Potowmack Elementary School

September 2014



Up Coming events for September 2014

8 - Spirit Wear Sales Begin

10 - PTA Meeting @ 7:30 a.m.

12- Restaurant Night

17 - Constitution Day

17 - Scouting Night

19-Watch Dog Dad Pizza Night

Oct 1 & 2 - Hearing & Vision Screenings

Oct 2 - Fall Pictures

Oct 3 - Walk-A-Thon

Mission Statement:

In a safe and nurturing learning environment, Potowmack Elementary's community strives to provide an education that embraces: High Expectations for Academic Achievement, Mutual Respect, Global Citizens and Personal Responsibility for All Students.

Jennifer Rule, Principal Nahid Haidari, Assistant Principal

A Message from the Principal... Mrs. Jennifer Rule

Welcome back, Soaring Eagles, to the beginning of another fantastic school year at Potowmack Elementary. We had a terrific opening day. The teachers are working hard going over classroom and school procedures. Thank you to our parents and families who had a chance to join us at Back to School Night and our Open House. If you were not able to attend, the classroom teacher hopefully was able to contact you by phone. Please sign up for a parent/teacher conference at your earliest convenience.

Our eagles continue to SOAR with Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS). The classroom teachers should have shared this program with you. Our kick off for students was Friday, September 5, 2014. We will be sharing the presentation with parents at our first PTA meeting on Wednesday, September 10th @ 7:30 a.m.

We are continuing our efforts to go green. The Potowmack Elementary Newsletter is available to view on the Potowmack Elementary web site. If you would like to receive a printed copy of the newsletter, please have your child stop by the office and notify Mrs. Wood or Ms. O'Sullivan.

Each classroom teacher has their own newsletter and it holds specific information for your child's classroom. In the school newsletter you will find important school wide information like a list of upcoming events, student recognition, as well as other valuable school wide information. The newsletter is packed with important dates and school events. It will help keep you informed.

Along with the news letters you can find special announcements regarding the school. This month our school improvement plan has been posted. We appreciate parent input. Please take a look at our Potowmack Elementary web site:

http://www.lcps.org/potowmack.

Regards, Jennifer Rule

Potowmack Elementary

46465 Esterbrook Cir. Sterling, VA 20165



Instructional Hours:

7:50 to 2:35 - Grades 1-5

Kindergarten:

7:50 to 10:50 - AM K 11:35 to 2:35 - PM K

Beginning of the Day:

7:35 - Buses arrive 7:50 - Instructional day begins Students arriving after 7:50 will be considered tardy

End of the Day:

2:35 - Dismissal bell rings

2:45 - Buses leave

Potowmack



Front Office Staff:
Mrs. O'Sullivan — Attendance Secretary
Mrs. Wood — Bookkeeping Secretary
Office 571-434-3270
Absence Line 571-434-3271

Pursuit of Excellence— Known for their strength in flight, bald eagles soar above the rest as one of the most majestic creatures in the sky. With power and balance they fly miles above the earth, catching warm air currents to lift them thousands of feet into the air. Keen vision gives the eagles the ability to see far-off challenges, soaring through each pursuit with great success. With you we soar to new heights.



Soaring to New Heights!

Office Reminders

The school day begins promptly at 7:50 a.m. Students MUST be in their classrooms at 7:50 a.m., arriving after that time results in an UNEXCUSED tardy unless a doctor's note is provided. Students coming in after 7:50 a.m. must be escorted by an adult. School dismisses at 2:35 p.m. Parents picking up students prior to dismissal are required to sign them out in the main office. All visitors to the building should begin their visit in the main office. Once in the office, you may sign in using the computer system located at the front counter. Any forgotten items should be brought to the office. This will cut down on interruptions to the class.

Absentee/Tardy

Please call the Potowmack attendance line at **571-434-3271** or go to our web site and report the absence online if your child will be absent or late to school.



After School Plan

Anytime your child has a change in his or her after school plan, please send a note in with your child in the morning. The office cannot redirect children after school on the basis of a phone call at the end of the day. If an emergency necessitates a change during the school day, you may fax the instructions to us at (703) 444-7526.



Arrival and Dismissal Procedures...

Please help us to make a smooth arrival and dismissal by reviewing the following procedures if you are dropping off and picking up child/children.

- 1. Car drop off is in the front of the building. Pull all the way up in the circle to allow as many cars into the circle as possible. If you get here "first" please do not park along the circle... PULL ALL the way up to be courteous of other cars! We need to have as many cars pull forward so that traffic does not back up on Esterbrook Circle.
- 2. At arrival or dismissal you can park your car on the side parking lot of the building by the gym (right side) or in the front parking lot and walk across to drop off or pickup your child.
- 3. You can park along the curb that wraps around the gym side of the building.
- 4. If you cannot get into the parking lot in the pickup line because the line is full, please line up on Esterbrook Circle making a right hand turn into the school.
- 5. When cars leave in front of you, pull as far forward as you can.
- 6. NEVER get out of your car and leave it unattended in the car drop lane. This blocks all the traffic and is very frustrating to other parents.
- 7. Children should be able to exit or enter the car independently. Parents who have to assist their child/children should park and walk them across the crosswalk.

Regular Attendance Can Help Build Reading Skills

We have seen a noticeable improvement in our students getting to school on time. It's important to get your child into the habit of attending school every day and getting there on time. After all, reading skills build day by day. Your child can't learn if she's not in class!

Here are some tips from *Elementary School Building Readers*' for getting your child out the door and ready to learn every day:

- 1. Help her get organized so she is never late. Take a few minutes at night to help your child lay out clothes and load her backpack
- 2. Avoid scheduling doctor and dental appointments and vacations while school is in session.
- 3. Never make up a false excuse for your child to miss school. That will only serve as a bad example for your child.
- 4. Don't let your child stay home for any reason unless she is sick. If she makes up excuses, work with the teacher to solve the problem she's trying to avoid.







The Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC) advises the Loudoun County School Board and the Loudoun County Public Schools administration on issues relating to achievement of minority students. If you are interested in being a representative, please contact our PTA that will appoint a delegate and alternate from our school as a representative. MSAAC general body meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month in the school board meeting room, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The MSAAC Executive Board Meeting is held the first Wednesday of the month in room 101 D from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM.

More information can be found on the school system website at www.lcps.org under the "Parents" tab, and then select Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee



LEAP Chairperson

(Loudoun Education Alliance for Parents)

The Loudoun Education Alliance of Parents (LEAP) is a nonpartisan network that promotes interaction between parents, teachers, school board members and members of the Loudoun County Public Schools Administrative Team. The group secures the highest advantages in academic, vocational, physical and social education.

The LEAP chair participates in monthly meetings at the Loudoun Education Center on the second Wednesday of each month and provides status and information at the monthly school PTA meetings. The LEAP meetings will be held in rooms 102A and 102B at the LCPS Administration Building beginning at 730pm.

*Potowmack is looking for a parent to volunteer to attend. If interested please contact Jennifer.rule@lcps.org

Potowmack Elementary School



If you have not done so already, please consider joining our PTA. The PTA sponsors many social and educational activities to enrich your child's experience at Potowmack Elementary. You can view the many activities and volunteer opportunities on the PTA portion of our webpage:

http://www.lcps.org/page/56538

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We will train you! If you would like to help with our copy volunteers, please contact Carolyn Wood. Our volunteer training will be held on Wednesday, September 17 and Wednesday, September 24 @ 3:00 p.m.

Please contact Carolyn Wood at 571-434-3270 if you are interested.



<u>Library News -</u> Dr. Copeland

Our birthday books fundraiser is off to a great started. So far, parents have already donated over \$600 to the library to help us purchase new books. Students have already begun selecting their birthday books. Be sure to look inside their library books when you read them with your children so you can see what they chose. You can continue to participate in the birthday books program in the weeks ahead. Thanks so much for helping us improve our book collection!

Our students did a wonderful job with the Scholastic Summer Challenge. As of Thursday, September 4th, Potowmack students had logged over 1,550,497 minutes. Students who logged over one thousand minutes during the months of July and August will receive a reading certificate to celebrate their accomplishments. They will receive their gift certificates for the fall book fair when the book fair begins in November. We are so proud of Potowmack students who read so much over the summer.

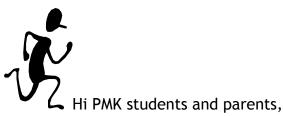


Follow Potowmack_ES on Twitter!
Get the latest update of school events.

LOST AND FOUND

Potowmack Elementary has several areas designated for lost items such as lunch boxes, and clothing. Students that misplace their belongings can check in the Lost and Found shelf that is located outside the cafeteria. Items of value or importance such as glasses, jewelry, and keys are kept in the front office. If your child has lost an item, please encourage them to check in the Lost and Found or with the office secretary. Items that go unclaimed will be donated at the end of each quarter to a local charity.





Hope your summer was active and adventurous. Here's what's going on in PMK PE: Mr. Caruso is now teaching PE at Loudoun County High School where he is also the varsity head wrestling coach. He is both happy about being at the school where his wrestlers are, but sad that he had to leave the PMK family. We wish him the best. Mr. Shockley is the new PE teacher and splits his teaching with us in the morning as well as Legacy in the afternoon.

In the first couple of weeks, your child will be learning all of our classroom protocols and procedures. Mr. Shockley and my # 1 job are to keep your child safe while they are having fun being physically.

Along with these rules & procedures, proper PE attire is required for participation in physical education class. Tennis shoes or sneakers must be worn at all times, with socks. Girls must wear shorts underneath their dresses. No sandals, boots, or any foot wear without a closed-toe or closed heel should be worn for PE. Students can bring their tennis shoes in their backpack and will be able to change into them at the beginning of PE class.

We kick off our 1st skills lesson for our upper grades with football and football lead up activities. The younger students will be learning all about moving in open space using various locomotor skills. They too will learn how the basic football passing, punting and kicking skills. We want all our students to get a hands on approach to football skills to get them ready for our annual NFL Punt, Pass, & Kick completion on October 2- from 3:00-4:30. I am only opening up the competition this year to all PMK students, past and present that are 8-15. I will be sending information forms home with PMK students that are interested. Of course, any parent volunteers are greatly appreciated!

Each grade level received a wide variety of recess equipment, which was purchased with our Brax spirit cups fundraiser from last year. PMK is very thankful for all who helped support this fundraiser!

Mrs. Thompson will be offering the PMK Fit Eagle afterschool club on Tues from 2:40 - 4:10. K-3 grade will meet from October 14-Nov 4. The 4th & 5th grades will meet Nov 11-Dec 2. The PTA will be sending out more information in their afterschool program notices.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at our 20th Anniversary Walk a Thon on Oct 3rd. Be active,

Linda Thompson & Stephen Shockley, PMK PE





Welcome to Potowmack Elementary! As Parent Liaisons, we are the bridge between the school and home - and are here to help empower parents so they can help their students. If you are in need of resources or answers, please let us know. We can be reached via email at Helen.Chang@lcps.org or Judy.Schmid@lcps.org. Our bulletin board at the front of the school across from the office is updated frequently with new information as it becomes available - please take a moment to see if there is anything of interest to you. Along with providing resources including clothing and supplies, we also manage the Backpack Meals program through a generous donation and aid from a community partner. If you would like to help, please let us know; there are many ways to help.

In addition to providing assistance, we also spearhead the annual Multicultural event. We'd love to work with any parent who is interested in helping with this winter celebration which has always been well attended.

Another program we manage is the Junior Achievement program. Please contact us if you are interested in teaching this program in a classroom. The program requires a very short commitment of your time but is greatly enjoyed by all the students.

We also manage the Cardinal Bank branch at our school, the Soaring Eagles Bank, which is student run by our 5th graders. Applications to the fifth grade students were sent home during the first week of school. The bank will operate on Wednesdays from 7:35am - 7:50am for deposits only; withdrawals can be made at any Cardinal Bank branch. We hope you consider opening an account and starting your student on financial security.

These are just a few of the many activities and programs we are involved in at the school. Please don't hesitate to stop us if you see us in the school or the community - if we don't have an answer, we will find out for you!

We hope your students have a great year and look forward to renewing old friendships and making new ones!

Helen Chang-Lin and Judy Schmid

PBIS Update: Once again we are working with the students and recognizing positive behavior. Staff is on the lookout for students showing positive behavior in the hallways, classrooms, bathroom, and cafeteria. At Potowmack, we expect the students to show respect, responsibility, and effort in all areas at school.

In the cafeteria, students try to earn a green day by being respectful in the cafeteria. Students get rewarded at the end of each month if most of their days are green. This month, students can earn a Sports Theme day with contests and songs during lunch time.

We will have our PBIS rollout on Friday, September 5. Students are reminded of the expectations in the hallways, cafeteria, bathroom, playground and classroom. We invite parents to join us in celebrating our cafeteria incentives each month and our PBIS ticket challenge assemblies. It all starts with positive attitude which leads to positive behavior. If you would like a brochure on PBIS at Potowmack, please stop by the office and pick one up.



The Counseling Corner with Ms. Peterson and Mrs. Jackson

Welcome back to a new school year! The school counselors are available to all students and families. Jeanne Peterson will be the full time counselor for grades 1-5 and Ms. Jackson is the counselor for grades K-1.

Loudoun County Public School's approach to guidance and counseling is preventative. The various programs and services available are listed below.

Small Group Counseling

Group Counseling is available to students throughout the year. Often it is comforting for a student to work with peers in a small group setting to discuss similar concerns and brush-up on various skills. Group members are selected by parents, teacher or self-referral. Parental permission is mandatory prior to student participating in a group.

Individual Counseling

Individual counseling is available to students at the request of parents, teachers or students. Parental permission is necessary before working with a student through a series of counseling sessions.



Classroom Guidance

We will be visiting each classroom throughout the year to conduct class lessons. The classroom component addresses developmental themes common to elementary students. Guidance lessons focus on themes such as understanding self and others, conflict resolution, study skills, and character education. Teachers may request one-time lessons throughout the year on a variety of topics.

Please remember that we are here to help your child have the best year possible, and help you and your child's teacher make that happen. We look forward to getting to know you and your children throughout the year!

Ms. Peterson & Mrs. Jackson - School Counselors

Some Helpful hints from Home & School Connection!

Making friends

A new school year brings opportunities to reunite with old friends and make new ones. Use these tips to help your youngster build friendships-learning to work and play with others and help her do better in school and enjoy it more.

Reach out. Encourage your child to be on the lookout for classmates who share her interests. If she enjoys making friendship bracelets and notices a classmate wearing one, she may strike up a conversation about her hobby. Or help her find an after - school activity (scouts, gymnastics) where she will meet children with similar interests.

Get in touch. Keep a class list handy, and let your youngster call to invite a classmate over. Before a friend visits, your child might brainstorm possible activities. When her guest arrives, she can ask, "Would you like to do magic tricks or play a board game?" Having a plan will help playtime go more smoothly.

Note: if your youngster is having trouble making friends, talk to her teacher. She may be able to suggest a classmate who would be a good match or offer ways to help your child feel more comfortable.

ART NEWS - MRS. JACKSON

Hello and welcome back to art! This year we are starting off by working on our portfolios. Students in every grade (1-5) will be creating a portfolio to hold all of their artwork for the entire year. During the last few weeks of school they will be taking everything home with them! We keep their art here for art shows during the year and so they can see how far they have come in June.

In the next few weeks we will be working on some pieces that will be used in the Original Works program. Students will be creating a piece of art that we will be sending to a company that prints their artwork onto coffee mugs, t-shirts, notebooks and a bunch of other fun things. I work with the PTA on this program to raise funds for our school. Keep a look out for more information about this wonderful program. We will also be trying out an online gallery for our students. I will be sending home a release form that will allow me to post your child's artwork online. Their names are NOT posted as all with their art or anywhere on the site. I am really looking forward to this great opportunity as I have spoken with many other art teachers who have used

this site and really love it. The website is called Artsonia and if you have a free moment feel free to check it out!

First grade- The first graders will be creating a contour line fish for the Original Works program. We will talk about how to draw the outline of a fish and what parts we need to make it look like a fish. We will then write our first initial on the inside of the body of the fish using a bubble letter style. Afterwards students will sharpie everything, color their fish using either warm or cool colored crayons and then paint a background with watercolors using the opposite color. Be sure to check out our school webpage for our finished pieces!

Second grade- The second graders will be creating a cityscape for their Original Works piece. We will be taking a look at some works by Paul Klee and talk about his style. Students will get inspiration from his work to create a city of their own by using a ruler and a pencil. Once we finish our drawings students will sharpie them and then paint them with watercolors. We will talk about the warm and cool colors and how to us them to create contrast in our piece. When the paintings are finished we will then add a pop of color and some patterns to our city with metallic crayons.

Third grade- The third graders will be taking a look at how to create their own Mola. Molas are pieces of art created by the Kuna Indians, native people of Panama. It is a type of artwork that is worn. They layer different pieces of color cloth together to create a type of collage on their clothing. Students will be mimicking this style with paper to create a Mola of their own. They will be choosing an animal of some sort to be the main focus of their piece surrounded by a repetitive colorful shape. Check back on our school webpage for our finished pieces!

Fourth grade- The fourth graders will be learning about contour line drawings. We will be looking at leaves from Virginia. Students will practice sketching the contour line of the leaves and choose a few they would like to put in their final piece. We will then create a picture frame for our leaves to be drawn in. After the frame is finished students will draw some of their leaves and then fill them in with patterns of their choice. Once those are completed we will then sharpie all of our leaves and patterns. When we have finished this piece we will then use watercolors to paint either the background or our leaves to add a pop of color.

Fifth grade- The fifth graders are learning about bestiaries. Students will be creating their own bestiary of their choosing. They will then create a frame and a background for their creature. We will be trying to make them look as realistic as possible by creating shadows with colored pencils. Students will learn how to blend colored pencils together to make new colors to bring their creatures to life. Be sure to check out our webpage on the school site for our finished pieces!

You can also check out things we are working on through my blog. Arttfromthestart.blogspot.com





Welcome to another school year at Potowmack. The PTA newsletter is filled with information of PTA events happening at your school. Please contact any board member with questions. We are here to help you.

JUST FOR LAUGHS



SPIRIT WEAR

Spirit wear is on sale. Choose your favorite t-shirt or pajama pant. Please visit the school website for details and order forms. You may contact elizabeth.tollefson@gmail.com for additional information.

GIRLS ON THE RUN (GOTR)

Registration begins 9/2/14. *Girls on the Run* is a curriculum based program for girls in grades 3-5. Practices combine an innovative and fun curriculum designed exclusively for pre-teen girls addressing specific life skills through

the use of games, warm-ups and workouts. The 9-week fall season culminates in a 5K. The goal of the program is to encourage positive emotional, social, mental, and physical development. Be sure to watch for an upcoming ConnectEd announcement. For more information, please contact nahedsuliman@gmail.com.



WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students)

Dads, Step-Dads, Grand-Dads and Uncles,

It's that time again to join all the fathers and father figures for good and hear about the WATCH D.O.G.S program. We will meet on Friday, September 19, 2014 from 6:30 – 7:30 in the school cafeteria.

Dads will have a chance to sign up on our calendar for a day of your choice to spend a day at school with your child. WATCH D.O.G.S. is an innovative program being used by schools across America to positively impact students through the committed involvement of fathers and father-figures. The goal is to have these men spend at least one day a year at our school to be an extra set of eyes and ears and act as a positive male role model. Look for invitations coming home soon. You may also email Wendylove@mac.com or Rennea.butler@outlook.com to RSVP or if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you there. Check out this video http://www.fathers.com/watchdogs/watch-d-o-g-s-featured-on-the-today-show/.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

There is still time to submit your information for the school directory. You can also provide an ad of your business that will reach almost 600 homes. Please contact us at potowmackdirectory@gmail.com directly to reserve cover space. First come, first served. Order forms are also in your BTSN welcome packet. Deadline for payment and ad copy is Friday, September 19, 2014. You can also contact maddynmel@aol.com for more information.

Business Card Ad (3.5" x 2")	\$25
Quarter Page (3.5" x 4.25")	\$50
Half Page (4.25" x 7.5")	\$75
Full page	\$100
Cover Page	\$125

RUNNING WITH THE STARS

Running with the Stars begins September 22nd! Registration is open! Go to <u>runningwiththestars.com</u> to register or for more details. This is a great program for the kids to learn about health and fitness and train for a 5K in December. We meet Mondays and Wednesdays after school until 3:45 on the track for 11 weeks. Please email <u>michelle.hytten@gmail.com</u> for questions. Thanks





Odyssey of the Mind "OM" is a long-term problem-solving program where kids learn cooperation, confidence and creative thinking. They work in teams of seven to develop creative solutions to a given problem. Solutions are presented in a Regional competition, Feb 28. (Regional winners progress to State competition; State winners continue to World's!) Participants should be outside-of-the-box thinkers, creative types and natural performers.

Categories are:

Vehicle, Technical, Classical, Structure, Performance. (Additionally, grades K-2 can participate at the "Primary" level, which performs, but does not compete.)

Registration forms will be available at school next week. Cost is \$40. Deadline is Sept 30th. Teams cannot be formed without parent coaches. Training is provided! Contact Maura Greenman maura@everywareinc.com for more info.



WALKING TODAY, SO OUR KIDS CAN SOAR

TOMORROW! Potowmack's PTA Inaugural Walk-a-Thon – October 3rd. Please join us in making the Walk-A-Thon a successful, fun and community-spirited event! This is our primary

fundraiser of the year. Money raised will go toward the purchase of new technology for our students and teachers. Donate now at www.GoFundMe.com/PotowmackWalks or via the donation envelope received at Back-to-School night. Volunteers for the day of the event are needed; please email Cristina McGeehan at potowmackwalks@hotmail.com.

FALL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The fall ASP will begin October 20. New classes are forming. Don't miss your opportunity to join your classmates in these fun after school programs. Please contact Rennea.butler@outlook.com, Wendylove@mac.com, or smith.diane.sd@gmail.com with any questions.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in volunteering, the following opportunities are available. Please contact Rennea.butler@outlook.com with questions or to sign up.

SEAC Representative

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meets monthly during the school year on the third Tuesday of each month from 7 to 9 p.m. We need a representative to attend each meeting and provide status and info at each monthly PTA meeting.

3rd Grade Level Coordinator

Work with the each classroom Rep to inform and advise of school events and coordinate the distribution of information to parents.

5th Grade Level Coordinator

Work with the each classroom Rep to inform and advise of school events and coordinate the distribution of information to parents.

5th Grade Bake Sale

Coordinate the 5th grade bake sale by recruiting volunteers to provide/donate baked goods.

Girls On The Run (GOTR)

GOTR is a non-profit organization that supports girls' physical abilities. This program has a definite impact on the girls' self-esteem and confidence. The girls train to run a 5K at the end of the session. There are two sessions a year – fall and spring. The history of GOTR can be found at http://www.gotrnova.org/about/history. If you would like to be an assistant coach, please contact Rennea.butler@outlook.com

Grocery Receipts

The coordinator is responsible for establishing the program each year. Enrollment in the program expires annually, so re-enrolling is necessary. Coordinator advertises for enrollment and collects enrollment info.

We're on the Web! http://www.lcps.org/potowmack
Follow us on Twitter at Potowmack_ES



IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW

The Math Superstars program is currently suspended. Our Chairperson, Angie Ignazzitto, is working on providing and updated interactive version for our students. Stay posted.

Save your General Mills box tops. You can drop them off in the school office to be converted to cash. The money goes right back into your child's school. PTA membership is on \$10 per person. If you want to join the PTA, please enter your information on the envelope found in your welcome packet and return it to school with your child.

Please send any ideas and suggestions to <u>rennea.butler@outlook.com</u> or <u>Wendylove@me.com</u>.

DON'T FORGET

Now Spirit wear is on sale September 10 // 7:30am PTA general meeting

September 16 Restaurant night – Chik-fil-a September 19 Watch D.O.G.S. pizza night

September 26 Movie night September 30 Sign up for OM