.m. and have usually occurred near holidays or extended breaks.

“We want people in this community to know what is going on and keep their ears to the ground,” Plain said.

“Hopefully, if we can raise some awareness for what is happening, together, the school and the community, can work together to look out for Gwynns Falls and our students.”

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Science Benchmark Test
5th graders – Jan. 19th –
Jan. 20th
- ◆ End of 2nd Quarter –
January 20, 2012
- ◆ 2nd Quarter Report Cards
distributed January 30,
2012
- ◆ Professional Development
School Closed
Jan. 26th & Jan. 27th
- ◆ Math and Literacy
Benchmark Tests
(1st grade – 5th grade)
Jan. 30th – Feb. 10th



As a Parent....

“Wake and act EACH DAY with the understanding that your actions will be absorbed by your children... and your children will grow to be contributing adults to the level of your influence.”

Author Unknown

More Upcoming Events

- ◆ Ident-A-Kid ID Picture Day
February 1st
- ◆ 1st Semester Honor’s Breakfast – Date TBD
- ◆ Black History Month Program – Date TBD
- ◆ Ribbon Celebration – Date TBD
- ◆ 3rd Grade Trip to the Aquarium – February 13th
- ◆ President’s Day – School Closed - February 20th
- ◆ Scholastic Book Fair
February 27th – March 2nd
- ◆ MSA Reading and Math Tests (3rd – 5th graders)
March 12th – March 21st
- ◆ SPRING BREAK –
April 2nd – April 9th

Pre-Kindergarten News

Hip, Hip, Hooray for Pre-K. We are learning letter sounds, sight words and many math skills. This month our unit is “Healthy Habits, Healthy Minds”. We will be learning the importance of exercise and healthy foods to help us succeed in school.

Note: Please continue to read with your child(ren) each night and help them with homework activities.

Dates to remember:

Pre- K System Assessments - January 30 to Feb. 10th. Please make sure your students come to school daily. Also, please review sight words, upper and lower case letters and letters sounds.

Baby on board: Amya’s mom had a baby girl.

We enjoy teaching your children.

Ms. Fulton, Ms. Hawkins,
Ms. Bennett and Ms. Smith

Kindergarten News

The new thematic unit is “Healthy habits, healthy minds.” During this unit, students will be learning about healthy lifestyles including hygiene, food choices, exercise and taking care of their bodies.

First Grade News

1st grade is preparing for the Stanford 10 Assessment. Look out for homework to help students with test prep skills. Please be sure to have students to read for at least 20 minutes every night.

In reading, students are currently studying contractions and compound words.

In math, students are collecting and organizing data into picture graphs. Students are also identifying and reading simply fractions.

Second Grade News

The second grade team at Gwynns Falls Elementary School is working hard to prepare all students for their upcoming “Benchmark Assessments” and Stanford 10.

Coach class is offered for reading and language art by Ms. Young on Wednesdays after school from 3:00 to 4:00.

Students are currently receiving intervention for both reading and math during the school day to ensure that every GFK is successful.

The mid-year reading assessment “DIBELS” is currently taking place. We need all of our students in school on time every day.

In social living, 2nd graders just finished a health and nutrition unit and completed an in-class project classifying magazine pictures of foods into the correct food groups. Prior to this, students enjoyed a STEM unit on heat and light and made bracelets with UV color-changing beads to take home!

Also, our next trip is scheduled for January 25, 2011 to the Museum of Industry.

Third Grade News

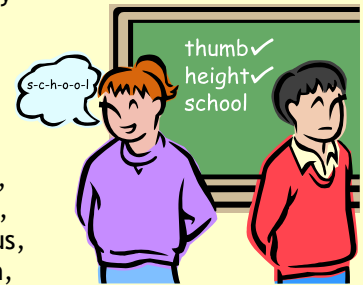
Third graders have begun preparing for their first MSA experience!

In Mrs. Logan’s Language Arts class, the students have been monitoring their own progress on weekly MSA practice test. Each student is aiming to achieve 80% or better on the practice test. Many have already succeeded and surpassed their goals.

Mrs. Carpenter is working on sharpening math skills with the students. Please work on two digit subtraction with

regrouping, this is a tough skill but many of our students are eager to attain mastery!

*****Reminder:** The final round of the Spelling Bee will take place on Friday, January 20th. The 22 finalist are Malech, Lynnya, Tyirell, Dontrell, Samara, Time, Annmarie, Gregory, Shamia, Eric, Marcus, Franklin, Sherrod, Kory, Angelo, Taliyah, Markel, Keojah, Savion, Tatum, Kierra, and Jalen.



Fourth Grade News

The fourth grade students recently completed a Social Studies Project about Maryland and they did a great Job! Students had to write a paragraph about 10 interesting facts that they learned about Maryland. In Math, the focus has been fractions. We have learned to add and subtract fractions. We also learned how to show fractions on a number line. Most students struggle with long division and solving word problems. In Science, students are studying Erosion in STEM Class. In Reading, the focus is on the Elements of Poems and Plays. Please make sure students attend school daily because we are preparing for the MSA and our GOAL is for ALL students to score Advance or Proficient.

As a Student....

“It is not so important to have all the answers as to be hungry for them.”

-Carol Ann Tomlinson

“If everyone is thinking alike then somebody is not thinking.”

-George S Paton

“You miss 100% of all the shots you never take.”

-Wayne Gretzky

Fifth Grade News

We are preparing for MSA by completing drills each day. Starting next week, students will start creating MSA chants.

Senior activities that will be discussed at the parent meeting scheduled on Wednesday, January 18, 2012 at 5pm.

Special Education News

The Special Education Department is making great progress on completing the ALT-MSA Portfolios. Special Olympics training has started.

First Event: Bowling: Friday, February 10, 2012

Art News

150 students from grades K - 5 will be chosen to attend a trip to see “A Perfect Balance” at Goucher College in May. The play, inspired by the work of American artist Alexander Calder follows a young artist, Sandy, on his quest to capture his vision of life. Challenged by his father to create a “masterpiece,” Sandy playfully experiments with drawing, painting and sculpting, accompanied by his puppet-like circus creations - his muse Fioni-of-the-flying-trapeze, his friend Ringmaster Loyal and his foe, Monsieur Critique. Only when Sandy risks taking his shapes “off the page” does he find his way to the show’s spectacular conclusion -- a mobile, 17 feet across, that suspends into the audience. Selected students will receive permission notices in April.



As a Teacher....

“A teacher’s purpose is not to create students in his own image, but to develop students who can create their own image.”

Author Unknown

“If a child can’t learn the way we teach, we should teach the way they learn.”

Ignacio Estrada

“Don’t try to fix the students, fix ourselves first. The good teacher makes the poor student good and the good student superior. When our students fail, we, as teachers, too, have failed.”

Marva Collins

Hearing Impaired Program

In Ms. Parshalls' class, students began the year with learning to sign "Happy New Year". Students in her class have continued to read stories about winter but have begun their new unit, "Food". In this unit, students are learning different kinds of fruits and vegetables and will be creating a classroom book about each of two food groups. The students will combine their skill of "drawing what they see" and a bit of shared writing, in which students copy a simple dictated sentence and add their own portion (ie. I like apples.)

In Science, students are still studying paper and created a beautiful collage of "All Kinds of Paper."

In Math, students are working on the computer to learn number order and number recognition.

Parents are asked to practice the "food signs" that were sent home with students. Additionally, parents are encouraged to name foods as they are served or eaten. This suggested type of "here and now" practice has a tremendous impact on learning!

Panthers' Basketball Team

Come out and support our Gwynns Falls Basketball Team. Currently, the team is 2-2. Below is the upcoming game schedule:

- Thurs. Jan. 19th at 4:00 p.m.
Gwynns Falls AT Arlington
- Thurs. Jan. 26th at 4:00 p.m.
Gwynns Falls AT Frederick
- Thurs. Feb. 2nd at 4:00 p.m.
HOME vs. Armistead Gardens

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Gwynns Falls will be providing additional support to our GFK's by offering math and reading instruction on Saturdays. This program is scheduled to begin on January 21st and will run through March 10th. The students in grades three through five have been targeted for this program to ensure success on the Maryland State Assessment which will be given in March.

Staff Birthdays !!

Happy, Happy Birthday!!!!

- Ms. Freeman - January 14th
- Ms. Hawkins - January 22nd
- Mrs. Weidig - January 24th
- Ms. Brim - January 25th
- Ms. Hughes - February 12th
- Mr. Hartley - February 14th
- Ms. Reviere - March 3rd

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Third grade

The third graders have been busy bees as they continue to study the food chain and how bugs are important to it

Fourth grade

The fourth grade geologists have been studying the effects of water erosion by exploring layers upon layers of information on the Grand Canyon.

Fifth grade

The fifth graders have been actively engaged in animal and plant adaptation for survival in different biomes.

BKCL Chess Club

Our Mighty Panther chess squad will be involved in the city-wide tournament held at Baltimore Polytechnical High School on Saturday January 28.



Gwynns Falls Elementary School #60
2700 Gwynns Falls Pkwy.
Baltimore, MD 21216

Phone:

(410) 396-0638

(410) 396-0639

Fax:

(410) 545-7853

E-mail:

Anthony Felder

ASFelder@bcps.k12.md.us

Nakeisha Savage

NSavage01@bcps.k12.md.us

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While Walking in Excellence*

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