

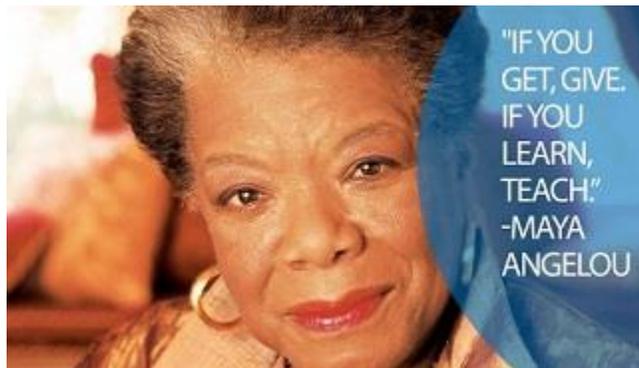
School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

February 4, 2022

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February is dedicated as **Black History Month**, honoring the triumphs and struggles of African Americans throughout U.S. history. This newsletter will feature a quote every week from a celebrated Black American. We invite you to do more research into the history of those we feature.

APS Celebrates Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, APS is celebrating one of Arlington's oldest neighborhoods, **Halls Hill**. Located in north Arlington, Halls Hill began as a segregated black community, with its own churches,

businesses, fire station, and school. The four black students who integrated Stratford Junior High School on February 2, 1959, were from the Halls Hill neighborhood. The former Stratford Junior High School is now Dorothy Hamm Middle School, renamed after one of the driving forces behind school desegregation—Dorothy Hamm.

APS is proud to share the rich history of Halls Hill with our students and community by sharing a four-part video series that features interviews with residents and inspiring stories. Episodes include a look back at the all-black Langston school; the history of local Fire Station #8; the importance of Calloway United Methodist and Mount Salvation Baptist Churches; and the segregation wall built in the 1930s to physically separate the black homes from the surrounding white neighborhood.

This week's segment is on the Halls Hill Segregation Wall. To view the video, visit [this page](#).

MPSA's Library Lunar New Year Week

This past week, the MPSA Library celebrated **Lunar New Year** – the Year of the Tiger! In honor of the holiday, which was on Tuesday, February 2, our librarian **Ms. Miller**, of Chinese heritage, decorated the space in beautiful new year decoration. The children absolutely loved coming into the library to see it so festively decorated and to hear all about how the holiday is celebrated in China. Please enjoy some pictures from the week.



New School Board Liaison to Montessori

We are happy to introduce **Mary Kadera** as the new APS School Board liaison to MPSA!

Mary Kadera joined the Arlington County School Board on January 1, 2022. Mary has been a lifelong advocate for public education and is herself a proud graduate of Virginia's public education system, from kindergarten through her Masters degree.

You can read more about Ms. Kadera [here](#).

Prepare Now for "Test to Stay"

APS will begin to collect voluntary student vaccine information in anticipation of launching the **Test-to-Stay** program, to reduce disruption to students' learning. Families are encouraged to complete student **vaccine verification** by uploading their documentation and completing the online questionnaire. [Access the portal here](#). **Please ensure you enter an "S" before your student's ID number to ensure that their record is updated appropriately.** Families who need support can contact the APS COVID Response Team at covid@apsva.us.

New Method for Reporting Absences

Beginning Mon, Feb. 7, parents/guardians will be able to report their student(s) absent via the [ParentVUE website](#) and mobile app. This new feature will appear as a blue button titled "Report Absence" on the main page.

The Report Absence feature allows parents and guardians to report absences for a single day or multiple days. For each absence reported, parents/guardians must provide a detailed note explaining the reason. If you are reporting your student as sick, please list the symptoms your student is experiencing. The note will help school attendance staff select the correct attendance code.

When an absence is submitted, parents/guardians will initially see the reported absence code as "Unverified." The absence verification is completed by the school attendance staff who will review the parent-submitted absence and determine whether it is [excused or unexcused](#) according to [APS Attendance Policy Implementation Procedure J-5.1.30](#).

This is the new preferred method for families to report absences. The electronic notification will serve as the required written notice for student absences. If you have a legal or medical document, please provide it to the school attendance staff upon your student's return to school. Parents/guardians can still submit a student absence notice via your school's attendance email or attendance hotline.

For step-by-step instructions, [click here](#). For assistance with reporting absences via ParentVUE, contact your school's attendance staff.

 **Upcoming Dates**

- Wednesday, February 9 – **EARLY RELEASE, Dismissal at 1:26PM**
- Thursday, February 17 – **Elementary Report Cards Issued**
- Monday, February 21 – **NO SCHOOL, Presidents' Day**

 **Keep in Touch**

- MPSA on APS: <https://montessori.apsva.us/>
- MPSA on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>
- MPSA Library on Twitter: https://twitter.com/MPSA_Library
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>