



Shepherd Elementary School

THE MUSTANGS



Home of the Shepherd Mustangs

November 19, 2012

A Word from Mrs. Miles!



Greetings Shepherd Families!

Get Caught Reading At Home

On Friday, Nov. 16, we kicked off our Get Caught Reading at Home Initiative with a Reading Pep Rally complete with a visit from Wilson High's Pep Band and Flag Girls.

Students were excited and appeared to have enjoyed the event.

How Does It Work?: Each pre-K through first-grade student is expected to read (or be read to) 15 minutes each night, and each second- through fifth-grade student is expected to read 20 minutes each night. Students in pre-K through first grade should record their book title on the provided log, and second- through fifth-graders should complete a reading response entry on the provided log. For every 15 minutes each pre-K through first-grade student reads, and for every 20 minutes each second-through fifth-grade student reads, they earn 1 step. Throughout the year students will accumulate steps to earn special prizes. Copies of the parent letter, prize chart and reading logs are on pages 10-14. When students complete a reading log, they should

turn it in to their classroom teacher or drop it in the Reading Box outside of the library. Happy Reading!

Lost and Found

We have two large industrial-size trash bags full of coats, hats, gloves, sweaters and lunch boxes. They will be leaving the building Tuesday and going to a local shelter. This is your last chance to check for any lost items before the bags are donated. Please help us by labeling EVERYTHING!!!! We really try to help items find their owner before making donations. Remember the lost and found items are donated to local agencies once a week.

Lunch Accounts

This year our meal policy has changed. The school is responsible for all outstanding debt. Therefore, please help us by doing the following:

- 1) Please keep money on your student's lunch account.
- 2) If you receive notice that your student's account is in the negative, please make a payment immediately. The directions for payment will be on the letter.
- 3) If you are having trouble paying for your student's meals, please complete a Free and Reduced Meal Application. We have copies in the main office. Please visit <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Beyond+the+Classroom/Food+Services/Meal+Prices+and+Payment> for more information and to find a link to mylunch-money.com, an online prepayment service.

Toy Drive/Canned Food Drive/Loose Change Drive

Please help support our efforts to give back as we continue to teach our students about the importance of giving. Please allow your student to bring three canned goods for our Canned Food Drive, one new toy for our Toy Drive (recommended minimum value of \$10) and a small bag of loose change for our Loose Change Drive to school no

(see MILES, p. 18)

- ▶ Monday, Nov. 19: Principal's Chat & Chew, 5 p.m. **(To be rescheduled)**
- ▶ Thursday-Friday, Nov. 22-23: Thanksgiving holiday, no school
- ▶ Wednesday, Dec. 5: Holiday Concert, 6:45 p.m.
- ▶ Tuesday, Dec. 11: Local School Advisory Team meeting, 4 p.m.



Consult the school website, www.shepherd-elementary.org, for a full array of events and happenings throughout the school year!

Congratulations to Ms. Goldman!

Congratulations to Shepherd first grade teacher, Ms. Goldman, who has been named to a prestigious panel of teachers working on a new project designed to help support implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Washington is among 45 states and three territories that have adopted the Common Core State Standards.



President Obama's Advisory Council on Financial Capability recently launched an initiative that will integrate personal finance into the Common Core State Standards in math and English Language Arts (ELA). The project is designed to show educators ways to use money lessons to meet math and ELA requirements and help bring these subjects to life for students of all ages.

Ms. Goldman will be among a team of teachers, led by economics professor Julia Heath of the University of Cincinnati, who will recommend math lessons at the elementary grade levels. Another team is working concurrently on lessons for English Language Arts. The project is expected to be included in the report made by the President's Advisory Council at the close of the President's first term. The lessons and guide will be available to educators early in 2013.

The President's Advisory Council is administered by the Treasury Department, and the project is sponsored by the national Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy. Ms. Goldman was one of two teachers nominated to the project by Jump\$tart, and is the only DCPS teacher on the project.

Did You Trick or Treat for UNICEF?

If you did (or your kid), you can always bring the box to the school office. Please turn it in if you can before Thanksgiving so we can send the U.S. Fund for UNICEF just one check instead of two or three.



Our holiday concert will be on Wednesday, Dec. 5, beginning at 6:45 p.m. (sharp!). All students are welcome to sing, including pre-K and K students.

We will begin with instruments. Approximately 15 violinists and 10 recorder players will perform some familiar holiday tunes. Then our violinists will be joined by another 10 alumnae violinists and two of our teachers (Ms. Charles and Ms. Miranda-Mulligan) to perform "Pachelbel's Canon" while Christylez Bacon raps and beatboxes with our students. Christylez is a D.C. born-and-raised musical genius.

A graduate of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Christylez plays guitar, drums, spoons, and his own internal beatbox. He brings contemporary stylings to the classical music of Pachelbel, creating a unique sound. Two years ago, Christylez was nominated for a Grammy, and someday he'll win national recognition. We'll be able to say we knew him when he visited Shepherd Elementary School.



Christylez Bacon

The holiday concert will conclude with songs in Spanish, French, English and Hebrew, including themes of peace and international understanding. The concert will be over by 8 p.m. Admission is free.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Shepherd is collecting new toys costing at least \$10 for the annual Toys for Tots drive. Get a head start on your holiday shopping and get a cool gift for someone you don't even know. Have your child bring it to school this week, or bring it to the office yourself. Help give someone a happy holiday!



PTA Meeting Highlights

Most of last Wednesday's PTA meeting revolved around the D.C. Council bill that would create a school boundary redrawing commission, and the potential negative impact it could have on Shepherd.



Mike Sweeney, the community representative for the Local School Advisory Team at Deal Middle School – which has been Shepherd's feeder school since 2000 – moderated the first half of discussion on the issue. Sweeney, a real estate agent with four grown sons who attended D.C. public schools, is on Shepherd's side in any boundary-redrawing tug of war. He did note, though, that the last comprehensive citywide look at school boundaries was in 1976; everything else since then has been done on an ad hoc basis. Sweeney noted some vague elements in the bill, introduced this spring by Councilmember Mary Cheh of 109%-of-capacity Ward 3, and suggested that Shepherd parents demand representation on any boundary redrawing commission. He asked, "Why is it necessary to require someone to do their job?", saying DCPS should have been at this business long before now, and noted the bill could be killed by inaction. If it passes, though, it could give the mayor and DCPS chancellor political cover for unhappy consequences. The sentiment prevails among elementary school parents of all Deal feeder schools that they moved into their current neighborhoods so they could attend Deal, and then Wilson High School.

Shepherd – and Deal – parent Sekou Biddle, a former D.C. Council member and former D.C. State Board of Education member, moderated the second half of the discussion. He noted that the U.S. Department of Justice has guidelines on redrawing boundaries so as not to attract unwelcome Justice Dept. attention on segregation. Biddle also noted that boundaries were supposed to have been redrawn after former chancellor Michelle

Rhee closed 23 schools in 2008, but that never happened. And it's an open question as to whether this round of closings will help DCPS students or be a repeat of 2008. The city has acceded to parent requests to track to Deal and Wilson without thinking of the future. The fact that both Shepherd and Deal have the International Baccalaureate curriculum should put Shepherd in good stead. But with mayoral control of schools, the D.C. Council has no formal role in school system administration. "We have to propose reasonable, credible, actionable solutions," Biddle told fellow parents.

Get Caught Reading!

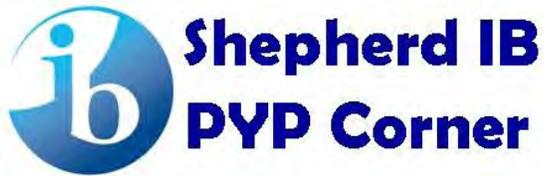
At last week's PTA meeting (for adults) and last Friday's pep rally (for students), details were given of the rewards to be reaped in the school's Get Caught Reading initiative.

For students up through first grade, reading (or being read to) for 15 minutes each day starts earning them steps. For students in grades 2-5, reading 20 minutes a day, plus keeping a response journal answering questions on what they've read, will earn them credits.



Perks students can get from reading range from free books at the used book room of the Shepherd Park neighborhood library on Georgia Avenue to "pieing" the principal; the latter would require reading a lot of books, but with reading as with pieing, the goal is to aim high.

This is just one outgrowth in Shepherd's quest to have 90 percent of its student either AT or ABOVE "proficient" level in reading. Make sure your students are part of the 90 percent – not part of the 10 percent!



The “Hope and a Home” families would like to thank our Shepherd School Community for the support in the Fannie Mae Walk for the Homeless which took place on Nov. 2. Our school was able to contribute enough walkers to put the grand total over the top in achieving the goal of 1,000 walkers. We couldn’t have done it without all of you! Achieving the goal of 1,000 walkers enabled Hope and a Home to receive a \$10,000 donation from Fannie Mae, the organizers of the walk. Our registered student walkers totaled over 200 and they all received a T-shirt for their effort in submitting a signed form.

THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

The Thanksgiving season is a time for giving, for sharing and for spending time with our families. In the spirit of giving, our school is committed to collecting 1,000 items of non-perishable food (canned soup, canned veggies, pasta noodles, boxed rice, canned tuna, peanut butter, etc.) for the local food pantry Martha’s Table. Thus far, we’ve collected over 200 items with still some way to go to attain our goal. Please help us by donating a few non-perishable items to add to our collection. We look forward to meeting our goal on the morning of Nov. 20.

We are also asking for a few volunteers to help us deliver all donations to Martha’s Table on Tuesday, November 20. If you are able to volunteer some time please speak to Ms. Whren or Ms. Johnson, two members from our School Culture and Climate Committee.

AWARDS DAY

Friday, Nov. 2, marked the end of our first Academic Advisory for the school year 2012-13 and the Awards Assembly was held on Nov. 9. A special recognition was given to Neiman Holton for his achievement in the Emerging Scholars Program. Students were recognized for their achievement in Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies, IB Learner Profile of Caring and Inquirer, Perfect Attendance, Outstanding Achievement on the Paced Interim Assessments in Reading and Mathematics and the DC Comprehensive Assessment System from 2011-2012 School Year.

Congratulations to:

Math Imani Akers, Love Reynolds-Gordon, Sifan

Kabeta, Julius Moore, Amari Mhoon, Nia Dunham, Erin Askew, Eyan White, Kahini Austin, Phillip Omohundro, Aileen Santacruz, Benjamin White, David Okechukwu, Caleb Schuster, Ashford Connor, Tony Nguyen, Alexander Kennison, and Jordan Johnson

Reading Asanatou Kanta, Christopher Kennison, Coruan Nunn, Grace Everitt, Frances Coulibaly, Marley Connor, Farrah Richmond, Nelson Alston, Gabrielle McKinley, Mia Saunders, Annelise Jefferson, Rosa Robles, Kelsea Saulny, Sydnee Montgomery, Courtney White, Dominique Cherry, Yewoinhareg Kebede, Lawrence Carvana, and Naomi Schuster

Science Joyce Kao, Kai Smith, Kristian Swanson, Aidan Alston, Stephen Levine, Cierra Barnette, Marshall Lewis, Deborah Okechukwu, Chima Ukaegbu, Kayla Boyde, Godloves Tata, Obed Johannes, Quentin Anderson-Watson

Social Studies Kadar Muir, Alexander Yemane, Helen Nguyen, Sarah Rice, Senay Yemane, Raphael Afrika, Fahari Dominique, Legend Van-Field, Alexandra Abede, and Jaden Brazey

IB Caring Jaidyn Turnbow, Angel Banks, Madison Proctor, Angel Flores, Aaron Curtis, Sharon Chirambo, Helen Nguyen, Emma Laudadio, Carys Nelson, Kalkidan Kebede, Zora Pauk, Phillip Omohundro, Renata Mills, Leela Mehta-Harwitz, Rafael Afrika, Kayla Muir, Kyle Jackson-Chang, Madison Swanson, Taylor Parales, Ashford Connor III, Cyntia Pattison, Ernestine Lwangu, Detroy Hudgens, Yewoinhareg Kebede, Tolani Smith, Chandler Mabry, **Teachers/Staff:** Mrs. LaShahn Booth, Mrs. Carole McNealy, Mrs. Beverly Johnson, Mrs. Miriam Martinez, Ms. Elizabeth Guldin, Ms. Anne Charles, Ms. Gail Liggins, Mrs. Delores Hebron, Mr. Tyrone Manigan, Ms. Pamela Adams, and Ms. Margaret Powell-Mallory

IB Inquirer Derek Marcus, Imani Akers, Adrian Riggins, Coruan Nunn, Sydney Mabry, Jacob Lotter, Cailey Edmunds, Travis Parker, Lee Bruner, Kayla Bethea, Sarah Rice, Lillian Beach, Layla Brent, Romy Herisse, Marshall Lewis III, Elias Mack, Malachi Smith, Benjamin White, Amanda Glover, Fahari Dominique, Camille Jones, Christopher Villalta, Julien Kearns, Ernestine Lwangu, Cyntia Pattison, Jasmine Hopkins, Quentin Anderson-Watson, Rasheda White, **Teachers/Staff:** Ms. Carol Laughinghouse, Ms. Tenishia Whren, Mrs. Claudia Miranda-Mulligan, and Mme. Koutouan Gadie

(see **IB Corner**, p. 5)

IB Corner from p. 4 _____

Achievement on PIA Reading and Math (*students who scored in the Advanced range) Zora Pauk, *Truth Woods, *Lillian Beach, Kalkidan Kebede, Grace Kao, *Isaac Layne, *Rashad Biddle, *Zoie Walden, *Romy Herisse, *Phillip Omohundro, *Cierra Barnette, Tyler Campbell, Layla Brent, *Renata Mills, *Radha Tanner, Joseph Carvana, Bianca Popa, *Sean Holmes, Elias Mack, *Leela Mehta-Harwitz, Tiara Dupee, *Marie-Therese Ta-ta, Victoria Newson, *Keshav Mehta-Harwitz, Shaina Adams, Samuel Bush, Fahari Dominique, *Jalan Gary-Alston, Clare Harvey, Masai Jenkins, *Jean Pierre-Roberts, *Ethan Reece, London Downing, Chima Ukaegbu, *Allison Holmes, *Colyar Trimble, Margaret Goletiani, Anthony Harrison, Bryce Smith, Quentin Anderson-Watson, Tolani Smith and Savannah Waymer

Perfect Attendance For the 1st Advisory - Catherine Foss, Derek Marcus, Kiersten Browner, Avari Moore, Ella Knight, Julius Moore Jr., Matthew Gomez-Martinez, Nabi Yemane, Cifani Dakka, Aminata Sissoko, Marjorie Romero, Ana Castillo-Zepeda, Layla Surafel, Cailey Edmunds, Payton Jones, Taylor Joiner, Jaylon Newby, Jacob Lotter, Adrian Cook, Joyce Kao, Frances Coulibaly, Sydney Mabry, Noni Wise, Aria Jefferson, Roxana Galvez-Rodas, Amirah Burgess, Chandler Mabry, Frank Sheffield, Gavin Rasmussen, Rasheda White, Benjamin White, Tiara Dupee, Ezinne Ukaegbu, Andy Nguyen, Briana Rodriguez-Knight, Annelise Jefferson, Marshall Lewis III, Rene Rodas, Elias Mack, Sean Holmes, Dylan Santiago, Dina Johannes, Phillip Omohundro, Layla Brent, Romy Herisse, Kyle Bowman, Jaylen Hebert, LATERRA DAKKA, Tais Moore, Casey Ross, Kalkidan Kebede, Kahini Austin, Grace Kao, Christopher Castillo-Zepeda, Edward Underwood, Kennedy Mack, Alexander Carter, Yasmina Konate, Micah Charles, Tsitsi Shabazz, Sarah Rice, Kayla Bethea, Tahir Best, Kayla Powell, Nicholas Anagnostopoulos, Kristian Swanson, Tobias Lindo, and Malchiah Marable

Achievement on 2011-12 DC-CAS Reading and Math (*students who scored in the Advanced range) Chima Ukaegbu, *Adam Thomas, Madison Swanson, *Caleb Schuster, *London Downing, *Ethan Reece, *Camille Jones, Zoe McCullough, Miles Davis, Cydni Taylor, Courtney White, Taylor Parales, Heidi Nikiema, Taye Moss-Suggs, Jamarly Calhoun, *Ashford Connor III, Khirah George, Kayla Boyde, Chanelle Haynes, Kemani Cash-Taylor, Godloves Tata, Cyntia Pattison, Tony Nguyen, *Allison Holmes, Keyshawn Lee, Ernestine Lwangu, Jasmine Greene, Jocelyn Bostic, Danny Page, Victoria Carter, Mia Heyward, Jaden Brazey, Chase Cook,



Dear Shepherd Parents and Caregivers,

Wow! I can't believe Thanksgiving is this week. Has the time passed fast for you as well? I think the 'busy-ness' of the art room has affected my time sense. Fifth graders are illustrating scenes of 19th-century westward expansion. In fourth grade students are creating collages of natural disasters; calamity has never looked so good! Third graders are using texture techniques to make drawings of wild animals in their habitats. The second grade has borrowed techniques of Australian Aboriginal dot painters to show their knowledge of rhythm and balance in visual art. First graders are assembling found objects to make collages of wild animals (and they are WILD!). Kindergartners have shown by drawing free-hand and combining shapes you can create a drawing of a house and its surroundings. In Pre-K students are using block tempera paint to mix colors and make new ones.

All this has meant for a media-intense week in the artroom. That's a nice way to say "messy." But, this is when I like it best. "Messy" in visual art means more selections, more out-of-the-box thinking, more mistakes, and more FIXES! Isn't that like life? Plans and neatness have their place but for me conquering a mess is more rewarding. So, be flexible this holiday season. Tolerate the messes and be grateful for what you can learn from them. Expect to be positively surprised.

For students in third, fourth and fifth grades, there IS homework due the week of Nov. 26.

Email me with questions, comments, and concerns at joele.michaud@dc.gov.

Happy Thanksgiving. I am grateful for you all. Remember, you gotta have art!

--Ms. Joele Michaud, art teacher

Lyndon Downing, Carlita Garrett, Yewoinhareg Kebede, Jasmine Hopkins, Luke Jennings, Obed Johannes, Gregory Jones, Colyar Trimble, Omari Clarke, and Tiffany Greene

Have a great week and an enjoyable Thanksgiving!

--Ms. Sandra Hart, IB coordinator



Hello Shepherd Mustangs,

This is London Downing and I would like to tell some of you about our girls' basketball team. We just completed two weeks of working out. Tryouts were held last week and the list of those who made the team was recently posted, so congratulations to the following girls:

- ◆ Shania Campbell
- ◆ Genesis Glover
- ◆ Imani Thomas
- ◆ Courtney White
- ◆ Kamryn Bowman
- ◆ Zoe McCullough
- ◆ Kaitlyn Hunter
- ◆ Denija Hudgens
- ◆ Omari Clarke and
- ◆ London Downing (me)

Ms. Moorefield and Ms. Hamer are proud of us all, even if you didn't make the team. It was a hard tryout process to go through. Be on the lookout for news about the boys' team soon.

--London Downing, fourth grader

Fundraising Committee News

The PTA's Fundraising Committee has assembled a fundraising survey every parent should take! You can go online to the school website to take the survey. It's at the top of the center column of the homepage. If you received a paper version of the survey, you can complete that and insert it into the PTA mailbox or go to this link:



<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PNQC826>.

The committee is looking for more parents to lend their time, energy and expertise to its work. The aim is to meet sometime during the first week of December. If you're interested, contact PTA assistant treasurer Judith McCullough at judith.mccullough@seiu.org.



Congratulations to the winners of officer positions in the recent Student Council elections at school: Tiffany Greene, president; Jay Matthews II, vice president; Colyar Trimble, secretary; and Margaret Goletiani, treasurer. Congratulations to all of the classroom representatives who won seats on the Student Council as well. Everybody in school is pulling for you to do a good job!

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

Deadline for the Dec. 3
Mustang is 5 p.m. on
Friday, Nov. 30.
Send items to
sesmustang@gmail.com.

Send submissions
no later than
5 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 30, to
sesmustang@gmail.com



Happy Thanksgiving!
To You And Your Family

Shepherd Parents Speak Up!

(Editor's note: During the two days of D.C. Council hearings on the proposed legislation that would create a school boundary redrawing commission, there were 102 citizens who asked to testify. Nine of them were either current or former Shepherd parents. This is strong evidence of our parent power. We're using the Mustang to reprint their testimony as long as we've got the space. The testimony below is from former Shepherd parent, and Shepherd PTA officer, Kristin Wells. We also thank the other Shepherd parents who signed up to testify: Alicia Anderson, Lori Matthews, Carmen Rush, Charles Rush, and Toby Susse.)

Chairman Mendelson, Ward 4 Councilwoman Bowser and Members of the City Council, my name is **KRISTIN WELLS** and I am a homeowner and parent in Shepherd Park. I am here to testify about the importance of maintaining the boundary and feeder patterns that allow students from Shepherd Elementary School to attend Deal Middle School and Wilson High School.

I was born and raised in this city and I am now the only African American woman partner in one of the city's preeminent law firms, Patton Boggs. In the '70's and '80s when I was growing up in Park View and Brookland, my local D.C. public schools did not offer the kind of quality education my parents demanded for me. Fortunately, my mother was able to send me to independent schools where I was joined, in middle school, by many graduates from Shepherd Elementary. These African American Shepherd students flocked into the city's best independent schools at seventh grade because at that time, their assigned junior high school could not provide the continuity of high achievement education that they received at Shepherd.

When I bought my first house in 2000, I knew I wanted my children to develop strong roots as African Americans. I wanted them to have the best education possible and I wanted them to have something I never had: the chance to go to a public neighborhood school, develop friends in their community and be surrounded by African Americans who demanded, and were pursuing, academic and professional excellence at the highest levels. There was, and is, no other neighborhood in the District, Maryland or Virginia

Voting With Their Sweet Tooth

On Nov. 6, not only did D.C. residents choose a president, a delegate in Congress, City Council members and ANC representatives, but voters and parents alike at Shepherd bought 100 boxes of Krispy Kreme doughnuts.



The doughnuts and the coffee turned out to be a terrific fund-raiser for the Safety Patrol. What's more, other parents stepped up to make donations to the Safety Patrol, including one parent who said she'd buy ponchos. Good news all around!

that can provide that kind of experience for an African American child; my husband and I chose to remain in the District and buy a house in Shepherd Park for the schools and community our neighborhood provides.

Shepherd Park and North Portal Estates form a strong and diverse neighborhood, but its real cohesiveness is rooted in Shepherd Elementary and the academic and community continuity provided by the progression to Deal and Wilson. Both of my children have attended Shepherd and they have made lifelong friends who, like them, are supported by families that are pushing and guiding them to academic success and a lifetime of leadership. Without the promise of remaining on that path at Deal and Wilson, our community will return to the patterns of my youth. Parents will flock to independent or charter schools and, more importantly, many will seek a more stable path by buying homes in the high performing school districts of Montgomery or Fairfax County.

While there are many reasons to protect the Shepherd-Deal-Wilson connection, I would like to highlight three.

(1) Shepherd Elementary is the highest performing predominantly African American elementary school in the city. These well-prepared students bring the largest number of African American students to Deal's community. These students and their parents bring the ties of a strong residential, communal social fabric from Shepherd Park and North Portal Estates to Deal,

(see **WELLS**, p. 16)

Good afternoon. My name is **KATHERINE TRIMBLE**. I have been a homeowner in the Ward 4 neighborhood of North Portal Estates, in Shepherd Park, since 2003, and my children attend Shepherd Elementary School as third and fifth graders.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the School Boundary Review Act of 2012. My comments also apply to DCPS' related efforts at portfolio management.

First of all, I appreciate the Council's efforts to address the problem of school overcrowding. While this bill has a citywide focus, I understand that its main focus is the overcrowding of Ward 3 elementary schools and the impact it is having on Deal Middle School, which serves students in Wards 3 and 4. As a Shepherd parent, this is also the focus of my statement.

While the bill seeks to establish a commission to review school boundaries based on such factors as building capacity and projected enrollment, it does not address critical factors like academic continuity and diversity. Furthermore, the accelerated timelines of the bill will make it difficult to thoughtfully consider such factors. In addition, I have heard that some seek to make Deal a Ward 3-only school. Unfortunately, politics seems to be driving this bill, rather than a commitment to provide a strong and equitable education to all students of Washington, D.C.

If a commission is established, I hope that it will review school boundaries based on factors that focus on educational quality vs. the political boundaries of the city. Here are a few to consider:

1. Everyone wants a quality education, which is why no one wants to be turned away from Deal.
 - The current overcrowding problem results from a lack of foresight and planning on the part of the city government.
 - More than four times the modernization resources have been spent on Ward 3 schools (\$317m) than Ward 4 schools (\$72m), even though Ward 4 has nearly twice the number of school-aged children.
 - Wards 3 and 4 don't have other successful middle school alternatives.
 - Don't push students from Deal's current feeder schools into lower-quality middle schools that are not prepared to challenge them. Find ways to accommodate all these students at Deal until

high-quality alternatives are available.

Regarding Shepherd Elementary School in particular:

2. Deal provides academic continuity to Shepherd Elementary students.

- Deal is Shepherd's neighborhood middle school. Many families, including mine, bought our homes in this neighborhood to take advantage of the Shepherd, Deal and Wilson trajectory. Deal is less than four miles from Shepherd, with a dedicated bus line to carry Shepherd students to Deal.
- Shepherd students perform to high standards comparable to Deal. For example, in 2012 76% of Shepherd students met or exceeded the reading standards on the DC-CAS, compared to 82% of students at Deal. Importantly, Shepherd's reading test scores are almost three times higher than those of the next closest middle school, and twice as high as the closest educational campus, neither of which are in a position to provide academic continuity to Shepherd students.

Percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards on the DC CAS for 2012

| | Shepherd ES | Deal MS | MacFarland MS | Takoma EC |
|---------|-------------|---------|---------------|-----------|
| Reading | 76% | 82% | 27% | 37% |
| Math | 69% | 85% | 34% | 37% |

Source: DCPS.dc.gov

- Deal and Shepherd have International Baccalaureate programmes. In 2006 Shepherd began pursuing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP), which offers a rigorous curriculum and an inquiry-based approach to learning that is designed to meet children's academic, social, physical, emotional, and cultural needs. Shepherd was authorized as an IB PYP school in 2011. Shepherd's five-year old programme serves as an excellent introduction to the Middle Years Programme at Deal, and Deal's programme offers important academic continuity to Shepherd students.
3. Shepherd provides demographic diversity to Deal.
- Shepherd is one of the highest performing majority-African American public schools in Wards 3 and 4.
 - With a student body that is 78 percent African American, Shepherd is a key provider of diversity to Deal.

(see **K. TRIMBLE**, p. 16)

Testimony of David Trimble

I am a Ward 4 Shepherd Park parent and I would first like to thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns regarding the School Boundary Review Act. I would also like to applaud and thank you for holding these hearings to exercise much-needed oversight into the operations of DCPS.

The proposed bill seeks to offer a process for changing the boundaries and feeder patterns for schools in response to overcrowding. I would like to highlight four concerns. First, the premise of the bill that there is a need for a new bureaucratic mechanism to manage boundary and feeder patterns is not established. Second, the bill's focus on overcrowding downplays the many competing elements essential to improving the quality of education in the District and seems to allow for the introduction of politics into the decision. Third, the timelines established within the bill undermine the credibility of the proposed process and have raised questions among many parents as to whether the "answer" to overcrowding has already been determined. Fourth and finally, while the mission of DCPS clearly demands that it make difficult decisions, the apparent absence of a robust strategic plan that would give context to key decisions and issues means that every DCPS decision runs the risk of being seen as ill-conceived or capricious.

First, in regard to the need to establish a new commission in the District responsible for changing school boundaries and feeder patterns, it is not clear that a new organization with such powers is needed at all. It certainly has not been made clear to the community or the schools that current policy and procedures are inadequate. Curiously, the DCPS report on proposed school closures includes a reference to their own study and impending decisions on this issue; though I give kudos to the authors of the bill as this new DCPS effort clearly looks as though it was prompted by the bill. Clearly, the bill speaks to the frustration of many regarding the tardiness of DCPS in addressing or anticipating this issue. While past inaction on the issue is frustrating, does a new law need to be passed to manage a problem that is presumably already a core responsibility of DCPS?

Second, while preventing overcrowding, on its own, is a reasonable goal, it is certainly not the only element needed to create a good educational environment. Clearly, curriculum, school facilities, parental involvement, strong teachers and principals and a diverse student body are also all critical. As currently drafted this bill appears to undermine or ignore these other essential factors and does not acknowledge the need to or suggest how to address balance competing goals – such as DCPS' stated

considered in making boundary and feeder school decisions and not a single one focuses on improving the education of the students. The bill also does not include any consideration to the goal of ensuring a diverse student population. Also absent is the principle that politics and political boundaries have no place in making such decisions. If tough decisions need to be made, it is essential that the criteria or guidance in making these decisions seek to balance all of the elements needed for effective education not just an over-simplified space utilization metric.

Third, the timelines established in the bill are grossly unrealistic.

- * By January 1st – about 45 days from today – the bill requires that the mayor identify and then appoint at least seven members to a school boundary review commission.
- * Commission members are to be "well qualified" (not defined) and include representatives from the city, DCPS, Office of Planning, parents and community members. (It is unclear how concerned parents would know to join since the schools impacted would not yet be identified.)
- * By Feb. 15, just six weeks after being established, the Commission must publish a draft report on public school boundaries and public school feeder patterns. (In this six weeks, the commission will need to establish rules of order for their operation, meet, gather data, and analyze many if not most of the schools in the District.)
- * The bill then allows just 30-days for two public hearings on the draft report (Only two hearings are required even though any changes will likely impact many neighborhoods across the city); and finally:
- * The bill allows only two weeks for the commission to incorporate all public comments or concerns and make and publish its final decision on boundaries and feeder patterns – all of which must be finalized by May 1.

This unrealistically rushed schedule is all the more apparent when one notes that under the bill, the Commission has ten years before it must consider the issue of overcrowding in the schools again. Further, compare this timeline to getting a permit to construct a new building. The implications for neighborhoods are far more profound and complex and yet under the proposal would be done in a fraction of the time. Importantly, DCPS' own study on overcrowding appears to set similarly rushed and unrealistic deadlines. For good reasons or bad, many parents in the Shepherd Park community suspect that bill is designed to address the concerns in one or two schools
(see **D. TRIMBLE**, p. 10)

D. TRIMBLE from p. 9 _____

without regard to how realistic the timeframes might be or the likely impact on other schools in the District. The early February deadline for the first determination suggests to many that there is already a preferred proposal and this is just a mechanism to legitimize it.

Fourth and finally, I believe that much of the concern voiced at the hearing last week -- lack of trust and feelings of betrayal -- stems from the belief that DCPS' decisions are without underlying reason and are ultimately capricious. In short, DCPS does not appear to operate under a coherent strategic plan for managing and improving our schools. I looked and found what DCPS calls its five-year strategic plan. It's entitled "A Capital Commitment" and it is posted on its website in several prominent locations. This document is not a strategic plan. It is six pages long and contains five PowerPoint slides broadly describing five goals that are simple aspirational statements. A real strategic plan would articulate long- and short-term goals, describe how these goals will be measured and reported, outline the steps needed to be taken by key stakeholders to reach these goals, identify barriers that might require risk mitigation measures, and establish a process for adapting to changes or unexpected setbacks along the way.

Community "buy-in" to a real, brass-tacks, workable and actionable strategic plan is critical to build consensus in the community on not just the near- and long-term goals for the schools but also the strategies on how to achieve these goals. Without a clearly articulated plan that gives voice and consideration to all the values, goals and desires that are sought by local schools -- educational excellence, diversity, facility renovation, continuing education, community pride and cohesion -- every DCPS decision will be seen as suspect because it cannot be explained as anything but reactive and it will be dismissed as ill-conceived or capricious.

In closing, I do not wish to imply that overcrowding is not an issue. As DCPS continues to improve and enrollments continue to grow, there is a need for a clear policy and transparent decision-making process to address this concern. This is an important issue, though I would argue not the largest issue facing the schools and one that should be tackled in the larger context of improving neighborhood schools across the city. All things being equal, overcrowding is difficult on students and faculty and should be minimized. However, boundary and feeder pattern decisions profoundly impact neighborhoods as well as the entire school system and must be made with great care. Whether the current process for handling this task is broken is not clear. Unfortunately, this bill raises the issue

but does not seek to address it in a thoughtful or comprehensive manner.

In the spirit of constructive suggestions, I recommend that, if a new school boundary commission is created, the membership, timelines and principles guiding its decision-making need to be more robust if such a mechanism is to be credible and effective. Membership must represent the schools potentially impacted by its decisions, the time allowed for the commission to gather information and get public comment must be significantly longer and the windows for public input expanded. Further, the timeframe for examining overcrowding should be reconsidered and possibly shortened. Finally and most importantly, the guidance to any such commission must make it clear that all of its decisions shall be based on improving the education of students -- a complex and difficult decision that involves not just numbers of students but also educational curriculum, achievement, and demographics. Finally, like many states and school districts already do, the city needs to explicitly state that politics and political boundaries (e.g., counties, wards) shall not be part of the decision making process. Of course, most of these points and principles also apply to the study DCPS indicates it has already begun.

Respectfully,

David C. Trimble

Shepherd Park resident

Shepherd School Pledge



Today is a new day!

I will respect the rights of others.

I will treat all property with respect.

I will take responsibility for my learning.

I will take responsibility for my actions.

I will act in a safe and healthy way.

Today I will be the best me I can be!



Get Caught Reading Challenge!

The challenge will start during the week of November 18-24, 2012

Dear Pre-K through 1st Grade Parents,

We are ready to begin Shepherd's –Get Caught Reading Challenge! We are expecting our young readers to read every night. We hope that, together, you and your child will read and talk about the books in 3 different ways:

- Your child may tell or make up the story by “reading” the pictures. Talking about what he/she sees in the pictures develops important language and pre-reading skills.
- Your child may read the words, IF she/he is ready for that.
- You may read books to your child. A parent reading to a child is one of the most powerful things in the world for creating successful readers.

Each time you and your child do any combination of the above three things for **15 minutes**, your child will get credit for **ONE STEP** of reading. Please:

- Fill out one line on the reading log for each 15-minute Step of reading. (You and your child will probably read 2 or more books during the **15-minute Step**. Pick just one of the book titles to write on the reading log line).
- Initial the reading log.
- Have your child to write his/her initials

While you are listening to or reading to your child, be sure your child is:

- Having fun! 😊
- Following the story pages from left to right.
- Using the picture clues to help tell the story.
- Talking with you about connections he/she and you make to the book.



Thank you for
your support!





Get Caught Reading Challenge!

The challenge will start during the week of November 18-24, 1012

Dear 2nd through 5th Grade Parents,

Shepherd's Get Caught Reading Challenge is a reading program designed to get our children to read. We are expecting our young readers to read every night. We want your child to read each night and enjoy what he or she reads. For each **20 minutes** that your child reads, he/she should complete an entry in their Reading Response log. For every entry your student will get credit for **ONE STEP** of reading.

Children should read books at their reading success levels. At these levels, the children will feel comfortable and will be able to read the words. The important thing is that your child has fun reading! Research has shown that the more a student reads, the more successful he or she will be in school. If you need help selecting level appropriate books for your student, ask your student's teacher.

Here are some ideas that can help your child become a better reader:

- Be your child's reading coach.
- Provide the time and opportunity for your child to read his book each day.
- Make sure your child has a relaxed, comfortable place to read (eg. couch, bed, floor).
- Listen to your child read.
- Be your child's listening ear. Help with pronunciation as needed.
- Help older children to read fluently and with feeling!
- Help your child select a variety of books from a variety of genres.
- Sign your child's log after he or she reads.
- Encourage your child to buy books and build his or her personal library at home.
- Set a good example for your child by sharing your own reading experiences. If your children see you read, they will read too.
- Stay in contact with your child's teacher about his or her reading progress.
- Keep it fun. Just enjoy it. ☺



Thank you for
your support!



Name: _____

2nd through 5th Grade

Shepherd Elementary -Reading Response Log

After each 20 minute reading, choose a reading strategy and respond to what you read. Use the sentence starters to help you begin. You should respond to whatever (a book or a chapter) you are able to read in 20 minutes. If you read for 40 minutes you may write two responses.



Summarize: "This book is about _____."

Predict: "I think the ending will _____."

Evaluate: "I like/do not like this story because _____."

Question: "I wonder why the author chose to _____."

Connect: "This story reminds me of _____."

Evaluate: "This story create images of _____," (see, smell, hear, touch, taste feel)

Title: _____ Date: _____

Author: _____ Minutes Read: _____ Fiction or Nonfiction

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Date: _____

Author: _____ Minutes Read: _____ Fiction or Nonfiction

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Get Caught Reading Incentives

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p><u>30 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Pencil Bookmark Book on the wall Book It Coupon | <p><u>100 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Certificate Reading Dog Tag | <p><u>200 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Reading Dog Tag |
| <p><u>300 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Ice Cream Sundae for Dessert | <p><u>400 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Star Reader Water Bottle | <p><u>500 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Star Reader T-Shirt |
| <p><u>600 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Pizza Party | <p><u>700 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Pie the Principal or Select staff | <p><u>800 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Reading Dog Tag Movie Tickets |
| <p><u>900 Steps</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name announced on morning news Free Book Coupon Book on the wall Book It Coupon Reading Dog Tag Reading Ribbon Reading Certificate Field Trip to Pump it Up or Joyful Jumps | <p><u>1000 Steps</u></p> <p><u>Name entered in drawing for a KINDLE FIRE !</u></p> <p>Other Prizes TBA</p> | |

K. TRIMBLE from p. 8 _____

- Removing Shepherd from the Deal feeder population would cut off the only predominantly African American community that currently has access to Deal, and further segregate our middle schools.

In summary, our students are not the cause of the school overcrowding problem. Deal is, happily but ironically, a victim of its own success. But that is not a reason to undermine the successes of Shepherd by pushing our students into lower-quality middle schools that are not prepared to challenge them, or by forcing us to send our students far outside our neighborhood boundaries, to charter schools, or to the suburbs. Deal has served as Shepherd's neighborhood school for 12 years, and many families purchased homes in the community in order to benefit from both Shepherd's and Deal's academic programs. Shepherd is a high-performing and diverse school with an IB curriculum that Deal matches at the middle-school level. Please provide the continuity and opportunity for Shepherd students to thrive. Do not take away Shepherd's, or any other feeder schools', access to Deal Middle School.

Thank you.

WELLS from p. 7 _____

where the children continue their high achievement and the parents continue their involvement in the school.

(2) The International Baccalaureate and foreign language programs at Shepherd Elementary and Deal currently provide an academic continuity of inquiry-based learning that must be continued to achieve the high performance results of that program.

(3) The draw that Shepherd Park and North Portal Estates have become for middle-class African American and other families seeking a diverse, interactive neighborhood with strong academics will be lost as families with children will opt for suburban public school systems.

I implore you to consider these factors as you consider this bill and any reorganization that may develop from this process. Parents and residents of my community have four proposed amendments to this bill which recognize our concerns and will strengthen the process for all schools should this bill pass. They are attached to my written testimony and I hope the Council will give them thorough consideration.

Thank you.

I am the mother of 2 young children who go to Shepherd Elementary School in Ward 4. We reside in Shepherd Park.

I am aware that Council members have a difficult task ahead of them. Any solutions attempted will not please all stakeholders, alike. However, any attempted solution must not simply transfer the problem from one group of stakeholders to another, unless there is some net good arising from such transfer. Such a solution will then necessarily be wasteful, because there are transaction costs to every change. Because you are responsible representatives and custodians, you must not put in place a solution that wastes public resources.

Our family moved to Shepherd Park about seven years ago, attracted primarily by its diversity, the excellent public schools it feeds into and the highly active parent body. We have been very happy with Shepherd ES so far. A key reason for us to continue to stay on in Shepherd Park has been the fact that Shepherd ES feeds into Deal Middle School.

If Shepherd ES no longer feeds into Deal MS, we will have to consider other options in the D.C. metro area which have comparable public schools, such as Montgomery (MD) and Fairfax (VA) counties, very seriously, to our regret. Our family is not unique in this regard - I know that many other families will depart to neighboring counties, starting a domino effect that will not be positive.

There is no good reason to disrupt a system already in place to feed from Shepherd ES into Deal MS. The partnership represented by Shepherd and Deal is a "natural" - Shepherd is an IB school; so is Deal. Shepherd has a highly active parent body; so does Deal. Shepherd is a high-performing school with majority African-origin students; in this regard it is unique among DCPS elementary schools. If Shepherd no longer feeds into Deal, Deal's composition will suffer for lack of the richness Shepherd contributes to it.

For these reasons, I urge Council members to ensure that in undertaking your difficult task, you do not simply replace Shepherd ES with another DCPS elementary school, when it comes to feeding into Deal. I urge you also to consider the unique history, richness and diversity represented in the relationship of Shepherd feeding into Deal.

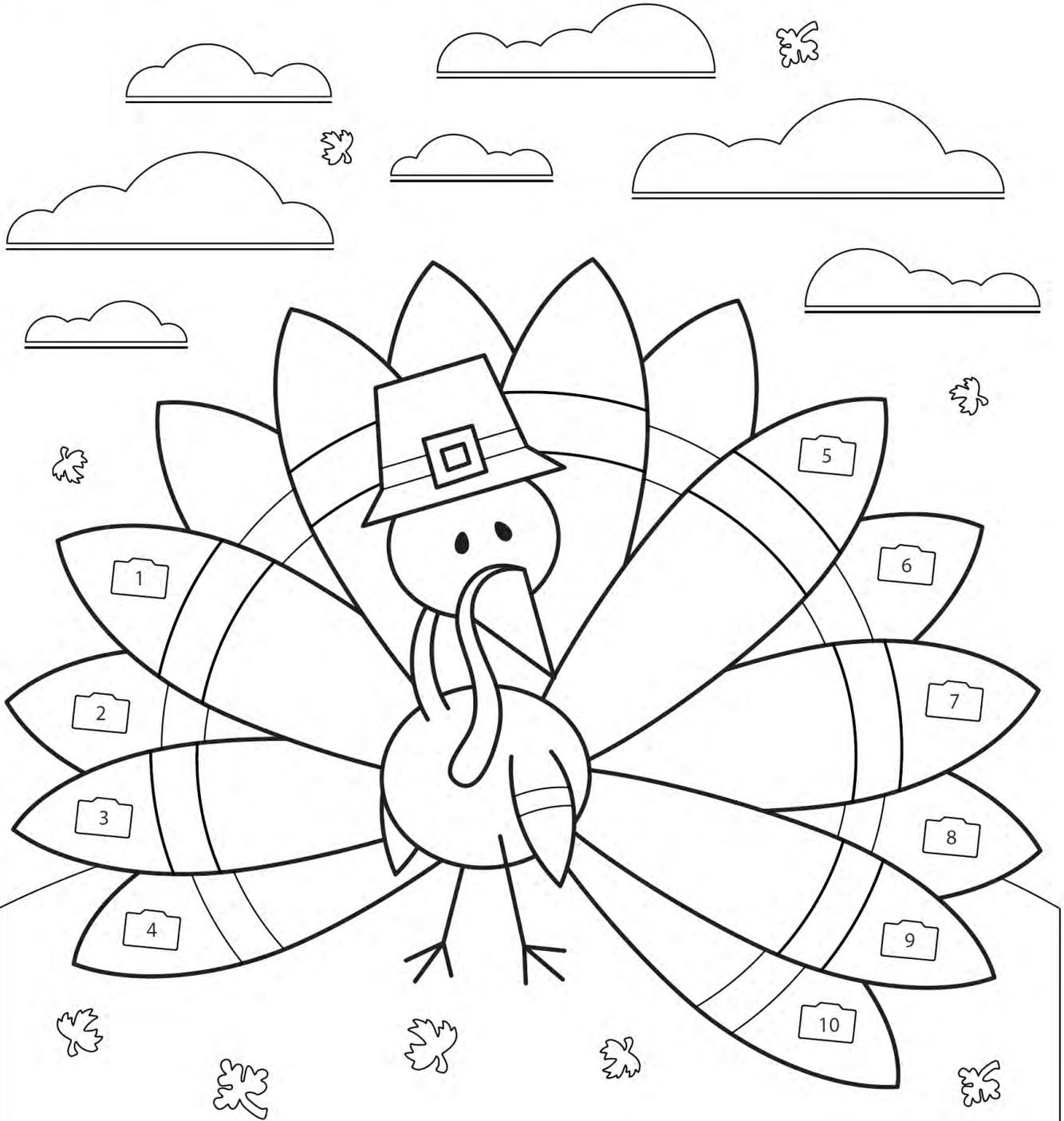
Thank you.

--**SANDHYA MEHTA**



it's turkey time!

Thank you for helping! Every Box Top you collect is worth 10¢ for your school. To see more ways to earn cash for your school, go to btfe.com!



Name

Grade

Teacher's Name

FOR COORDINATORS ONLY Total # of Box Tops on this sheet:

MILES from p. 1 _____

later than Tuesday, November 20, 2012. The classes with the highest total of donations will receive a special lunch. All donations will help support our own Shepherd families and families who have solicited help from other agencies in the District. Thank you in advance for your support.

Parking Reminders

Please do not park and leave your car unattended in front of the school between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. This is a drop-off and pick-up zone and it is also our fire emergency lane. Parking Enforcement is out and will be issuing tickets.

School Dismissal

Our school day ends at 3:15 p.m. We dismiss students between 3:15 and 3:30 p.m. After the Thanksgiving break, parents whose students have not been picked up by 3:30 p.m, will be charged a \$5 (per 10 minutes) late pick-up fee. For example, if you arrive anytime between 3:30 and 3:40 p.m. you will be charged \$5. If you arrive anytime between 3:41 and 3:50 you will be charged \$10. Please plan accordingly.

Winter Clothing

During the cold winter weather, please be sure that your child has a warm coat, gloves or mittens and some type of headgear. We do want children to go outside during recess, so dressing for the weather is vital. If it is raining, or if the wind chill factor is about 10 below, we do not allow anyone to go outside. The students remain in the gym during noon recess. If you have problems getting the necessary winter gear for your child please let us know and we will try to assist you.

Season of Thanks

During this season of thanks, I will leave you with this.....

What I Am Thankful For?

by Peter DeJesse

Things that work out for the best
People that make my life soar
Events that make me smile
These are the things I am thankful for
Colors of the leaves on the trees
Clouds and a clear blue sky
Birds that sing in the morning

And a love that makes you sigh
Family and friends above all
Have always been there it seems
Through the good and bad times
They've helped me follow my dreams
You may ask, What am I thankful for?
The only answer I can give
I am thankful every day
For the wonderful life I live.

Additional things to be thankful for.....

- ▶ The wonderful students who bring so much joy to my life every day.
- ▶ The supportive parents who go above and beyond to make Shepherd a great place.
- ▶ The volunteers who keep giving even though a word of thanks may be forgotten.
- ▶ The Shepherd staff who come prepared to serve every day.

Warmest regards,

Jamie B. Miles

Principal

Shepherd Elementary School Mission:

At Shepherd, we are committed to the advancement of students' academic, emotional, social and physical well being. We, as a community, will provide students with a safe, supportive, creative, and flexible environment in which children think and learn globally and act compassionately.

Shepherd Elementary School



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