



Click here for the weekly schedule of PTA-sponsored after school activities:

<http://bellsmill.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Bells-Mill-Enrichment-Schedule-Week-of-January-18.pdf>

**This Week**

**Mon., Jan.18**      **School Closed, Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**

**Tues., Jan. 19**      **Welcome Back!**

**Wed., Jan. 20**      **French, 8:00 am, rm. 159**  
**Spanish Intro, 8:00 am, rm. 150**  
**Spanish Beginner, 8:00 am, rm. 154**  
**Instrumental Music Concert, 7:00 pm, APR**

**Thur., Jan. 21**      **Class photos all day**

**Fri., Jan. 22**      **End of Second Marking Period**  
**United Nations Model, 8:10 am, rm. 149**  
**Hearing/Vision Screenings for all K-1 students and those new to MCPS**  
**Odyssey of the Mind, 3:50 pm, Media Center**  
**Mad Science, 3:50-4:50 pm, rm. 163**

**A Look Ahead**

**Jan. 25**      **No School for Students, Professional Day for Teachers**

**Jan. 26**      **Hearing/Vision Screenings continue for all K-1 students and those new to MCPS**

**Jan. 28**      **Gr. 5 Parent Meeting, 7:00 pm at Cabin John MS**

- **Vision and Hearing Screenings will take place on January 22 and 26 for all students in K-1 and those new to Montgomery County.**
- **We have seen several cases of strep throat at school. Streptococcal sore throat is a common illness in childhood.** It usually occurs as a sore throat, which may or may not be red, and is commonly accompanied by a fever. Children may also present with swollen glands, headache or abdominal pains. A definite diagnosis can only be made through a throat culture done by your source of medical care. Infection is spread by direct or intimate contact through discharges from the nose, throat and skin of the infected person, who may or may not have any symptoms. Infection can also be spread indirectly through contaminated hands or objects. Symptoms appear between 1-3 days after exposure. Persons are no longer infectious 24 hours after the start of treatment. We emphasize the importance of prevention of infections through proper hand washing.
- **Winter weather emergencies such as snow and ice may cause disruptions in school operations, including the closure of school, delayed opening or early dismissal.** Information is announced publicly as

soon as possible on area radio and TV stations and on the internet at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org) . If schools are closed or delayed, the announcement is made no later than 5:00 am. If schools are closing early, the announcement is made by 11:00 am. **A delayed opening means that schools open 2 hours later than normal (11:20 am for Bells Mill), and bus pickups are 2 hours later than normal. There is no Head Start on delayed opening days. An early dismissal means that schools will close 2.5 hours early (1:20 pm for Bells Mill). Head Start's early dismissal time is 11:05 am.**

*Parents are encouraged to sign up for MCPS QuickNotes to receive emergency email announcements, visit <http://news.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/quicknotes-home/> .*

- **Interim Superintendent Larry Bowers submitted a \$2.4 billion Recommended Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 to the Board of Education on December 8.** The recommended budget increase is a modest 4.5 percent, which will pay for the same level of services for more than 2,500 new students. Recommendations include investments to improve student literacy and math skills; build the cultural proficiency of staff; foster stronger partnerships with the community and our families to support students; and better organize the district to ensure every student is prepared for college and careers.

There are a variety of ways that you can learn more about the MCPS budget and become involved in the budget process this year, including the new Budget 101 website; Neighbor to Neighbor small-group discussions; Parent Academy workshops; and an overview video and other budget materials available on the MCPS budget webpage. Visit the budget webpage at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/budget/) to read more about these resources and how to make your voice heard.

- **MCPS needs full funding of its budget this year to prevent further cuts and to begin reinvesting in education. Anything less than full funding would likely require further cuts that could impact every school.** Be sure to share your ideas and views on the importance of funding the MCPS operating budget with our elected Montgomery County officials—the Montgomery County Board of Education, the County Executive, and the Montgomery County Council—through emails, letters, short videos, and testimonials. The Board of Education will be holding two public hearings on the budget recommendation: the first was Thursday, January 7; the second is Thursday, January 14.

The county will hold budget forums in January to seek input from residents about the county's FY 2017 budget priorities. The remaining forums, which begin at 7 p.m., are scheduled as follows:  
January 20, Silver Spring Regional Services Center, One Veterans Place, Silver Spring  
January 21, Mid-County Community Recreation Center, 2004 Queensguard Road, Silver Spring  
January 25, BlackRock Center for the Arts, 12901 Town Commons Drive, Germantown

Five Education Budget Meetings, presented by Montgomery County Councilmember Craig Rice, MCPS Interim Superintendent Larry Bowers, and Montgomery College President DeRionne Pollard, are scheduled for February and March. Find out how budget decisions are made, what the county is doing today to get ready for FY 2017 and beyond, and the opportunities residents have to influence budget decisions. The meetings will take place from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the following locations:

February 17, Montgomery College, BE Building, Room 151, 20200 Observation Drive, Germantown  
February 24, Albert Einstein High School, 11135 Newport Mill Road, Kensington  
March 9, Gaithersburg High School, 101 Education Blvd., Gaithersburg  
March 16, Col. Zadok Magruder High School, 5939 Muncaster Mill Road, Rockville  
March 23, Thomas S. Wootton High School, 2100 Wootton Pkwy., Rockville

- **Learn how the MCPS operating budget is built and gain a deeper understanding of why it's essential to invest in our schools.** Mark your calendar for one of three Budget 101 Parent Academy workshops that MCPS is hosting this winter. You'll learn where our funding comes from, how it's spent, and how individual

schools are staffed to ensure we are meeting the needs of every student. The workshops are scheduled for  
January 20 at Francis Scott Key Middle School in Silver Spring  
February 17 at the Carver Educational Services Center in Rockville  
March 7 at Forest Oak Middle School in Gaithersburg.  
All workshops begin at 7:00 p.m. Childcare is provided for children ages 4 through 12.

- **The MCPS Parent Academy is back with an exciting lineup of free workshops for parents.** Parent Academy workshops give parents useful tips and tools to support their children's success in and out of school. A wide array of topics will be covered during the winter session, including college and career planning, helping teens manage stress, literacy, the MCPS operating budget, recognizing child abuse and neglect, and much more. All of the workshops are free and are held at schools and locations throughout Montgomery County. Childcare and interpretation services are provided. To see the schedule of workshops and to register, visit [montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy/](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/parentacademy/).
- **PARCC Night Set for Monday, Feb. 1.** MCPS is hosting an event for parents to learn more about the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments. The event will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 1, at Richard Montgomery High School, 250 Richard Montgomery Dr. in Rockville. MCPS staff will be on hand to help parents understand their children's score reports from the spring 2015 administration of the PARCC tests. In addition, staff will share an overview of PARCC and information on upcoming changes for the 2016 administration of the tests. Free childcare (ages 4 and older) and foreign language interpretation will be provided.
- **Montgomery County Public Schools is partnering with the Montgomery County Public Libraries to launch Library Link, a new countywide initiative aimed to ensure every child enrolled in school has access to a library card.** This program is part of the national ConnectED Library Challenge, led by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency supporting libraries. With 21 branches across Montgomery County, libraries have millions of books, magazines, movies, and more for children to borrow. Libraries also serve as digital hubs to connect students to Internet resources, and offer important tools such as test preparation materials, electronic databases, world language materials, and quiet spaces for children to do homework. You'll hear more about Library Link in the coming months.
- **Register now for the spring session of Kids College, a Montgomery College Youth Program for students in grades 1-10.** Many enrichment courses are offered on Saturdays on the Rockville and Germantown campuses. Courses fill up quickly. Limited scholarships are available. For course descriptions and to register, visit [www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/youth) or call 240-567-7917.

*Thank you for being partners in your child's education.*