A Message from Mrs. Hutchison & Mrs. Burch

WOW! We are officially halfway through the 2019-2020 school year. Our students, staff and school community have truly accomplished so much this year. We want to thank each of you for your positive role that you are playing in ensuring our students are meeting high expectations and are successful. We thank you and truly recognize how lucky we are to be a part of MES.

This Friday, January 31st, we have an amazing opportunity to attend the Kenwood High School basketball game, free of charge for students and one adult with flyer. Some of our staff will be attending the game. Many of us plan to attend the varsity game at 5:30! We hope to see you there.

We will have signs made by our students cheering on our future HS. We will participate in some halftime fun and enjoy a fun night as a school community. If you can, please wear blue or green to represent Middlesex and Kenwood. We are looking forward to a great night!

On Thursday, February 6th report cards will be sent home with students in 1st through 5th grades (pre-school, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten will have an opportunity for conferences in the spring).

On Tuesday, February 11th, we are beyond excited for our Arts Integration and Dancing with Dads Event. You do NOT need to be a dad to attend, mom, grandmom, granddad, aunts, uncles or a friend can attend with your student to chaperone. Our request is that all students attending do attend with an adult.

Finally, each year BCPS provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to complete a survey. Please take a few minutes to complete it, your responses will help us to continue to make MES better. We will have computers available on February 11th at the Arts Integration and Dancing with Dads Event – we look forward to seeing you!
Who are MES HEROES?

**Middlesex Elementary**

I pledge to be a HERO today!

- I am helpful to my school family.
- I work toward excellence as I learn.
- I am resilient when things do not go my way.
- I am orderly with my space and my actions.

**HERO REFLECTION JOURNAL**

Each day, after every subject, students are prompted to self-reflect based on if they believe they demonstrated the following virtues –

- Helpfulness
- Excellence
- Resilience
- Orderliness

Students will record their personal reflections on their HERO chart. Each night, they will take this chart home and share with you.

Please sign and return the chart daily.

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**FRIENDLY REMINDERS...**

With the WINTER MONTHS and possible severe weather conditions, we wanted to review our inclement weather to both reassure and help parents and families prepare and plan.

- In the event of a major weather event (severe storm, power outage...) please watch our local news stations, visit [www.bcps.org](http://www.bcps.org) and/or download the BCPSNow app. In addition, you MAY receive an automated phone call, text, or email. For this information to reach you, it is important that you keep your contact information current within the online SIS system. If your contact information has changed, please visit the office in order to update.

- Please be considerate and safety conscious as you drop off and pick up students at school. The winter months see an increase in the number of cars. Remember to: not block the flow of traffic, not block cross walk area, and use the crosswalk when crossing.

- The weather is cold. Please remember to send your child to school in appropriate seasonal wear. Our students will continue to enjoy the fresh air if there is not precipitation or extreme cold.

- We continue to ask for your help with regards to arrival and dismissal. Students should **NOT** arrive at school prior to 9:00am. This is because we do not have supervision prior to then. Please help us ensure ALL students safety by making sure they do not arrive until 9:00am (**not before**).

**Bus Riders** (daily or for field trips) – Our drivers’ number one goal is student safety. Please help us remind our students of the following....

- Do **NOT** eat on the bus. This causes a choking hazard.
- Stay in your assigned seat.
- Use an inside voice when speaking to friends.
- Check the bus for personal belongings prior to exiting.
School Fun

Mrs. Edwards’ and Mr. Boarman’s classes researched continents and created brochures to share the weather, climate zone and possible extreme weather one would experience if they visited that country. Students enjoyed making a “YouTube” video to present their knowledge. Thank you to the families and friends that visited to hear the presentations.

Our 5th Graders participated in a “Living Museum” where they shared their reports on famous individuals in history. Come to our Arts Integration Night on February 11th to learn more about these individuals from our 5th graders themselves!

Mrs. Dufel’s class demonstrated the act of kindness by recognizing a retired military personnel. The students wrote letters to thank him for his commitment and dedication!

SAFE SPACE

In order to assist students with developing self-regulation skills every classroom has a SAFE SPACE. This is an area within the classroom where students self-select to go and regulate their emotions. A place with tools that can be used to change their inner-state. A place where students can get composed. A place where students can change their emotions from upset to composed and maximize their learning. Within the Safe Space there are materials for students to utilize. For example, there may be visuals to help student utilize breathing strategies to calm their mind. There are fidgets to help students calm their body. Staff teaches the students how to appropriately utilize these tools and how to use not abuse Safe Space. Please ask your child to share strategies that they have learned about and/or utilized at Safe Space.

VIRTUE LANGUAGE

What is it?

At MES, we utilize virtue language to help develop positive traits within our students’ character. Above is a list of virtues. Discuss with your family which virtues are your strengths and which are growth virtues.
Students, teachers and adults experience conflict and need to identify strategies to effectively problem solve at school and in life. *Conflict is an opportunity for growth.* Conflicts are utilized as teaching opportunities at Middlesex Elementary.

We do this through conversations with students, witnesses, peers and others that were involved. When discussing situations, we pose the following questions to help problem solve and learn-

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at that time?
- What have you thought about since?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

At MES, everyone will be welcomed to our *MES Family* and encouraged to do their best!
We believe in each other, we will do our best in school, in life and in our future!
“Students who attend school regularly also feel more connected to their community, develop important social skills and friendships, and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, setting them up for a strong future.”

Each month we monitor ALL student’s attendance. We provide several interventions to support regular daily attendance. We will provide a phone call home, a letter to inform you of days missed, opportunities to speak with the teacher, school counselors, or administration. Our goal is to work together to ensure all students attend school at least 94% of the time.

For more information -
http://absencesaddup.org/importance-of-school-attendance/
Below is a list of 20 questions to ask your kids after school that will help us get beyond the “good” and “boring” answer to the question, “How was your day?”

1. What did you have for lunch?
2. Whom did you sit with at lunch?
3. Who told a funny joke today? What was it?
4. Who gave the best presentation in your class?
5. Who gave the worst presentation?
6. Which of your teachers was the kindest today?… Happiest?… Grumpiest?
7. What book did you get from the library?
8. Who was a super-hero today (who helped someone)?
9. Whom did you make laugh?
10. Whom did you help today?
11. When were you bored today? If you were the teacher, how might you make the topic more interesting?
12. What is something new you learned—that you didn’t know this morning or yesterday?
13. Why do you think your teacher wants you to learn (a specific topic or subject)?
14. If you could see into the future, how do you see yourself using this (math, English) skill?
15. Would you like to go to (state or country) some day, based on what you’re learning in geography (or social studies)? Why/why not?
16. Would you like to go back in time (to the place in history your child is learning about), how do you see yourself living/being/doing during that time?
17. What were the clothes like during this time in history? Do you think you would like to wear these types of clothes?
18. If you could invent a P.E. activity, what would you do that would include everyone?
19. Did anyone have a birthday today? How was it celebrated?
20. Did you learn any new songs? What were they?

Well, I committed to asking the questions and it was not easy. Many responses were “nothing,” “nope” or “can I go now?” But I continued to nag him, I was able to get a few responses… he knows I am determined so I will continue to ask. I hope that it will become a habit and he will look for things to share from his day with me.
Our 2019-2020 Teacher of the Year

Each year, BCPS asks that all schools select a teacher of the year! This year our staff selected one of our many amazing educators, Mrs. Solomon! When selecting, staff was asked to share a few words about their nominee. Here is just a small sampling:

“Mrs. Solomon is a wealth of knowledge and resources. She puts an unbelievable amount of time and effort into her work to help our students and our teachers. She is flexible, adapts to the needs of each classroom/student/teacher, and cares an awful lot about everything she does. She goes above and beyond to help ALL. She is always looking for ways to provide students with even more support. She will never say no, no matter how much is on her plate. She even takes her lunch to work with the students. I have enjoyed co-teaching, co-planning and pulling small groups with Mrs. Solomon because of her depth of knowledge of student needs and standards. She always puts students first. She finds ways to support the individual IEP goals of each student and helps find ways to reach the standard. Mrs. Solomon helps pull groups or co-teaches. She is always prepared and a wealth of knowledge. Her students love going to group. She is flexible when plans change and always willing to create resources for lessons. Mrs. Solomon is an amazing special educator to work with. I am super grateful to be working with her. She builds connections with the students and builds a safe and loving environment for all. She works tirelessly for her students during and outside of work hours. She is an incredible teacher who has served as a role model to me during my time at Middlesex. Solomon flies under the radar but is doing amazing things every day that makes Middlesex a better place for our students to learn!”

We are beyond fortunate to have Mrs. Solomon at MES. She is truly an advocate for children. She works hard, is caring and does whatever it takes to ensure students are successful! When you see her, please tell her congratulations! We are so proud of her.
Changes announced to Baltimore County Public Schools calendar for 2019-2020 school year

*Schools and offices to be closed on Feb. 4 and open on Presidents’ Day, Feb. 17*

TOWSON, MD. - All Baltimore County public schools and offices will be closed on Tuesday, February 4, for the special 7th congressional district election to fill the remainder of the term in the United States House of Representatives created by the death of Elijah Cummings, the incumbent representative. This closure will shift the last day of classes for students from Friday, June 19 to Monday, June 22.

In addition, pending Maryland State Board of Education approval, Baltimore County public schools and offices will be open on Presidents’ Day, Monday, February 17, to make up for the school system’s emergency closure of schools on December 16, 2019. This change is in accordance with the 2019-2020 school calendar and the planned use of emergency closure make-up days.