

DUMBARTON MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Published by the Dumbarton Middle School PTSA

Dumbarton Middle School

301 Dumbarton Road Baltimore, Maryland 21212

410-887-3176

A National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

Nancy Fink, Principal

November 2009

From the principal's desk....

In our world today, the issue of good health is an obvious need. Dumbarton's absentee rate in late October reached 15%, and you were sent a letter about best practices to try to prevent any illness. I believe that keeping these recommended behaviors in mind and constantly reinforcing them with early adolescents who believe that they won't get sick until they do are very important:

- Washing hands thoroughly with soap and water is the most important key to good health.
- Coughing into the sleeve or a tissue rather than into the hand helps to prevent transfer of germs to other surfaces.
- Keeping the hands away from the eyes, nose, and mouth will prevent infiltration of these areas, the gateways to the internal body.
- Not sharing drinks and food with friends prevents the spread of an infection.

These are starts to good health, but my favorite is that people need to stay 10 feet from each other since that is how far the germs can travel. In our school world, that would be impossible, and I would think this school would be a very different place. Relying on the four behaviors listed above might be the most prudent way for children to protect themselves.

However, what would happen if a child is sick? In the August mailing, there was a Q&A sheet for parents. Item #4 details how to get work if a child is absent.

4. If my child is absent, how do I get the make-up work?

If your child is out just one day, he/she should see the teachers when he/she returns the next day. If your child will be out for an extended period, you may request work that can be picked up in the main office. Either using the team leader's email (preferable) or leaving a telephone message (410-887-3176), you may request work. Homework is also posted on newschoolnotes.com. Teachers request 24-hours to get materials together

Some students make arrangements with another student or a sibling to pick up missed work from teachers. Others call a friend to find out what to do. It is the student's responsibility to find out what was missed and WHEN it is due.

Teachers are also having the students make-up only the most necessary assignments. They understand how a child can feel overwhelmed returning to school, trying to get caught up and not feeling 100%. If your child seems overwhelmed, please communicate that with the teacher. Modifications can be made.

Lastly, there is no magic number or percentage that will trigger an automatic school closing. As I have explained to students and to the PTSA Executive Board, BCPS is following the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control and the MD Health Department that schools remain open and emphasize good health practices. I have heard that most physicians are regarding the illnesses as more than the seasonal flu, even though they are not testing. We are sure that the "business-as-usual" mode is the best one for the children and their parents. Please do not hesitate to call (410-887-3176) or email me (nfink@bcps.org) if you have questions or concerns. Please remember I am rumor control and will always be honest about what is happening. If things change, you will be among the first to know.

Nancy Fink, Principal

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent

Towson, Maryland 21204-3711

TO: Parents, Teachers, and Employees of the Baltimore County Public Schools

FROM: Robert Merrey, Supervisor
Department of Physical Facilities
Environmental Services

DATE: Oct. 23, 2009

RE: Notification of Availability of Asbestos Management Plans

On October 22, 1986, the United States Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop an asbestos management plan that addresses asbestos hazards in school buildings, and implement response actions in a timely manner.

Baltimore County Public Schools' program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our Asbestos Management Plan. This plan contains information on our inspection, re-inspection, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic re-inspections and surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress.

You may review this plan at the Department of Physical Facilities, 9610 Pulaski Park Drive, Suite 204, Baltimore, Maryland 21220, or at the school or office with which you or your children may be associated.

If you have any questions regarding Baltimore County Public Schools' Asbestos Management Program, please contact me at 410-887-6310.



Baltimore Reads Fall Book Drive

Give your old books new life by donating them to the Baltimore Reads Fall Book Drive. Bring your gently used books to the Dumbarton library where a box will be located to collect fiction and nonfiction. We are happy to accept books for both young and old. You can begin bringing in your shareable books any time. The drive will end on November 20.

"A sobering statistic: 1 in 300 children in the city have a book at home!" - Mark Feiring, Baltimore Reads



Bank of America Exhibit

The art department is proud to announce that the following students had work on display at the Rogers Forge Branch of the Bank of America during this summer.

Congratulations:

Brianna Anglemyer
Daniel Bailey
Meredith Barone
Sim Bostaleoti
Emily Ciaccio
Clair Devaney
Hanna Edmonston
Maria Fath

Giuliana Getter
Emilia Gold
Chase Gorden
Lauren Gould
Emily Healey
Brandon Kane
Megan Lemon
Casey Jo Martinez

Rachel Morgan
Olivia Nightingale
Asia Luna Patlis
Daniel Pyle
Ma Teresa Totanes
Brian Weber
Rachel Weeks

The art department would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Bank of America for this wonderful opportunity to display our students' work.

The Fall Scholastic Book Fair



The Fall Scholastic Book Fair will be held December 1-5 in the Dumbarton Lobby. Please join us for two special family events – on Wednesday, December 2, 5:30 -7:30 pm and on Saturday, December 5, 10:00 am -1:00 pm. Join us for this annual celebration of reading and fun!

If you would like to volunteer, please contact Laurie Newton-King, PTSA Library Liaison, (410) 825-1298 or newtonking@verizon.net.

We hope to see you there!

From the PTSA...

Thanks again to all of you who have joined the PTSA for this year and who have made your membership contributions.

If you have not already done so, please join our Contribution and Membership Campaigns! While we suggest a \$50 contribution per child at Dumbarton, a donation of any amount will be greatly appreciated. You can also contribute in installments. Already, PTSA funds have provided the following to our students this year:

- **30 new microscopes for use in science classes**
- **instructional materials for the math department**
- **student subscriptions to educational magazines**
- **the Sixth Grade Ice Cream Social**
- **an Activity Night**

This is just the beginning of the year, and there will be many other opportunities for the PTSA to support and enhance the learning environment at Dumbarton, for the benefit of all of our students. Please do your share and send in a contribution to the PTSA (checks should be made payable to "Dumbarton PTSA"). Remember, this will be our only fundraising appeal this year -- no gift wrap, no raffles, no chocolate to sell. In addition, we encourage you to send in membership dues to become a member of the PTSA. Dues are \$6 per member.

In our last newsletter, the email address of Kerry DeSantis, our Volunteer Coordinator, was printed incorrectly. Kerry's email address is kerry.desantis@att.net.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the PTSA Board Members if there is anything we can do to help make this year at Dumbarton a happy and successful one for your child and your family.

Sincerely,
Martha Bishai, President
Dumbarton PTSA

November Calendar

4	Lifetouch Picture Day Make-up
5	First Quarter ends
6	Assessment Day; school closed for students
9	Faculty meeting: 3:15 pm PTSA Executive Board Meeting: 7:00 pm
16-20	American Education Week
16	Department Meetings: 3:15 pm
17	Grade 6 Visitation Day F.E.A. Induction: 3:30- 4:30 pm
18	Grade 7 Visitation Day
19	Grade 8 Visitation Day Report Cards distributed
20	Newsletter articles due
23	SIT meeting: 3:15 pm
26-27	Thanksgiving Vacation; school closed



American Education Week – Nov. 16 – 20

NEA's American Education Week (AEW) spotlights the importance of providing every child in America with a quality public education from kindergarten through college, and the need for everyone to do his or her part in making public schools great.

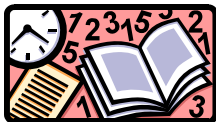
The annual tagline, *Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility*, reflects the Association's calling upon America to provide students with quality public schools so that they can grow, prosper, and achieve in the 21st century. This year, the 88th annual American Education Week will take place **November 16–20**. Dumbarton parents are invited to come in anytime and visit during the week. However there will be designated days for designated grades:

Grade 6: Tuesday, Nov. 17

Grade 7: Wednesday, Nov. 18

Grade 8: Thursday, Nov. 19

On Monday and Friday, parents should sign in at the office. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, sign in will be located in our front lobby. Parents are urged to come and see the great things being done at Dumbarton Middle School.



Counselor's Corner....

Private School Transcript Requests

To receive an Official Transcript for private school, please follow the procedures listed below:

1. Please fill out a transcript request form that is available in the main office and school counseling office and submit it to Mrs. Desiree Adams-Daniels, the secretary in the school counseling office.
2. Allow five business days for the transcripts to be completed from the day the Transcript Request Form is submitted.
3. Pick up a sealed official transcript ready for delivery in the school counseling office five business days after the request was submitted.

Transcripts can be requested after the first quarter report card is printed on November 19, 2009, and may be requested until December 18, 2009. Requests for transcripts will not be accepted after December 18, 2009.

If the application includes a request for teacher(s) recommendation(s), it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to make the request in writing to the teacher(s) of his/her choice. Teachers are NOT required to fill out recommendations. The parent/guardian must include an addressed and stamped envelope for each recommendation. When completed, the teacher will send in the recommendation via mail. Please check back with the teacher to verify it was sent. A "Thank You" note is encouraged.

Cont'd....

Magnet School Applications and Open Houses

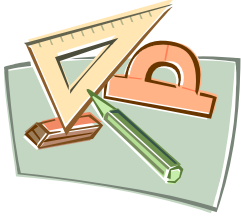
8th grade Students have received information about the Magnet School Options and many of you have gone to the open houses. Please remember that all applications must be received in the Office of Magnet Programs or postmarked by November 30, 2009. Application postmarked after November 30, will not be considered. Applications are not to be turned into Dumbarton but rather sent to the Office of Magnet Programs. If you have questions about this please contact Ms. Tina Dixon, 8th grade Counselor at 410-887-5654.

SAP

Did you know that Dumbarton Middle School has a Student Assistance Program in place? What is it? The purpose of the SAP team is to identify students who may be struggling in a certain area and to offer parents options in dealing with the situation. Student Assistance is a confidential service, funded by Safe and Drug Free Schools, in which a teacher, parent, or student can refer a student to the team because they are concerned about some aspect of the student's behavior. These behaviors can range from a drop in academic performance, changes in appearance or peer group, mood changes, sleeping in class, over-hearing them talk about drugs and alcohol, running away, etc.

The SAP team neither determines the meaning of the observed in-school behavior, nor does it judge the existence and severity of a problem. Instead, it simply brings to the attention of a parent or guardian that certain behaviors have been noted at the school level and that they have the option of obtaining a free and confidential assessment at First Step: A Community Counseling and Resource Center to determine if a problem does exist. The school keeps no records of any type, and teachers of the student are not aware of the reason for referral. If you as a parent or your child has a concern about a classmate you are always welcome to contact your grade level counselor but if you would prefer your concern be kept anonymous, purple referral forms are located in the School Counseling Office. These may be placed in the black locked box. You also can print out an SAP referral from the DMS website under the guidance section <http://dumbartonms.bcps.org/guidance.htm>

The following members sit on the SAP team: Stephanie Campbell, Matt Ferenschak, Tina Dixon, Cari Hummel
Please feel free to contact any one of them if you have any questions or concerns at 410-887-3176.



Shop at the DMS School Store

Are you in need of school supplies like notebook paper, graph paper, composition books, pens, pencils, pencil grips, erasers, lead refills, highlighters, dividers, protractors, compasses, sketch books, and music supplies? Then, stop by the school store with your small bills and loose change so that you can be prepared for your classes. Don't forget your Dumbarton flip-flops for only \$13.

The school store located next to the cafeteria is open daily from 7:50 to 8:10 a.m.

The Plunge



Brrr, it's cold in here, there must be something in the atmosphere. And yes, there certainly is. Teachers and students alike have already started the vigorous process of planning for the 2010 Polar Bear Plunge! Two years ago, math teacher, Sam Sharbonda put forth a great initiative to find a way to celebrate the wonderfully diverse student body of DMS. She wanted to teach middle schoolers to understand that differences among peers should be embraced and the school as a community should be celebrated. To

reinforce that message, she asked teachers and students to sign up for the Polar Bear Plunge – an event that raises funds for the Maryland Special Olympics. The event hosts thousands of people who jump into the near freezing temperatures of the Chesapeake Bay in order to raise money for the thousands of children and adults with intellectual disabilities who benefit from the year-round training and competition programs of the Special Olympics.

This year Team DMS is continuing the tradition, hoping to meet an all time fundraising goal of \$7,000. Team registration and collection of money has already started, but we are still just getting our feet wet (figuratively speaking of course); and we need your help. If you or your child is interested in splashing around in some freezing water, please visit our team website at http://web.me.com/srsharbonda/PBP10/Team_DMS.html . A link to the site can also be found on the Dumbarton website homepage. Please note that this year DMS is invited to the new Cool School, Frigid Friday plunge where we will plunge with other schools on the Friday before the main plunge, giving us smaller, alcohol-free crowds! Interested members should register no later than Dec. 18th.

Don't feel like "bearing" the cold temperatures? You can support us by placing a donation. Just go to the team website and click TEAM DMS under the words "To Participate." Donations can then be made for specific team members or you can make a general team donation.

Just thinking of getting your support gives us chills!

Justin DePrima, teacher & member of Team DMS.