



# DRAGON TALES

DUFIEF ELEMENTARY'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## DUFIEF CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

This month, DuFief Elementary's much awaited construction project will begin. The purpose of the project will be adding a limited-access security vestibule to the front of our school, and will also provide a completely renovated front office, health suite, administrative offices and art room. Buch Construction has been awarded the contract and, all construction workers will have been background checked, fingerprinted, and badged. Work will beginning the week of January 8th, and there will be minor disruptions to the exterior sidewalks of our building.



The project will take place in three phases:

Phase 1: Room 1, 2 and 3 will be worked on first. The result will be kindergarten classrooms fitted with new bathrooms and storage. These newly created classrooms will allow us to temporarily move one kindergarten classroom and the art room to these new spaces to allow for Phase 2.  
*Approximate completion-late March 2024*

Phase 2: Once the existing classrooms are vacated, work will begin to convert the existing art room and one kindergarten classroom to accommodate the new front office suite, health suite as well as building of the security vestibule.  
*Approximate completion-late June 2024*

Phase 3: Once the new front office and health room is moved to the newly created spaces, the existing front office and health room will be converted to a new art room and workroom.  
*Approximate completion-mid August 2024*

We are looking forward to these much needed upgrades and are working with our partners in the MCPS Division of Construction to ensure the safety of our students and staff remain the top priority and our projects can occur with minimal impact on our positive teaching and learning environment. We look forward to sharing periodic construction updates with our community and identifying opportunities to use the construction project to make curricular links with our students.

## JANUARY 2024

<b>JANUARY 1-2</b> No School for Students
<b>JANUARY 4</b> Third Grade Field Trip/Baltimore Aquarium
<b>JANUARY 8</b> DuFief PTA Dining for DuFief/Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza-Kentlands
<b>JANUARY 10</b> Fifth Grade Parent Virtual Meeting/Robert Frost Middle School /6:00-7:00 pm
<b>JANUARY 15</b> MLK Holiday/Schools and Offices Closed
<b>JANUARY 26</b> End of Marking Period 2
<b>JANUARY 29</b> Professional Day/No School for Students

## DUFIEF -A MARYLAND CERTIFIED GREEN SCHOOL

Did you know that DuFief Elementary is a Maryland Certified Green School? This year, DuFief is working to recertify our status as a Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) certified Maryland Green School for our *dedicated efforts to integrating the environment into instruction, modeling sustainable environmental practices at our school, and extending learning into our community.* To continue to enhance our "green efforts", we continued our composting program during our student lunches. See some recent statistics because of the success of our composting program.



120 lbs diverted!

This is the total weight we have collected from you during this time period.



5.4 gallons of gas!

The number of gallons of gasoline offset by diverting food scraps from the landfill



0.8 seedlings planted!

From a greenhouse gas equivalency standpoint your composting efforts are equivalent to 0.8 urban trees seedlings grown for 10 years.



119 miles offset!

Your composting efforts are equivalent to not driving 119 miles. Whoa.

## COUNSELOR'S CORNER

This month, Ms. Suzanne Pape, school counselor, will be starting new lunch bunch groups for grades 1, 2, 3 and 4. If your child was recommended by their classroom teacher, your child will be bringing home a permission slip for you to sign.

Lessons in all grades levels this month will be focusing on stress management/worries and various calming strategies. Please ask your child about which strategies they prefer to use. We will be reading a combination of the following stories with the lessons:

*Wemberly Worried*, by Kevin Henkes, *Worry Says What?*, by Allison Edwards, and *Wilma Jean the Worry Machine*, by Julia Cook.

During the week of January 15th, DuFief student will be collecting used toy donations to donate to Goodwill for our MLK week of service project. Stay tuned for more information.

Our Leader in Me Habit of the month is "Put First Things First."

- Talk with your children about their most important jobs or responsibilities, such as doing homework, making the bed, or taking out the garbage.
- Talk with your children about doing their chores before being asked.
- Talk with your children about doing the hardest part of their homework first.
- Have your children think of something they've been putting off for a long time, like cleaning up their room or pumping up the flat tire on their bike.



As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if you need support for your child. Please email Ms. Pape at [suzanne\\_pape@mcpsmd.org](mailto:suzanne_pape@mcpsmd.org)

## MCPS CONNECTIONS

### Inclement Weather Season Reminder

As we move into the winter weather season, MCPS aims to ensure you are kept up-to-date with timely and accurate information about weather-related delays, closures and early dismissals. MCPS has [six operational status options](#), which are reported by easy-to-understand, color-coded messages on the main page of the MCPS website, and this information is linked to each school website.

### Text and Email Alerts: Alert MCPS







Alert MCPS provides you with emergency information about school operations via text messages (i.e. SMS text or email messages) to devices you register. Signing up for Alert MCPS is free, but your wireless carrier may charge you a fee to receive text messages. This service is provided in collaboration with the Montgomery County government. Weather-related messages are sent in English and Spanish.

[Sign up for Alert MCPS](#)

### Art, Writing, Video Contests Open to Students

[Earthday.org's Your Art, Our Earth](#) poster competition for [Earth Day 2024](#) is open to students from 5-17 years old, and 18 and older until Monday, Jan. 22. The 2024 theme is [Planet vs. Plastics](#), which aims to spotlight the detrimental effects of plastics in our oceans and on land.

The MCPS Division of Sustainability and Compliance (DSC) is sponsoring an art contest to find designs to use as wraps for new electric-powered cargo vans. These electric vehicles will help reduce MCPS' overall greenhouse gas emissions and support the Board of Education's commitment to cut GHG emissions by 80% by 2027. All MCPS staff and students from MCPS middle and high schools are invited to participate. The deadline is Friday, Feb. 2. [Click to learn more.](#)

 <p><b>Green</b></p> <p><b>Normal Operations</b></p> <p><i>All schools and offices are open on time</i></p> <p><i>Before and After school childcare programs and Community Use occur as scheduled</i></p>	 <p><b>Yellow</b></p> <p><b>Two Hour Delay</b></p> <p><i>Schools will open 2 hours later</i></p> <p><i>Before and After school childcare programs and Community Use occur as scheduled</i></p>	 <p><b>Blue</b></p> <p><b>Early Closing</b></p> <p><i>Schools will close 2.5 hours earlier</i></p> <p><i>After school childcare programs and Community Use are canceled</i></p>
 <p><b>Orange</b></p> <p><b>Schools Closed/ Offices Open</b></p> <p><i>Schools closed / School and Admin Offices are open</i></p> <p><i>Before and After school childcare programs may decide to operate and Community Use is canceled</i></p>	 <p><b>Red</b></p> <p><b>School System is Closed</b></p> <p><i>Schools and Offices are closed</i></p> <p><i>Before and After school childcare programs and Community Use are canceled</i></p>	 <p><b>Purple</b></p> <p><b>Virtual Learning Day</b></p> <p><i>Virtual Instruction Occurs</i></p> <p><i>Before and After school childcare programs and Community Use are canceled</i></p>