

DIAMOND MINE

Diamond Elementary School
JUNE 2025



Dear Diamond Parents,

Another successful school year has quickly come to an end!

Reflecting on the past school year makes us realize how fortunate we are at Diamond Elementary. Our school has been successful due to the wonderful, collaborative partnerships between students, staff members, and parents. Our students are meeting high standards of performance due to the excellent teaching from our wonderful staff and the support from our parents. We must recognize our students for their perseverance, hard-work, and effort displayed throughout the school year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our wonderful PTA and executive board and Mr. Dan Gopman, PTA president, for providing excellent leadership and support to the PTA committees, the school staff and administration, and most importantly to the students at Diamond ES. Thank you to all parents on the PTA executive board and various committees for your endless contributions and dedicating a great deal of time to provide beneficial activities, programs and events to our school. Without your support and dedication we would not have been able to have such wonderful and successful school activities including and not limited to before/after school clubs, school fundraisers, charity events, volunteering, staff appreciation week, a variety of Cultural Arts assemblies, the annual Book Fair, the always popular Dol-Finn Dash and International Night, and so much more.

To honor all of our wonderful Volunteers throughout the school year, we had our **Volunteer Appreciation Reception on Thursday, June 5th**. Thank you to all of the volunteers who attended this event. We sent home certificates to all volunteers in student backpacks. During the month of June, staff and students are busy with teaching and learning, assessments, and exciting events such as field trips, school events, and celebrations.

Once again, we would like to thank you all for a wonderful school year and we wish everyone a relaxing, enjoyable and exciting summer break!

Sincerely,

Daniel Walder
Principal

JUNE 2025 CALENDAR

Thursday, June 5th

Volunteer Appreciation Reception- 8:30-9:30 AM

Friday, June 6th

No School for Students- Professional Day for Teachers

Tuesday, June 10th

Kindergarten Orientation for incoming Kindergarten families.
5th Grade End of Year Picnic

Thursday, June 12

Last Day of School for Pre-K PEP Classes.

Friday, June 13

5th Grade Promotion Ceremony- Quince Orchard HS Auditorium at 9:30 AM
Early Release Day- Student Dismissal begins at 1:20 pm

Monday, June 16

Early Release Day- Student Dismissal begins at 1:20 pm

Tuesday, June 17

Early Release Day- Student Dismissal begins at 1:20 pm- Last Day of School for All Students in Grades K-5.
End of 4th Marking Period

Wednesday, June 25- Report Cards Mailed Home

First Week of August- Diamond ES Summer Welcome Back Packet will be sent via email and posted on school website.

Tuesday, August 19th- Teacher Assignment Post Cards Mailed Home

Tuesday, August 26th - 1st Day of School students can begin arriving at 9:05 AM

We have already started the planning and preparations for the 2025-2026 school year. One of the planning areas is to ensure our staff exemplifies the very best of educators who demonstrate a passion for teaching and learning. Unfortunately, we will be saying farewell to some of our staff members at the end of the school year, who will be moving onto new endeavors. We would like to thank each of them for their dedication and commitment to our students during their time at Diamond ES. First, we would like to acknowledge a few staff members who will be retiring on June 30, 2025: Ms. Ruthlyn Ryan, *3rd Grade Teacher*, will be retiring after 44 years in education and 18 years at Diamond Elementary as a third grade teacher; Mrs. Dell White, 2nd Grade Teacher, will be retiring after 24 years in education and 22 years at Diamond Elementary as a second grade teacher; and Mrs. Deborah Hase, 1st Grade Teacher, will be retiring after 36 years in education and 19 years at Diamond Elementary as a 2nd, 3rd, and 1st grade teacher.

The following staff members are moving on to other schools/experiences:

- *Mrs. Robinson-Williams*, 3rd grade teacher moving to a new position at another school in MCPS.
- *Ms. Carol Davis*, part-time music teacher, moving to another MCPS school.
- *Mr. Fleming*, instrumental music teacher, moving to England.
- *Mrs. Roth*, part-time speech-language pathologist, moving to another MCPS school.
- *Ms. Hellen*, part-time speech-language pathologist, is moving to another MCPS school.

On behalf of the Diamond staff and school community, I would like to wish *Ms. Ryan, Mrs. White, Mrs. Hase, Mrs. Robinson-Williams, Ms. Davis, Mr. Fleming, Mrs. Roth, and Ms. Hellen* the very best in their future endeavors. As we say farewell to great staff members, we are looking forward to welcoming new staff to our school community.

Please join us in welcoming the following new staff members to Diamond Elementary School:

- ♦ *Mrs. Katie Murphy*, our new 1st grade teacher. She is currently working at another elementary school in Gaithersburg, MD and formerly worked at Diamond ES as a kindergarten and 1st grade teacher.
- ♦ *Mr. Andrew Schwartz*, our new 2nd grade teacher. He is currently working as a classroom teacher in Gaithersburg, MD.
- ♦ *Ms. Eleanor Zang*, our new 1st grade teacher. She recently completed her teacher internship program from the
- ♦ *Ms. Carla Wardell*, our new part-time music teacher. She is currently a music teacher at another MCPS school.
- ♦ *Mr. Daniel Wilson*, our new instrumental music teacher. He is currently an instrumental music teacher in Maryland.

We have a few staff assignment changes within the school building:

- ♦ *Mrs. Casias*, currently a kindergarten teacher, will be our new Pre-K teacher for our new Pre-K inclusion program next year.
- ♦ *Mr. Desai*, currently a 4th grade teacher, will be joining the 3rd grade team next year.
- ♦ *Mrs. Waghode*, currently K-5 paraeducator, will be our new Pre-K classroom paraeducator.

Diamond Elementary School will be getting a new program starting in the fall of the 2025-2026 school year. Last year, we started the Preschool Education Program (PEP). This upcoming year, we will be starting a Pre-Kindergarten Inclusion program consisting of one classroom. The Pre-Kindergarten Inclusion class will be a full-day program. We are excited to welcome new staff members, students and families to the Diamond community. More information will be shared over the summer.

During the summer 2025, Diamond Elementary will be hosting the City of Gaithersburg Summer Camp program. The main office will remain open Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm throughout the summer.

We will keep you informed of any summer staff changes or any new additions to the Diamond staff with our summer newsletter in August 2025. Once again, we would like to thank you all for a wonderful school year and we wish everyone a relaxing, enjoyable and exciting summer break!

Principal

Outstanding DES Obligations: This is a friendly reminder that all obligations should be cleared on or before Tuesday, June 17. These obligations include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- Library books
- Cafeteria charges
- book replacement charges.

We want all students to remain eligible for the end of year events. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

MCPS Staff Gift Policy: MCPS Staff Ethics Policy related to accepting gifts: Gifts to staff are not expected nor solicited, however we recognize and appreciate the desire to celebrate our staff for their dedication and hard work. Occasionally, staff members will receive gifts from parents during the holiday season, at the end of the year, or for special occasions such as a wedding shower, a baby shower, etc. Please be aware of the ethics policy as you consider your recognition over the holidays and beyond. As a friendly reminder (or possibly new information for those new to the Montgomery County Public School System), the MCPS Ethics Policy states that staff may not accept gifts from parents/families exceeding \$20 in value or a series of gifts exceeding \$100 in value in a calendar year from any person or family. If parents/families decide to contribute to a class gift for the staff member, it must follow the MCPS policy and each parent/family contribution to the gift cannot exceed \$20 in value. For example, if 15 families contribute \$10 each to make the class gift value of \$150 or 10 families contribute \$20 each to make the class gift value \$200, then this will be in accordance with the MCPS gift policy.

Recognizing Teachers and Other Staff Members: If your student has teachers or other staff members who are especially meaningful to them, this season of the year is a perfect time for you to send an e-mail to the teacher/staff member praising his/her work. In casual conversations, many of you speak to a school administrator about teachers or staff members who you and your student think are outstanding, but staff members do not often hear those words of praise directly. If you choose to do so, you may send a copy to Mr. Walder, and he will print it out for the staff member's file.

2025-2026 Student Supply List: The 2025-2026 Student Supply List is available. A copy is attached to this newsletter and is also available on our school website: [Student Supply List 2025-2026 - Google Docs](#) . The supply list highlights the organizational tools and personal supplies your child will need for their assigned grade-level next year. Please have your child bring the appropriate materials for their new grade level to school during the Sneak Peek on Friday, August 22nd.

MCPS 2025-2026 School Year Calendar:

https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/siteassets/district/calendar/2026/FY26_TRADITIONAL_BoardAdoptedCalendar.pdf

School Volunteer Training Process:

As we begin to prepare for the upcoming school year, we are looking at opportunities next year for our grade levels to have regular school activities and events, including participating in field trips. This means we will have opportunities for volunteers for some of these school events. In order to permit school volunteers, we need to make sure all volunteers are properly trained and cleared before volunteering can begin in school. Currently, all volunteers/contractors must complete the vCAN (Volunteer Child Abuse/Neglect) module. In addition, depending on the level of volunteering, some are required to be fingerprinted, per the vCAN FAQ- [https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/childabuseandneglect/FY22%20CAN%20Volunteer%20FAQs_211129\(1\).pdf](https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/childabuseandneglect/FY22%20CAN%20Volunteer%20FAQs_211129(1).pdf). Fingerprinting requirements are not being changed for field trip events where we travel to another state.

Diamond Elementary School and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) values the volunteers who work in our schools to enrich our students' experiences. As a community, we all are mindful of our shared responsibility to create safe, nurturing environments for our students. In order to be a regular volunteer at Diamond Elementary School, all parents, guardians, and community members must complete the Diamond Elementary School Volunteer Training and MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect training. Here is more information on who needs to complete the required training.

- If MCPS records reflect that an individual completed MCPS training offered in the 2023-2024 school year, the individual **does not have to undergo additional training** for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Any volunteer who completed the online Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect Training in the 2022-2023 school year or prior, **will need to renew their training certification** in 2025-2026 by completing the Diamond ES Volunteer Training and the MCPS Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect Training.

The Diamond Elementary Volunteer training reviews school procedures and school expectations regarding volunteering in the school building. This online training takes about 5-10 minutes to complete. The Montgomery County Board of Education has revised its child abuse policy, and MCPS has engaged in a comprehensive effort to implement practices and protocols to ensure all of our students have a safe learning environment. MCPS has developed training for all volunteers in the district to learn about recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. This online training takes about 30-45 minutes to complete and can be accessed through your *myMCPS Classroom/Canvas* at the following link: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/> or through the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org by searching volunteer training.

All Diamond Elementary parents, guardians, and community members who wish to volunteer at Diamond Elementary School by helping in the classroom, media center, grade-level field trips, lunch and/or recess, **MUST COMPLETE** the two-step volunteer training process which includes the Diamond Elementary Volunteering Training and the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect Training before volunteering can begin at the school.

Volunteer Training 2 Step Process:

Step 1: Complete the Diamond Elementary On-line Volunteer Training: <https://goo.gl/forms/wpkTGnASgoY4un6f2>

Step 2: Complete the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect Training: via your parent *myMCPS Classroom/Canvas* account: https://md-mcps-psv.edupoint.com/PXP2_Login_Parent.aspx?regenerateSessionId=True, or you can access the training at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/>

More Information about the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect Training

The online child abuse and neglect training provides information about:

- Types of abuse;
- Grooming behaviors that may make our children vulnerable; and
- The MCPS procedures and state law requirements for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

While we encourage all community members to engage in this important, informative training, currently we only require individuals who **regularly** support schools to complete the Child Abuse and Neglect training. Infrequent or occasional volunteers who support large events or assist at one-time events under the supervision of school staff members are not required to complete the training at this time.

Below are examples of the types of activities that do not require completion of the volunteer training:

- Guest readers and speakers in classrooms where they will be supervised by a MCPS employee;
- High school/college recruiters and volunteers at job and college fairs;
- Parents/guardians or other relatives who are observing or supporting a celebration (e.g., a parade) or helping with a class party; and
- Parents/guardians staffing concession and ticket booths at large events.

We have the option of using the online child abuse and neglect training module as a resource to provide individual or small group training sessions for their volunteers, especially if accommodations, such as language interpretation, are needed. The online training is available in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Parents/guardians will not be barred from participation in their schools due to the need for accommodations.

Answers to frequently asked questions about the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect Volunteer Training are posted on the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect webpage www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect

Just a reminder, you must complete both the Diamond ES Volunteer Training and the MCPS Child Abuse and Neglect Volunteer Training before you begin volunteering at the school. If you have completed the training in the past 3 school years, you will need to redo the volunteer training this year since it has been more than 2 years. We are grateful for your commitment and partnership to ensure the safety of students. Your continued support will help to keep our school a safe and wonderful place of learning for all students.

Elementary Student Supplies and Fees: Students will not be asked to pay for or provide textbooks, supplementary readers (such as anthologies, atlases, or workbooks), most materials of instruction, audiovisual aids, stationery items not commonly found in the home and required for the student to demonstrate mastery of course objectives, or building/office materials needed to operate schools. Students may be asked to pay for materials of instruction that primarily fit into three categories as follows:

- Items eaten by the student as a part of the course (example: bread-baking ingredients).
- Component parts of a product that will become student property (example: sculpting clay).
- Materials of instruction or items of personal use that become the property of the student (example: recorder).

Students are still expected to bring individual organizational tools and personal supplies from home. Please see the 2025-2026 student supply list on page 6. In addition, there are student fees which are not course-related but local school decisions made by the principal in collaboration with the school and parent leadership. These may include fees for class snacks, special grade-level assemblies, etc. There also may be fees related to field trips, but these will be shared each time there is a trip and not in advance as a school fee. We are committed to providing all students, regardless of their economic circumstances, with full access to the instructional program. If you need assistance for any requested expense or with providing the organizational tools and personal supplies, please contact your child's teacher, our counselor, our assistant principal, or the principal.

Parent donations of items that enhance the classroom experience are still welcomed, either as donations from individual parents or organized by class parents or by the PTA. A list of these items is also attached to this letter and titled, Voluntary Parent Donations. They are not required donations, and no student will be expected to provide these items, but if you care to contribute, it will be appreciated.

Diamond Elementary School Student Supply List 2025-2026

Kindergarten	1 st grade
Crayons, large box (2) Glue sticks, non-toxic, purple (2) Headphones, for individual computer use Markers, dry erase, various colors, box Pencils, #2 (box) Stickers, various	Crayons, large box Glue sticks, non-toxic, clear (4) Headphones, for individual computer use Pencil box Pencils, #2 (2 boxes) Scissors, blunt-tip
2 nd Grade	3 rd Grade
Crayons, regular box (no boxes with sharpeners) Glue sticks, non-toxic, clear (2) Headphones, for individual computer use Markers, dry erase, various colors, box Pencils, #2 (2 boxes) Scissors, blunt-tip	Crayons, regular (box, no boxes with sharpeners) Headphones, for individual computer use Pencils, #2 (2 boxes) Pouch, zippered for binder use
4 th Grade	5 th Grade
Composition book, hard cover (2) Glue sticks, non-toxic, clear (4) Highlighters, various colors Headphones, for individual computer use Pencils, #2 (2 boxes) Pencils, colored (box) Pouch, zippered for binder use Scissors, pointed	Composition book, hard cover Crayons, regular (box, no boxes with sharpeners) Erasers, large, latex free & Eraser Caps Glue sticks, non-toxic, clear (3) Headphones, for individual computer use Highlighters, various colors including yellow (5) Markers, non-toxic, various colors, regular box Pencils, #2 (4 boxes) Pencils, colored (box) Pouch, zippered for binder use Scissors, pointed

- We recommend, but do not require, that students bring the following individual organizational tools and personal supplies to school on the first day of class. Students may need to replenish as needed throughout the school year.
- Grade levels have also included requests for donations. These items are not required but would be greatly appreciated. This list has been revised under guidelines regarding MCPS Course-Related Fees.

Items to consider for donation at all grade levels

These items are not required, but would be greatly appreciated: liquid soap, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes, paper towels, facial tissue, gallon and quart-sized plastic zip-lock bags, tennis balls.