

Family Engagement Newsletter



P.S. duPont Middle School

Spring Edition

Volume 1, Issue 3

April, 2013

Letter From the Principal

Greetings Parent(s) and Guardian(s)!

As we draw the curtains on another school year, let us not forget that learning is an every moment of every day experience. School may be coming to a close, but each of us, young and old, continue to learn on a daily basis.

There are many memorable moments and events that occurred this school year. Some of these memories involved field trips, sporting events, musical concerts, plays, parties, and many other exciting and memorable events. They are all great memories and ones that I'm sure will live long in our students' minds as well. Children will remember the time we give them, the priceless gift of time and the endless gift of happy memories.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, our staff, the PTA, and all who have made this school year so productive and pleasant for our whole school community.

Lastly, I wish you all a very happy and safe summer vacation. I also wish time you you spend with your children is creative and fun.

Sincerely,

Lewis Cheatwood, P.S. duPont Middle School Principal

It is the directive of the Board of Education that the Brandywine School District shall not discriminate in its employment practices or its educational programs and activities of students on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, domicile, martial status, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any legally protected characteristic. All policies, regulations and practices of the District shall be guided by this directive.

Resource Corner

This section provides valuable resources for P.S. families.

Ways to Prepare for the End of the School Year

1. Manage Spring Fever

As school winds down, the end-of-the-year events — from music recitals to sports banquets — clog the calendar. But the academic year isn't over yet! Making sure your kids finish with their best effort — when their efforts are required in so many different areas — can be quite a challenge.

- **Stick with the routine.** Try your best to stick with your child's regular after-school routine. Set homework rules and check to make sure they are still meeting deadlines. If a progress report says your child's work isn't getting done, make a plan with your child to ensure a strong finish.
- **Address stress.** If your child is showing symptoms of end-of-year-stress — not eating or sleeping well or being irritable — you may want to talk to them about ways to handle the pressure of juggling too many balls.

2. Plan your child care

Need child care every day or just occasionally this summer? Begin to look for summer camps that meet the needs that you are looking for (i.e. enrichment camps, overnight camps, etc.).

3. Ask the teacher for a reading list for the summer.

Teachers often have lists for the appropriate grade level, or in some cases, you might be able to get specific recommendations for two kinds of books, those your child may enjoy reading, and those you may enjoy reading to your child.

4. Research summer jobs for your teenager

Summer jobs can prevent boredom and help teens make their own money. Your child may not be old enough to have a “real” job this summer, but you can still teach them the value of a dollar. Try paying them by completing chores or help them search the neighborhood for odd jobs (i.e. mowing the lawn, cleaning up someone's yard, etc). Your child can even volunteer at a local organization.

5. Review final report card

Your child will be bringing home his/her final report card soon. Take the time to look closely at each grade and compare their marks to those earned previously. Don't forget to read the teacher's comments for additional clues about your child's progress. If you're having trouble understanding any of the information, contact the school immediately. Remember that teachers only remain in the school building for a few days after school ends. P.S. teachers last day is June 13, so be sure to contact them before this date.

- **Ways to respond**

When a child brings home a great report card, they deserve to be praised. If your child brings home a less-than-perfect report, it won't help to get visibly upset. Instead, talk to your child about the progress they've made this year. Whether it's As, Ds, or grades in between — find the best way to react to your child's individual situation.

- **Make time over the summer for learning**

There are several ways kids can improve their skills during the summer so they can return to school with added confidence. You may still be able to enroll your child in a summer-school program. Investigate any remedial programs that exist at local colleges. Tutors are another option — you can obtain names of tutors from your school or classroom teachers. You can also call high schools and inquire about volunteer tutor programs. Two other options are to tutor your child yourself or enroll him in a learning center.

6. Analyze Test Scores

Schools use spring standardized test scores as one of the criteria for class placement, inclusion in gifted programs, and placement in mandatory basic-skills programs. So it's important that you understand the percentiles, local and national, and composite scores that you'll find on that sheet of paper. If you're confused, you're not alone! Just place a call to the counselor, teacher, or an administrator in your school and ask for help interpreting the scores.

7. Plan ahead for next years school classes

It's smart to start thinking about the next school year during the spring. Consider how your child has performed this school year and what might help them do even better next year.

- **Gifted programs, Honors and AP courses**

Do you think your child has special talents? Don't miss out! Now's the time to submit parent and teacher referrals for gifted-and-talented programs, AP courses, and honors courses . An evaluation period may be underway in your school to determine eligibility for programs in the fall.

- **Separating kids**

This is also the time to share with your child's current teacher any concerns you may have about separating your child from another student. For example, you might request to have your child placed in a different class from a friend they are too dependent on. Don't hesitate to convey any concerns that you think will contribute to your child's success.

8. Consider Retention vs. Advancement

You should know by now if your child's teachers are considering retention. Retention planning usually requires teachers to submit requests earlier in the year. Parents should be informed along each step in this process.

- **To stay or not to stay?**

There's great controversy in the education and mental-health communities over retention, and research doesn't tend to support the practice. If your child is experiencing great academic difficulty, it may be due to an undiagnosed learning disability. Before deciding whether or not to retain your child, request a professional evaluation to rule out a learning disability.

Source: <http://school.familyeducation.com/school/summer/56215.html?page=2&detoured=1>.

Student Highlight Corner

This section provides student highlight information for P.S. Families.



The Next Generation: Zaire Hermon

Zaire Hermon is an aspiring entertainment artist. By attending an AVID trip in December, 2012, Zaire was able to pursue his dream of becoming an entertainer. During this field trip, Zaire met the CEO, Alex Peay, of Rising Sons. Mr. Peay explained that Rising Sons was a non-profit organization based in Philadelphia, PA. Rising Sons targets underprivileged youth to open their eyes to what they can offer to their community, to their country, to their world, as well as what the world can offer them. Through personal attention and guidance, the youth build the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed and excel.

From the guidance of Rising Sons, Zaire has been a host at community events like basketball tournaments and Harlan's poetry night. Along with hosting, Zaire is also in the process of creating a Youtube.com show called *Undercover Criminals*. According to Zaire, "I'm 14 years old and I'm trying my best to be a famous comedian. Rising Son is helping me pursue my dreams. People always ask me if I am getting paid and when I tell them I am not getting paid, they think it is the dumbest thing they have ever heard. I explain to them that I'm not worrying about getting paid right now. I just want to get the entertainment experience so that I can use my learned talents and skills in my future career".

For more information about Rising Sons, please visit their website at <http://www.risingsons.org/>.



Great Job Artasia Wells!

Mrs. Lori Luckenbill, P.S. Family Consumer Science teacher, has her students volunteer at P.S. Early Childhood Assistant

“Artasia Wells is AWESOME with the kids! During one of her volunteer sessions, Artasia ran a center on her own and helped the preschoolers with a measurement/math activity!”

Ms. Gunter and the P.S. staff would like to say great job Artasia!

Program (ECAP) every morning to educate them about how to work and teach preschool children. In addition, there was one student who stuck out to Erika Gunter, who is a teacher for ECAP. Ms. Gunter expresses her gratitude for Artasia Wells by stating,

2nd Annual Anti-Bullying Fashion Show



P.S. duPont is hosting their 2nd Annual Anti-Bullying Fashion Show. This fashion show is unique because last year a group of 7th grade girls came together to organize a fashion show to help eliminate bullying at P.S. duPont. To show the student body that everyone is equal and beautiful, these girls decided to put together a fashion show.

With the success of last years fashion show, P.S. decided to host another Anti-Bullying Fashion Show. This year, the student directors, models, and crew members are working extremely hard to make this years fashion show successful. This student run event is an excellent experience for the students who are participating because they are learning leadership skills, event planning skills, and how to work as a team. In addition, the students are gaining confidence in their selves and learning how to respect one another’s feelings and opinions. Antonia De Luz, who is P.S. Family Liaison and the advisor for the fashion show has expressed that, “when the students first started to practice for the fashion show, some of them did not know each other and they wanted to stay in their cliques. However, as they get to know each other, the students are beginning to bond and the cliques are being eliminated.” Ms. De Luz has expressed how proud she is of the student directors, models, and crew members because they are taking on a cause that is so serious in todays society.

This years Anti-Bullying Fashion Show is on Friday, May 10 at 6:00pm. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Antonia De Luz at 302.762.7146 ext. 1158 or at antonia.deluz@bsd.k12.de.us.

Education Corner

This section provides educational information for P.S. Families.



2nd Annual Transition Series

Come to the 2nd Annual Transition Series to see what the future holds for you and your student. Each school will present their programs, policies, procedures, clubs, and activities. A tour of the schools and other important information will be provided. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Antonia De Luz, Family Liaison at 302.762.7146 ext. 1158 or antonia.deluz@bsd.k12.de.us. Please RSVP a week before the scheduled event.

Transition Series Dates

All events begin at 6:00pm

Mt. Pleasant High School ~ Wednesday, April 10th

Brandywine High School ~ Thursday, April 11th

Concord High School ~ Tuesday, April 30th

P.S. duPont Middle School ~ Wednesday, April 17th

Springer Middle School ~ Thursday, April 18th

Talley Middle School ~ Wednesday, April 24th

Brandywine ECAP: Free Preschool for Four Year Olds



Brandywine ECAP offers free preschool for four year olds who are income eligible. Children must be four years old by August 31, and live in or attend a daycare in the School District. The program is

currently located at P.S. duPont Middle School. Brandywine ECAP offers students small classroom

settings, breakfast and lunch, all teachers are certified in early childhood education. Individualized instruction as well as services for children with special needs are offered to students. Fine and gross motor development, social skills, physical education, music, reading readiness and mathematics are key components of the program. Children are given the opportunity to build on their strengths while preparing for kindergarten.

For further information, please contact PJ Facciolo at 761-7420.

Brandywine School District's Parent Resource Center



The Parent Resource Center, located at Claymont Elementary School, exists to provide parents and caregivers with resources and support as they work in partnership with schools to meet their child's learning needs. Our goal is to help families understand the important role they play as part of the educational team. For more information, please contact Marisa Wilson at 302.762.3847 or at marisa.wilson@bsd.k12.de.us.

The Parent Center is a place where you can...

- Find resources to help you increase your child's reading skills
 - Find resources to help you increase your child's math skills
 - Find resources to enrich your home life
 - Receive English Language Learner support
 - Participate in parent education classes and workshops
 - Learn how to navigate the BSD education system
 - Borrow books, access computer and fax services
 - Connect with community-based resources
 - Meet other parents / caregivers like yourself
 - Have your concerns heard and be valued as a parent or caregiver
- ...and much more, all at no cost to you!

Spring Schedule for Parent Resource Center

~Thursday, April 11

Simply Organized

~Thursday, April 18

Parenting the Second Time Around

~Thursday, April 25

Grandparents and Alternative

Caregivers Holding Families Together

~Thursday, May 2

Separating and Divorced Parenting Skills

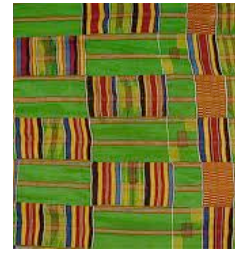
~Thursday, May 16

Transition to Pre K to Kindergarten and Kindergarten to 1st Grade

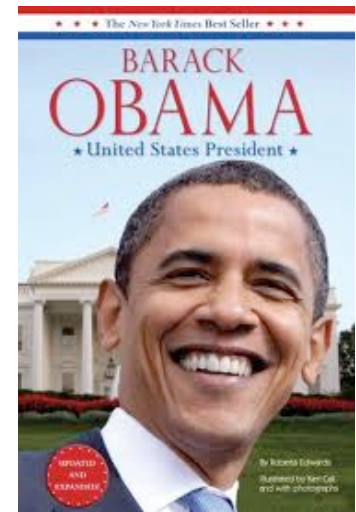
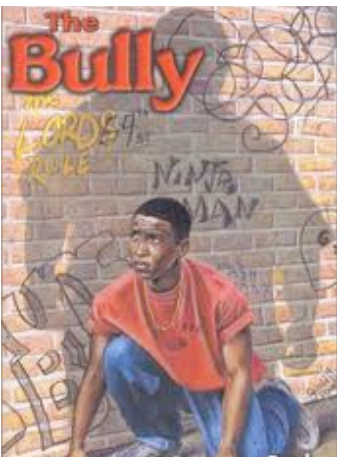
Letter From Mr. Scira, Art Teacher



Mr. Scira's 3rd semester Art students are moving ahead with the completion of their kente cloth paper weaving project and Adinkara weaving silhouette project. Him and his students are now involved in exploring paper mache' masks and sculptures.



Letter From Mrs. Howden, Reading Specialist



In Mrs. Howden's Reading class, students have been working hard and having fun. In January, we read *The Bully* which is about a boy who moves from Philadelphia to Los Angeles and gets bullied because he is so small for his age. He joins the wrestling team and builds his confidence and strength. He stands up to the bully and helps others as well. February is Black History Month so we learned a lot about President Barack Obama. The students learned about his childhood, college years, how he got started in politics, and his many accomplishments. Focusing on non-fiction, we are currently doing a unit on Amazing Underwater Animals. We have read about Ferocious Fish (orcas, piranhas, barracudas, moray eels, giant squid, etc.) and discovered what they eat, where they live, what they look like and more. We have created a map of where they can be found around the world and read about a boy who catches fish to feed his family. We are learning about sharks and how to avoid a shark attack. We continue to focus on reading skills such

as main idea, facts and details, drawing conclusions, inferences, vocabulary and context clues, and author's purpose. Please check Home Access Center on a regular basis to stay informed about your child's grades in each class. Please contact me with any questions at laura.howden@bsd.k12.de.us.

Need to Know News

This section provides important information about activities for P.S. families.



8th Grade Formal

Preparation for the 8th Grade Formal has begun and we need YOUR help! The event will be held on Saturday, May 18th in the large gym of P.S. duPont from 7PM until 10PM. The 8th Grade Formal is a wonderful way for the 8th grade students to celebrate the end of their time at P.S. duPont Middle School and share the excitement of beginning a new journey to high school.

The semi-formal event is a PTA sponsored event. As you can imagine, this is a big undertaking and requires a large number of volunteers to make it a smooth and successful event. PTA is looking for parent volunteers to help make the 8th Grade Formal successful. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Darlene Jeter, PTA President at djeter53@gmail.com.

Please Share Christ (PSC)



PSC is P.S. duPont's new student run Christian club. The club shall meet the first Wednesday of each month. Interested students and staff may come. The club is designed for students and staff to have a place to share and grow in their faith. Some of the clubs activities include time for students to share their faith, service projects, speakers, topic Bible studies, prayer, and entertaining activities. Everyone is welcome!

Box Top Collection

We need your help! Box Tops are all about the difference we can make for our school! Clip the Box Top from hundreds of participating products and send them to school with your student. They can be dropped off in Room 112. Each one is worth 10 cents when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education. Ask family and friends to collect for you as well! The limit per school is \$20,000--imagine if we even get close to that!



PTA Membership

Whether you have a student starting, midway through or in the final years at PS duPont; or if you are a community member and supporter, your interest in PTA activities is appreciated. If you have not already done so, we invite you to become a PTA member.



everychild.onevoice.®

Some of the programs our PTA provides and supports are Back to School Events, Family Fun Nights, Picture Day, Community Outreach, Positive Behavior System, Bully Awareness, 8th Grade Formal, Teacher Appreciation Events, Trip Scholarships, and Common Core Standards.

PS duPont PTA program stands firm on building a strong sense of community between staff, students, parents and community leaders. Please stand firm with us at PS duPont PTA by participating in PTA activities, supporting teachers and staff in the classroom, or contributing your time and talent(s).

Late Library Labs (L3)

Late Library Labs or L3 for short is back! We're happy to announce that the district has 3 school libraries in the evenings for our entire community to enjoy. This program provides evening access throughout the week. Learn more about the wonders of our school libraries by visiting one soon with your student and see the great educational resources available! Check it out!



Three locations to choose from:

Mount Pleasant High School: Tues. & Thurs. 5 to 7 p.m.

Talley Middle School: Mon. & Wed. 5 to 7 p.m.

P.S. duPont Middle School: Tues. & Thurs. 5 to 7p.m.

91.7 Radio Station

Looking for something different to listen to while waiting in the carline? 91.7 FM is the BSD student-run radio station. If you want to listen to it with your family or friends at home, you can always check out our favorite broadcasts as Podcasts through our website, WMPH.net or just set your dial to Super 91.7 FM WMPH and never miss a program!



Teacher Appreciation Week



ALL HANDS ON DECK! Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6th thru May 10th, 2013. Teacher Appreciation Volunteers are needed! Please e-mail Donna White, PTA Financial Secretary, at donna.white@state.de.us to extend a hand.

P.S. Weekly Tutoring



Tutoring is occurring! Tutoring for English is every Tuesday and tutoring for Math is every Thursday. Tutoring is from 3:00-4:20pm. The last day for English tutoring is April 23 and the last day for math is April 25. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lynn Scanlan at lynn.scanlan@bsd.k12.de.us.

SPECIAL NEWS: Health Examination Requirement

Dear Parents of Eighth Grade Students,

Starting with the 2013-2014 school year, Delaware schools will require that all students entering 9th grade must have a current health examination on file. The health examination must have been completed within 2 years of entry into 9th grade and must be received within 30 days from the start of school. The following forms will be accepted:

- a) Delaware School Health Examination Form **or**
- b) DIAA Pre-Participation Physical Evaluation form **or**
- c) Health Examination or evaluation document on a form which includes, at a minimum: healthy history, immunizations, results of medical testing and screenings, medical diagnose, prescribed medications and treatments, and healthcare plans.)

(the most recent versions of both a and b can be found on the P.S. website)

This notification is provided now so that you will have ample time to obtain a health exam prior to September, 2013. As with other regulatory requirements, students who do not meet the requirement will be excluded from school until this requirement is met. The regulation can be accessed at: <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/800/815.shtml#TopOfPage>.

In the event that your child had a health examination within the past two years, there is no requirement for an additional examination; however, the school will need documentation of the examination. If a recent physical examination has not been completed, please arrange for an appointment with your health care provider.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 302-762-7147.

Sincerely,

Robin Collins, RN
P.S. duPont Middle School Nurse

Important Dates to Know

April 1-5	Spring Break
April 10	Transition Series: Mt. Pleasant High
April 11	NJHS Induction Ceremony
April 15	Transition Series: Brandywine 3rd MP Report Cards Distributed
April 16	Transition Series: P.S. duPont
April 18	Transition Series: Springer Spring Musical PTA Meeting
April 19	Spring Musical
April 24	Transition Series: Talley
April 26	6th Grade Gifted Field Trip
April 30	Transition Series: Concord
May 1	AVID Parent/Student Goal Review
May 2	NJHS Awards Ceremony
May 6-10	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 6	Gifted Open House
May 8-11	7th Grade NYC Trip
May 9	Interim Reports Distributed
May 10	Fashion Show
May 14	PBS Pool Party
May 15	6th Grade Band & Chorus Concert
May 16	PTA Meeting
May 17	6th Grade Downey Park Trip
May 18	8th Grade Formal
May 20	7th & 8th Grade Band Concert
May 22	7th & 8th Grade Chorus Concert
May 24	7th & 8th Grade Band & Chorus Hershey Park Trip
May 27	No School; Memorial Day
May 31	School Dance
May 31-June 1	Relay for Life
June 5	Final Exams (Full Day)

June 6,7,10,11
June 11
June 12-13
June 13
June 25
July 4
July 31
August 21-23
August 26

August 27
August 30

Final Exams (Half Days)
Last Student Day
Teacher Inservice Day
Last Teacher Day
Summer School Begins
No School; Independence Day
Summer School Final Exams
Teacher Inservice Day
First Student Day (6th Grade Only)
All students Attend
No School; Labor Day

For more important dates and information, please visit P.S. school calendar and website at www.brandywineschools.org/psdupont