

The Patriot

NEWSLETTER



19110 LIBERTY MILL ROAD * GERMANTOWN * MD * 2087 * 301-353-8050

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CDC: COVID-19

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[Self-Checker and Testing](#)

[Care for self and others](#)

Germantown Elementary

19110 Liberty Mill Road
Germantown, MD 20874
Phone: 301-353-8050

GES Website

montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/germantownes/

Contact: Jaime Howenstein

jaime_b_howenstein@mcpsmd.org

Listserv: Join and stay up-to-date! To sign up, submit your email at the bottom on our website www.ges-pta.org and click blue button GO

Patriot Newsletter Editor:

Kris daCosta-Warshauer

KdacW35@gmail.com



Principal's Message

Dear GES Families,

I cannot believe this **school year is coming to an end**. It has been an interesting year indeed! When I work from our empty school building, it certainly makes me miss you all more but it also reminds me that a school is just a building without the diverse faces and voices of our school community. However, I am thankful that our virtual schoolhouse has kept us connected until we can see one another again.

Yesterday we had a very **successful food distribution event** co-sponsored by non-profits, Nourish Now and Black Rock Center for the Arts. One PTA member collected the food boxes for her family from GES yesterday. She was amazed at the abundance of fresh vegetables and fruits: lettuce, cucumbers, zucchini, carrots, potatoes, onions, apricots, and apples. In addition, the box contained several non-perishable canned foods and a loaf of bread. She is thankful for the donation as her husband recently was laid off from his job.

Approximately 85% grocery boxes (1 per family) were distributed. The **next**

distribution will be on Tuesday, June 16th from 2-4 or until supplies run out. They will increase the number of boxes for distribution if they see a need (in other words, if all boxes were distributed, they would increase the # for the June 16th distribution). The goal is to provide this food distribution every two weeks. Let's show up Germantown! I am advocating for this resource for our families. I want you to get what you need, and I know there is more of a need out there. Please email me if you have extenuating circumstances, we may be able to deliver a small number of boxes to families with a critical need.

During the summer you'll hear updates about the plans for instruction in September once the state and school system have decided. Until then, if you have neighbors with children that will turn 5 by September 1, 2020 or **new neighbors move in** with elementary aged children, please **have them enroll online** at https://bit.ly/MCPS_Registration_Survey More information is in this Patriot issue, following my letter.

Continued on next page...

Dates to Remember

Friday, June 5	No live ZOOM classes; Staff close out
Monday, June 8	No live ZOOM classes; Staff close out
Thurs, June 11	Grade 5 Promotion
Monday, June 15	Last day of online learning/school
Tuesday, June 16	Staff EOY Car Parade (time TBD)
	Food Boxes distributed at GES, 2-4 pm

Principal's Message continued ...

Tomorrow (June 4) and Friday (June 5) we will be **collecting GES student library and guided reading books** that have been home since March. A large bin will be on the sidewalk at school from **11am to 4pm on Thursday** and from **8:30am to 1:30pm on Friday**. This will help us to reassemble our school materials while staff prepare to close out for the summer.

Speaking of staff preparing for the summer, as was previously shared, staff will be closing out of their teaching spaces this Friday and Monday (June 5th and 8th). We will be **packing up student materials from desks and cubbies for return to families** sometime after June 16th. Once MCPS assigns GES with a date for student materials' return, I will communicate with families. Families may opt to keep their child's materials here for transfer to next year's classroom. I will also send out a survey asking families if they would like that option (keep materials here) as we get closer to that date. Stay tuned!

As we wind down to the last school days of distance learning, students may be anxious for summer break. I hope you will find the ideas and resources shared in this Patriot issue are helpful in planning a fun summer with some reading, relaxation, and exploring. Please know Ms. Taylor, acting assistant principal, and I continue to be reachable by email. Our last weekly office hour is on next Thursday (June 11) between 4:30-5:30pm. If you have questions or concerns, please join our office hour tomorrow or next week via Zoom at:

<https://mcpsmd.zoom.us/j/96749721798?pwd=c0IvK2t3SXZlMU9qWWNwaVBJV1FCQT09>

Meeting ID: 967 4972 1798

Password: 000268

Before, my letter comes to an end I would be remiss if I didn't address the traumatic week we experienced in our nation. The BOE and the Superintendent addressed the recent horrific events in a statement to the community **decrying social and racial injustice**, and stressing that we will continue and intensify our commitment to equity and excellence, ensuring we are building a school system where all truly means all. This article is a good resource for parents that may be struggling to talk about what their children have recently seen and heard: <https://www.gse.upenn.edu/news/talking-children-after-racial-incidents>

That's all for now; thanks for allowing our staff and I to serve you and your children. It has been a pleasure. Have a restful summer!

Take care,
Amy D. Bryan
Principal
Amy_D_Bryan@mcpsmd.org



Follow Amy Bryan 's tweets @TeamGermantown1



Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration is open for children who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2020. MCPS' kindergarten program is widely recognized as among the best in the nation, with students making excellent progress toward the district's reading and mathematics goals. We believe our youngest learners should receive a rich and well-rounded early learning experience to prepare them to be successful, productive 21st century citizens. MCPS has launched a new online registration/enrollment process to support families who wish to enroll their children. Families can complete the process in three ways:

1. **Online, starting with this [Registration Survey](#)**
2. **Over the phone by calling 240-740-5999**
3. **By paper forms. Complete the [Registration Survey](#) or call 240-740-5999 to request forms be mailed to your home.**

If you are uncertain about your plans for the fall, but will likely send your child when school opens, please enroll him or her now. Families that have received the registration materials are asked to complete the forms and submit them as soon as possible.

[Learn More about the MCPS Kindergarten Program](#)
[Enroll Your Child Now](#)

Montgomery County Public Schools
Expanding Opportunity and Unleashing Potential

Is your child going to be 5 years old by September 1, 2020?



Kindergarten registration is now open!

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Families can complete the process in three ways:

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If you are uncertain about your plans for the fall, but will likely send your child when school opens, please enroll him or her now.

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Learn More about the MCPS Kindergarten Program
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/enroll/kindergarten.aspx

Resources from Jennifer Atanda, School Counselor



Virtual Career Day at GES

We have some exciting presenters! We have GES parents, Montgomery County community members, a former White House Photographer, and many more!

Learn about their interesting careers online. The resource link includes videos of people who describe their jobs and passion, reading short descriptions in what a job entails, and links to kid-friendly career sites. Many career sites have games, videos, worksheets, and career search information. [Virtual Career Day](#)

Visit Mrs. Atanda's Counseling Office



Please click on the images in her virtual office on the Google slide to access a variety of resources that include relaxation videos, coloring pages, calming strategies, and more! [Virtual Counseling Office](#)

Questions related to the above resources? Please contact Jennifer_T_Atanda@mcpsmd.org

PTA News from GES PTA President and President-elect

Hello GES Families,

As this unique school year comes to a close, I want to thank everyone who was a part of this awesome PTA at Germantown Elementary. I was very excited to see some new faces at the PTA meetings and volunteering at GES school events. We even had a few kindergarten moms jump right in, which I love to see! A special thank you to **Kris daCosta-Warshauer** for her work on the monthly Patriot Newsletter and **Nigel Ohrum** in his capacity as Vice President, as well as the website, social media, and GES PTA app over the past few years. As both of you move on to middle school with your 5th grade Patriots, please know your contributions to our PTA were appreciated and will be missed. (Nigel, don't go too far. We will see you again!)

Due to the COVID pandemic and remote learning, we unfortunately were not able to hold a number of our regular events. I do hope this quarantined period provided some families with a chance to rest and recharge. Our PTA board will regroup and plan for an even more amazing year next year! While we don't know exactly what the next school year will look like, there will be plenty of opportunities, big and small, to volunteer. Feel free to reach out to myself, Danielle, or anyone else you know who was an active volunteer to get an inside scoop. As I have said in the past, getting involved with the PTA is a great way to meet more of the children's teachers, and the parents of their friends. It really helps build that sense of community.



As we close out this year, we still have a few projects in the works. Due to so many businesses going into furlough status, the yearbook was delayed. We continue to work with LifeTouch and the publisher to have the yearbook completed. Purchases of the yearbook will take place through the new GEST PTA online store under MemberHub. A link and more information will be provided as it becomes available, so keep an eye on your email and/or the GES PTA social media accounts.

The annual spring book fair, traditionally held in the Media Center at our school, has also been able to go virtual. Click on the image below to shop the Scholastic Book Fair and support the GES PTA. While they are not providing the typical buy one get one free event that we all look forward to, the book fair is active now through September 4th with free shipping on books-only orders over \$25. Included in this newsletter



is a flyer and parting letter from our book fair coordinator **Lourdes Pesseh**, which follows my letter. Let's raise a little money for the PTA and encourage our kids reading!

Don't forget summer is more than books. Summer is a good time for family fun. Our editor, Kris, has shared a couple sources on activities and other ideas to keep your Patriots busy at home. Her letter follows.

Until then, continue to use Amazon Smile and Box Tops for your shopping needs, same time raise money for next year's events. Let Amazon help you shop online for gifts for the graduate in your family. When you plan fun activities for this summer, let Amazon help you with the shopping plan.



If you buy groceries online, you can email receipts to receipts@boxtops4education.com for Box Tops credit.

Best,
Meghan Lowery
Danielle Story
gesptapresident@yahoo.com

Keep up with the current news and events:

 Germantown ES PTA @GermantownPTA

 Germantown Elementary School PTA (public)
Germantown Elementary PTA Group (private)

Dear GES Staff, Students and Families,

It has been my pleasure to serve as Book Fair Chair and in the PTA over the past few years...it has gone by so fast! I am sorry we could not have our BOGO event this spring. I looked forward to it as much as you do. I will miss running this event as we will be leaving our GES family this year! I have no doubt that the GES-PTA will continue to bring you awesome fairs in the future. The book fairs has proved to be a popular fundraiser for GES.

Thank you to all the volunteers (teachers, parents and students) who helped make the fairs a success each time. I couldn't have done it without the help!

Please contact me with any questions regarding the virtual fair during this summer.

Sincerely,

Lourdes & the Pesseh family, Lpesseh2023@gmail.com or 240-723-6311

Book Fair Chair

Scholastic Book Fairs

It's a Jungle Out There!

Read to Survive!

Introducing our first ever... **Scholastic Summer Read-a-Palooza Virtual Book Fair!**

The book fair will be available the entire summer

June 1st-September 4, 2020!

Check out this link to see what's new...

https://players.brightcove.net/1543299976/Eyj59PHsg_default/index.html?videoid=6128684602001

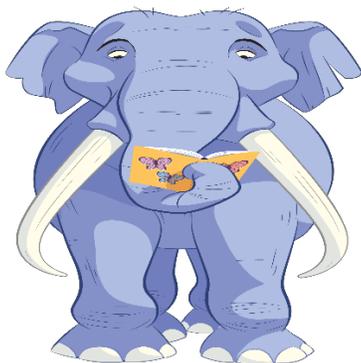
Your purchases will help GES-PTA earn money that will support activities at GES next school year.

Through the virtual fair, all orders are delivered directly to students' doorsteps. This process helps eliminate the distribution challenge to the school community. The best part is FREE shipping on book-only orders over \$25!

Please click on the link below to start browsing and ordering books for summer reading.

Come summer, you and your family will have a lot of time for reading!

<https://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bookfairs/cptoolkit/homepage.do?method=homepage&url=germantownelementarysch2>



**WILD
FOR
BOOKS!**





A Farewell Message

With this Patriot issue, I wrap up my three years as the school newsletter editor. These three years of managing the newsletter issues, collecting and editing contents, making it attractive to read has been an enriching experience for me. When my son was in 2nd grade, one of the PTA board members Tisha Chrobak reached out to me if I would be interested in taking over the outgoing editor. I've always enjoyed writing, it is one of my many creative thinking outlets. *Edit* the school newsletter? I was hesitant at first knowing during that school year, the Patriot transitioned from paper – manual cut and paste style onto printed pages of words – to computer layout program. With some familiarity in basic Word documents, authoring an article, and creating photo books, I had no prior experience with format editing on the computer let alone a newsletter! As soon as I found out the Patriot newsletter already had its front page format set up, I was convinced to go headstrong into my first newsletter media experience.

When I started out with drafting the first issue of the following school year, the newsletter pages contained so many hidden text boxes. Cleaned that up. Added new features – Spotlight on New Staff, a link to theme of the month features, and images. I tried to make the newsletter attractive for the busy families to read, putting in less content, made font changes to separate the contents, and pasted images.

Each month brought an intense two to three days of putting together all submissions from the Principal, teachers and staff, PTA President and committee volunteers. I appreciated the flexibility the PTA Board members gave in their email communications with me. Working with Principal Amy Bryan and the PTA Board on the newsletter was never boring. One of our biggest challenge and concern was reducing paper. With that, we challenged ourselves with readership questions: How can we best reach out to more families in the GES community? How can we make it accessible on print and on line? Moving from a paper copy of seven pages front and back to a one pager and online access for the monthly Patriot newsletter turned out successful and more effective.

I wish to give my biggest thanks to Principal Amy Bryan. If it were not for me volunteering to edit the newsletter, I would not know her fierceness in keeping the GES families informed, her dedication to education, and her commitment to keep a lasting relationship with the teachers at GES. Emails made it convenient for me to ask Amy to clarify on words and confirm contents that went into the newsletter. We knew patience both ways was the key in our email communications. Amy, it has been a real pleasure working with you!

My son is now moving onto middle school. With that, I also must move on. Who will fill the spotlight on the incoming newsletter editor for the Patriots? Your school is awaiting the new voice of the GES Patriot calling out *Hear Ye, Hear Ye* next school year. Your PTA Board may be exploring new challenges for the Patriot newsletter.

GES families, PTA past and current Presidents and board, and Principal Bryan, heartfelt thank you for the rich experiences!

Best wishes,

Kris daCosta-Warshauer

A final note: As school closes for the summer break, let’s wrap up another school year by sharing summer reading tips and kid-friendly activities for a fun summer at home. The GES teachers and staff, PTA Board wishes you and your family to stay healthy.

READING: A CRITICAL PART OF YOUR SUMMER
HOW TO BEAT "SUMMER SLIDE"

Children who are given access to books over the summer perform **35-40%** better on reading achievement tests.
—First Book

During the summer months, children who don't read fall an average of **2 MONTHS BEHIND.**

However, kids who read over the summer can make slight **GAINS!**

By fifth grade, children can be as much as **2.5 YEARS BEHIND** in reading due to "summer slide."

Reading Practice Is Essential. Kids Get Better At Reading By Reading.
"One of the major differences between poor and good readers is the difference in the quantity of total time they spend reading."
—National Reading Panel, 2000

Daily Reading Adds Up!
If a child reads **30 minutes a day** at home, every day of the school year, he or she will have read **90 hours** in one year. That's more than two weeks of school!

SA KEEP IT UP DURING THE SUMMER: READ EVERY DAY!

Activity Jar

Cut strips of paper.
Kids and parents write an activity on each strip. Fill the jar with the strips of paper. Each day draw one paper strip from the jar. Decide when to do that activity! Make a team focused plan with your family.

Source: Arizona Governor’s Office of Education

Quarantine-Friendly Summer Activities for Kids

<https://www.mystayathomeadventures.com/free-summer-activities-for-kids-during-quarantine/>

100 Fun Things for Kids to do at Home this Summer

<https://happyhooligans.ca/fun-things-kids-do-at-home-this-summer/>

Additional MCPS news

MCPS Recovery Plan

MCPS is continuing to work on the development of a recovery plan that provides schools and central office with a structure for coordinated action steps to re-engage students, staff and families in our learning communities for the 2020-2021 school year—whether in our school buildings or through an enhanced continuity of learning program. Our recovery plan will be informed by the state’s *Maryland Strong: Road Map to Recovery*, along with established guidance from the Maryland State Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control, and local health officials. The MCPS recovery plan will include strategies for strengthening engagement with students and school communities; fostering academic excellence; differentiating supports for students and staff; providing effective and tailored professional learning opportunities for all staff; and creating timely communication and feedback opportunities to support continuous improvement.

We are committed to a multi-pronged approach to ensure parents, staff, students and other key stakeholders are included in the creation of the recovery plan. More information will be shared in the coming weeks.

MCPS Summer School

As shared in the [May 23 community update](#), MCPS is continuing with plans to offer summer learning and enrichment opportunities to elementary and secondary students through regional, school-based and other districtwide programs. These programs, some of which will be offered for free, will provide instruction in math and literacy, as well as fun enrichment opportunities for students to pursue areas of interest, and social-emotional support.

Given the challenging conditions families will face this summer, we would like to hear from parents about their preferences for summer programs. Would you participate if the program offerings were all online? How long of a program or how many hours per day would you prefer? Please [complete a brief survey here](#).

Programs will begin by July 13. Details on available programs, registration dates and program-specific start dates will be shared with families during the week of June 8 and posted on the [MCPS Summer Programs webpage](#).

ESY for Special Education Students

Due to the uncertainty surrounding opportunities for face-to-face instruction, the current plan for the Special Education Extended School Year Program (ESY) is to offer the program virtually. Families with students receiving special education services will have a meeting with their child’s case manager to determine if their child qualifies for ESY. ESY is for students with disabilities who are not able to recoup the skills lost during an extended break in the school year. In order to ensure these students maintain the skills growth they achieved during the school year, services are provided to address specific areas of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) during extended periods of time that school is not in session, such as the summer months. All ESY decision meetings will be completed by June 8. The calendar for ESY programs is as follows:

- Friday, July 10, 2020: ESY pre-service day for teachers
- Monday, July 13-Friday, August 7, 2020: Instructional days for the four-week program
- Monday, July 13-Friday, August 14, 2020: Instructional days for the five-week program