



Piney Ridge Elementary School

February 2012 Newsletter

6315 Freedom Ave
Sykesville, MD 21784
(410) 751-3535
(410) 795-9022
(410) 751-3537 FAX

www.carrollk12.org/pre

Karen A. Covino
Principal

Michele Becker
Asst. Principal

IT IS THE MISSION OF
PINEY RIDGE ELEMEN-
TARY SCHOOL TO DE-
VELOP STUDENTS AS
THINKERS, PROBLEM-
SOLVERS, AND COM-
MUNICATORS.
ALL WILL WORK TO
ENSURE MAXIMUM
ACHIEVEMENT FOR
EVERY CHILD IN ALL
CURRICULAR AREAS.

NOTICE OF NON- DISCRIMINATION

The Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ancestry or national origin, religion, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The CCPS provides nondiscriminatory access to school facilities in accordance with its policies and regulations regarding the community use of schools (including, but not limited to, the Boy Scouts). The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Gregory J. Bricca
Director of Research and
Accountability
125 North Court Street
Westminster, Maryland 21157
410.751.3068

Dear Piney Ridge Families,

Our PTA hosted a very successful Science Fair on Friday, January 20th. We had a record number of students participating and the experiments were very thoughtful and informative. Thanks to Mr. Jeremy Cooper and his committee for an awesome event! Thank you also to our visiting scientists who gave feedback to our students, our teachers who promoted and encouraged students to participate and, most importantly, to our students who worked so hard. Parents, your support of your child with extra activities such as the Science Fair really does make a difference! It was obvious that lots of hands on, authentic and meaningful learning took place!

The year seems to be passing quickly and before we know it, testing days will be upon us. The MSA gives us valuable information about how our students are performing in comparison to other students in the state. Please make note of the dates below and try to refrain from scheduling doctor appointments or family outings on these days. It is important for students to be in school on testing days. The schedule is:

- Reading MSA – March 14, 15
- Math MSA – March 20, 21
- Grade 5 Science MSA – between 4/16 and 5/4

Here are some facts about MSA from www.mdk12.org website. You can get further information and sample questions by visiting this website.

- The test meets the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act.
- The test assesses the Maryland content standards in mathematics and reading.
- The test is administered annually to students in grade 3 through 8.
- MSA scores will show how well Maryland children have learned the reading and mathematics skills specified in the Voluntary State Curriculum (VSC). MSA scores will also show how children performed compared to other students across the nation. The test includes both multiple-choice and short-essay questions.

Second marking period reports go home Feb. 1st. This is an opportunity for you as parents to celebrate the learning gains your child has made. It is also a great time to help your child set goals for the rest of year, perhaps with grades, organization, homework completion, or any other area that needs improvement. Overall, we are pleased with the progress our students are making and we hope you are also.

Karen Covino
Principal

Michele Becker
Asst. Principal





February Calendar of Events

(Please post this calendar on your refrigerator)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Report Cards Go Home	2	3 Guys Read Club 7:45-8:30am Team Jersey Day (wear a sports jersey)	4
5	6	7	8 Volunteer Training 6:30 pm PTA Meeting 7:00pm	9 24 Club 7:45am 	10 2Hr 45Min Early Dismissal Guys Read Club 7:45-8:30am	11
12	13	14 Valentines Day (wear red or pink) 	15 Newspaper Club Begins 3:30-4:30PM Pizza Hut Fundraiser 5:00-9:00pm	16	17 Guys Read Club 7:45-8:30am (Pajama Day wear appropriate pajamas)	18
19	20 Schools/Offices Closed for Presidents' Day 	21 Schools Closed For Students Professional Day for Teachers	22 Newspaper Club 3:30-4:30PM	23 24 Club 7:45am 	24 Guys Read Club 7:45-8:30am Daddy/Daughter Dance 7:00-9:00pm	25
26	27	28 Market Day Pickup 6-8pm 	29 Conference Night K-5 (4:00-7:30pm) By invitation only			

School Improvement Team (SIT)

Has your child been a **B.A.R.K.** student?
Have they been **Respectful** and **Responsible**?

Monthly Incentive– February: Sit wherever you want at lunch w/ music

SIT Bits:

For the past several weeks our students and teachers have been working hard to assess student learning for the first semester. Teachers are assessing students' reading levels and strategy skills using various assessments provided by our county reading department. This will allow teachers to meet all students' needs and continue to provide a challenging curriculum. In math, students have taken a math benchmark in every grade level to measure their knowledge of skills taught so far this year. Again, this will allow teachers to do some reteaching where needed while moving on to the next clusters. Our School Improvement Team will be meeting in February to review all of the assessment data. Look for more specific data in our March newsletter.

Honor Roll Criteria – Grades 3-5

Starting in 2001, Piney Ridge Elementary School, in accordance with School Improvement Team goals, began instituting an Honor Roll system to reward students who meet the criteria listed below. These awards are earned quarterly. In addition, students also have the opportunity to earn Student Effort and Character Awards if they do not meet academic criteria, but have shown effort in their behavior and work habits.

Principal's Honor Roll – All A's, no N's
Honor Roll – All A's and B's (not all B's) and no N's

Presidential Academic Fitness Award (grade 5 only) awarded in June.

The requirements for 5th grade students to achieve this award are:

- Grade 4 MSA—advanced in either reading or math
- Math Benchmarks—90% or higher on each subtest (not average) on January and May Grade 4 and January Grade 5
- Grade Point Average—3.5 GPA for all of Grade 4 and the first two marking periods of Grade 5

COUNSELOR'S

O

Your Child's Attendance

R

This month, I want to cover a very important topic that I know is on all your minds these days - attendance! Unfortunately, sporadic attendance, whether it's due to illness, family vacations, or excessive snow days, does hinder academic growth, good study habits, routines and unfortunately in some cases, behavior (both at home and at school). Some children thrive on predictable steady routines, and when things are topsy-turvy, there is bound to be an impact!

N

Since we can't control the weather and when schools are open or closed, let's focus on those times that we can control - our child's attendance - this includes lateness (tardiness) as well and early "pick ups" from school. When your child is sick (has a fever over 100 degrees or is vomiting or has diarrhea) they should not come to school. But there are many "iffy" days when your child may *complain* about not feeling well, but may be perfectly fine to attend school. It is not good to get into a habit of "giving in" or giving them a "mental health" day. Kids will inevitably use this to the extreme once they know it's a possibility. And remember, family vacations need to be pre-approved by the principal to be coded as "lawful absences," otherwise, your child's vacation will be recorded as "unlawful."

E

R

Equally important is that your child is at school prior to the 9:00 bell. This is particularly difficult during the cold and dark months of January and February. It is important that most (if not all) homework is completed the night before and that book bags are packed and ready to go. Children should be woken so that they can eat a healthy breakfast before leaving to catch the bus or walk / car ride to school.

The "Attendance Police"

Part of my job as the School Counselor is to review attendance every week. The miracles of computer programs (ESchoolPlus) allow me to tap into any child's attendance record at any given time. The program calculates tardiness (both unexcused and excused), absences, and even when your child is dismissed early for an appointment. Every 2 weeks we calculate a figure that is 20% of the days of school and 15% of the days of school. This generates a list of students who are at that mark or above it (missing 20% or 15% or more days for tardiness/absences).

Prior to the 15% or 20% mark, you may be contacted by your child's teacher or the school nurse. These conversations are documented. If your child continues to be absent or late 15% to 20% of the time, you may get a call or letter from me. If absences continue, a letter may also be sent by Mrs. Becker, our Assistant Principal, requesting that a meeting be scheduled with you so we can better understand the reasons why your child continues to be absent or tardy frequently.

Unfortunately, if this pattern continues, our Principal and/or Pupil Personnel Worker, Susan McFadden may have to become involved, requiring a doctor's note for all absences and in rare cases, the State's Attorney's office.

We certainly understand a severe illness or extreme circumstances. If either of these two problems are not the case, and it's just a bad routine (like not getting up early enough, whining, or "giving in") this inconsistency will hinder your child in a multitude of ways and no amount of homework truly can make up for the missed instruction.

Setting the tone for good attendance and being on time is modeling expectations that your child will need to show in their future career!! Being a good role model *yourself* will help to instill this value of persistence in your children!

Piney Ridge has a yearly attendance rate of above 96%! Help us stay at the "excellent" rating!!!

Mrs. Snively
School Counselor

COUNSELOR'S

O Be A Respectful, Responsible, Kid - B.A.R.K!

R
N
E
R

Along with the start of February, we are em“barking” on the second half of the school year! To enhance our Discipline Program, we are re-launching B.A.R.K. for the second half with an assembly which took place on January 30th and a new program where students will be able to earn “B.A.R.K.” tickets from their teachers daily for exhibiting respectful, responsible, behavior! You may even notice some ticket stubs in your child’s folder each day that says they earned a “B.A.R.K. ticket!

Earning tickets enters your child in weekly class drawings and bi-monthly school drawings for special prizes. The monthly incentive for February (for students who haven’t received any cafeteria citations or support room referrals) is playing music at lunch and being able to sit wherever they want! March will be a “double incentive” where students will earn a prize on both March 16th and again on March 30th for no support room referrals or cafeteria citations.

Please post the attached “refrigerator page” at your home and reinforce B.A.R.K. behaviors at school and home!



B.A.R.K.!

Respectful	Responsible
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Use kind words■ Hands, feet and objects to self■ Listen to others■ Follow directions■ Cooperate with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Make good choices■ Focus on instruction■ Finish your work■ Have materials ready■ Always do your best

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

MARCH 26—30

9:30 AM—2:30 PM

ALSO

TUESDAY, MARCH 27

6:00 PM—8:00 PM

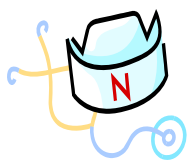


Kindergarten is mandatory in the State of Maryland

(Your child must be 5 years of age by Sept. 1, 2012)

Parents are required to provide:

- Photo ID of parent.
- Proof of birth—birth certificate, hospital certificate, baptismal certificate, birth registration, or passport/visa.
- Proof of residence—lease agreement, signed settlement document, recent utility bill (cell phone bill not acceptable), current tax bill, mortgage statement/bill or deed (must show house number and street name).
- It would be most helpful if you could also provide us with your child's current immunization record. You will receive a kindergarten packet (which will include health forms) at the time of registration.
- Please contact the school office for further questions, 410-751-3535.



NEWS FROM THE HEALTH ROOM

Smile! February is National Dental Health Month

Our teeth are important for chewing, speaking, and our appearance. One part of our teeth is the protective hard covering called enamel. It is important to keep the enamel strong by brushing our teeth. If we don't brush our teeth, then the enamel begins to break down from a bacteria germ call plague. Plague likes to attach to our teeth after eating sugary foods.

Eventually if the plague is not removed by brushing or by the dentist cleaning our teeth, a cavity will form. Plague also causes bad breath. You can prevent cavities, plague and bad breathe by:



- Brushing your teeth twice a day, after breakfast and before bed is perfect!
- Flossing at least once a day.
- Eating healthy foods and limiting sugary snacks, sodas and sports drinks.
- See your dentist twice a year.

You'll have your adult teeth for the rest of your life. Take good care of them and have a smile to be proud of!

Hearing and Vision Screening

Hearing and Vision screening will be on February 27-March 1 for all Kindergarten, 1st grade and 4th grade students. Also, referrals from teachers and any student new to CCPS. You will **only** be notified in writing if your child should fail either exam. Please return all follow up exam forms to the nurse once your child has been screened by a licensed professional.

BULLYING RESOURCES

If you suspect your child is being bullied or may be bullying others, explore these links to find out more on the topics of bullying and cyberbullying and to learn what you can do to help.

www.findyouthinfo.gov/spotlight_cyberBullying.shtml

www.BullyingInfo.org

www.findyouthinfo.gov/topic_bullying_what_Can_ParentsDo.shtml

www.makeadifferenceforkids.org

More websites are on the CCPS website.



**On Friday, March 2nd
Piney Ridge Elementary
will join our Nation in
celebrating Read Across
America and the birthday
of everyone's favorite
author, Dr. Seuss.
At 2:30 p.m., all of the
students, teachers, and
staff members will be
encouraged to
Drop Everything and
Read!**

**Read with the Trees and
NEA's Read Across America**



Congratulations to all of the readers and writers that participated in the Quarter 2 Ready, Set, Read incentive in November, December, and January. All participants received a Matt Birk H.I.K.E. bookmark, chances to win a book of their choice, and a Ravens t-shirt.

Journals and reading calendars for Quarter 3 are due on March 29th. This spring we will be taking 2 students to M&T Bank Stadium to meet Matt Birk.



DALMATIAN SPOTLIGHT

The Newspaper Club will be meeting on Wednesdays after school from 3:30 - 4:30 PM.
The club is open to 4th & 5th Graders.



Liberty High School Drama Department is having an encore performance of the play "War Letters" on February 7th at 7:30. This play is performed by The International Thespian Society (the oldest honors society at LHS). Admission is free for this encore production.

Starting with the 2012-2013 School Year, Piney Ridge Elementary's school hours will change from

**9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m (present)
to
9:15 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.**

***Please note that this may require a change in daycare arrangements, and/or after school activities.**

CELL PHONE REMINDER

Reminder: CCPS policy does not permit cell phone usage in classrooms or hallways. This includes all adults, as well as students.



Volunteers, if you need to make a personal call while volunteering, please feel free to come to the office and use our phone or walk outside and make your call. Thank you!

The 24 Club is ready to roll for 4th & 5th graders who have pre-registered. They will meet on the following dates:

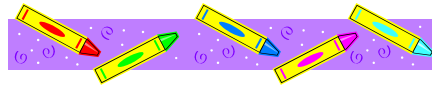
February 9
February 23
March 8
March 22
April 12
May 3—Last Meeting



The meetings start at 7:45AM.

Artist of the Month

**Artist of the Month for February:
Suzanna Martin**



Congratulations to Clare McMahon. Her black & metallic scratchboard artwork is being displayed in Annapolis in the tunnels under the State Building.

STUDENT VACATIONS

In order to provide the best educational experience we can for our students, we ask that requests for student vacations be submitted to the school office for approval **prior** to them occurring. Thanks for your support!