



School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

December 15, 2023

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Winter Break begins Thursday, **December 21st** and goes through **January 1st**! There will be **NO SCHOOL** this coming Thursday and Friday. Children will return to school on January 2nd.

This newsletter will also be on Winter Break and will return on Friday, January 5th.

We hope you enjoy your time off!

Calendar Note: School Board Adds 1 More Day Off for Students

The APS School Board voted to amend this school year's calendar during the December 14, 2023 board meeting. **March 5, 2023**, will now be a staff workday, with all APS students having **no school that day**. This is due to March 5 being the date of the Presidential primary, and with most APS facilities being used as polling spaces, this change was deemed necessary. So please add this date to your calendar.

Winter is Coming! What You Need to Know

The local weather agencies have predicted that the DC area is going to have an unusually large amount of winter weather in the coming months. Here are some things to take note of as you come out of our winter break.

APS and Inclement Weather: Please review our [inclement weather procedures here](#) and ensure you have a plan in place should we need to close schools or change arrival or dismissal due to weather.

Based on the number of minutes available, we have **13 days** available for weather events and other unexpected school closures. We will therefore allow for 13 traditional snow days. After 13 days off due to weather (should we reach that amount) we will transition to **distance learning** on any additional snow days to meet our required 990 hours of instructional time and to avoid extending our school year.

View how APS makes their decision to close/delay school [here](#).

Winter Illnesses: Cold and flu (& COVID-19) season is upon us, and we are seeing more and more sick children in the clinic daily. One question parents always ask is “Why are you asking me to pick my child up early?”

The protocol is if a child presents with a symptom or has a health event that has made them lethargic, unable to concentrate, or just cranky from being sick, the clinic may ask them to be picked up.

If you know or suspect your child is ill and would not be able to be in the present state of mind, please do not send them to school. Please do not dose with medicine and send them because most children’s meds cannot hold a fever at bay for the whole school day, and as soon as they get a fever, we will be calling you for pick up. Please see this chart provided to APS by the Arlington County School Health department for more about when we will send children home.

Stay at School or Go Home?

Condition	May remain in school	May not remain in school
Head Lice Infestation	Until the end of the school day when they are diagnosed	If student doesn't begin treatment using a proven method of head lice eradication before the next school day
Fever	Temperature less than 100.4° F (38° C) and no other significant health symptoms	100.4° F (38° C) or higher (Note: May <u>not</u> return to school until fever free for 24 hours)
Diarrhea	Single episode if no fever, vomiting, soiling (unless has a health plan), abdominal pain, or signs of illness	Single episode with signs of illness OR 2 or more episodes in the past 6 hours (Note: May <u>not</u> return to school until symptom free for 24 hours)
Vomiting	Single episode with no signs of illness (no fever, diarrhea, abdominal pain, ...) and reasonable idea of what caused vomiting	Single episode with signs of illness OR 2 or more episodes in the past 24 hours (Note: May <u>not</u> return to school until symptom free for 24 hours)
Seizure	If they have an IHCP which covers their symptoms/condition	If they don't have an IHCP or if their seizure activity exceeds what is covered by their IHCP or if their IHCP specifies medical care for current symptoms

[Read more on the APS page “Winter Illness: What You Need to Know” here.](#)

Meet Fangyi Ma & a Trip to the Hillwood Estates

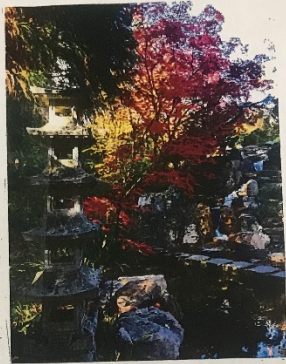
This year MPSA hosted a Museum Studies intern from the George Washington University (by way of Dalian, China) named **Fangyi Ma**. A little about Fangyi by Fangyi herself:

I'm Fangyi Ma, I'm from China. The city I lived in is Dalian, it's a beautiful city by the sea in the north of China. I have been here since the end of June, two days after my undergraduate studies - my undergraduate major was Fine Arts. I had some experience as a museum volunteer, high school assistant, and an art gallery intern. But the experience in MPSA is such a wonderful experience, I learned a lot. Thank you for everything!



Fangyi Ma

Ms. Stork's 3rd graders had the chance to visit the historic **Hillwood Estate and Gardens** in Washington, DC last month. Fangyi was a wonderful docent who helped guide them through the tour and various activities and discussions during the trip and at the in-school recap of their visit a week later. The students engaged all their senses while exploring the Greenhouse, Japanese gardens and the Lunar Lawn. These sensory and emotional encounters were documented in written narratives, student photos and video. Enjoy some pictures below.



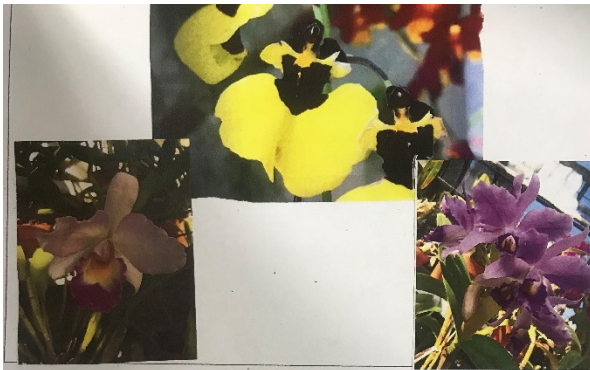
Japanese Garden

I feel peaceful and calm in the Japanese Garden. I smell fresh air, floral and clean. I see statues of rock that rush. I see rivers, lanterns, bamboo, and bridges. I feel peaceful here. I hear the water trickle. I see flowers here too. I am at peace in nature.



Rolling down the hill was fun. I felt my heart pumping as I rolled down the hill on the cool grass. I heard my friends giggle and steal with joy. The musty grass made me giggle. I lost my shoes when

I was rolling down the hill. I could feel the grass through my socks. It was a bad situation but I rolled down the hill again and made me feel happy!



We saw flowers that looked like fairies and bumblebees. If I could name this orchid, I'd name it Bumbafairy.

Inside the greenhouse I felt Planturific: awesome, joyful, happy, ready to dance and burst into singing!

As Requested, Cafeteria/Custodial/ExtDay Staff List

Many parents have asked for the names of our cafeteria/custodial/Extended Day staff so that they can be included in the holiday gift giving. Their names are below.

Cafeteria

Supervisor: Filamor Pangan

- Staff: Touria Oulabas, Jean Pierre Woo

Custodial

Supervisor: Rigoberto Pacheco

- Staff: Maria Diaz, Dora Raymundo

Extended Day

Supervisor: Leslie Elgendi-Whiteside

- AM: Elizabeth Alvarez, Ana Aquino
- PM: Sharmin Akter, Jayda Buckner, Monserrat Ignacio Gonzalez, Dylan Mohan, Faiza MOUNTIA, Touria Oulabas, Sarah Yunus

Upcoming Dates

- Thursday, December 21 through January 1: **Winter Break**
- Tuesday, January 2: **Students Return to School**

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
- MPSA Science on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/MPSA_Science ***NEW!***
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>

****SCROLL DOWN FOR THE PTA NEWSLETTER****

ACMPTA WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



What's Inside?

- **Join the Community & Stay in Touch During the Winter Break**
- **Represent MPSA in the APS MLK, Jr. Literary & Visual Contest**
- **Join the PTA or Sponsor a Staff Member**

Join the Community & Stay in Touch During the Winter Break

Not all families go out of town for the Winter break, so stay connected with the community is doing by joining the various Montessori listservs and social media.

If you are planning a group playdate, know of some fun upcoming activities for children, or anything that families staying local might enjoy, you are encouraged to share!

- Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACMPTA/>
- Our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MPSAFamilies/>
- Our Chat listserv: <https://groups.io/g/ACMPTA>

There is also a community lead group not hosted by the PTA on Facebook. Come visit and join them!

[The MPSA Caregiver Social Group](#)

Represent MPSA in the APS MLK, Jr. Literary & Visual Contest

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was a phenomenal leader who played a pivotal role in the American civil rights movement. His leadership was marked by intelligence, self-confidence, and determination. He recognized that many before him had paved the way for him to take up the fight for freedom and equality. The **Martin Luther King, Jr. Literary & Visual Contest** is an annual competition where students are encouraged to express his influence through literary and visual art. We would love to see MPSA submit many entries this year!

This year's prompt: Choose one of Dr. King's leadership traits (listed below) that means the most to you. Describe in writing or through visual art why the trait matters to you and how it makes a difference in your school, community, or society as a whole.

- **Courage and Determination:** Dr. King demonstrated exceptional courage and determination in the face of adversity. He was unwavering in his commitment to nonviolent protest and civil disobedience, even in the face of violence and threats. His determination played a crucial role in the success of the civil rights movement.
- **Inspiring Oratory Skills:** Dr. King was a gifted and charismatic speaker. His speeches, including the iconic “I Have a Dream” speech, are remembered for their passion and ability to inspire people to take action. His words continue to resonate and inspire generations.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** Dr. King’s leadership was characterized by a deep sense of empathy and compassion. He advocated for equality and justice for all, promoting a message of love and unity that transcended racial and social divides.
- **Leadership:** Dr. King was not only a moral leader but also a strategic one. He employed nonviolent resistance as a strategic tool to bring attention to the unjust and discriminatory practices of the time. His approach was instrumental in achieving significant legislative changes, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

All submissions are due by Wednesday, January 3 at 5PM one of 3 ways: Bring to the main office and give to Ms. Kia; take it to the Syphax Education Center, 1st floor Welcome Center, at 2110 Washington Blvd; e-mail your submission to mlkentries@apsva.us.

An entry form MUST be fully completed and attached and submitted with your entry. [You can download the entry form here](#) or see Ms. Kia in the office for a hard copy.

Read more about the contest (rules, eligibility and prizes) [here](#).

[Join the PTA or Sponsor a Staff Member](#)

Membership is **\$12** per person, or **\$20** for 2 people. Cash and check will be accepted or sign up through our [online portal on Membership Hub](#). Signing up to be a member is also the easiest fundraising effort you could make as a portion of the dues goes into our general fund. Already have a membership? Consider sponsoring a staff member. We require staff to be a paid PTA member in order to receive a PTA grant. Help them out by purchasing them a membership!

**The ACMPTA wishes you a restful and restorative
Winter break and will see you in the New Year!**