

# Pershing Hill Elementary

## General News.....

January 2024

### The Principal's Message

Greetings Parents, Students and Staff,

As we embark on this journey into 2024, we are thrilled to extend our warmest wishes for a Happy New Year.

The beginning of a new year is a time for reflection, renewal and setting new goals. It is with great enthusiasm that we look forward to the incredible learning opportunities and achievements that lie ahead for our school. Our commitment to providing a nurturing and highly engaging learning environment remains steadfast. We are confident that we will continue to create memorable learning experiences that are filled with joy, success, and academic growth.

As we resume our academic activities, we would like to express our gratitude to our dedicated staff, engaged parents and talented students for contributing to the positive atmosphere at our school.

We are extremely proud to report that 94.41% of our students are attending school regularly. Our school-wide goal is 95%. Keep up the great work! We will continue to focus on our attendance and academic growth throughout the school year. Classroom Teachers will continue to share academic progress throughout the remainder of the school. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

In closing, we are looking forward to our continued partnership as we foster a love of learning and growing at PHES!

Your partner in education,

Selecia Hardy, Principal

## Important Dates

Date	Event
January 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	Reading and Math Testing Social Studies Testing
January 8 <sup>th</sup> – February 16 <sup>th</sup>	WIDA Testing
January 15 <sup>th</sup>	No School – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day
January 17 <sup>th</sup>	2- Hour Early Dismissal for Students
January 18 <sup>th</sup>	2-Hour Early Dismissal for Students; End of Quarter 2
January 19 <sup>th</sup>	No School for Students; Workday / Professional Development for Teachers
January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Student of the Month Breakfast at 7:45 am
January 24 <sup>th</sup>	Group and Candid Yearbook Photos; PBIS Student Event
January 26 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Marking Period Awards Assembly 8:00 am – Grades 1 and 2 9:10 am – Grades 3, 4 and 5



# First Grade Team Newsletter

Mrs. Noel [nanoel@aacps.org](mailto:nanoel@aacps.org)

Mrs. Tibbetts [ktibbetts@aacps.org](mailto:ktibbetts@aacps.org)

Ms. Gruss [cgruss@aacps.org](mailto:cgruss@aacps.org)

Mrs. Graham [tjgraham@aacps.org](mailto:tjgraham@aacps.org)

Ms. O'Connell [mvoconnell@aacps.org](mailto:mvoconnell@aacps.org)



## Instructional Focus for the Month of January:

**Writing:** We will continue our informational unit through the end of the 2nd quarter with "How to" books. In the 3rd quarter, January 22nd, we will begin opinion writing.

**Science:** We will be exploring plant and animal traits and how traits connect living things.

**Explicit Comprehension:** In Reading, we will continue to read books related to the theme that Cultures Connect Us. Later, in Quarter 3, we will read stories related to the theme "Sending Messages." Students will practice describing the characters, setting, events, and lesson of the story in order to retell the story. Also, they will practice identifying text features in non-fiction books.

**Foundations:** We will learn and apply grade-level phonics and word skills when decoding words. FUNdations will focus on glues sounds an and am and then move onto suffixes.

**Math:** First grade will be wrapping up our unit on shapes to start off the New Year. We will then begin subtraction. Students will relate counting to subtraction. Then they use the strategies, count back, count on, make a 10, use addition, and fact families to subtract within 20. They will be testing unit 5 and 6 in January for math. They will also be iReady Math testing in January.

### Reminders:

*Please read with your child each evening and practice sight words.*

*Also, practice addition facts through 10. Flashcards will help improve fluency.*

# 2nd Grade January

## ●●●●● NEWSLETTER

### REMINDERS

- Please be sure to have your child bring their take home folder home and back to school daily!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Reading Quarter 2 Assessment Jan. 11th
- January 15th- No school
- January 17+18- Half Day
- January 19th- No school, end of Quarter 2

### 2nd Grade Contacts

Ms. DeCrispino-

mdecrispino@aacps.org

Ms. House- chouse@aacps.org

Mr. Das- sdas@aacps.org

Mrs. Smith- tasmith5@aacps.org

Mrs. Carter- ncarter@aacps.org

Mrs. Hawkins- Khawkins@aacps.org

### WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

**Math:** Adjusting Numbers to Subtract, Subtracting Fluently Within 20, Representing Subtraction with 2-Digit Numbers, Using a Numberline to Subtract

**Reading:** Fiction- Understanding the plot and structure of a story, identifying character traits.. Nonfiction- Formatting a friendly letter, responding to a prompt using RUNOVV, understanding key details.

**Writing:** Informational Writing- Students will write an informational book about a topic of their choosing.

**Science/Social Studies:** We Are Economists- Students will gain information about imports/ exports, wants vs. needs, scarcity, and geographical features.

# JANUARY



## Learning Focus

**Reading:** In reading we will continue our focus on responding to prompts and recounting major events. We will also be preparing for our Reading Quarterly Assessment. Beginning in the second quarter, we will begin looking at poetry.

**Writing:** We will be writing our country research reports. In the new marking period, we will be starting opinion writing.

**Math:** This month, in math, we will begin our unit about fractions! In this unit we will be exploring ways to represent fractions as well as compare fractions with the same numerator or denominator.

**Science:** During science we will learn about trait. After traits our next topic will be adaptations and habitat

**Social Studies:** In Social studies we will finish our country research project. Once the project is finished we will begin our unit on economics.



## Reminders

**Recess:** We go outside for recess and PE unless it is 32 degrees or colder. Please make sure your child is dressed accordingly. Also, adding your child's name to tags helps find lost clothing quicker.



## Contacts

**Kayla Clements**

[Krclements@aacps.org](mailto:Krclements@aacps.org)

**Loren Pardoe**

[Lpardoe@aacps.org](mailto:Lpardoe@aacps.org)

**Katie Scott**

[Kescott@aacps.org](mailto:Kescott@aacps.org)

**Sophie Taylor**

[smtaylor4@aacps.org](mailto:smtaylor4@aacps.org)



# Fourth Grade

# NEWSLETTER

January

## Reminders:

Jan. 2nd: Return to School  
Jan. 3rd: Science Quarterly Assessment  
Jan. 5th: Math Quarterly Assessment  
Jan. 10th: Reading Quarterly Assessment  
Jan. 15th: MLK No School

Jan. 17th & 18th: 2 Hour Early Dismissal  
Jan 18th: End of 2nd Marking Period  
Jan. 19: No School

**\*\*Please make sure to empty purple take home folders regularly.\***

## What are we learning?

### Reading: Nonfiction Focus

We are focusing on the following skills.

- Main Idea and Detail
- Using context Clues
- Supporting answers with evidence from the text.
- Making Inferences.

### Writing:

We are working on using our animal research to write an informational writing piece.

### Science:

We will be working on identifying types of weather, depositions and erosion.

### Social Studies:

We will start learning about the types of people living in the british colony and events leading up to the American Revolution.

### Parent Portal/PowerSchool:

Power School should be checked frequently to review your students grades. Any unfinished or missing assignments are also noted in Powerschool.

### Math:

We will be covering the following skills:

- Division within 10,000.
- Multi-step word problems using all four operations.
- Equivalent Fractions
- Adding and Subtracting fractions and mixed numbers.

### Contact Info:

Mrs. Corcoran: [alcorcoran@aacps.org](mailto:alcorcoran@aacps.org)  
Mr. Wells: [rnwells@aacps.org](mailto:rnwells@aacps.org)  
Mrs. Boaten: [nboaten@aacps.org](mailto:nboaten@aacps.org)  
Mrs. Whittington: [jewhittington@aacps.org](mailto:jewhittington@aacps.org)

# January

# NEWSLETTER

Ms. Crockett & Mrs. Ramirez

[tmcccloudcrocket@aacps.org](mailto:tmcccloudcrocket@aacps.org)

[aramirez@aacps.org](mailto:aramirez@aacps.org)

Mrs. Edralin & Ms. Nelson

[sedralin@aacps.org](mailto:sedralin@aacps.org)

[dnelson2@aacps.org](mailto:dnelson2@aacps.org)

## REMINDERS

Students need to bring  
Chromebooks charged everyday!

All Classes

iReady Reading Homework: 2  
Lessons per week

iReady Math Homework: 3  
Lessons per week

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 1/15 - No School - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 1/17 - Half Day: 2hr. Early Dismissal
- 1/18 - Half Day: 2hr. Early Dismissal
- 1/19 - No School

## WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

**Math:** We are ending our Q2 testing over Unit 4, Unit 5, and Unit 6. We will be beginning Unit 7 Dividing whole numbers in the middle of January. Students will continue to use equations, rectangular arrays, and area models to extend their knowledge of division to include up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors.

**Reading:** Students will interact with multiple literary texts that enable them to compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters. Students are exposed to informational texts that enable them to compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in multiple texts on the same topics.

**Writing:** Write research-based informational reports within the discipline of history. Writers will conduct their own short research project to write an informational article on the topic.

**Science:** We are ending our unit on galaxy, stars and constellations. These lessons are focused on the motion of the Earth and how the constellations seem to move in the night sky over time. We will also be finishing with shadows and the apparent movement of the Sun in the sky, and how this affects the length of shadows.

**Social Studies:** We are ending our social studies unit with the transportations of Maryland and the enslaved people of Maryland. Key people we will be studying will be Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass and the impacts of the institution of slavery in North America and finally the conflict that led to the Civil War

January 2024

Penny Reisler, Principal's Secretary  
preisler@aacps.org

Debbie McAlvanah, Secretary  
dmcalvanah@aacps.org

Patrice Tucker, Secretary  
pctucker@aacps.org

## Notes from the Office

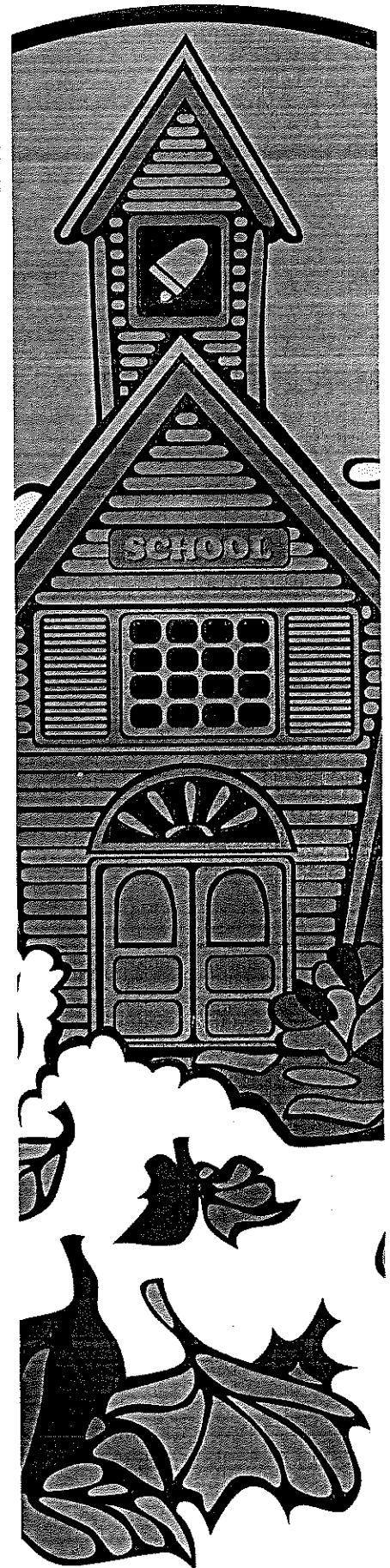
**Early Dismissal / Change in Dismissal** -- All Early Dismissals or Change in Dismissals must be done prior to 2:00 PM

**Late Arrival** -- Any arrival after school begins at 8:00 AM, is considered tardy. **You must bring your student into office to sign them in.**

**Absences** -- Absences can either be reported through the Parent Portal Account or a note can be sent in with the student when they return to school. Emails and phone calls are not accepted.

**Automated Attendance Calls** — When your child is late to school, or absent, you will receive the automated phone call stating that your child is absent. Updating attendance is a manual process done throughout the day and can take up to 24 + hours to be updated.

**Are you moving soon?** — If you are planning on moving soon, please notify the office via email with when your student's last day will be and where you will be moving to. This will ensure time to make sure an electronic transfer packet is created, as well as making sure items such as chromebooks and media books are returned to the school.



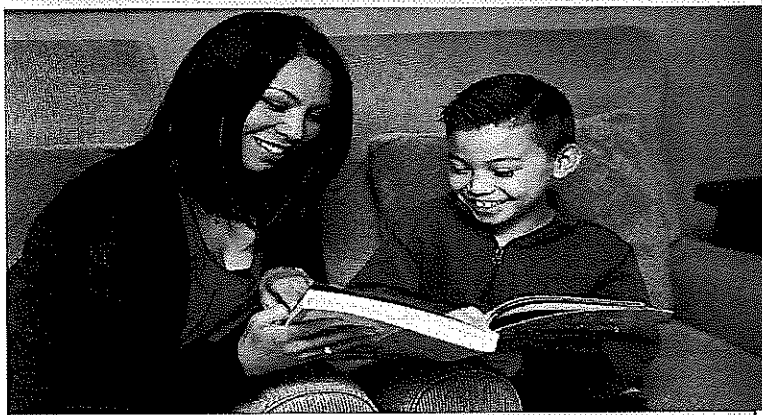


# PHES Reading News



## *January is Read to a Friend Month*

This month students will meet and read to their writing pen pals assigned in Dec. All students will begin the month by choosing a short story or book to read to their penpal. They will practice reading their chosen text to a classmate in preparation for our Read to a Friend Day. On Wed., January 24th, students in grades 3 - 5, will travel to the classrooms of their primary penpals. Each student will then read their short story or book to their student reading buddy.



## *What is Reading Comprehension?*

Reading comprehension is a complicated process. It is the ultimate goal of all reading. It is defined as the ability to gain meaning from what has been read. Students must integrate new information they read with what they already know and later be able to recall what was read. Comprehension is dependent on students being able to decode words quickly and fluently. Students must also have an understanding of oral language, and word meanings.

Robin Parker, Literacy Teacher

- [rbparker@aacps.org](mailto:rbparker@aacps.org)

Corinne Herrera, Early Intervention Teacher

- [cherrera@aacps.org](mailto:cherrera@aacps.org)

## *PHES January Reading Events*

- Jan. 8th - 12th AACPS Reading Assessment (80 min.) will be administered to grades 2 - 5. Check your child's grade level news for the date your child will be tested so you can help your child prepare.
- Jan. 24th - Read to a Friend Day

## *Home Reading Tips to improve Reading Comprehension*

- Hold conversations about what your child reads. Have your child summarize what was read. Ask probing "how/why" questions such as "What lesson can we learn from this?" (fiction text) or "What is the author trying to teach us?" (non-fiction text).
- Help your child go back into the text to find text evidence to support his or her answers to your questions ("How do you know this?").
- Begin comprehension questioning with a sentence, paragraph or short section of text to be sure that your child is understanding as the reading progresses.
- Discuss the meanings of unknown words that your child both reads and hears.
- Help your child to make connections to what is read with what has been read previously or with what he or she already knows



## **Counselor's Corner**

### **New Addition to School Counseling Staff**

We are very excited to welcome Ms. Evy Gelvar (Ms. G) to our school counseling team:

Hi Generals! I am so excited to be one of your school counselors! I am a first year school counselor and recently earned my Masters Degree from Loyola University MD. Living in Baltimore, I like to enjoy the outdoors, spend time with friends/family, and root for the Ravens, Orioles & the UConn Women's Basketball team!

We want to thank Ms. Stacey Jaundoo, our temporary counselor, for her excellent work ensuring necessary curriculum and critical student support were provided this Fall. Her expertise and empathy made a real difference in service delivery for our school.

### **Coffee with the Counselor**

Please join Mrs. Jackson and Ms. Gelvar on Tuesday, January 30 at 8:15 a.m. for a discussion of Growth Mindset: What It Is and How to Instill it in Your Children. Coffee and munchies will be provided and younger siblings are welcome.

### **Community Service Superstars**

What a wonderful response our Pershing Hill Community had to our service focus this December! Due to your generosity, we were able to donate many, many hats, gloves, ear muffs, boots and scarves to children living at Sarah's House here in Ft. Meade. If you check out our 'It's Cool to be Kind' bulletin board when you enter our building, you will see the numerous random acts of kindness our students and staff performed for others. Finally, we were able to send almost 400 homemade cards to our deployed service members, letting them know we were thinking of them and wishing them the best at this time of year.

It is clear from these results that our families are instilling a wonderful sense of service and care for others in their children. Keep up the good work!

### **January Classroom Activities**

As we kick off 2024, classroom lessons for our first and second graders will focus on effective problem-solving skills. While early primary students frequently rely on adults to help them resolve issues, it is important that they begin building their own skills in this area. We will focus on "I Statements" and empathy for these lessons. Our third through fifth graders will begin some self-reflection on their personal strengths and interests and discuss how important these factors

can be in selecting a career or future course of study. Parents can help their students start thinking this way by pointing out strengths that they see their children demonstrating.

## The Cultural Arts Corner!

We are so excited to share what is happening in the cultural arts classrooms!

**ART with Mrs. Long:** PHES art students are working hard everyday. Winter artworks are hanging in the hallways for everyone to enjoy. In January, 1st grade students are connecting with Chinese artworks to create a koi fish pond. Second grade students are exploring how science influences art by creating masterpieces that are out of this world. Third grade artists are working together in groups to design totem poles that are inspired by native American art. Fourth graders are studying the artist Kurt Pao and learning how to use measurement and value to create realistic gem drawings. The fifth graders are exploring how artists can change the world through positive messages. We are all excited to make wonderful things in this new year!

Contact information:

Mrs. Long - [aglong@aacps.org](mailto:aglong@aacps.org)

Ms. Bostwick - [abotswick@aacps.org](mailto:abotswick@aacps.org)

**GENERAL MUSIC with Mrs. Phelix:** We had such a great ending to December exploring holiday traditions and music from around the world while understanding the form of music. All classes are continuing to develop their skills and understanding of musical elements. For the month of January, I would like to highlight our 5th graders. To end out the first marking period, students will be using the music elements to evaluate National Anthem performances in a bracket system!

Contact information:

Mrs. Phelix - [kphelix@aacps.org](mailto:kphelix@aacps.org)

Mr. Poole - [srpoole@aacps.org](mailto:srpoole@aacps.org)

**PE with Mr. Armstrong:** Students will complete units in Rolling a Ball (Bowling), Rock Wall Climbing, Hula Hoops, Individual Short Rope Jump Rope, and Long Rope Jumping during the month of January.

Contact information:

Mr. Armstrong - [starmstrong@aacps.org](mailto:starmstrong@aacps.org)

Mr. Beaty - [bbeaty@aacps.org](mailto:bbeaty@aacps.org)

**EEE with Ms. Gilbert:** EEE students have completed their projects in first, second and third grade, and are starting the new year with new questions around how to tell stories through yoga (first), how to use mindfulness strategies to calm their emotions (second), and how to represent their family's story on an Egyptian-style stele (third). Fourth and fifth grades are hard at work finishing their final projects. These projects should be

completed in the next few weeks. Fifth grade classes will be printing their own logos onto stickers that they will be able to use or give as gifts. Fourth grade has gotten approval to display their rock mandala public art project in front of the school. They also helped design the rock installation. Look out for their display in the coming weeks!

Contact information:

Ms. Gilbert - [amgilbert@aacps.org](mailto:amgilbert@aacps.org)

Ms. Johnson - [kdjohnson@aacps.org](mailto:kdjohnson@aacps.org)

**MEDIA with Mrs. Reed:** Students enjoyed exploring Dash robots and different coding challenges and activities in December. This month, we will dive into the uses of eBooks on MackinVia, author and folktale studies, and begin an inquiry unit on different parts of research.

Contact Information:

Mrs. Reed - [glreed@aacps.org](mailto:glreed@aacps.org)

Ms. Wineke - [swineke@aacps.org](mailto:swineke@aacps.org)

**Our Music Program:**

Chorus: What a wonderful Winter Night we had (the night before the official start of Winter). Congratulations to our chorus students and thanks to all who supported the event. There will be signs up available for any 4th and 5th graders who wish to join in on the fun!

Chorus families - please be on the lookout for upcoming information about camp, Baysox, and Spring Concert. We look forward to making more wonderful music this Spring!

Instrumental:

Congratulations to all our instrumental music students on a terrific winter concert last month! We look forward to more music learning in the second semester of the year. Students are reminded to keep practicing their instruments as we continue to build on the foundation we established in the first half of the school year.

Contact information:

Mrs. Phelix (chorus) - [kphelix@aacps.org](mailto:kphelix@aacps.org)

Mr. Lindberg (instrumental music) - [wlindberg@aacps.org](mailto:wlindberg@aacps.org)

# Pershing Hill PTA

The PTA would like to give a huge shoutout to our families for contributing their time and efforts in December. The Unity Day Staff Salad Bar was made possible due to our community's generous donations! Our faculty and staff continue to appreciate all of your support! Be on the lookout for February's Unity Day pot luck, a chili contest!

Before break, the PTA hosted Winter Fest. We loved seeing so many PHES families athering as a community to celebrate. We cannot thank our WinterFest committee and all of our volunteers for executing a magical event. We could not do it without you!

Congratulations to Mrs. Crocket and Mrs. Clement's class, for winning the gallon jug donation competition. Those students will be celebrated with an ice cream party this month!

## Box Tops

You can also support Pershing Hill by uploading your grocery receipts to the Box Top app

## Get Active in the PTA

You can sign up to be a member of the PTA by submitting a PTA form, along with \$5 membership dues paid by cash, check, or Zelle ([pershinghillmdpta@gmail.com](mailto:pershinghillmdpta@gmail.com))

Got questions? Contact us at [PershinghillMDPTA@gmail.com](mailto:PershinghillMDPTA@gmail.com)

