

Good Evening Snowden Farm Families,

Thank you to our students and staff for a wonderful first week back from winter break! It has been great to see everyone settled back into routines and ready for learning.

As a reminder, school doors open at 8:45 AM, and all students should arrive by 8:55 AM to be on time and ready to learn.

We also plan to go outside as much as possible for recess, so please be sure students come to school with coats, gloves, and hats each day.

Check out [January's Enrichment Choice Board here](#) for family enrichment opportunities!

BINGO Night on 01/15 at 6:00 PM

Looking for a fun night with your family? Join us on Thursday, January 15th from 6:00 - 7:30 for our annual Family Bingo Night! It is \$5 for 8 bingo cards.

Proceeds from Bingo go towards the SFES instructional funds. Dinner and snacks will be available for purchase as well and support our 5th grade Promotion Committee. We hope to see you all there!

New: Testing Information

As we approach state testing, we are continuing to strengthen our classroom testing environments to better mirror the structure and expectations of MCAP and MISA. Beginning this cycle, CKLA unit assessments for grades 3–5 will be administered over two class periods to support student focus and stamina.

Students who are absent will be given an opportunity to make up a missed testing session at an alternate time. However, make-up sessions will not be provided for assessments that are started but left incomplete.

Families can support students at home by discussing effective test-taking strategies, such as:

- Taking time to carefully read each question without spending too long on any single one
- Using the bookmark feature to flag questions they are unsure about and returning to them later
- Using any remaining time to review answers and check their work

New: Attention 5th Grade Families!!

Hallie Wells is excited to welcome our next class of Mustangs! January 2026 will be an important time for your 5th grader.

Please mark your calendars with the dates below and bookmark this link:

- **[ALL REGISTRATION INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND HERE.](#)**
- **January 20th:** 5th grade Family Night at Hallie Wells MS. All students and caregivers are invited to attend. Please [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.
 - ***Childcare will be provided by high school students earning SSL hours*
- **January 27-30:** Hallie Wells MS counselors will visit elementary schools to hear an intro to middle school and review elective registration information.
- **January 26 - February 6th:** **Registration forms** will be OPEN.

New: Kids Heart Challenge during their PE classes on February 9th-13th

This February 2026, all Snowden Farm Elementary School students will be participating in our annual Kids Heart Challenge during their PE classes on February 9-13th where we help to raise funds to support the American Heart Association's efforts to raise money to help fight cardiovascular disease. This annual free event is sponsored by our Physical Education Department in conjunction with the American Heart Association.

Your child will participate in fun and exciting heart healthy activities during **all** PE classes the week of Feb.9-13th to celebrate our fundraising efforts. This is a free program for **all** students at our school to participate in and all donations to the American Heart Association are voluntary. Please consider helping us as it is a great way to show community service and to help promote an increased level of physical activity.

To sign up, your child can register at heart.org/KHC Once there, they will have the opportunity to choose a daily health challenge and to earn thank-you gifts from the American Heart Association based on the amount of money they collect online.

All thank-you gifts will be given to your child approximately 3-4 weeks after the event is completed. Mr. Benco and Mrs. Vick will introduce the program to your child during the first part of PE classes on January 20th through Feb. 6th. If you have any preliminary questions please contact our PE Teacher Mr. Benco at the following email address:
thomas_m_benco@mcpsmd.org

Thank you in advance for being a heart hero!

The Spelling Bee is Coming! Are you Signed Up?

We are excited to announce our upcoming SFES Annual Scripps National Spelling Bee. **Dates are as follows:**

- Kindergarten & 1st - 1/27/26
- 2nd & 3rd - 1/28/26
- 4th & 5th - 1/29/26

The top three spellers from 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades will advance to a school-level competition on February 4, and the winner of that round will go on to compete in the Scripps National Regional Spelling Bee.

Please be sure to carefully read the directions on the [SignUpGenius](#) when signing up your student. We look forward to cheering on all of our spellers!

Join the PTA

Join the PTA to become an integral part of your child's elementary school experience.

- Fill out the membership form online,
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc98gaet2hNbdVBLPQMYyjdDemfgWNSvYCWmhazRDuDsSE-8w/viewform?usp=preview>
- Pay Dues
 - Pay online via Zelle: treasurer@sfespta.org
 - Individual Membership \$20
 - Family Membership \$40
 - Staff Membership \$15

New: Important Information from MCPS

New: Illness Rates Rising; Mask Wearing Recommended in Health Rooms

Respiratory illness rates (including COVID-19, flu and RSV) are currently high in the state of Maryland and in Montgomery County, according to the Maryland Department of Health. Based on guidance from Maryland health professionals, mask wearing is recommended — but not required — only while in school health rooms. While these rates remain elevated.

- Students will not be denied access to the health room if they are unable or choose not to wear a mask.

- This temporary recommendation will be lifted once state respiratory illness rates decline.

New: Preview Third Quarter Instructional Materials

MCPS is hosting a community meeting next week for parents/guardians to preview instructional materials for the third quarter. The meeting, scheduled for 7-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 13 at Summit Hall Elementary School, will cover materials for the elementary and secondary curricula. Summit Hall is located at 101 W. Deer Park Road in Gaithersburg. A second preview event will be held from 7-8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18 at Ritchie Park Elementary School.

- [View the third quarter “Refrigerator Curriculum,”](#) which provides a one-page overview of the main themes and texts students will study each marking period.
- [Regulation IFD-RA, Curriculum Transparency and Requests to be Excused from Instruction](#)

New: Now You Know (Video): Attendance

Strong attendance helps students succeed academically, develop strong social-emotional skills and become future ready.

- Our goal is for every student to be in school at least 95% of the 180 school days.
- And we know that chronic absenteeism — missing 10% or more of school — is an ongoing concern and continues to be a significant barrier to learning.
- Watch in [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [French](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Vietnamese](#) | [Amharic](#) | [Korean](#) | [Portuguese](#)

Parent Academy Workshops Jan. 14

Parents are encouraged to check out two virtual [Parent Academy To Go workshops](#) coming in January. Parent Academy *TO GO* informs and empowers families as advocates and partners in their children's education. Upcoming sessions are:

- Wednesday, Jan. 14, 6-7 p.m., Nature as Classroom: Inside the Smith Environmental Experience

If you are unable to join a Parent Academy workshop, visit the [MCPS YouTube channel](#) for recorded sessions. [Learn more.](#)

Additional Information

- [Annual MCPS Pest Management Notice](#)
- [Annual MCPS Asbestos Notice](#)
- [At-Home Student Device Request](#)
- [Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation Reporting](#)
- Food Assistance: Call Manna's main office during regular business hours, Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm, at (301) 424-1130.
- [Menus - Department of Food & Nutrition Services - Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, MD](#)
- School Cash Online- <https://mcpsmd.schoolcashonline.com/>
- Maryland Anonymous Tip Line - 1-833-632-7233- Report threats or situations that put your safety, or others' safety, at risk.
- In Case You Missed It:
 - [Refrigerator Curriculum](#): See what your children will be learning each marking period.
 - [Register for Saturday School](#). The tutoring sessions are available to students in K–12 in math and English/Language Arts and have in-person and virtual options.
 - MCPS welcomes volunteers! [Here's how to do it](#).
- More MCPS Resources
 - [School calendar](#)
 - [Parent resource page](#)
 - [Remind](#), [ParentSquare](#), [ParentVUE](#): What's the difference?
 - [Student Code of Conduct](#): [Read the revised document](#) and [watch the video](#).

Upcoming Important Dates

- Monday, January 12th- Stallion Meet-up
- Thursday, January 15th- Bingo Night at 6:00 PM
- Monday, January 19th- No School for Students and Staff
- Tuesday, January 20th- 5th Grade Parent Night at HWMS
- Monday, January 26th- No School for Students

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students start each day strong!

With Gratitude,

Mrs. Michelle Fortune, Principal