

Important Dates to Know

January 11 School Dance
 January 15, 29, Feb. 5 Singapore Math Night
 January 17 PTA Meeting
 Jazz Band & Steel Drum

 Concert
 January 21 No School, MLK Day
 January 24 End of Second Marking Period
 P.S. Got Talent

 January 25 No School, Staff Professional
 January 26 History Club: GreenBank Mill
 January 30 Watch Dog: Chat & Chew
 February 4-8 PTA Candy Gram
 February 4 Report Cards Distributed
 February 5 Honor Roll Social
 February 6 Effectively Communicate with
 your Student's School
 February 13 Sista's Can Sing Play
 February 15 Pre-K Parent Conferences
 February 18 No School, Presidents' Day
 February 20 Watch Dog: Pizza Night
 February 21 PTA Meeting

February 27 Suicide Prevention
 March 1 Interims Distributed
 March 6, 13, 20 Parenting Education
 March 11-15 Spirit Week
 March 13 Wheel Chair Basketball
 March 16 History Club-Iron Hill Museum
 March 21 PTA Meeting
 March 27 End of Third Marking Period
 March 28 No School, Staff Professional
 March 29 No School, Spring Break
 April 1-5 No School, Spring Break
 April 17 Transition to Middle
 School_P.S. Edition

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

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,

P.S. duPont Middle School
 701 W. 34th Street
 Wilmington, DE 19802



Family Engagement Newsletter



P.S. duPont Middle School

Winter Edition

Volume 1, Issue 2

February, 2013

Letter From the Principal

Happy New Year Parent(s) and Guardian(s)!

On behalf of the P.S. duPont administration, staff, and teachers, we would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! We also hope that everyone had an enjoyable and refreshing winter break.

It is hard to believe that we are half way through the school year. The second marking period ends Thursday, January 24 and report cards will be sent home with students on Monday, February 4. We at P.S. strongly encourage all students to check with their teachers to make sure they do not have any assignments missing.



As the New Year unfolds, there are a lot of exciting events and programs that are occurring at P.S. Please read the Family Engagement Newsletter in full to keep up to date on all of the upcoming activities.

As we continue our journey towards a successful school year, it is critical that you understand your part in this journey. I encourage all parents and guardians to understand their role in their student's education. The teachers and staff at P.S. duPont Middle School have the best interest of every student. We are all working hard to reach each student's learning level. However, in order to successfully completely this goal, teachers and parents and/or guardians must be willing to work collaboratively as a team.

As you read the newsletter further you will find helpful tips to help your child become successful in school.

Sincerely,

Lewis Cheatwood, P.S. duPont Middle School Principal

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Resource Corner

This section provides valuable resources for P.S. families. Tips to Help Your Student Be Successful in School

Here are some tips that parents can use to help their children be successful in school.

1. **GET A PLAN AND STICK TO IT.** Set a specific “quiet time” every day for homework or general reading. Involve your child in setting the rules for this. Ask your child to come up with 3 rules — for example:

- Collect all needed materials before starting.
- No talking or fooling around during this time.
- Complete all work before stopping.

Write the rules on paper and post them in your house. Children are more likely to follow rules that they helped create.

2. **BE A CHEERLEADER.** Some children do poorly in school because they see themselves as unworthy. For a child to feel good about learning, they must first feel good about their selves. Encourage your child by praising them for their efforts. Express interest in their school work.

3. **MAKE NO EXCUSES.** Avoid giving your child a reason for making excuses. Even if you think your child will feel better if you do so, never say this sort of thing: "Some people just don't have a head for math." Your child may think that you think they aren't able to handle a task. Success in a future job will requires your child do the best they can. You will not help your child by encouraging them to make excuses whenever it is convenient.

4. **LIGHT A FIRE.** Be enthusiastic! It can be contagious. Don't give the message that homework is a boring chore. Children who do well enjoy learning. If your child does not seem motivated to do well in school, make a list of treats -- such as staying up late, pizza, or overnight stays with friends--when homework is done really well.

5. **MAKE LEARNING "REAL."** The best learning is hands-on. Show how school work skills are needed and used in day-to-day life. For example, a child who helps make a meal learns fractions, telling time, reading and multi-step problem solving. Show your child what is under the hood when you work on the car. Ask for "help" when you balance the checkbook or write "thank you" notes.

6. **FIGHT THE FRUSTRATION.** Listen carefully when your child talks about having difficulty with his homework. Encourage him to break down problems into small steps.

Tips Cont.

7. SET THE RIGHT MOOD. Make your home a place where it is easy for your child to learn. Keep books, magazines, catalogs and writing materials at easy reach. Make sure that your child has a place to study. This could be in the child's room, in the kitchen, or in another place where the lighting is good, and it's quiet. Be near enough to answer questions that your child has. If your child does homework somewhere else (such as at their after school program or at a day care provider's home), be sure to discuss with them where and how the homework gets done. Ask them to provide a quiet, well lighted space where homework gets completed. Once your child is home, go over their homework to make sure it is complete. Answer any questions they have about their work. The example you set will make more of an impression than your words. The more interested you are in their homework, the more your child sees you learning, the more excited they will be about learning. Make sure your child sees you reading. Limit the amount and kind of TV you watch. Limit your child's TV viewing to no more than 10 hours per week. Suggest programs that have useful tie-ins to schoolwork, such as shows about history, computers or animal life. Discuss these shows with your child. Help them see the connection to their school work.

8. DON'T PINCH HIT. Your child must learn to "face the music" for poor or incomplete work. While you should be actively involved with your child's homework, don't carry the whole load. Don't do the long division, write the essay or do the science project for your child. If you are getting overly involved in homework because of a concern that it is too difficult for your child, call or visit the child's teacher and share your concern.

9. ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENT GROWTH. Eventually a child must take charge of their own learning. This means that it is important for you to "let go" when your child pursues hobbies and starts reading for their own enjoyment. One way to encourage independent growth is to maintain the daily "quiet time" even during vacations and weekends. Introducing your child to hobbies, even something as simple as reading the baseball box scores in the sports section of your newspaper, is a good way to make non-homework learning fun.

10. USE THE SCHOOL.

Get to know your child's teachers and what they expect. Compare your goals for your child to those of the teachers. Make sure that your child knows that you are interested in their school. This will send the message that what they are doing is important. Tell teachers of special events, such as a recent family death, divorce or move, that may influence how your child does in school. Get answers to all of your questions about homework requirements, attendance policies, dress and conduct rules, discipline policies, and curriculum guidelines. Talk with your child and find out what their concerns are. If you learn that your child feels ignored or "picked on" in the classroom, talk with the appropriate school official. If you can't find the time to visit in person, call the teachers or attach notes to homework your child is taking back to school.

You're Child's Learning--Daily Check List



Clip this handy list and place it on your refrigerator or another spot where you will be sure to see it every day.

- Is a learning "quiet time" scheduled for my child today?
- How can I praise the initiative or thinking of my child today?
- Have I clearly talked about what I expect?
- Have I avoided making excuses for low effort by my child?
- Can I praise a good effort?
- What will I read or write today to set a good example?
- How will I get relaxed before working on homework with my child so that I do not become impatient?
- Have I made it clear that my child (not me) is responsible for homework?
- Can I involve my child in a household activity today that will show the practical importance of learning?
- Have I encouraged my child to pursue a hobby, reading the newspaper or another independent activity?
- Did I remember to look for important flyers/ notes and attach a note if there is a problem?

Education Corner

This section provides educational information for P.S. duPont Middle School.



National Junior Honor Society Donates to the Ronald McDonald House

P.S. showed heart for the Ronald McDonald House of Delaware (RMHDE) on December 13, 2012 by presenting a \$700 check at the RMHDE Light a Light event. The money was raised through the purchase of light bulbs that were hung around the school and through the purchase of P.S. duPont Middle School Has Heart t-shirts. The National Junior Honors Society (NJHS) and the 6th Grade Gifted students partnered up to raise money for this worthy cause.

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 Mount Pleasant Elementary 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!

Winter Schedule for Parent Resource Center

Thursday, January 10

Breathe: How to Manage Stress and Time

Thursday, January 17

Let's Talk: Effective Communication

Thursday, January 24 & 31

Special Education

Thursday, February 7, 14, 21, & 28

Family Math Connections (K-8)

March 7, 14, & 21

Read and Rise Family Literacy (K-5)

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

PBS Den

Every Friday the PBS Den is open to all students to trade in their earned PRIDE cards for school supplies, in school and after school PBS sponsored activities and PS gear, just to name a few. **PBS is always looking for parents that are available to volunteer on any Friday from 10:30- 12:30 in the PBS Den. If you are interested, please call the PBS facilitator, Robin Collins, RN at 302.762.7147.**

Events



January is a fun filled month for PBS and NJHS with preparations for their third annual talent show. Students were asked to register in late November and December. Try outs are the first full week of school in January. These try outs are held after school and the late bus is available for all bus riders to get home. This talent show, *P.S.'s Got Talent*, will be held in the auditorium on Thursday, January 24 at 6:00pm. Please come and support P.S. students as they perform their talent's.

February 5th is P.S. honor roll social. PBS offers an opportunity for all students that earned honor roll, high honors, or distinguished honors for the 2nd marking period. This social allows these student's time to get together, enjoy a snack, and socialize for a bit. Typically this occurs at the end of the day.



March 11-15 is PBS spirit week. More specifics will follow on our website and on our announcements. We often have a competition between the grades for the most participation and originality. Pictures will be taken and will appear outside the Nurse's office on our PBS bulletin board, so please stop by and check them out the next time you are in the building.

March 13 will be PBS annual wheelchair basketball game with PS staff versus The Delaware Destroyers. It is scheduled to begin at 6:00pm in our large gym. There is a small admissions fee which is donated to our Relay for Life campaign to help fight Cancer. This donation is in memory of two recent P.S. teachers who lost their battle with this disease. Please mark your calendars and come join us.



Need to Know News

This section provides important information about different clubs and activities that are going on in P.S. duPont Middle School.



Sistas Can Sing Play

PTA and the Family Engagement Team Present *Sistas can Sing*. A play portraying and paying homage to Sarah Vaughn, Ella Fitzgerald, and Billie Holiday. Join us on Wednesday, February 13 at P.S. duPont Middle School. Doors open at 5:00pm and the curtain will rise at 6:00pm.

Free transportation and child care is available for Brandywine School District Families. If you are interested, please contact Antonia De Luz. 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.

This play is open to the public and admission is \$3.00 per person.

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. November's activity will include making caramel popcorn and chatting about how God and Christ has changed each student's life. 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



everychild.onevoice.®

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.

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)



Back for a full school year---Late Library Labs or L3 for short. We're happy to announce that the district is once opening up 3 of our 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.

Jazz Band and The Pride Concert

P.S. duPont Middle's Schools Jazz Band and The Pride, P.S. duPont's Steel Drum Ensemble will be performing on Thursday, January 17 at 7:00pm. Sections include: Can't Buy Me Love, James Bond Theme, Bob Marley's Jammin', Imagine and much more!



Watch D.O.G.S.



Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) is a national program that engages men, inspire children, reduce bullying, and enhance the educational environment at the school. Watch D.O.G.S. is a father involvement initiative of the National Center for Fathering that organizes fathers and father figures in order to provide positive male role models for the students.

A father and/or father figure will volunteer a whole school day once a year.

Throughout their day, they will help teachers in their classrooms, work with student's one-on-one or in groups, help with lunch duty, and provide many other assistance. If you know a father or father figure who would be interested in volunteering as a Watch D.O.G. please contact Antonia De Luz at antonia.deluz@bsd.k12.de.us. For more information, please visit www.fathers.com/watchdogs.

P.S. Weekly Tutoring



Tutoring has begun! Tutoring for English is every Tuesday and tutoring for Math is every Thursday. Tutoring is from 3:00-4:20p.m. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Lynn Scanlan at lynn.scanlan@bsd.k12.de.us.

Singapore Math Night



A workshop series for parents, guardians, and educators who want to learn fun and innovative ways to help their student's with Singapore Math. This series will provide valuable tools and techniques for Singapore Math so that the student can be helped at home.

This workshop series will be on **Tuesdays, January 15, January 29, and February 5**. All workshops will begin at 6:30pm and participants must attend all three (3) workshops. RSVP is strongly encouraged and free transportation and child care is available. Please

contact Antonia De Luz if you have any questions or concerns at 302.762.7146 ext. 1158 or at Antonia.deluz@bsd.k12.de.

Effectively Communicate with your Student's School



Communication is often the reason for disagreements between parents and school personnel. This session gives parents tools for respectful and effective means to share information and expectations with teachers and school administrators, while learning about differences in school operation and school culture.

This workshop will be on **Wednesday, February 6 at 6:00pm**. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Antonia De Luz, 302.762.7146 ext. 1158 or at antonia.deluz@bsd.k12.de.us.