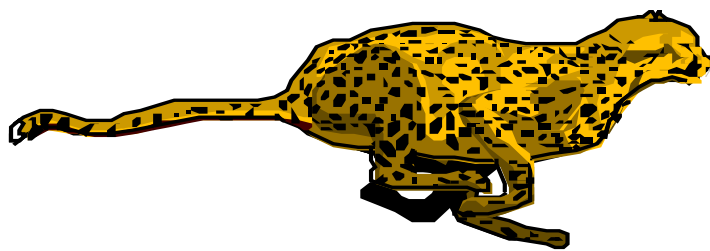


Chapel District Elementary School



New Parent Welcome Packet

We hope you are finding our school exactly what you had hoped for: a school staff that is warm and caring, parents who are welcoming, and students who are kind and considerate. We would like to introduce you to our school, so you will understand some of the lingo, events, and activities which make Chapel District Elementary School unique.

Important Terms

M.S.A. - Maryland State Assessments – These are given in the spring of the school year. The tests are in math and reading for 3rd – 8th graders, and science for 5th graders. Results are available at the beginning of the following school year.

M.S.T.A. - Maryland State Teachers Association

P.E.A.K. – Planned Enrichment And Knowledge – This is a school committee that focuses on enrichment activities for the students.

P.T.O. – Parent Teacher Organization – This is a group of parents, teachers and staff who become members of the organization and who volunteer to organize events, activities, extracurricular, and cultural activities to enrich the school experience for our children. Membership per adult is \$5 each year. The class with the highest amount of adult members in the PTO gets a prize! Any adult can join; parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and guardians are welcome. If you don't have time to volunteer, we understand, but ask that you become a PTO member and come to our meetings to support those who are volunteering and to learn about what is happening at school. Free childcare is provided for PTO members and homework passes are given out at each meeting. The class with the most adults in attendance at a PTO meeting gets free ice cream.

R.I.S.E. – Reading Intervention for Student Excellence – This is our tutoring program for beginning readers in 1st and 2nd grade. Our volunteer coordinator recruits parents, grandparents, and community persons to tutor these young readers to become better readers by the time they leave 1st and 2nd grade.

S.I.T. – School Improvement Team – This is a team of teachers, staff, and parents who meet regularly to discuss and plan for positive improvements and changes to be made at our school.

S.S.T. – Student Services Team - This is a team of people including the principal, school counselor, teacher, parents and a representative from the board office (depending on the needs of the student) which meets to discuss weaknesses in student performance or

attendance. This team assists the classroom teacher and parents in determining ways to help the student succeed in the areas of defined concern.

I.E.P. – Individualized Education Plan – This plan is used to ensure that the needs of a student diagnosed with a learning disability are met. Special Education Services are provided through a student’s IEP.

School Activities

School Carnival - The carnival is planned for September of each year. It is held on the school grounds. PTO members and other volunteers give of their time. Donations are accepted and appreciated for the silent auction as well as prizes for the carnival booths.

Family Fun Nights - Over the years different activities are planned just for families to come and spend some time together having fun! These have been held on a Friday evening or Saturday afternoon. Bingo night and movie night are just a couple of examples of the Family Fun Nights at Chapel.

Lunch With Santa – This event is held on a Saturday in early December to celebrate the arrival of the holiday season in our area. Kids can get their picture taken with Santa, make crafts, win door prizes, and play games. In addition, community members are able to purchase tables to display and sell crafts and goods. Donations are accepted and appreciated for the silent auction.

Variety Show – The variety show has been a big hit for years at Chapel District! Students and teachers participate in a ‘variety’ of ways by sharing their talents with us. It is held on a Friday evening during winter.

After School Programs – Learning for Life (homework help for students who need extra assistance) has been a consistent program at Chapel for many years. We also realize the value in afterschool enrichment programs. Parents, teachers and community members have volunteered their time for programs such as Junior Master Gardener, Lego Club, Sign Language Club, Crochet Club, Art Club, Good News Club, and cooking club. If you are interested in sharing a special talent or skill with elementary students after school, contact Ms. Murdoch in the school office.

Music Program – Band is available to 5th grade students and Cheetah Choir is available to students in grades 3-5.

Grandparents Breakfast – Chapel District holds a special breakfast in late fall for students and their grandparents. This is usually held during our fall book fair, so that grandparents/guardians can visit the book fair with their child.

Chapel Basketball and Cheerleading – Our school offers a unique opportunity for children in grades 3-5 to become a member of a basketball team or the cheerleading squad. Parent volunteers organize and coach the co-ed teams. Beginning in January, every Friday evening in our school gymnasium for about 8 weeks, the basketball teams will play a game and the cheerleaders cheer. This is a fun family event with a full concession stand run by parent/grandparent volunteers. Any money raised in the concession stand goes directly to keeping the basketball/cheerleading program going. Service learning hour students are welcome to assist.

Raising Funds for Charity

Jump-Rope for the Heart - This spring event is held to raise money for the American Heart Association. The students participate through their Physical Education classes.

Local Charities – The Chapel District Student Council chooses local charities to donate goods or dollars to each year. The PTO also sponsors some local charity work, especially around holiday times.

Fundraising

Fundraising for PTO – The goal of the PTO is to raise money to maintain the wonderful programs that we have been providing each year to our students. The funds raised from membership fees and the fall and spring fundraisers are given back to the students and staff in a variety of ways, such as having cultural events for the students (see below for details of cultural events), defraying costs relating to field trips (\$600.00 per grade level is given by the PTO), sponsoring scholarship moneys for families in need, supporting teachers with money for supplies, giving staff appreciation gifts, buying ribbons for field day, etc... If you would like to see a full budget it is available upon request or check out our website.

Designer Hand Bag Bingo- A fun event on a Friday evening in the Spring which benefits the PTO. We accept monetary donations or donations of brand new Coach and Vera Bradley purses and bags.

Service Auction – This is an event that the PTO hosts every other year! This has proved to be a fun and creative fundraiser. Previous years' proceeds benefited our students through the purchase of 5 new mats for our gymnasium. Rave reviews came in about the food which was an all you can eat buffet for \$5 a person. No service is unappreciated. Individuals and businesses offer up services for auction. There is a value and minimum bid assessed and let the bidders go wild.

Spaghetti Dinner – The teachers serve the community dinner one evening during the school year. It is typically held in late winter or early spring, during the spring book fair.

Book Fair – There are two Book Fairs held during the school year. One is in November/December and one in March. The book fair benefits the library. Any money raised through the book fair is used to buy new books and supplies for the school library. Please support our book fair. Your child's teacher will send a note home stating which two days of the book fair week your child will visit the book fair. Parents, grandparents and guardians are welcome to visit the book fair in the library anytime. The hours are 8:30-4:00 pm during book fair weeks.

Miscellaneous Cool Stuff to Know...

Meet Your Teacher – This event is held during the day each year prior to school starting. The date is announced when classroom assignments are made and the school supply list is received.

Back To School Night – This event is held in September. The purpose is for parents to meet their child's teacher and to familiarize parents with the teacher's expectations for the school year.

Newsletter – The school sends home a monthly newsletter via email or sends it home in backpacks. If you would prefer to get the email version please contact the office.

Winter Concert – This is an evening event held in early December before students go home for Winter Break.

Cultural Events – Our PTO helps cover the costs of cultural events during the year. Some examples of the programs are the Mobile Science Lab, Reptile Man, and various dancing and

singing groups. Also, sponsored partially by the PTO are the “First Strings Program” for third graders, “Poetry in Residence” and “The Mosaic Project” for the 5th grade students.

Parent-Teacher Conferences – Conference days are scheduled twice a year. Your child’s teacher will send home information about conferences and are sensitive to all scheduling needs. Should you wish to conference with your child’s teacher at any other time during the school year, just contact the teacher to set up a time.

Field Day – This event, held in May and organized by the Physical Education Teacher and PTO, is a fun day outside, participating in physical fitness events, such as running, throwing, relay races, etc... Parents help their child’s class have a great day by providing food items, drinks and snacks for the picnic lunch. Room mothers organize the picnic donations for the class. The PTO provides a hot dog for each child. Snow cones are sold by the PTO for 50 cents; each child receives a ticket for two free snow cones.

Nurse/Health Aide – Our nurse and health aide are available during almost all school hours. The nurse’s office can always use donations of brand new packs of underwear and socks. Gently used elastic waist pants and t-shirts in children’s sizes 4 and up are greatly appreciated for spills and accidents.

Student Council – We have a student council who is elected in the fall of each year. They plan activities to enhance school spirit and community involvement. They coordinate the canned food drive in the fall for local food pantries.

Collections – We collect on a regular basis: Campbell Soup Labels, Box Tops for Education, and printer cartridges. Our school participates in the A+ Bonus Bucks with Giant Foods (simply go to www.giantfood.com) and Food Lion’s Shop and Share program. In the fall we collect school supplies for our students in need and in the winter numerous activities are conducted to benefit those who are in need. Some classes also adopt families for the holidays.

Angel Tree – The PTO works with school administrators to have an angel tree in the lobby during the holidays. The families remain confidential and the PTO collects gift items and food boxes to donate to families in need in our school community.

Volunteering at Chapel

We know our school is a better place with parent, guardian, grandparent, and community volunteers! Children who have parents or guardians who volunteer at

school receive a positive message that says, “Your education matters to me.” They also learn the value of community involvement. We hope you will find your own volunteer niche at Chapel, whether it be the library, tutoring a child through R.I.S.E., classroom, office, PTO/committees, and/or field trips. There are a lot of ways to be involved at Chapel District. Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator or talk to a parent volunteer at Chapel District to learn how you can become involved. Sign-ups are *ongoing* and are also held at Meet Your Teacher, Back to School Night, and at the first general PTO meeting for the year. ***Please do not hesitate to pick up the phone if you have any questions about volunteerism. No amount of volunteerism is too small.***

Originally authored by Jody Gunn fall 2007

Revised and updated by Dawn Andrews and Dana Kapusta fall 2009