



October 2008- Newsletter

JENIFER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2820 Jenifer School Lane
Waldorf, MD 20603
301-932-9603 301-753-1768

Thadine Wright
Principal

Karen Lewis
Vice-Principal

Principal's Message

We are off to a fantastic start to the 2008-09 school year! The entire Jenifer school family is settling into daily routines and processes which will guarantee a successful school year. It is hard to believe that we are to the mid-point of first quarter already! The teachers have taken time to get to know their students, not only academically but also each students' individual personality, interest, and talents. This bonding time creates valuable connections that can last a life time. Please take some time to read your child's grade level newsletter that will be sent home at the end of each month for information about the upcoming month. This is an excellent way to connect to the classroom and the curriculum being taught. Ask your child about the information; you'll be pleasantly surprised how much they know!

Routines are needed for success during the school day but are also very important at home during homework time. Homework assignments are designed to reinforce and practice skills taught during school. Time to complete these tasks should be no longer than 10 minutes multiplied by the student's grade level (e.g. Grade 1=10 minutes, Grade 2=20 minutes). This time frame accomplishes the purpose of the homework while avoiding frustration.

*A very important part of school/home responsibility for our students is remembering the materials needed each night for homework. Our teachers communicate assigned homework through weekly/monthly assignment sheets (K-1) and through the agenda book (gr. 2-5). They also review homework and expectations before the children are dismissed every day. **Students and /or their parents can not return to the classroom to retrieve any school materials after 4:15 each day.** This encourages personal responsibility in our students and guarantees the safety of our staff and our families. Classrooms will be locked when the teachers' day ends and our building service staff will not unlock classrooms.*

Please join me for our first "Chat and Chew" on October 7th at 9:30 a.m. in our cafeteria. This is an opportunity for parent/guardians to enjoy some coffee and light refreshments while sharing their thoughts or to ask questions that may be on their mind. Please sign in at the office before coming to the cafeteria. I hope to see you there.

Important Numbers & Contact Information

Jenifer Elementary School 301-932-9603
2820 Jenifer School Lane 301-753-1768
Waldorf, MD 20603 Fax - 301-374-9496
Charles County Board of Education
P.O. Box 2770 301-932-6610
La Plata, MD 20646

Want quick access to closing information?

- Call the 24-hour information line at 301-932-6656
- Receive email notification from www.schoolsout.com
- Check the web site at www.ccboe.com



School Closures

**October 8 - 2 Hour Early
Dismissal-PM
Pre-K Attends**

**October 17 - School Closed
MSTA Conference**

**October 30 - 2 Hour Early
Dismissal-AM
Pre-K Attends**



During the month of October, we will focus on "Respect" as the character trait of the month. Encourage your children to show consideration for the worth of self, others, living things, the environment, property, and rules through words and actions. Remind them that we show respect by following rules and instructions given by parents, and other adults and persons in authority.

5th Grade

McCabe to Nanjemoy / 9th – 10th
White to Nanjemoy / 13th – 14th
Johnson to HBF / 21st – 22nd
Ramsey to HBF / 23rd – 24th

Over Night Trips



The Reading Corner

by Tammy Barnes
Reading Resource Teacher



"Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body."
- Sir Richard Steele

I'm delighted to be at Jenifer Elementary as the Reading Resource Teacher. It has been a pleasure to meet such eager and welcoming students. I look forward to working with the students, staff, parents, and community this year.

As partners in your child's education, I would like to offer reading strategies for you to incorporate in your home. These strategies parallel with what we are doing in the school setting and can be easily implemented at home. It is my hope that as a team our efforts will instill a love of reading and help develop lifelong readers.

At the beginning of each month your child will bring home a reading log. Each student should record all the books read on this log and return it to his/her classroom teacher at the end of the month. A grade level graph will be displayed outside of the library showing how many books each grade level has read. Our goal is to exceed 100,000 books this year! So...open your books...get set...and READ!

Below are steps you can take at home to promote reading:

- ☆ Have reading material available. Books, magazines, newspapers, greeting cards, cookbooks, catalogs, and song lyrics are great resources.
- ☆ Find a special reading spot. This place should be comfortable, have good lighting, and be away from any distractions.
- ☆ Be a reading role model. Show your child how important reading is by letting him/her see you read, discussing what you're reading with your child, reading together, taking trips to the local library, and giving books as gifts.
- ☆ Practice, practice, practice! Research shows that children who spend 30 minutes a day reading for enjoyment are more likely to become lifelong readers.
- ☆ Keep reading FUN! Read aloud together and use different voices for the characters. Praise your child for his/her efforts and use words of encouragement.

TAKE IT TO THE WEB!



Follow this link from the Library of Congress for families to play and learn online! <http://www.loc.gov/families/>

The Counselor Connection

Jenifer Elementary
Waldorf, MD



Ms. Kathleen Poirier, NCC
School Counselor

Hello Jenifer Elementary Parents and Guardians;

I would like to begin by saying that I am thrilled to be entering my second year as Jenifer's School Counselor. I had a wonderful time getting to know your children and feel honored and privileged to be able to be here every day. We were involved in many activities; such as our "I Care" and Student Ambassador program and our **Multicultural Family Night** and I am looking forward to many more exciting events this year.

My hope is that every student will have the opportunity to thrive both academically and socially. In order to help make that happen, throughout the school year, I will be meeting with students on an individual basis, in small groups and in the classrooms for specifically targeted guidance lessons; such as, Social Skills, Listening Skills and Career Readiness. My job is to help students work through any challenges they may face.

One of the ways in which I support your child's school experience is through our Character Education Program. I believe that the more that a child is encouraged to the ability to make good choices, the more personal assets that child will have to develop. These core assets or character traits will help prepare a child for continued future success. These character traits consist of being Respectful, Responsible, Caring, Fair, Trustworthy and how to be a good Citizen. These traits will be taught, modeled and explored in depth through my guidance lessons. Every month, we will focus on a specific trait. **September** was about **Respect** and **October** will address **Responsibility**. Your child will have many opportunities to learn about, role-play, and discuss the many ways that your child can be responsible.

You, as the most important adults in your children's lives, are the first and most influential character teachers they have. We hope to take what you have so diligently begun at home, and incorporate it into the school setting as well. Since we are partners in teaching your children, I welcome your comments, suggestions, support, and help in implementing this important program. One great way to reinforce this home-school connection is to follow up with our efforts here at school with discussions about what responsibility means to your child. What does Responsibility look like, what does it sound like and why it is important are all effective places to begin. Sometimes, all we ever really need is just to be acknowledged for doing the right thing and kids are no different. So when your child demonstrates that responsible behavior or choice, let them know just how proud of him or her you are!

If you have any questions about any matter concerning your child, please feel free to contact me here at the school (301-753-1768).

Thank You and We Are Off to a Terrific School Year!!!

With Warm Tidings,

Ms. Poirier (or Ms. "P" if you like)

Computer Lab News

Technology is wonderful! Unfortunately the same advances that allow us to communicate more effectively also provide that advantage to strangers who mean to harm our children.

The Internet can be a vital tool in studying, but it can be a danger to our young ones. At the beginning of this school year second grade through fifth grade students learned how to be more careful on the Internet in Computer Lab. Students learned about what sites they are allowed to visit at school or home. Students also learned about not giving out personal information on the web and about “chat rooms.” They also engaged in some computer games that teach Internet safety.

Please have your child visit the following websites to reinforce the message of Internet safety:

From PBS- take a “Safety Test” online and get their web license if they are successful:

<http://pbskids.org/license/>

Disney- “Surf Swell Island” is an animated adventure where kids learn the safety rules of the Internet:

<http://disney.go.com/surfswell/index.html>

and also from Disney - “Cybernetiquette Comix”, an interactive way to learn valuable lessons about being safe on the Internet:

<http://disney.go.com/cybersafety/>

NetSmartzKids from the Center For Missing and Exploited Children- These are the type of games that parents would love to know about and use with their children when discussing online safety:

<http://www.netsmartzkids.org/indexFL.htm>

Netty’s World from Australia is a fun way for younger students to not only learn about online safety, but to understand the Internet and how it works:

<http://www.nettysworld.com.au/>

Remember, we can not always be present when children are faced with tough decisions. It is our job to provide them with the necessary skills to make the right choices.