

Choptank Elementary School
1103 Mace's Lane
Cambridge, MD. 21613
Respect Responsibility Right Choices
December 2009 - January 2010
Issue 2



Administrator's Corner Mrs. Jennifer Ruark and Mrs. Emma Pinkett

Happy Holidays to all. It is certainly hard to believe that the holiday season is upon us already. It seems like the school just started a short time ago. But, time waits for no one. This school year is moving very quickly. Our staff and students are as busy as ever teaching, learning and utilizing taught skills and processes.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to those of you who were able to attend our Honor Roll Assembly on November 13th. We do understand how difficult it is to be able to attend daytime activities. Our students were very excited and proud of their academic accomplishment in the first term. Once again we thank you for all that you do at home to help your student meet with success while here at Choptank.

The month of December is a relatively short month as far as school goes. We only have 14 more school days until the start of Christmas break on December 18th. Also, please be on the lookout for Interim reports to come home on December 3rd and Parent Conferences to take place on December 7th. Also, please note that our Winter Concert will take place on December 9th instead of the 10th as stated in the county calendar.

As we forge ahead into the winter season, we implore you to make sure that your child is prepared daily with a warm coat, hat and gloves as children will be going outside for recess as the weather permits. Dressing in layers is advised to help students remain comfortable as they move from classroom to classroom within the building as well.

As always, thank you for all you do to assist us with educating your student(s).

We truly appreciate you and all that you do. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you in 2010. Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Counselor's Corner

Mrs. Zulieka Jarmon-Horsey

Stay connected to children, teachers, parents, family, and friends.

Who does it take to make a child successful? It takes everyone! Parents, teachers, staff, family and friends all play a special role in the development of a child. As a parent now, I realize and believe a parent/guardian is a child's first teacher. Our role is to provide the nurturing support they need for healthy development. Parenting is the most rewarding, challenging, exciting, fulfilling, and beneficial job we will ever have, BUT it can't be done alone. Each of you has a special and unique situation that aides in the growth and success of your child. We are excited that you allow Choptank Elementary School to play such a special role in your child's life.

Here are a few tips to "connect" home and school:

1. Maintain contact with the teacher and school.
2. Please, Please, Please make sure that we have updated telephone numbers for you. This also includes emergency contact information. For example, imagine if we really needed to reach you in the event of an emergency and we don't have working numbers...
3. Call the school and schedule a parent conference. A parent conference is a perfect opportunity for you and the teacher to meet to discuss important aspects of your child's academics.
4. Visit us when you can. We welcome you anytime.

Attendance:

The cold and flu season has kept us all on high alert and using precaution. We appreciate your assist as you exercise your judgment with your child. Here are just a few reminders when it comes to attendance. Please make sure that you send in a note and/or doctor's note when your child returns to school. If you know that your child is going to be out for an extended period of time, please call us. If you have any questions and/or concerns about attendance, please call me. I am always here to help!

Upcoming Events

December: Caring Coupon Month	"Caring"
January/February Multicultural Fest	"Respect & Diversity"
March: Read Across American	"Dr. Seuss Day"

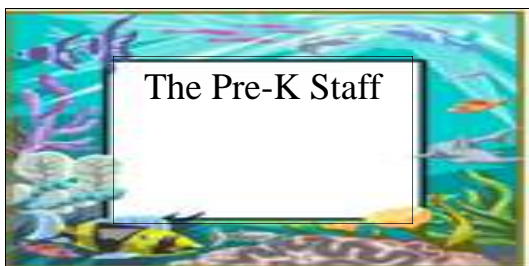
Pre-Kindergarten News

The pre-kindergarten students are busy learning Christmas songs and rhymes for the Christmas Program. They are very excited about the program. In addition to preparing for the program, we will be studying two new themes in December. In the unit entitled "Here We Go", the students will explore various kinds of transportation and that most vehicles have wheels. We will primarily focus on cars, buses, boats, trains and airplanes. During "Boxes and Balls", the students will learn to describe the attributes of these familiar objects. Also, they will be concentrating on the following positional words: over, under, above, on and below. Throughout the last week of school in December, we will be learning about the traditions of Christmas.

In January, we will be studying three different themes and learning about Dr. Martin Luther King. In "Good Morning, Good Night", the students will be concentrating on opposites and expanding their language skills while learning new rhymes and songs. During "Winter Wonders", the children will observe ice melting, learn about various animals and how they behave in the winter, explore winter clothing, and observe changes in nature. Lastly, in "Art & Artists", the students' experiences of their own creativity will be expanded. They will observe, manipulate, and experiment with the process and products of artists.

Throughout these units, we will be emphasizing the following skills: AB patterns, writing their first name with a model, building sets of objects, answering questions related to the stories and blending syllables into words. Please continue to read to your child daily and ask him/her questions about the story. Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Mrs. Sorrell



Kindergarten News

Our kindergartners are diligently working on learning all of the pre-reading skills necessary to become successful readers. We have taught all 26 letters of the alphabet, as well as their sounds. Our next step is to start blending sounds together to read words and then it is off to reading storybooks. It is truly amazing to witness the progress all of our students have made since the beginning of the school year. Please continue to reinforce letter sounds and recognition as you read with your child at home. Your dedication is paying off. To ensure the success of each student, we are providing small group rotations to focus on reading strategies and skills to meet the student's identified strengths and weaknesses. Already this has proven to be very beneficial, as many of our students now know all letter sounds and some are even reading Shared Story Books. If you have any questions or concerns about our reading program, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

We are still moving along in our new Math Connect Program. Students will continue to write, recognize and count numerals from 0-20 using concrete objects and illustrations. The students will also use one-to-one correspondence and counting to compare sets and determine which has more than, less than, or whether the sets are the same/equal. Please reinforce these skills as home as well.

December will be a very busy time for all of us as we prepare for our upcoming winter concert. Please continue to have your child practice singing the songs and reciting the rhymes at home. We look forward to sharing your child's progress with you at the next scheduled parent conferences.

We would like to wish each and every one of you a very safe and happy holiday!

Mrs. Cook and Mrs. Elliott



First Grade News

We have already completed two **Math** units for Term 2. Our next Math units will cover *Subtraction* and *Time*. Please make sure your child is doing his/her Math homework every night to receive full credit. Also, continue to help your child learn his/her math facts!

This winter we will be studying and writing about holidays in **Writing**, exploring shadows in **Science** and learning about where we live and our place in the world in **Social Studies**. Please continue to encourage your child to try his/her best in each of these areas.

Also remember that your child has **Reading** homework every night. He/She should be reading for 20 minutes and complete any other assignment his/her teacher requires.

Reminders:

- *Check bookbags every night for notes or homework.
- *Clean out bookbags regularly to help your child stay organized.
- *Also label any coats, hats and gloves/mittens that come with your child to school.

Dates to Remember:

December 9th – WINTER CONCERT
December 18th – HOLIDAY PARTY
January 28th – BALTIMORE AQUARIUM
TRIP and REPORT CARDS

Ms. Wheatley, Mrs. Owens and Mrs. Messick

Third Grade News

Wow! Can you believe that we are almost halfway through the school year? We are so proud of the progress that we have seen from our 3rd graders so far, but there is still more work to be done. With MSA testing just around the corner we are “stepping-up” the expectations and we know that if you put forth your full effort, we can absolutely meet our goal! In Math we are jumping into Geometry – exploring 3-D shapes and polygons! In Science we are digging into our soil unit and in Social Studies we are learning about communities!

Please remember to do your math and reading homework EVERY NIGHT! Also, study your spelling words each night – we challenge you to see if you can hear those words being used around you! Keep reaching for those S.T.A.R.S.!!

Mrs. Outten, Ms. Holbrook, Mr. Thomas, and Ms. Tolley

Second Grade News



Off to the races-Term 2

Everyone was a winner in Term 1. Whether our second graders made Honor Roll, did well in Reading or Math, completed class work and homework, and/or followed the school rules, our students are all shining stars! As we look forward to the remainder of Term 2, we encourage parents to oversee the completion and returning of homework. Children seem to do better during the daily routine when they are prepared with required work.

Our reading groups are showing progress. Enrichment classes are moving forward as well.

In Science we will soon begin our study of the moon and Writing will be incorporated into this unit. Our next few Math units will cover adding, regrouping, and rounding two digit numbers **and** subtracting one and two digit numbers by counting back and regrouping tens.

Important Dates to Remember:

Parent Conference Day-Monday, December 7, 2009

Winter Break-December 18, 2009-January 4, 2010

Mrs. Bradford, Mrs. Desire and Mrs. Watkins

Fourth Grade News

Here is what's happening in 4th grade this month! Mrs. Travis and Mr. Snyder are making the following arrangements for a field trip to the National Aquarium in Baltimore, MD. We will be going on January 28th and any parents interested in chaperoning should contact Mr. Snyder as soon as possible. We will be sending a letter home in the near future with all the details. In Math class, students are learning to solve multi-digit multiplication problems. If your child is not practicing his or her math facts every night, PLEASE encourage him/her to spend time learning facts through 10 x 10. This month your child is either completing fun science experiments with Mrs. Travis that pertain to food chains and webs or is learning about the history and geography of Maryland with Mr. Snyder. As a reminder, we will be having a holiday party on the day before winter break, and any contribution of supplies, snacks, or drinks would be greatly appreciated. Your 4th grade team

Mrs. Travis and Mr. Snyder

Fifth Grade News

Hello once again family and friends! We encourage our students to continue studying math facts and completing homework assignments every night. Interims for the second 9 week period go out on December 3th. We hope to see all of you here for Parent/Teacher conferences on Dec. 7th. As our year continues, 5th grade work becomes increasingly more difficult. In Math, our students just finished a unit on displaying and interpreting data using graphs. They will now begin working on division and fractions. We are also preparing our students for their second reading benchmark test. We continue teaching our students a wide variety of writing, reading and enrichment activities to prepare them for the next level and a life of learning, growth and many successes. We teach our students the importance of being responsible for their own actions. Showing responsibility prepares students for some of life's biggest challenges. When we teach our children responsibility, we are enabling them to grow up to become responsible, successful adults. Happy Holidays to you and your families and have a safe New Year!

Ms. Dean and Mr. Schwickrath

Physical Education

For the month of December, the physical education classes will be learning various types of dances- aerobic, folk, line, and square dances. Students will learn dances as the "Hokey-Pokey", "Chicken Dance", "Macerena", "Electric Slide", "Cha-Cha Slide" and others. This will prepare us for our yearly *Choptank Gym Show* in February when each grade will demonstrate a dance they learned in class. In January, the students will learn various basic tumbling stunts. Early grades will learn animal walks, various rolls, and the upper grades will review the basic tumbling stunts and learn even more skills. At the end of this unit, there will be a group of 3rd through 5th grade students who will practice together to perform tumbling for our gym show to be held February 17th. Mark your calendars! There will be more detailed information given to students in February.

Mrs. Follmer

Professional Development

Our partnership with Salisbury University is going great! We are fortunate to have many SU students in our school. We would like to welcome the following students who spend a day a week in the following classrooms:

Amanda Slayman	Mrs. Travis – 4 th grade
Mark Susinko –	Mrs. Follmer- PE
Taylor Kohn –	Mrs. Outten – 3 rd grade
Parris Travers –	Mrs. Cook- Kindergarten
Hunter Wozny –	Mr. Snyder- 4 th grade
Lamesha Murry –	Mrs. Sorrells – Pre K (Chesapeake College)

We also welcome Ms. Ashley Hanyok to 3rd grade. She will be co-teaching with Mrs. Tolley and will be with us until Thanksgiving break. Her students are writing and publishing their original writing on a blog. Ask most 3rd graders and they can tell you all about it!

All Choptank students will be especially glad to hear that Mr. Susinko will be here for 8 weeks, after our Christmas break, co-teaching PE with Mrs. Follmer.

Helping Chesapeake College and SU students at Choptank Elementary as they prepare for a career in teaching also is a bonus for our teachers and students. The extra hands allow for more quality, small group instruction. Students are able to have more individualized attention. Strong bonds of respect and trust are created.

If you visit our school, check out the PDS bulletin board in the side hall by the office, to see pictures!

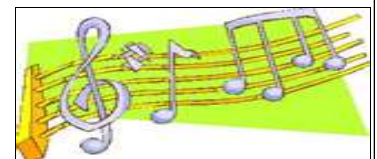
Cathy Hanson
Site Coordinator

4

Music Department News

Time to celebrate the holidays! We will enjoy the talents of our children in our winter concert on Wednesday, December 9th, at 7:00 p.m., in the Choptank cafeteria. **PLEASE NOTE---WE HAVE CHANGED THE DATE OF OUR CONCERT!!!** Our Pre-Kindergarten through second grade singers will be sure to put the spirit of the season in your heart. The members of our school band will also entertain with "horns (and drums) a plenty"! A letter will go home with the performers to give parents more information about the concert. Mr. Cooper and the performers hope everyone will come out for a wonderful evening of holiday joy! Mr. Cooper thanks you for your continued support of the music program at Choptank Elementary School.

Mr. Paul Cooper
Music Director



Reading and Math News

Time is moving so quickly it is hard to believe that Christmas is rapidly approaching! Students are engaged and working hard in class. Our flexible grouping allows for movement between reading groups when data supports the move. 27% of our first graders have now moved into a second grade reading anthology. It is anticipated that at least 9 more 1st graders will move into a 2nd grade book by the end of this term. Almost 50%!!! Wow!! In grades 2-5, thirteen students have moved up a level!

The engagement in classrooms is something to see! Students are delving deeper into the story and acquiring a deeper understanding. Teachers have been modeling and teaching what a good reader does as they read – consider background, question, predict, infer, visualize, and synthesize. It is a process, that as it continues to be modeled and taught, will help all students become better readers.

Please consider making sure that one gift your child receives at Christmas is a book. **It takes just one great book to capture the attention and make a child a lifelong reader!** Ask your child, the media specialist, a book store employee, teacher or me to recommend a good book.

Students and teachers are continuing to work in our new math series – Math Connects. Benchmark scores in Math support the fact that students are doing well. Remember to look over your child's homework, ask questions and give support as needed.

As always, read for 20 minutes and study math facts nightly. (Some classrooms are creating raps to help them remember!!) Think about helping your child create his/her own rap to help him/her learn and remember facts.

I wish you all a great holiday!

Cathy Hanson

PD Coach

Young Gentleman's Club

We currently have about 12-15 members in the Young Gentleman's Club. We meet most Thursday's unless I tell the students otherwise.

Recently we have talked about anger and how to control tempers. I have talked about role models such as Jackie Robinson and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.. I realize with all of the stresses in today's world it is not easy to do the right thing, but these young men do a great job 99.9% of the time and I am proud of them.

Thank you for picking your child up at 4:30 each week. We have instituted a new policy that requires the young men to be dressed in a shirt and tie when attending YGC meetings.

I look forward to working with each young man as the school year progresses. As always if there is ever anything I can do to help your child be more successful, please let me know.

Jon Harper

5

From The Art Department

Karla Gleason

The Maryland State Department of Education is co-sponsoring a poster contest with Prime outlets, the Maryland Association of School Health Nurse, the Maryland Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance and the Maryland PTA to create awareness for increasing physical activity among children and their families.

The following students will be participating in this contest:

Third Grade:

Jamia Jarmon, Autumn Duncan, Tala'jah Jones, K'Breania Johnson, A'Metria Green, Da'Brion Chester, and Nayeli Saldana-Gonzalez.

Fourth Grade:

Ja'Mall Bank, JaBrea Barrows, Cammie Foxwell, Gabriel Warner, and Jahson Tyler.

Fifth Grade:

Joiah Mays, Tionie Gregory, and Hannah Moore.

Math

I am very excited about our implementation of the new math program. Parents, you are going to find that this program is more challenging than Math Wings in some ways. As always if you ever have any questions please contact the teacher or myself at school. There are many new terms and ways of solving problems that are being introduced everyday. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions. I am the math coach and I learn new terms and new ways of solving problems whenever I go in the classrooms.

Much of what your child does in the classroom can be found online. If you would like access to this awesome site please just let your child's teacher know and I will get the information to you. Please have your child practice Math their facts each night. This year our goal is for all 3rd graders to know Multiplication facts for 0-10 by March, all of the 4th graders by Christmas, and all 5th graders should already know them. First and second graders should be learning addition facts and know facts up to 20 by the end of the year.

I am pleased with the overall progress of our students on the new county assessments. While it can be difficult for children to take tests so often, frequent testing does mean that they do not have to remember as much for each test. Also, understand that your child's grade is not based primarily on tests. A large portion of the grade is class work and small quizzes.

Jon Harper

Math Facilitator



School Nurse Notes December 2009

Flu Update as of November 24:

- Numbers of students with Influenza-like Illness have been **very low** for most of November.
- Many parents are taking advantage of having their children vaccinated at school with the intranasal H1N1 vaccine spray. Many others took their children to the Dorchester County Health Department for the injectable H1N1 vaccine.
- Health Department nurses plan to begin administering the **2nd doses of H1N1 vaccine** in the schools (with written parent consent) the week of December 7, if we have received the vaccine. Children aged **9 years and younger**, at the time of receiving the first dose, will **need a 2nd dose**.

The **Seasonal Flu** vaccine project (for grades K thru 5th) will resume after the H1N1 is finished.

PREVENTION saves missing work and school:

- **Wash hands** with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, **often**.
- Cough and sneeze into **your sleeve, not your hands**.
- **Do Not send ill children to school**, for any reason. With any illness, allow **24 hours to pass with no fever**, vomiting, or diarrhea before sending your child back to school. Normal body temperature is less than 100 degrees. Sick child care needs to be planned ahead of time.
- Seek **immediate medical care** if a child has difficult or labored breathing, has bluish color, trouble waking, unusual behavior, or seems to improve and then worsens. Not drinking adequate fluids can lead to dehydration complications. So can diarrhea and vomiting.

Do Not give aspirin, or products containing aspirin (or other **salicylates**), to children or teens, unless instructed to do so by a physician. Aspirin can cause **Reye's Syndrome**, a serious complication with neurological effects. Most children can tolerate acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) for aches and fever. **Always check the package for age appropriateness and dosage.**

"Healthy, Happy Holydays"



SCHOOL MEAL PRICES INCREASE

January 4, 2010

The price of school meals in Dorchester County is going up next year. On Thursday, November 19th, the Board of Education approved a \$0.25 school meal price increase for both breakfast and lunch and a 15% increase in a la carte items (individual servings of menu items, snack foods, etc.). This change will take effect on January 4, 2010 when students return from the holiday break.

The Food Service Program in Dorchester County had been fortunate enough for many years to operate at a break-even point, with a small positive balance, which was used to offset increased costs associated with providing breakfast and lunch to students. This past year, due to rising food costs associated with Federal guidelines for healthy eating (providing more fresh fruits and vegetables, along with whole grain products); the rising costs of other food and food-related items, such as milk and paper products; the rising costs of employee benefits; and increased transportation costs, the payments from students, plus subsidies from the State and Federal governments, are not sufficient to offset the costs of operating the school Food Service Program.

Student breakfasts in all schools will change from \$1.00 to \$1.25; an elementary school lunch will change from \$1.75 to \$2.00 and middle/high school lunch will change from \$2.00 to \$2.25. Even with this increase, Dorchester County is still close to or below the State average price charged to students. Currently, the State average for breakfast is \$1.23, an elementary school lunch is \$2.07, and the average for a middle/high school lunch is \$2.30. This increase in school meal prices is a nationwide trend.

On October 15th, students in grades 3, 4 and 5 took their first Reading benchmark. This assessment is one way for our teachers to determine how well they are teaching specific skills based on the children's performance on the benchmark test. I am very pleased to report that the majority of the students did extremely well. That makes us, as teachers, feel like we're doing a good job. On December 3rd we will give the second. Reading benchmark; at that time, 2nd graders will also take it, in addition to the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. As always, please encourage your child to do his/her best.

All students in grades 3 - 5, plus those in my reading class have been working hard to practice the strategic reading practices that they are learning. As adults we apply these strategies when we read without even thinking about them. These strategies include monitoring reading to be sure they understood what the author wanted them to understand, predicting what will happen next in the passage and making inferences, all based on what they've read, and summarizing. As your child completes reading at night, discuss the book with him/her asking specific questions that will let you know if he/she truly understood the story.

With the holidays approaching, Christmas is an excellent opportunity to add books to your child's collection. When choosing a book be sure to check and make sure it's something your child will enjoy, as well as be able to read independently. If you're choosing a book to read to or with, your child, make sure the vocabulary is a little more challenging. That's one of the best ways to increase your child's knowledge of our vocabulary.

As always, if there's anything I can do or questions I can answer regarding Reading, please feel free to contact me at school.

Happy Holidays from the Reading Department!

Mrs. Connie Dunnock
Reading Facilitator

News From the Media Center

I would like to thank everyone for a successful Book Fair. We earned over \$1,100.00 to use to buy new books! I am looking at ordering a new set of I Spy books to replace some the ones we currently have that are becoming very worn, as well as, some new chapter books and picture books.

Students have been reviewing and working on media skills. They are learning about the parts of books, how books should look on a shelf, and how to find books using call numbers. Students have also been using the computer lab. Early childhood has been learning how to use the computer mouse and the other students have been learning how to access programs. The fifth grade classes have been creating book talks using powerpoint presentations.

There have been 6 books returned in this year that have been damaged, usually by younger siblings. Please try to keep library books in a safe place and away from younger brothers and sisters. Your child has Media on the same day each week, try to remind them to return their book on time so that they are able to check a new book each week.

Parent Information

School Closings or Delayed Openings

The following radio stations will carry information relative to a delay or closing approximately by 6:00am:

WCEM-106.3, WCEI-96.7, WAAI-100.9, WQHQ-104.7

The following TV Stations:

Channels 16, 47, 11, 2, and 13

Web Site:

<http://www.dcps.k12.md.us>

Also a sign will be posted outside the school the morning of any delayed opening.

The Dorchester County Bd of Education does not discriminate in admission, access, treatment, or employment in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, age, National origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis prohibited by law.

Appropriate accommodations for individuals and disabilities will be provided upon request. The information in this announcement is available in alternative formats upon request.

Concerns regarding the above are directed to Gary McCabe, Sr., Assistant Superintendent for Administration, Dorchester Public Schools, 700 Glasgow Street, Cambridge, Maryland 21613, or by phone at 410-228-4747, extension 1015.

Note from the School Nurse

So that you may be reached in an emergency, it is very important for all parents/guardians to notify the school when contact information changes, throughout the school year.

Also, the school nurse is in need of clean, gently used small children clothing.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 2009

- 3 Interim Report
- 7 Parent Conference Day No School For Students
- 9 CES Winter Concert 7:00pm **(New Date)**
- 9 **Picture Make-up Retake Day**
- 17 Board of Education meeting @ 3:00pm
- 21st-31st School closed Winter/Christmas Break

January 2010

- 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR
- 4 School open for students and staff
- 7 Gianni's Pizza Fundraiser flyers will go out the week of January 7th for Super Bowl Sunday, February 7th.
- 15 End of 2nd marking period/End of Semester 1
- 18 Schools Closed Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 19 Schools closed for students (Professional Development)
- 21 Bd. of Education meeting @ 3:00pm
- 28 Report Cards Go Home



Name _____

Homeroom Teacher _____

1. Cut out this box .
2. Fill out the information.
3. Return to homeroom teacher.
4. Receive a gift