

# Engage • Achieve • Thrive



Brooke Grove Elementary

February 17, 2023

Dear Brooke Grove Families,

This message was sent to all parents on 2/14/23

Dear MCPS Students, Staff and Families,

Safety and security in our schools is a vital priority that we work to ensure through prevention measures, essential partnerships and immediate response to any incident. When our school environments are free from safety concerns, our students and staff can focus and perform at their highest levels. Recent stories in the news have led to worrisome thoughts and conversations by students, staff and parents. Despite these recent serious incidents, our 210 schools are some of the safest places in our community because of the attention and processes we have in place to support safety. To maintain high levels of safety, it is important that we all work together as partners.

Your cooperation is essential to help protect the safety and welfare of all our students and school staff. We teach students—and ask parents and caregivers to remind students—that:

- Weapons are not allowed on school grounds, ever. Guns, knives, toy guns, ammunition, or any device meant to cause harm are prohibited and carry significant school and possible criminal consequences.
- Explosives are not allowed. Fireworks, smoke bombs, flares, or any incendiary devices are prohibited.
- Illegal drugs of any kind (opioids, marijuana, etc.), vaping devices and tobacco products are not allowed on school grounds.
- Fighting and physical altercations such as shoving, pushing, or being physically aggressive toward anyone are not allowed.
- All exterior doors must be closed and locked at all times. Although basic, this is essential to maintaining safety. All visitors must go through our school and office's main entrances, which have security vestibules. No individual should open an exterior door for anyone.

If there are guns at home, ensure they are stored securely out of children's reach. According to BeSmart for Kids, a gun safety campaign, nearly 700 children, 17 and under, die by suicide with a gun every year. Storing firearms securely can help prevent these tragedies and keep kids safe at home and school.

Learn more about secure gun/weapon storage [here](#).

## School Restrooms

Safety measures for school restrooms are currently being examined with input from students, staff and parents. Our restrooms must be safe places for students and cannot be places where activities that violate our code of conduct, such as drug and tobacco use, occur.

Schools are making sure restrooms are checked regularly and monitored throughout the day so they can continue to be available for use as intended. Latches are being installed on exterior restroom doors in secondary schools to ensure doors remain open. During transition periods and more unstructured times, like before school, after school and lunch periods, schools may limit access to designated restrooms. Staff are increasing the frequency of their visual monitoring and checks inside restrooms throughout the school day, in between class periods and during lunch periods. These measures, along with additional support from the Department of Systemwide Safety and Emergency, are being implemented to enhance the level of security students feel. Schools will continue to keep this as a priority.

### Emergency Preparedness

It is critical for all students, staff and families to know and follow the guidelines for serious or emergency incidents. Know your role during Lockdown, Shelter-in-Place, or Evacuation. Schools and students participate in practice drills multiple times yearly, and everyone must follow these procedures precisely during emergencies. Due to lessons learned from reviews of serious incidents, schools are engaged in outreach and education efforts so that parents will have more information about these procedures.

For more information about emergency preparedness, view these resources:

- [Emergency Preparedness, Are You Ready?](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness website](#)
- [Department of Systemwide Safety and Emergency Management website](#)

These emergency preparedness procedures are informed by federal safety guidelines in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and represent our steadfast commitment and readiness for a crisis.

### Communications and Partnerships

Recent commitments to more frequent and detailed communications with our communities during emergencies are a direct example of feedback we have received from you. Essential relationships with all county law enforcement and emergency response agencies are in place and working to bring high levels of preparedness and response to our schools. We are thankful for these vital partnerships and their commitment to safety in all MCPS locations.

The Montgomery County Board of Education Policy JGA, Behavior Intervention, Safety, and Well-being Plan sets forth the expectation that MCPS schools will be positive, respectful, orderly and safe learning environments necessary for effective learning; increase student engagement; boost student achievement; and proactively foster positive school cultures and climates that prevent student misbehavior, when possible before it occurs. We will ensure safety in all our buildings by working together as a united community of students, staff and families. We must have zero tolerance for weapons, fights, drug use and behaviors that threaten any one of us.

Our call to action for each of us is if you “see something, say something,” doing so is important and an easy way to partner in this work.

### Montgomery County Public Schools

For more information:

- [Policy JGA, Behavior Intervention, Safety, and Well-being Plan](#)
- [MCPS Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [MCPS Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Resources:](#)

- [SAFE SCHOOLS MARYLAND is a FREE reporting system for safety concerns– please report by App, Safe Schools MD website or 1-833-MD-B-SAFE](#)
- [MCPS Emergency Preparedness Website](#)

Email us: [ASKMCPS@mcpsmd.org](mailto:ASKMCPS@mcpsmd.org)

## **Science Share**

The Science Share will be held on the evening of March 16. Projects will be set up in the school gym after school on the afternoon of March 15.

We will continue to accept the entry forms all this week, so if your child is still interested in participating in Science Share, please send in the form! Thank you and please reach out with any questions [Beth\\_Mcnicol@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Beth_Mcnicol@mcpsmd.org) . The Science Share Committee, Beth McNichol, Ph.D.

We do have the Science Share boards in the office at no cost. Thank you to parents who donated money. The students can pick up display boards in the front office before they go home.

This note is to remind you that there is **no preK on 2/22/23** due to teacher professional development.



**BINGO NIGHT! Save the date for Friday, February 24, 2023 for Brooke Grove Bingo Night! Pre Order Bingo cards [here](#).**

### **Upcoming Dates**

**March 3**

**Early Dismissal 12:55pm**

**March 7**

**5th grade Rock N Roll Revival 10:30am-1pm**

**March 16**

**Science Share**