

DUNDALK ELEMENTARY

September 24, 2009

Calendar of Events

- Monday, September 28 Yom Kippur, Schools Closed
- Tuesday, September 29 PTA's McDonald's Night, 4 – 7 p.m.
- Thursday, October 1 Living Classrooms to visit 4th Grade
- Friday, October 2 Living Classrooms to visit 5th Grade
..... 2nd Grade to visit the Baltimore Aquarium
- Monday, October 5 PTA Candy Sale ends
- Thursday, October 8 Market Day pick-up, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- Friday, October 9 Individual Pictures taken
- Monday, October 12 1st Grade Fire Safety Program
- Wednesday, October 14 4th Grade to visit Science Center
- Thursday, October 15 Buster Bus to visit PreKindergarten
- Friday, October 16 Professional Development Day, School
Closed to Students
- Monday, October 19 –
Friday October 23 Lunch With You

Tuesday, October 20 Parent Coffee, 8:30 a.m.

Monday, October 26 PTA' s Chick-fil-A Night (outside Eastpoint Mall)

Our year at Dundalk has gotten off to a wonderful start. We were happy to see over 175 people at our Open House and several hundred people at our Back to School Night! We hope that everyone enjoyed hearing about the year to come, our technology updates, and meeting with your child's teacher. On Friday, September 18th we shined as we opened the Dundalk Elementary School Wellness Center. We hope that you will take advantage of having this resource in our building. More information about the center can be found within this newsletter. Thank you to all who is participating in the candy bar fundraiser. We can't wait to total our earnings on October 6th. We will let you know how well you did at raising money for the PTA in our next newsletter. A special thank you to Ms. Shiflett and Mrs. Idzi for organizing this fundraiser.

There are many opportunities for you to visit with your child coming up over the next few months. Make sure to read your child's class newsletter for dates when you can participate at school. If your schedule allows, feel free to visit with us at any time. Take a minute to write your child's teacher a note saying you would like to visit and then come on up and spend some time with us. We invite you to "Lunch With You" when you will be able to eat lunch in the cafeteria with your child. Enclosed you will find a schedule of dates and times for your child's class. In addition, we invite you to our next Parent Coffee on October 20th at 8:30 a.m. Last month 76 parents attended – it was a record! We always offer wonderful give-a-ways and items you can use at home to support your child's success in school.

It is our goal to work with you to ensure the success of your child(ren). We welcome any questions or concerns at any time and look forward to working with you throughout the year.

OFFICIAL MSDE ATTENDANCE RULES

Students Scheduled for a Full Day: A student is counted present for a full day if the student is in attendance four hours or more of the school day. A student is counted present for ½ day if in attendance for at least two hours of the school day, but less than four hours.

Students Scheduled for a Partial Day: A student scheduled for less than a full day is to be counted present based on the amount of time he/she is scheduled. Example: A student scheduled for a two hour block of time will be counted present for a full day if the student is in attendance for that entire block of time. If the student is absent for that entire block of time, the student will be counted absent for a full day. A student scheduled for a two hour block of time will be counted present for ½ day if the student is in attendance for one hour.

A student is counted present if at school or at another place at a school activity sponsored by the school and personally supervised by a member(s) of the school staff. This may include authorized independent study, work study programs, field trips, athletic events, contests, music festivals, student conventions, instruction for home bound students, and similar activities when officially authorized under policies of the local school board. It does not include “making up” school work at home, or activities supervised or sponsored by private groups or individuals.

Excerpt from *2008 Maryland Student Records System Manual*, page C-3.

WELLNESS CENTER

On Friday, September 18th, Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith, Baltimore County Department of Health Officer Dr. Branch, and Baltimore County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Hairston officially “cut the ribbon” to open the first school-based wellness center to serve three schools in the County. Located in Dundalk Elementary, the Dundalk Wellness Center will serve students from three area schools – Dundalk Elementary, Middle and High.

A clinician from the Department of Health and a nursing assistant from the Board of Education will staff the Center. A grant awarded to the Department of Health from the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission paid for the renovations to create the Dundalk School-Based Wellness Center and for the Center’s initial supplies.

The Dundalk Wellness Center will be open Mondays, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and Wednesdays, 12:30 – 4:00 p.m. The contact telephone number is (410) 887-7099.

MUSIC NEWS

Music participation provides a unique opportunity for literacy preparation. Whether the children are singing, playing, or listening, teachers direct them to listen and hear in new ways which exercises their aural discrimination and critical thinking skills. Playing instruments, singing and adding movement to the lessons, teaches children about sequential learning which is essential in reading comprehension. Involvement in musical activities stimulates the part of the brain that involves imagination and creativity.

1. *Music is academic.* For some people, this is the primary reason that parents want music in their child’s life. A recent study from the University of California found that music trains the brain for higher forms of thinking. Second graders who were also given music lessons on an instrument scored 27% higher on proportional math and fractions tests than children who received no music instruction. Research indicates that musical training permanently wires a young mind for enhanced performance.

2. *Music is physical.* Music can be described as a sport. Learning to sing and keep rhythm develops coordination. The air and wind power necessary to blow a flute, trumpet or saxophone promotes a healthy body. Playing, singing, or moving in a musical group encourages teamwork and personal responsibility.
3. *Music is emotional.* Music is an art form. We are emotional beings and every child requires an artistic outlet. Music may become your child's vehicle of expression or emotional comfort.
4. *Music is for life.* Most people can't play soccer, football or basketball at 70 or 80 years of age, but they can still sing or they can play piano or some other instrument. Many older adults still can and do, dance, as well. Music education is a gift your children receive, that will last their entire lives.

ART NEWS

We have really had a great start of the school year as we have begun many thematic art projects in grades K-5.

Website of the month: Vincent Van Gogh

http://metmuseum.org/explore/van_gogh/intro.html

“In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love.”

Marc Chagall

Things to consider:

1. You might want to consider sending in an old shirt for your child to use over their clothes so they don't get any art materials on their outfits.
2. I would also like to inform parents that there are great art programs for your child to expand his/her art skills. If anyone is interested here are the links.

Programs are available for kids in grades K-12. Class descriptions and registration information can be found for:

Maryland Institute College of Art – Young People Studio – www.mica.edu

Towson University – Community Art Center – www.towson.edu

Community College of Baltimore County – Creative Art Center – www.ccbcmd.edu

VOCAL MUSIC NEWS

Welcome back to another great year of music learning for your child! Kindergarten is beginning a unit using “Mother Goose” rhymes, songs, and games to explore: vocal sounds, steady beat, rhythmic movement, and creative “story dramatization.”

First grade will start using simple pictorial and standard symbols to represent musical characteristics such as: high/low, fast/slow, soft/loud and melodic contour (shape).

Second grade is learning new and reviewing previously learned “patriotic” songs, in order to develop the ability to recognize music as a form of individual and historical cultural expression.

Third, fourth, and fifth grades are singing and learning American patriotic songs and patriotic listening selections, in order to develop the ability to recognize music as a form of individual and historical cultural expression.

NURSE’S NOTES

We are off to another busy year working to keep our students healthy and in school. Health and learning go hand in hand! Thanks to all who have returned the necessary paperwork to care for our students. If you have not returned the nurse’s emergency sheet or the blue emergency office cards, please do so as soon as possible. Remember to update emergency information as phone numbers change.

If your child required medication in school last year, a new doctor’s note is required every school year. If you need a new form, please contact Mrs. Anderson. Medication will not be given if it is accompanied by a parent note only. The instructions on a prescription bottle are not adequate.

Please send a change of clothes in a labeled bag to be kept in your child’s locker. Extra clothes are not kept in the nurse’s office. Students not only have bathroom accidents, but they spill drinks and tear clothes. Having clothes readily available means they can change and quickly return to class.

Look for permission forms to come home the end of September for the Flu Mist vaccine which will be offered to our students on October 19th at school. Forms must be completed in ink and signed. Forms will not be accepted after October 12th, so early return is strongly recommended. Students with asthma will not be eligible for the Flu Mist, so contact your child’s healthcare provider for the flu shot. This is the seasonal flu vaccine, not the H1N1 vaccine.

Health updates for your child can be provided at any time by phone call, notes or conferences. You may contact me at (410) 284-2204.

SOCIAL WORK NEWS

I just wanted to introduce myself. I am Jacquie Pencek, the School Social Worker, at Dundalk Elementary. I play many roles at Dundalk. I provide individual, group, and family therapy as well as supporting families with resources. If you need help accessing resources, such as clothing, food, or emergency help or just need information, please feel free to call me at (410) 887-7013. I am at Dundalk

Elementary Monday through Friday and will try to assist students and families in any way I can.

Available Resources:

- We will continue to have the BayLife School-based Mental Health Program at our school. This program is affiliated with Franklin Square Hospital and provides support to families by evaluating and treating behavioral and emotional problems. The program provides individual, group, and family therapy at Dundalk Elementary. Medical Assistance and other insurance policies are accepted. If you are interested in this program, please contact Mrs. Pencek, School Social Worker or Mrs. Hepner, School Counselor at (410) 887-7013 to get more information.
- Dundalk Youth Services Center also provides counseling services on a sliding scale basis with fees as low as \$4 ! They offer individual counseling and are offering a Parenting Group. They can be reached at (410) 288-4356.
- A new YMCA has opened! This YMCA is an Aquatic Center that offers swim lessons, group exercise classes, Arthritic exercise classes, and is starting a swim team. They have 2 different kinds of memberships: Metro membership (any YMCA), \$74 a month; Center Specific (Dundalk and Randalstown), \$52 a month. Some financial aid is available so if this is too expensive let them know and they may be able to help.

Upcoming Events:

- Our school will participate in the Kids Helping Kids Food Drive from October 19th through November 6th. Look for further information.
- If you need holiday help, don't forget to contact the Salvation Army. They are having walk-in registration for low income families to receive holiday assistance from **9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, from September 14th until October 2nd**. Registration must be done **in person by the parent or caregiver**. (A flier was sent home with specific information.) Please contact me if you need more information.

MAGNET EXPO! – OCTOBER 3RD

Mark your calendar with this important date! This year, Baltimore County Public Schools is holding a Magnet Expo! to showcase its elementary, middle and high school magnet programs. The Expo will be held Saturday, October 3rd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza in Timonium.

Another important date to remember is November 30th. ***All*** Magnet applications must be completed and postmarked by November 30th in order for your application to be considered.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

To all new families, "Welcome to Dundalk Elementary School!" and to all our returning friends, "Welcome Back!" My name is Chris Hepner and I am the School

Counselor. I look forward to working together with you to help your child experience a happy and successful school year.

Guidance services are available for all students. I provide assistance to the students and teachers in the classroom; in small groups of children with similar needs; and on a short term individual basis. Students, parents, and teachers may make referrals. To share concerns, please feel free to email me at chepner@bcps.org or call the school, (410) 887-7013.

Classroom guidance is offered in areas such as conflict resolution, building healthy relationships with family and friends, character education, and other specific needs as indicated by teachers and students. Small group and short term individual counseling will be offered as needs dictate for children experiencing family changes such as divorce, illness or the death of someone significant in the child's life, or in areas such as friendship/social skills, self-esteem enhancement, or anger management. If for any reason, you do not wish your child to participate in individual or small group counseling or you would like more information, please feel free to call and set up an appointment to talk. Additionally, there is a list of community referral sources, I am happy to share with you.

P.E.R.K. (Partners in Educating and Raising Kids): Parent coffees are offered once a month. Our 2nd P.E.R.K. coffee will be held on October 20th in the school cafeteria. We hope to see you there!

TOGETHER, our kids will do BETTER!

PEANUT/TREE-NUT ALLERGIES

In compliance with Maryland law, our school will designate a peanut and tree-nut free table in the cafeteria for use by students with medically documented allergies. If your child has such an allergy and you would like to request this accommodation, please notify the school nurse.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Welcome and welcome back. We have some exciting things happening in PE this year. First of all, we have a new PE teacher with us this year. His name is Mr. Weaver and he is with us on Tuesdays and Fridays. Mr. Weaver is very excited to be here so say "Hi" when you see him. In September we are doing a soccer unit with grades 3-5 and special awareness/locomotor skills with Kindergarten – 2nd. To ensure that your child gets to come to PE and participate in all of the fun, please make sure that they wear tennis shoes on days that they have PE. Any questions, please call Mr. Mirabile or Mr. Weaver at school.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER NEWS

Our library is a sharing library, where everyone in the school shares all of the books and materials. It is a wonderful place for finding great books and interesting information, for reading, and exploring. The library is this way because we ALL are careful and responsible citizens. We:

1. read with clean hands,
2. never eat or drink when we are reading,
3. have a special place at home to keep our library books safe,
4. only use a bookmark to our place,
5. protect our books from the weather, pets and babies,
6. bring our books back on time,
7. never write or draw in a book,
8. never give our library book to someone else,
9. will pay for a book that is accidentally lost or damaged,
10. WE ENJOY THEM OVER AND OVER AGAIN ALL WEEK LONG!

BAYLIFE SERVICES SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

BayLife Services is a school based therapy program currently offering services in Dundalk Elementary. We work with children with various emotional and/or behavioral difficulties through individual and family therapy. Our program is designed so that a licensed child and adolescent therapist (Trina Bennett LCSW-C) will meet with your child at the school during school hours. However, we provide some evening hours at our office to accommodate working parents so that they can participate in their child's treatment. We also have a psychiatrist available at our office for parents who wish to have their child evaluated for possible medication needs.

If your child struggles with anger outbursts, anxiety, hyperactivity, sadness, the grief of a loved one, trouble adjusting to family changes, etc, and you would like them to receive counseling, please contact our central intake office at (443) 777-7878. When you call, please have your child's insurance card ready. We accept medical assistance, as well as, several private insurances.

BayLife brochures are available in the school's guidance office.