

Garrett Park Elementary School

Newsletter

February 2012

Glimpses of International Night

Garrett Park Elementary
4810 Oxford Street
Garrett Park, MD 20896

Phone:
(301) 929-2170

School website:
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/garrettparkes/

PTA website: www.gpespta.org



At this year's International Night, held on Saturday, January 28, children represented more than 37 countries, from Algeria to Zambia. Photo by Krista Merker Reilly.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Wed, February 1 - Report cards distributed; third distribution date for approved flyers

Mon, February 6 - National School Counseling Week

Tue, February 7 - Raccoon Club begins

Wed, February 8 - 2nd grade field trip to Imagination Stage; second session of clubs begins

Fri, February 10 - Blanton Studios, Class Pictures; Garrett Park Education Foundation Sweetheart Dance, 7 pm

Tue, February 14 - Valentine's Day parties, 2 pm; 5th grade party in MPR, 2:15 pm

Thu, February 16 - 1st grade field trip to Imagination Stage

Fri, February 17 - Blanton Studios, Club Pictures; 2nd grade astronomy demonstration

Mon, February 20 - President's Day, schools and offices closed

Tue, February 21 - Recorder concert, 2 pm & 7:30 pm; 2nd grade astronomy demonstration

Sat, February 25 - PTA Silent Auction/Bingo, 5 pm

Mon, February 27 - Blanton Studios, candid pictures taken for yearbook

Tue, February 28 - Snow date for recorder concert, 2 pm & 7:30 pm



Harikesh Kailad played the Veena on stage. Photo by David Friedlander.



Valentina Ortiz-Guevara represented Colombia. Photo by Ana Guevara.



Families helped represent their cultures. Photos by Veronica Sereno and by David Friedlander (Greece table).

Letter from the Acting Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for supporting Garrett Park Elementary School in our new building during the month of January. We have transitioned very nicely thanks to your continued support. Many important **dates and events** are highlighted below. Please note those which apply to your child/family.

Special thanks to the PTA for coordinating a great 2012 Garrett Park International Night! Thank you to everyone for participating in such an extraordinary event. It was a grand occasion. Thank you to all of the parents who worked very hard with planning the program, mapping out the logistics, advertising the event, and volunteering throughout. We appreciate your commitment on behalf of our students, staff, and community.

This month, our first and second grade students will be going to Imagination Stage in Bethesda to see the performance of *P. Nokio*. Second grade students will go on Wednesday, February 8, and first grade will go on Thursday, February 16. On Friday, February 17 and Tuesday, February 21, our grade two students will enjoy an in-school astronomy demonstration. Also on Tuesday, February 21, our grade three students will *show off* their skills by

performing in two recorder concerts, one during the school day and one in the evening. We will be taking class pictures on Friday, February 10, as well as club pictures on Friday, February 17. (Look for order forms in your child's backpack.)

Please come and support the Garrett Park Elementary School's Education Foundation by attending the *Valentine Sweetheart Dance* being held on Friday, February 10 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. in the multipurpose room.

Be sure to mark your calendars for our PTA Silent Auction/Bingo night, which will be held on Saturday, February 25 beginning at 5:00 p.m.

Valentine's Day, Tuesday, February 14, 2012

Valentine's Day parties will be held on Tuesday, February 14 in all classes. Please speak with your child's teacher as to the start time as each grade may start at a different time depending on when their lunch/recess block ends.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

Vision and Hearing Screenings for kindergarten students and students new to the state of Maryland will take place on Monday, April 16 and Tuesday, April 17 during the school day. We automatically screen these students. If you have

questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Shaw, our health technician, at 301-929-5527.

5th Grade Promotion Ceremony – Please Save the Date!

The 5th Grade promotion ceremony will be held on **Monday, June 11, 2012, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** More details will follow.

Application and Selection Processes for the Elementary Foreign Language Immersion Programs

This year, the immersion lottery process application dates are February 1, 2012, to April 13, 2012. Parents may participate in the immersion lottery process using the Elementary Immersion Interest Form. The form and directions will be available on the MCPS website at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms, and by calling the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services at 301-592-2040 beginning February 1.

Student Transfer Application Season

Montgomery County parents who wish to request a Change of School Assignment (COSA) for their children from their home school may begin the process during the upcoming transfer season, February 1 – April 1. The transfer process begins in the home school where parents may request a COSA form and the Change of School Assignment Information Booklet that describes the process and provides useful information. For more information, please contact the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services at 301-592-2040.

Spring 2012 Testing – Please Save the Dates!

ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to State for English Language Learners) for Grades K-5

The ACCESS for ELLs test is given to English Language Learners in Grades K-12. It assesses students' English language proficiency in four language domains--reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This test is used to give us information on how to meet students' needs and to also satisfy state and federal requirements for the annual assessment of English language proficiency of English Language Learners. The testing window is Monday, February 6 – Friday, March 23. If you have questions or concerns regarding the test, please contact Mrs. Rodgers, our ESOL team leader.

Maryland School Assessment for Grades 3-5

The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is an annual state test of reading, math, and science. These tests are used by the state of Maryland to meet the federal mandates under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. MSA measures how well students have learned the math, reading, and science skills outlined in the Maryland Content Standards. All schools must show continuous improvement each year with the goal of 100% proficiency by the year 2014. Maryland State Department of Education provides content standards for students in pre-K through grade 12. These standards outline the objectives students need to meet for each grade level.

For more detailed information about the MSA, please visit the Maryland State Department of Education website: <http://www.mdk12.org/parents/index.html>.

Students in grades three, four, and five will be assessed in reading and math. Only grade 5 students will be assessed in science. Students in grades three and four will complete the reading assessment on Monday, March 12 – Tuesday, March 13 and complete the mathematics assessment on Friday, March 16 – Monday, March 19. Students in grade five will complete the reading assessment on Wednesday, March 14, – Thursday, March 15; complete the mathematics assessment on Tuesday, March 20 – Wednesday, March 21; and complete science on Monday, April 30 – Tuesday, May 1, 2012.

The Terra Nova – Second Edition for Grade 2

The TN/2 is a multiple-choice test that assesses skills in reading/language arts and mathematics concepts and computation. The test is administered to all second grade students in Montgomery County Public Schools. Students in grade 2 will be taking the Terra Nova – Second Edition (TN/2) on Monday, April 16 – Friday, April 20.

Teachers are providing rich instructional experiences to strengthen students' understanding and to enhance students' learning. As we approach the testing season, teachers have also been engaging in simulated test sessions that give students practice with the format, processes, procedures, and rigors of the tests. Our goal is to help students feel more confident and comfortable during the test sessions. We want our students to demonstrate their best efforts.

We encourage families to schedule vacations and appointments around the scheduled testing dates. We have minimal make-up days scheduled for students who are ill or absent for unavoidable reasons. Please note that the make-up test sessions are within a very limited window. If you have questions or concerns regarding any of the tests mentioned above, please contact Mrs. Furr, our staff developer.

Grade Two Administration of the InView Assessment

The *InView* is an assessment of developed cognitive abilities that includes verbal reasoning, nonverbal reasoning, and quantitative reasoning. All grade two students in Montgomery County Public Schools will be given the *InView* assessment during the testing window, Tuesday April 10 – Friday, April 20. This assessment allows students to demonstrate strengths that are not ordinarily measured during regular classroom assessments and learning tasks. All grade two students will be assessed on three *InView* subtests, *Analogical Reasoning*, *Quantitative Reasoning*, and *Verbal Reasoning – Words*. Each subtest takes approximately 25 minutes to complete. Our school will begin gathering information about students in grade two for the purpose of matching appropriate instructional enrichments for students while planning for the next school year in grade three and for *Gifted and Talented* (GT) identification. Over the next few months, we will continue gathering information

about each student from a variety of sources, including parents. If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Korth, our GT Liaison.

Kindergarten Orientation – No School for Current Kindergarten Students!

Kindergarten Orientation will be held on Thursday, April 26 and Friday, April 27. On these two days, there will be NO SCHOOL FOR CURRENT KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS to allow our kindergarten teachers to be available to meet all incoming K students.

All students, who will be five years old on or before September 1 are eligible to attend Kindergarten during the 2012-2013 school year. If you have a child who will be eligible, please call our office at (301) 929-2170 to schedule your orientation slot. If you have a neighbor who is not currently a Garrett Park parent and has a Kindergarten-aged child, please ask him/her to call the school to register their child.

Kindergarten attendance is mandatory. If you have a child who is eligible but do not wish your child to attend Kindergarten, an enrollment waiver form must be completed. These forms are available in the main office.

New School Address, School Hours, and School Phone Number

Please be reminded that Garrett Park's original address and the location for the new school is as follows: 4810 Oxford Street, Kensington, Maryland 20895. School hours are 9:05 a.m. – 3:20 p.m. Parents should now use 301-929-2170 as the school's main number. Please do not use 301-571-6920 after the move as it belongs to the Grosvenor Holding Center. The school's fax number will remain the same. It is 301-929-2008. Also, please note that the Health Room now has a direct line, which is 301-929-5527.

Part-Time Work Available at Garrett Park

Looking for part-time work? Garrett Park Elementary School is in need of substitute lunch/recess aides. Applicants need to be 18 years old to be considered and will be paid at a rate of \$13.88 per hour. If interested, please call Mrs. Georgatos, Administrative Secretary, at 301-929-2170 for more information.

Scrapbook Help

We would love to recruit one parent to help update our GPES scrapbook. Articles and pictures are set aside from various events to add to a scrapbook that guests can look through in the main office while waiting for a meeting. We will fund the cost of the materials and the parent volunteer can work at his/her own pace. If you are interested in helping with this, please let us know.

Wish Lists!

- **Non-Perishable Snacks** – many teachers are in need of non-perishable snacks that they can store in case kids forget to bring snacks or simply cannot afford them.

- We would appreciate **coffee, tea, and hot cocoa Keurig cup donations** for our Keurig machine in the staff lounge. We have almost spent down the money budgeted for this and will not be able to replenish supplies as soon as we would like.

- **Napkins, forks, knives, spoons, coffee stirrers** for our staff lounge.

- **Golf-sized umbrellas**

- **Donations for our After School Clubs** – checks can be made payable to "Garrett Park ES" with "After School Clubs" in the memo line.

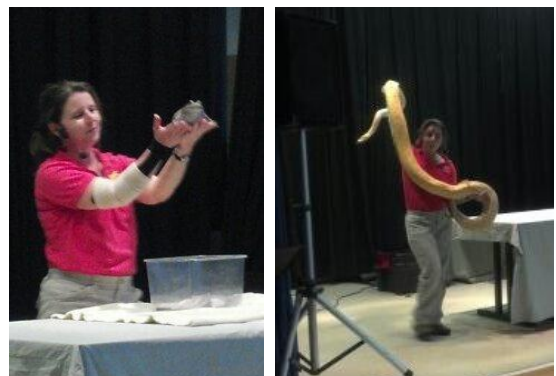
Please know that it is my sincere pleasure to serve our unique community. On Friday, February 17, 2012, I will have completed my acting principal practicum portion of my principal intern program. Thank you for playing a significant role in my leadership! I have really enjoyed leading as the acting principal, watching the smiling faces, and feeling the warm hearts of the stakeholders I serve. I am grateful for every moment that I am empowered to make a positive difference in the lives of our children. I am also amazed by the overwhelming generosity and genuine compassion of our community. Your collective support and strong partnership speaks volumes for why Garrett Park Elementary School students are able to soar!

Respectfully,
Monique Godfrey

Reptiles Alive Assembly Introduced Students to Magnificent Creatures

Just before winter break, students enjoyed a presentation of live reptiles sponsored by the PTA. Reptiles Alive director and handler, Caroline Seitz fully captured the children's attention as she introduced each of seven magnificent creatures and shared a little about them. While these wild things were amazing enough to see, the students also learned something new...like what *ectothermal* means and what's it like to have both an *exoskeleton* and an *endoskeleton*. The children met, among others, an African Leopard Tortoise named Janice, an American Bullfrog (not a reptile!) named Boomboombaloomba, and a 9-foot albino Burmese python named Moonlight! It was exciting! Thankfully, there were no escapees!

- Anne Puglisi



Photos by Melvin Thomas.

Letter from the PTA VP for Membership

There's Still Time to Join the GPES PTA!



Have you been planning to join the GPES PTA but just haven't gotten around to it yet? Have you wondered if there was still time to join?

It's not too late, and now is the perfect time!

We now have 324 members--almost to our goal of 350. Help us to get there!

We welcomed several new members at International Night on Saturday, January 28, and are continuing to take memberships in February.

Membership forms came home in backpacks last week and have been posted on the listserv.

It's easy to join by sending your form and payment (checks made out to "GPES PTA" please) to school with your child. You can also mail them in to

"Garrett Park Elementary School, ATTN: PTA Membership, 4810 Oxford Street, Kensington, MD 20895."

There are so many great reasons to join the PTA. Here are just three:

1. HELP YOUR CHILD

By joining the PTA, you help your child *and* our school. More than 30 years of research has proven that children do better when their parents are involved both at home and in school. Grades are higher. Test scores rise. Self-esteem grows. Schools improve.

2. EVERY MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

When you join the GPES PTA, you also join the Maryland state and national PTA and become part of a national effort to improve the education, health, and welfare of every child. Membership numbers count in a significant way when our representatives are lobbying for funding for education.

3. YOU HAVE A VOICE

PTA membership helps you connect with the school, the staff, and other parents and gives you a voice in deciding the direction of the GPES PTA. Only members can vote on PTA issues and hold a PTA office.

Joining the PTA does not obligate you to volunteer at school or attend PTA meetings—although we hope you will!

And remember, the PTA will throw a dance party for the GPES grade with the highest percentage participation! As of International Night (January 28), Kindergarten is leading with 43.33% participation, but 1st Grade isn't far behind, with 43.10%. Come on, Grades 2-5, you can do it—you can catch up!

Kindergarten:	43.33%
Grade 1:	43.10%
Grade 5:	40.00%
Grade 4:	39.47%
Grade 3:	37.21%
Grade 2:	36.70%

If you have questions, please feel free to call or e-mail me. Thanks for your support!

- Sheryl Friedlander

301-962-9037 or SBLFriedlander@yahoo.com

Garrett Park Elementary School

Counselor's Corner – February

Shana Schnaue

Counseling Program

February's focus is on Study Skills and Test Taking Tips. With state testing right around the corner, this month will help students focus on how to prepare for testing appropriately.

This will help students focus on areas of concern for them. They will be able to identify new ways to stay organized, keep their desk and binders clean, plan out long-term assignments, as well as how to prepare for tests so that they feel comfortable with the material while taking the test.

Please help your child at home by providing a space for them to complete homework assignments. Help them to make sure that they have all necessary materials, too. A calendar is a great tool to use in order to plan out projects for students. Also, help your child break down their assignments into smaller parts. This will make completing work much easier for your child.

I am in the middle of small counseling groups. The next set of groups that I will be working on will be for students in Kindergarten and fifth grade. Please let me know if you are interested in having your child participate in a group.

What You Should Know

Did you know that National School Counselor Week is February 6-10, 2012? The focus of this week is to look at the impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

As a school counselor, I am constantly looking at research and current articles and attending professional development sessions in order to learn new topics and strategies to help the students at Garrett Park Elementary. I am always happy to share with you what I am learning.

I would appreciate your feedback this week about your thoughts of Garrett Park's School Counseling Program. Please feel free to email me, write me a note, or call. For more information about school counselors, check out the American School Counselor Association's website at www.schoolcounselor.org or the American Counseling Association's web site at www.counseling.org.

Calling All Career Day Speakers

Did you know you could talk to a group of students about your current job? Career Day is May 11, 2012, in the afternoon. This is an opportunity for parents, friends, and community supporters to come in to Garrett Park ES and speak with students about what they do. If you are interested in participating or know of someone who might be, please let me know!

Please feel free to contact me either by phone or email if you have any concerns regarding your child. I can be reached by telephone at (301) 929 2170 or email at Shana_A_Schnaue@mcpsmd.org.