

THE MUSTANG

Home of the Shepherd Mustangs

Friday, January 16, 2009



Mark Your Calendars!

- 1/19 – Martin Luther King Day—NO SCHOOL
- 1/20 – Inauguration Day—NO SCHOOL
- 1/22 – 3rd through 6th Grade January Parent Meeting, 5:45-7:30 pm
- 1/23 – Early Dismissal, 12:15 pm (no aftercare)
- 1/24 – Saturday Language Classes begin
- 1/28 – First Prospective Parent Open House, 9:30-11:00 am (see page 3)
- 1/28 – PTA Meeting (**NEW DATE**), 6:45 pm, SES Auditorium
- 1/28 – Songs of Freedom tickets go on sale at PTA meeting
- 1/29 – Pre-K through 2nd Grade January Parent Meeting, 5:45-7:30 pm
- 1/30 – Winter Fest Dance, 3:30-6:30 pm
- 1/26-2/13 – Prospective Parent Building Tours

The January 21 PTA meeting has been postponed one week.

New meeting date: January 28

Join us January 28 for the
PTA Meeting

Shepherd Auditorium — 6:45 pm

Although attendance at the PTA meetings is not required, we encourage all parents to attend. Childcare for children of parents attending the meeting is available. Refreshments are available during PTA meetings. (Refreshments for the children attending the PTA-provided childcare have a nominal cost; refreshments for adults attending the PTA meetings are complimentary.)

School starts on time! So do PTA meetings!
Look for the full agenda on the PTA listserve.

A Word from Mrs. Miles!

Dear Shepherd Family,

Greetings! This week was another wonderful week at Shepherd. The students continue to work diligently to meet the expectations set before them. This week students have been testing, testing, testing. Students in grades K-3 were administered their mid-year DIBELS assessments. This assessment will continue through the end of the month. Students in grades 3-6 completed their DC BAS test. I expect great things and will be sharing information with you once all the tests are completed and the data has been disaggregated.

Free and Reduced Meal Applications

Each week, I receive a report with information about how our school compares to other schools in the district. The reports share things such as: how many days out of the week our attendance was submitted on time, truancy reports, timeliness of paperwork submission, etc. Ninety-nine percent of the time our reports are great and I am happy. However, recently my smile diminished. I received a report that listed our school as one of the 10 most egregious schools relative to missing Free and Reduced Meal applications. We are number two in the district.

I understand that there are some families who do not wish to participate in the meal program; however, it is the responsibility of DCPS and Shepherd Elementary to ensure that all families have been informed about the meal program and provided with an opportunity to apply or opt out of the program if they choose. **If you are not interested, please return the form with your child's name and an adult signature.- no other information is required. Please help us to get off the "bad" list.**

Science Fair

Students in grades 4th – 6th are encouraged to participate in the James Martin Science Fair. At this point, students should have started their project. They should have gathered materials, formulated a question, made a prediction, and started to see if the prediction is correct.

Boards and labels are available from Mr. King for \$5.00. All projects are to be turned in February 13, 2009, for labeling and packaging for delivery to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). If you have questions, please contact Mr. King at 202-576-6140 and/or visit www.otisking.blogspot.com for additional information.

(See Principal, continued on page 2)



Why We're Proud

For those of us who are African-American, it's an immense source of pride that Barack Obama is becoming the first black president of the United States. For many it represents the culmination of all that generations before him have worked for.

But does the work end with Obama's election and inauguration? Not at all.

As parents, we work tirelessly but not for our own comfort but to make our children's lives better. That's why we send them to Shepherd. We could go elsewhere, but:

- Why go to any other DCPS elementary school when Shepherd has the most language instruction of them all, save one?
- Why shift your children to another school when Shepherd tests among the top elementary schools in the DCPS system – and the best east of Rock Creek Park?
- Why start all over again when Shepherd already boasts top-notch music and art teachers and award-winning classroom faculty?
- Why desert the school now that we've finally got the windows long promised us?
- Why should we leave when the parents of a net 46 more children think that Shepherd is the best choice for them, too?

How many other DCPS elementary schools are growing, with an added pre-K and an added kindergarten class this year – and not because surrounding schools were closed?

These reasons, and plenty more, are why you've got to support the Shepherd PTA. Despite all the good things in Shepherd, there are still some things DCPS can't or won't pay for. The PTA covers that through the Family Enrichment Fee. Those things improve the educational experience at Shepherd.

Because Obama is becoming our 44th president, we're reducing PTA dues to \$44 – but only through January 28th's PTA meeting (*note new January PTA meeting date*). Also ending on the 28th is our offer to cut your Family Enrichment Fee contribution from the typical \$500 max to \$365, to reflect how many electoral votes Obama won in the November election. As we like to do at Shepherd, the classrooms with the highest percentage of children whose parents belong to the PTA will win a pizza party.

We are the parents of hundreds of winning children. But winning is only one step in a long journey. Please join the PTA to give your children the opportunity to make change themselves!

Make your check to Shepherd Elementary PTA and drop it off in the PTA box at the school office.

(Principal, *continued from page 1*)

Help Requested

Do you enjoy speaking in front of groups? Are you currently happy with your child's educational experience at Shepherd? Do you have a couple of hours available on January 28 or February 11? If so, we need your help. I am currently in need of two parent volunteers to meet, greet and share with prospective parents during one or both of our Open Houses for prospective parents. If interested please contact Ms. Brooks via email (robbynabrooks@dc.gov) or by phone (202-576-6140) to volunteer. Thank you in advance for your time.

We are currently seeking parents who are available two to three hours a week to answer phones, assist in the library, escort students to class, assist with morning arrival and/or bandage a cut finger or scraped knee. If you have completed the DCPS volunteer application process and you are interested, please contact Mrs. Confer via email (june.confer@dcps.gov) or by phone (202-576-6140) with your schedule availability.

Afternoon Dismissal

A HUGE thank you to everyone who returned their afternoon dismissal slips to their child's teacher. If you have not returned your slip, please do so ASAP. We will use this information to help make our afternoon dismissal safer and more efficient. If you have lost your form, please send a note indicating one of the following:

- _____ I will pick my child up from the designated dismissal area.
- _____ My child is to meet me out front in the carpool line; I will wait in my car.
- _____ My child rides a bus/van.
- _____ My child goes to after care.
- _____ My child is to walk home after school.

Please include your student's name and the name of his/her classroom teacher.

To date, there have been no changes. You will be notified via the newsletter, voicemail and by memo when the changes take effect.

Please remember to pick your student (s) up between 3:15 and 3:20 in the designated pick-up area for the day (auditorium or playground). At 3:25 any student who has not been picked up will be dismissed from the front office.

Preparations for Next Year

If your child is in pre-kindergarten through 4th grade he/she is guaranteed a spot at Shepherd next year. You will be asked to register your child beginning early spring.

(See Principal, *continued on page 3*)

(Principal, continued from page 2)

If you have a child whom you would like to enroll in pre-kindergarten next year, you must apply through the Pre-kindergarten Enrollment Process. If there are more students than spaces, students will be chosen at random through a lottery. In-boundary children and children who are siblings of current students at the school will receive preference in the lottery. More information will be coming in the next few weeks about the process.

Constructed Response

Students in grades 3-6 will continue their weekly Wednesday night constructed response homework in reading. Math will begin next Wednesday for students in grades 3-6. Second grade students will begin constructed response homework in reading next Wednesday.

Parent Grade Level Meetings

January Parent Grade Level meetings will be held on January 22 for grades 3-6 and January 29 for grades PK-2. The focus for the evening will be constructed response, Everyday Mathematics and PYP questioning strategies. I encourage you to attend to learn what teachers are teaching in the classroom and how you can extend your student's learning at home.

Saturday Language Academy

The response for Saturday language instruction was/is incredible. We had over 130 students to express interest. Due to the high level of interest, we are unable to accommodate parents and additional students at this time. If our numbers decrease additional spots may become available.

For those who expressed interest, a final invitation was sent home on Monday and Tuesday. If you have not accepted or declined your invitation, please do so immediately. If you do not confirm, we can not guarantee your student(s) a spot. If you expressed interest via email or survey and you did not receive a letter, please contact the main office.

Tardiness

Please continue to work to get your student(s) to school on time. We are doing better but we still have a ways to go. Last week, we had 91 students who reported to school late. Let's continue to work to decrease our number.

Thanks for all you do!

Warmest regards,

Jamie Miles

Spread the Word!

Open Houses for Prospective Shepherd Parents

Shepherd Elementary School Open Houses are scheduled for January 28, 2009 and February 11, 2009 from 9:30 am to 11:00 am. There will be a brief information session, followed by a Q&A and building tour.

Building Tours for Prospective Shepherd Parents

The building will be open for prospective parents to tour our building during the last week of January through the second week in February (January 26, 2009 – February 13, 2009). Tours will be held every half hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am -11:00 am. These tours are for parents who are unable to attend the Open House but would like to tour our facilities. Prospective parents must call the school at 202-576-6140 to schedule a building tour.

If you are a parent interested in providing potential parents with a guided tour, please send an email to Ms. Brooks at robyna.brooks@dc.gov or call her at 202-576-6140.



On Time – All the Time!

Practice makes perfect. And we are getting lots of practice every school day on cutting the number of tardies at Shepherd. It helps that there is a pizza party for the class with the least amount of tardies and fewest absences during the month of January.

Make it a New Year's Resolution: No more tardiness at Shepherd Elementary. As with all New Year's resolutions, we may backslide from time to time. It's like the story of the person who quits smoking -- "It's easy to quit smoking. I've done it hundreds of times!" But with each time you fall off the wagon, you can resolve anew to not smoke again. Or, in this instance, let your kids arrive late to school. Do anything and everything in your power to get your children to school on time, all the time!

The Mustang Is YOUR Newsletter

Do you have a comment, a suggestion, or something to share with the Shepherd family in *The Mustang*? Would you like to write an article to be included in an issue of *The Mustang*?

Send it in an e-mail to SESmustang@gmail.com.

The next issue of *The Mustang* comes out on Friday, January 23, 2009.

Submit information to be included by Tuesday, January 20.



Shepherd IB-PYP Corner

The Six Transdisciplinary Themes and the Programme of Inquiry

Update:

- Teachers continue this week working on grade level teams to align the six PYP transdisciplinary themes with the four to six major social studies units they will implement during the course of a full school year. (Remember that pre-kindergarten is required to do a minimum of four PYP units of inquiry per year, grades one through four must do six PYP units per year, and grade 5 must do five units and a year-long project called “the exhibition.” Teachers are using the DCPS standards and pacing charts to guide their work. Once they have aligned and sequenced their social studies units with the PYP themes, they are identifying for each unit the “central idea,” the “key concepts” and the “lines of inquiry.” (In future articles we will provide more information about these unit components.) When all grade levels have submitted this information to Mrs. Miles within the next few days, we will have a matrix that comprises the school’s draft “programme of inquiry.”
- On Wednesday, January 21, the entire instructional staff will meet with Mrs. Tucker and Mrs. Miles to collaboratively examine and discuss the draft programme of inquiry and check for the appropriateness of progression from grade level to grade level and possible omissions or repetition.
- Teachers will continue to work on writing and refining the details of their units of inquiry through the next three months, but will not implement a unit until the first week in May, after the administration of the DC CAS is over. In this way, all grade levels will stay on the same schedule, and the testing grades may focus fully on preparing for the DC CAS.
- Mrs. Crockett’s class drew figures of children to mount on the IB bulletin board outside the main office. We thank each member of the class for his or her artistic contribution.
- On Friday, January 23, 2009 Principal Miles, Mrs. Tucker and two teachers will visit another authorized PYP school, College Gardens in Rockville, MD.
- We continue to keep an eye on IB happenings at Deal MS, which is a candidate for authorization as a Middle Years IB school. The latest newsletter from Principal Kim reports that some teams have implemented some of their

MYP units and are continuing collaboratively to develop their unit planners and guiding questions. In MYP teachers must align their units with “areas of interaction” rather than “themes.”



PYP Lesson of the Week:

Again, a PYP school must have a “programme of inquiry,” which is made up of all of the four to six units of inquiry on each grade level. Each unit of inquiry is aligned with one of the six PYP themes. The programme of inquiry is shared with the school community in the form of a chart or matrix showing the themes and the main components of each unit (see update).

The six PYP transdisciplinary themes are:

Who we are: An inquiry into the nature of the self; belief and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

Where we are in place and time: An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

How we express ourselves: An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

How the world works: An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.

How we organize ourselves: An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.

Sharing the planet: An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

Is collaboration among all teachers really important in formulating the programme of inquiry? Why can’t each teacher just write their own units of inquiry?

~ Patricia L. Tucker & Jamie Miles

Literacy Corner

Skill: Compare and Contrast

Activity: Student identifies details and uses information to construct meaning and make inferences. Have your child read through the comic strips in today's newspaper; have him/her look for a character that is most like them. He/she can make a list of the things they have in common with this comic character as well as the differences.

Constructed Response: What character trait best describes [character name]. Use details from the text to support your answer.

(Don't forget to use the R.A.C.E. Strategy)

Primary grades (PreK – 2) should complete this activity orally and with parental assistance. Help your little ones think through this process. You may choose to write down your child's answer.

Intermediate grades (3-6) should complete this activity in writing and share the comic strip and response with a parent.

~ Crystal Moorefield, Literacy Professional Developer

How to Answer a Constructed Response Item R.A.C.E

R—Reword the question into a statement

A—Answer the question

C—Cite evidence from the passage to support your answer

E—Explain how your evidence/example supports your answer



Pizza Pizza!

Thank you for making a conscious effort to get your student(s) to school on time. Our tardiness rate has decreased this week and we are extremely happy.

Please continue working to get your student(s) to school between 8:25 am and 8:35 am. Our teachers begin transitioning students to class between 8:35 am and 8:40 am. We are tracking daily attendance and tardiness. The class/classes with the least amount of tardies and the fewest absences during the month of January will be rewarded with a pizza party.

**Have YOU joined the
Shepherd PTA yet??**

PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

Sign of the Times

We need temporary mid-winter help on changing the sign in front of the school. Our current person needs about a one-month break. We'll supply you with what needs to be said on the marquee; all the letters, numbers and tools needed to get into the sign are in the school office. The messages change roughly every other week. If you want to help keep everyone at Shepherd up to date on the most important upcoming events at school, call PTA recording secretary Mark Pattison at 202-829-9289, or send him an e-mail at pattison_mark@hotmail.com.



January Parent Meetings

Parents of students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6: Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 22 from 5:45 pm until 7:30 pm.

Parents of students in grades Pre-K, K, 1, and 2: Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 29 from 5:45 pm until 7:30 pm.

These meetings will be held in the Auditorium. Child care is not provided. So that all parents attending the meeting are able to fully participate, there will be tables in the back of the auditorium at which children may work quietly on homework or read.

Problem of the Week

Primary Problem

(Students in Grades PK-2 should use real pennies to solve this problem with the help of their parents. Third graders should solve this problem using pictures and words).



Gilmore wrote the problem below on the chalkboard.

Cam had 20 pennies. He put all his pennies into groups. He put 5 pennies in each group? How many groups of pennies did Cam have?

1. Write a number sentence using division that shows how many groups of pennies Cam had?
2. Write a number sentence using multiplication that shows how many groups of pennies Cam had.

Intermediate Problem

At a recycling center in his state, Chris receives \$0.05 for every can he returns. In the equation below, m represents the total amount of money that Chris receives, and c represents the total number of cans he returns.



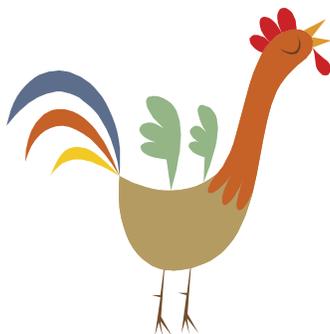
$$m = 0.05c$$

1. What is the total amount of money that Chris receives for returning 10 cans? Show or explain how you got your answer.
2. Chris received a total of \$10 for the cans he returned last week. What was the total number of cans Chris returned last week? Show or explain how you got your answer.

Reminder: The January PTA meeting has been postponed from Wed. January 21 to Wednesday January 28.

See you at PTA on Wednesday January 28!

Early Bird Special



Students in Ms. Chambliss 3rd grade class are invited to attend Early Bird Skills Prep. The sessions are held every Monday through Friday beginning at 7:45 am.

Please contact Ms. Chambliss for more information.

Past Issues of The Mustang are Online

Would you like to read *The Mustang* electronically? Need to refer back to a past issue? Each week, *The Mustang* is uploaded to the files area of the PTA listserv. Join the listserv and click to read.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Shepherd_Elementary_PTA/files/%22The%20Mustang%22/

Announcing the Mardi Gras Box Tops Collection Contest



Turn in your Box Tops into the Collection Box in the Main Office anytime between now and February 24. Collection sheets have been sent home with each student. Additional collection sheets are available outside the Main Office and the Files section of the PTA listserv. If you prefer to put your box tops into a ziplock bag rather than on the collection sheet, make sure you include your full name/teacher's name/class.

Please put your Box Tops (collection sheets and/or bags) into the Box Tops Collection Box in the Main Office. As long as your full name/teacher's name/class is included with the Box Tops you turn in, your Box Tops will count toward the class totals in the Mardi Gras Box Tops Collection Contest.

Teachers: If your students turn in Box Tops to you, please drop them off in the Collection Box in the Main Office. Thanks!

For parents with more than one child at Shepherd: You can list *each* child you have at Shepherd on one Collection Sheet, and *all* siblings listed will receive credit (and a prize) for the box tops your family submitted. You may, of course, continue to submit separate collection sheets for each child.

Deadline: **Tuesday, February 24, 2009.**

For more information about the Box Tops for Education program at Shepherd, contact Laura Noble, Box Tops Program Coordinator at: TaylorFarm@kddmggroup.com.

Remember to keep clipping Box Tops for Shepherd!



*Laissez les
Bon Temps
Roulez!*

Songs of Freedom and Justice Concert Set for February



Shepherd Elementary School, under the direction of music teacher Mr. Ken Giles, will present a musical history of America, "Songs of Freedom and Justice: 150 Years of American History in Song."

There will be two performances. The public performance will be held Thursday, February 12, at 6:45 p.m. Numbered tickets will

be sold for \$5 each, and extra contributions are welcome at the door. Tickets go on sale starting at next Wednesday's PTA meeting on January 21. Parents are invited to a free-admission dress rehearsal to be held Wednesday, February 11, also at 6:45 p.m.

The concert will feature 25 songs and 30 historical characters tracing American history from the anti-slavery era through the union movement to the civil rights movement. Students will portray such historical figures as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Bernice Johnson Reagon.

The D.C. Labor Chorus will sing with Shepherd's students throughout the show.

Both the dress rehearsal and the performance will be recorded for a CD. Each and every Shepherd student will receive a free CD. If you want to buy extra CDs to give to neighbors, friends and family, you can order them for \$10 each, also starting Jan. 21 at the PTA meeting. CDs should be available about a couple of months after the show.

CDs and copies of the script will be sent to school music teachers around the country to show them how easy it can be to mount their own production of "Songs of Freedom and Justice."

The Mustang is for Parents & Kids!

Hey Parents: Be sure to share the activity sections of *The Mustang* with your children each week. You can help your children work through the fun and educational activities featured in each week's *Mustang*. These activities are based on DCPS standards.



And don't forget to have your kids answer the weekly Trivia question! Winners names will be published here in *The Mustang*.

Shepherd Elementary School
Ski Club presents our

Winter Fest Dance

Shepherd Ski Club will host a rockin' fundraiser. All proceeds will benefit the Shepherd Elementary School Ski Club

When: Friday January 30

Time: 3:30-6:30 pm

Where: Shepherd Auditorium

Tickets cost: \$5.00 in advance;
\$5.50 at the door

Attire: Come as you are

Refreshments will be available for purchase.

For tickets and additional information (or to volunteer to help with the dance), please see Mr. Velez either before or after school (not during class time.)



Who's Buried In Grant's Tomb?

The answer – not even the joke answer – is what you think it is. Even in today's uncertain economy, there are grants that can establish, support or expand our educational mission at Shepherd Elementary.

Proposals for grant money are typically submitted in late February or early March. This means, then, that we have to start now to identify funding sources that would look kindly on our needs, and write the grant proposals.

If you or anyone you know has experience writing grant proposals of any type, please get in touch with Shepherd PTA treasurer Doug Noble at taylorfarm@kddmgroup.com or Marnie Keller at marniekeller@gmail.com and include your name, contact information and prior grant-writing experience.



There are grants ranging from \$5,000 all the way up to \$100,000 that could be ours if we do our jobs right.

Trivia Corner — Just for Fun!

Each week students will be asked a trivia question. Students should place their name and the answer to the trivia question in the trivia box located outside the cafeteria door. On Tuesdays, one lucky winner will be selected to receive a special treat. Answer this week's trivia questions by Tuesday.

Trivia Questions:

The tradition of an Inaugural parade dates back to April 30, 1789, in New York City when **who** took the oath of office?



Answer to last week's trivia question:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a famous civil rights leader. In 1963, he gave a famous speech. The speech is known as the "I Have a Dream" speech and he gave it on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC.



Community Events

Shepherd Park Citizens Association

The Shepherd Park Citizens Association will host its annual New Year/New Member Potluck from 5 to 7 p.m. on Sunday, January 25 (this is rescheduled from a different, previously published date) at the Lowell School on Kalmia Road west of 16th Street.

If you live in the Shepherd Park neighborhood – bordered by Walter Reed Army Medical Center on the south, Georgia Avenue on the east, the D.C./Maryland line on the north, and Rock Creek Park on the west, then this event is for you. And there is a play space for children.

Because this is a potluck, bring an entree, a salad, a side dish or a dessert with you. Please RSVP with how many from your household are coming and what dish you're bringing to Christine Martin at 202-723-0976 or email her at christine@dcmartins.com.

How to Corral a Herd of Mustangs

We have improved the process of producing *The Mustang* each Thursday to the point where it needs only one person's time for about one hour. Volunteering for this project will require a brief tutorial from Laura Noble on how to use the new office copier; the lesson should last only a few minutes. From there, it's a virtual snap! If you want to take a stab at being a one-man or one-woman production team for *The Mustang*, get in touch with Laura at TaylorFarm@kddmgroup.com or call 301-504-7448.



Join the PTA Listserv Today

To subscribe, send an email (include your name, your child's name and his/her teacher/class) to:

Shepherd_Elementary_PTA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.



Shepherd Elementary School

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Send your submissions for the next issue of *The Mustang* to:

SESmustang@gmail.com. Deadline is Tuesday at 10 am for inclusion in the newsletter issued that Friday.