

DRAGON NEWS

A newsletter from Principal Collins and the DES PTA

November 2017

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

DAMASCUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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SCHOOL WEBSITE:
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schools/damascuses/](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/damascuses/)

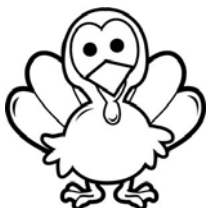
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Hello DES families! November is the month when we hold our parent/teacher conferences. If you have not yet scheduled your conference, please contact your child's teacher.

At the November 7 PTA meeting we will be discussing the recent changes to the MCPS report card. The presentation will provide parents with a better understanding of what they can expect to see on the upcoming student report cards.

More information on the report card changes is also available on the

MCPS website at:

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading/report-cards.aspx

We invite all parents to join us on November 7 at 7 p.m. in the media center.

*~ Bill Collins
Principal*



Counselor's Message

Please join the Damascus and Clarksburg clusters on **Tuesday, November 28 at 7 p.m.** for a presentation for parents on helping your child handle stress and anxiety. The presentation will be held at Damascus High School. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Jonathan Dalton, director of the Center for Anxiety and Behavioral Change in Rockville, Maryland.

Bingo Night

Thursday, November 16
DES Cafeteria

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for concessions sold by the fifth grade celebration team.

Bingo for prizes will be played from 7 to 8 p.m.

This is a free event for your entire family - we hope that you can join us!



DES Spirit Wear

Please support the DES PTA with a purchase of DES Spirit Wear.

We have set up an online store to make ordering easier. This is the preferred method of ordering.

Please go to:

<https://desdragons17.itemorder.com/sale>

The store will be active until November 10 and orders will arrive at the school in late November and will be sent home with your child.

Why We Should All Be Reading Aloud to Children

Dear DES Families,

I came across this TEDx event online, and it struck me as something I wanted to share with you all. It took me back to when my own children were younger and just how much they enjoyed being read to each night, even up to middle school. The speaker is Rebecca Bellingham who is an instructor in the Literacy Specialist Program at Columbia University Teachers College. She has been teaching in some capacity for 18 years. She talks about the importance of reading to your children, even when they are reading themselves.

When children are being read to, they can listen to and appreciate the language in books at a higher level than they can read for themselves. The adult is dealing with the decoding, and the tricky vocabulary, and this frees the child to think more deeply about the book. The listener is free to imagine, create, enjoy, and even learn! If you have about ten minutes, watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBuT2wdYtpM&t=283s>

*Yours in reading,
Ms. Schmierer, NBCT
Reading Specialist*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an amazing fall! October has been a blast with the Fall Fest, Movie Night, and Halloween parties. Thank you for all of your support and hard work to make these events successful. November is bringing even more fun!

Our first Spirit Night is Tuesday, November 7. The proceeds from all orders placed at Maggi's between 4-8 p.m. (carryout or delivery) will benefit our school. It is a win for everyone!

DES Spirit Wear is now available, and it can be purchased online until November 10. Bingo Night is Thursday, November 16. This free family event will feature snacks from the fifth grade celebration team and, of course, a night of yelling "BINGO." We hope you can join us!

Grandparent's Day is November 22. This annual event is special to our school, and it takes place the day before Thanksgiving when more families might be able to come. It provides an opportunity for grandparents to see how their grandchildren learn at school. It is a special day for students and their families. Finally, a sneak peek ahead, the Holiday Shop is coming in December!

It has been an amazing year so far, and as you can see there is more to come. Please make sure you get all of the details by joining our Google group e-mail list. If you would like to receive an invitation to join, please send an e-mail to me at derbyjc@bellatlantic.net. It is going to be a great month!

*~Christine Derby
DES PTA President*

Spirit Night on Nov. 7

Please join us for our first Restaurant Spirit Night of the school year on Tuesday, November 7 from 4 to 8 p.m. at Maggi's in Damascus. Check out their menu at maggispizzaanddeli.com.

Proceeds from carry out and delivery sales will benefit our school. They have delicious pizza, subs, sandwiches, and desserts! Call Maggi's to place your order at **301-253-4620**.



Damascus Elementary School PTA Board	
President	Christine Derby
VP Finance	Brittany Marshall
VP Communications	Melissa North
Treasurer	Jaime Kemp
Recording Secretary	Beth Walter
Corresponding Secretary	Laurie Murtaugh
Advisory Board	Lisa Willis Tara Owens
PTA Website	www.damascuspta.com
PTA Email	desptamail@gmail.com

Volunteer Corner

Happy Fall! I am now collecting October hours. Remember that DES is required to submit volunteer hours to the Montgomery County central office each month. If you volunteer in the classroom, on a committee, at an event, or in any other way that benefits our school, please let me know (Christine at derbyjc@bellatlantic.net), so it can be included in our total hours submitted to Montgomery County each month.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to recognize those who have given time and resources during the months of September and October.

Thank you to Nancy and Theresa for your help in kindergarten the first week of school. It was such a tremendous help as our new kindergarteners learned about going to school.

Thank you Beth for all of her work on Spirit Wear for our school.

Thank you to Melissa, Jaime, Laurie, and all of the helpers who made Fall Fest an amazing success!

Thank you to all who have been able to help with the Parents Helping Teachers workgroup. This includes Jody, Linda, Theresa, Wendy, Jenny, Kristen, Jaime, Amachei, Krista, and Christine. We prepared an amazing amount of classroom materials for our teachers.

Thank you to Karen and Nora, along with their many helpers: Melissa, Nancy, Christine, Kristina, Beth, Josh, Roberta, Colleen, Karen, and Laurie who made Pastries with Parents a delicious start to our Parent Visitation Day.

Thank you to Beth who has been capturing great moments in the school year for our yearbook!

Thank you to Theresa and Christine who helped make Picture Day run smoothly.

Thank you to Tara for organizing a fun evening for movie night. And thank you to Tara, Nicole, and the fifth grade celebration team for the delicious concessions!

Thank you to Ashley for her work organizing Spirit Nights for our school. It is a fun way to raise money for all of our important programs.

Thank you to all of our room parents and helpers who made our Halloween parties such wonderful memories.

Finally, thank you to all who help in the classroom with individual teachers, represent our school, and contribute their time in ways that may not have been mentioned. We appreciate you and all that you contribute to make our school a special place - it makes a huge difference!

*Nancy Giganti and
Christine Derby*



Grandparents Day

Our annual Grandparents Day celebration will be held on **Wednesday, Nov. 22 from 8:45-11:15 a.m.** A reception with coffee and pastries will be held in the cafeteria from 8:45-9:30 a.m. Following the reception, grandparents can visit classrooms and experience the learning environment with their grandchildren. At the conclusion of the event, many grandparents like to take their grandchildren out to lunch. Children must have written permission in order to be dismissed with their grandparents. To ensure the safety of our students, there will be no exception to this policy. More information will be send home in early November. Contact Beth Walter at bwalter425@comcast.net with any questions. This is always a really fun event. We cannot wait to see you there!

Volunteer Training Requirement

If you took the training last year, you do not need to retake it this year.

If you volunteer at school this year (including field trips), you need to bring a photo ID to enter the building. You also must complete the online training on Child Abuse and Neglect which is designed to help volunteers be aware of signs of potential abuse and neglect and how to handle situations where you might suspect abuse and neglect. This training is required for adults who would like to volunteer within the school building or attend field trips. The same training is required for all Montgomery County schools, including Baker MS and Damascus HS.

The training is available online at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/>

The training takes about 25 minutes. At the end you will be provided with a confirmation number and the system will send you an e-mail showing that you have completed the training. You will need to show this confirmation e-mail to the office when you come to volunteer. If you have any questions or concerns or need computer access, please let me know at derbyjc@bellatlantic.net and I can work with you to help you get your confirmation of training.

*~ Christine Derby,
DES PTA President*

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Parents Helping Teachers:

Fridays, November 3, November 17, and December 1 from 9:30-11:30 a.m. This is a drop-in opportunity where we help make copies and educational materials to help teachers. Please meet us in the main office if you can. No experience necessary.

Media Center helpers:

We are looking for parents who are able to help in the media center Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons from 3:00-3:45 p.m. If you are interested, please sign up using Signup Genius: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d44a4a628a2fc1-library>

Bingo Night:

Thursday, November 16, 7-8 p.m. This will be a SSL opportunity worth one SSL hour. SSL students will help check bingo cards, assist the caller, and monitor prizes. Look for an e-mail coming soon!

Grandparents Day, Wednesday, November 22:

We will be looking for adult helpers the morning of Grandparents Day to help with refreshments and serve as guides. Look for an e-mail coming soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

- November 3: Parents Helping Teachers Work Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- November 6-10: Parent/Teacher Conference Week
- November 7: PTA Meeting, 7 p.m. in the Media Center—Presentation on the Changes to MCPS Grading and Report Cards
- November 9: First Marking Period Ends
- November 9-10: Early Release at 1:20 p.m.
- November 12: Dashing Dragons 5K Race
- November 13: American Legion Veterans Day Ceremony, 10 a.m.
- November 15: Second Grade Field Trip to Strathmore
- November 16: Bingo Night—concessions begin at 6:30 p.m., Bingo 7-8 p.m.
- November 17: Parents Helping Teachers Work Group, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- November 17: Early Release at 1:20 p.m.
- November 22: Grandparents Day and Early Release at 1:20 p.m.
- November 23-24: NO SCHOOL—Thanksgiving Holiday

