



THE VILLAGE BLUEBIRD

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2015

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SUMMER GREETINGS!

Dear Village School Families,

We hope you are enjoying the summer and looking forward to the start of school. Our team of teachers and staff are excited about all that a new school year will bring!

The Montgomery Elementary School PTA co-presidents, Mrs. Kristen Shlossberg and Mrs. Maureen Daniels, have been working hard with their team of volunteers to plan a variety of special events and invite you to get involved. Please visit the PTA link on our website for more information.

On opening day, our staff and PTA

volunteers will help guide students to classrooms in the morning and to buses during dismissal. Color coded maps at each entrance and balloons will help students navigate the building. Please join us for the open house on the 26th for a preview!

Review this issue for important dates and information and keep an eye out for our school handbook and website updates to stay informed throughout the year!

We look forward to seeing you!

Ms. Susan Lacy, Principal

Mrs. Jaime Maccarone, Asst. Principal

IMPORTANT DATES:

- Sept. 8: First Day of School
- Sept. 14: Rosh Hashana, school closed
- Sept. 16: PTA Meeting, OHES 9:45
- Sept 17: PTA Volunteer Welcome Meeting, OHES Cafetorium, 9:30
- Sept. 17-18: Student Picture Days
- Sept. 21: 3rd Grade Back to School Night, 7:00
- Sept. 23: Yom Kippur, school closed
- September 24: 4th Grade Back to School Night, 7:00
- Sept 25: School Spirit Day, Outdoor Movie Night, OHES, 6:30-9:00
- Sept 28-Oct 2: Food Allergy Awareness Week
- Oct. 5-9: Week of Respect
- Oct 12-16: Fire Prevention Week
- Oct. 14: PTA Meeting, VES, 9:45
- Oct. 16: 4th Grade Bingo, 4-5:15
- Oct. 22: Picture Makeup Day
- Oct. 23: School Spirit Day, 3rd Grade Bingo, 4-5:15
- Oct. 30: Halloween Events
- Nov. Box Tops Kickoff
- Nov. 5-6: NJEA Convention, Schools Closed
- Nov 11: PTA Meeting, OHES, 9:45
- Nov. 20 School Spirit Day
- Nov. 19, 20, 23, 24: Parent Teacher Conferences, 1:30 Early Dismissal
- Nov. 25: 1:30 Early Dismissal
- Nov. 26-27: Thanksgiving, Schools Closed

Class Lists and Teacher Welcome Letters

On Friday, August 21st at 4 PM, class lists and welcome letters with supply information will be available on Parent Resources.

- 1) Visit <https://parents.mtsd.k12.nj.us>
- 2) Enter your username, which is your email address, and your password. If you forget your password, use the "Forgot My Password" link. Your password will then be sent by email. If you are unable to log in or do not have an account, please contact Jaime Velez at jvelez@mtsd.us

VES Open House Wednesday, August 26th, 8:30-12

Please come and tour our building. There will be scavenger hunt excursion passports available in the front and rear foyers. Bring a pencil and be sure to follow the directions to complete your passport. We hope to see you on Wednesday!

Back-to-School Nights

- 3rd Grade - Monday, September 21st, 7 p.m.*
- 4th Grade - Thursday, September 24th, 7 p.m.*
- Related Arts/Community Fair at 6:30 p.m.*

This night is for parents/guardians only. We invite you to learn about VES programs and attend an important presentation by the classroom teacher.

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Guidance Offerings from Mrs. Fornal and Mrs. Schantz

Village School is excited to welcome an addition to our counseling staff. Mrs. Jolene Schantz will serve as our full-time 3rd grade guidance counselor. Mrs. Schantz has served as an academic support teacher for several years in the Franklin Township School District and recently earned a master's degree in counseling from Rider University. She will be a wonderful addition to our district's counseling program and will be working closely with fourth grade counselor, Mrs. Fornal and our entire team. Please join us in welcoming her to our team.

Our counselors offer individual and small group counseling to students who would benefit from additional support. Parents and teachers may refer students when they feel a child needs a safe place to go to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns. The first group of the year, the Newcomers Club, will be held during the first few weeks of school to assist new students with their transition to our district. Students will converse with peers, ask questions about the school, and participate in activities.

Other groups offered throughout the year include Social Skills, Controlling Emotions, Self-Esteem, Separation/Divorce, Loss, How Your Engine Runs, Organization, Relaxation, and Siblings of Special Needs. These groups will begin in late September or early October. Parents are encouraged to contact the counselors for more information. Mrs. Fornal will be the fourth grade counselor and can be reached at lfornal@mtsd.us. Mrs. Schantz will be the third grade counselor and can be reached at jschantz@mtsd.us. You may also call 609-466-7606 and press 5 for the guidance office. The counselors will be sharing room 301 this year.

As the year progresses, our counselors will provide monthly guidance lessons following the Steps to Respect Anti-Bullying Program emphasizing the pillars of character. The pillars include: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, Citizenship, Sportsmanship, Friendship, Honesty, and Leadership. They will also work closely with teachers, administrators, and other faculty to monitor the academic, social, and emotional needs of students to determine the appropriate interventions that can help students reach their full potential.



The History of Blazer, Our Bluebird

Bluebirds thrive in areas of open farmlands where insects and old woodpecker holes exist. Montgomery offers this type of habitat, especially in the land around Village School, and can be enhanced with the addition of bluebird houses.

Cousins of the robin, Bluebirds have made a comeback through the efforts of people who provide and maintain nesting boxes along bluebird "trails." Several bluebird boxes were installed on VES grounds a few years ago. As a result, bluebirds have become commonplace around VES and in many parts of Montgomery. Students can learn about and observe these quiet, beautiful birds right here on our school grounds while practicing caring and responsibility for our fellow inhabitants.

In April 2006, Village Students voted to name our mascot Blazer the Bluebird and in 2007 they voted for our school motto: Blazer says, "Be Your Best at VES!"

Mr. Alfred Hadinger, Retired Vice Principal

IMPORTANT SCHOOL DAY PROCEDURES—*PLEASE REVIEW*

ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, VISITING AND PARKING

- **School Hours:** 9:30 - 3:50
- **Early Dismissal Hours:** 9:30-1:30 (Parent pick up begins at 1:15)
- **Emergency Delayed Opening:** 11:30-3:50 (Student drop off 11:20-11:30)
- **Transportation:** Buses will drop students off and pick them up at the main entrance to VES. Your child's transportation arrangements are available on *Genesis* accessible from the district home page. Delays during the first days of school are normal.
- **Before School Drop Off:** If you need to drive your child to school, you must travel on Spruce Drive and use the **rear** entrance of the school. **This entrance will be open from 9:20 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Please do not drop your child off early as the doors will be locked until 9:20.** When dropping children off at the rear entrance in the morning, if you stop your vehicle **next** to the school sidewalk, your child may exit on his or her own on that side of your vehicle. However, if your child has to walk across lanes of traffic, you **must** walk him or her to the sidewalk. Please do not drop students off in the front of Village School at any time, except for before school programs. After 9:30 a.m., park in our front visitors' lot and **an adult must sign children in at the main office.**
- **After School Pickup:** If you need to pick your child up at the end of the school day, park in the large back lot and enter through the cafeteria doors or park on the right side of the back driveway that is between the school and the traffic island. Enter through the main rear entrance doors. **Please do not park on the roadway itself as it creates a traffic hazard.** Students will be dismissed to the cafeteria for parent pick-up at 3:45 p.m. as instruction takes place up until this time. **Parents must sign children out in the cafeteria.** Please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning if you plan on picking up your child in the afternoon or if your child is attending an after school activity. **Without a note, children will be sent to their buses.** Midday and end of day pickup requests can be disruptive to instruction and are difficult to honor as dismissal information is confirmed early in the day.
- **School Day Visits: All parents/visitors arriving between 9:30 and 3:45 must provide photo identification.** After you push the button to buzz in, you **must** give your name and scheduled appointment destination, enter through the front entrance, report to the main office, show identification, sign in and obtain a visitor nametag. During special events, the Spruce Drive/rear entrance hours may be extended. These times will be communicated in advance. Visitors must sign out in the office before leaving the premises.
- **Late or Midday Drop off/Pickup:** If you need to drop off or pickup your child between the hours of 9:30 and 3:45, please park in our visitors' parking lot in the front of VES and use the main front entrance. **Parking is not permitted in the front driveway as it is a bus driveway only.** **After 9:30 a.m., children must be signed in by an adult.** You must submit a request in writing in advance if a late arrival or early pick up is planned. (BOE Policy 5230) **Please sign your child in or out at the main office.**
- **School Day Parking:** Parents/visitors may park in our front visitors' lot, our side lot, or our large lot in the back between 9:30 and 3:45. When parking in the back lot, all visitors will need to walk around VES and enter the front main entrance. **Please do not park on or block roadways.** If you absolutely must park on a roadway, use caution and park on the far right side. **Parking is always prohibited in designated fire zones and in the bus driveway.** Please use caution when parking along the side of the road and driveways. **Always park off the road to the right as far as possible and do not block roadways.**





Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome Back! I hope everyone had a great summer. I invite you to review September's lunch menu online at www.mtsd.k12.nj.us. Simply select your child's school from the main page and click on "Lunch Menu" to access the menu each month. Nutrislice is a new addition to our menu options. Click on the Nutrislice link under the lunch menus and you can see important information about the products being served daily. Nutrislice will list all allergy information, ingredients, carbohydrate counts etc. Please check our menu/Nutrislice for each days hot and cold lunch selection.

Please ensure that your child has the necessary funds in his/her account. You can still send in cash or a check (made payable to Montgomery Township Board of Education or MTBOE food services) or use our online payment system www.payforit.net. When your child's account has three lunches remaining the cashiers will give your child a friendly reminder. Mrs. Lanzner, my Assistant Director, will contact you by phone or email in order to remind you to make a deposit to your child's account. Children's accounts do go negative from time to time but any lunch purchased will be charged to the students account for collection. Lunch at the elementary schools will be \$2.30 and milk sold separately is \$0.60.

Your child may choose one item from the main menu, i.e. hamburger, salad or a premade deli sandwich. Children may choose a hot or cold vegetable, fresh or cupped fruit, and 1% white, fat free, or chocolate milk. A complete lunch comes with five components, meat/meat alternate, grain, vegetable, fruit and milk. If a child doesn't take 4 of the 5 components, the lunch will be sold at ala carte prices. We encourage children to take the fruit and vegetables.

Our pizza on Fridays is made with a whole wheat crust, and our chicken nuggets and patties are all white meat with a whole grain breading. More information can be found on Nutrislice. We will be selling baked chips, low fat ice cream, reduced fat cookies, fruit and veggie cups for snacks as time permits during the week. Snacks range in price from \$0.50 to \$1.00. Water is not part of a lunch and is offered as an ala carte item for \$1.00. The USDA set this rule stating that water has no nutritional value.

Allergies are listed in RED on each register for the cashier to see. The list is updated each year by the school nurses and I keep a hard copy in my office. If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact me at Chartwells@mtsd.us or 609-466-7602 ext. 6510.

I hope this information will help you and your child to have a happy and healthy lunch experience. To learn more about Chartwells, visit our website at www.eatlearnlive.com. We're excited to continue our long partnership with the Montgomery Township Schools. Look for our new Simply Good campaigns throughout the school year.

Patricia Kurczewski, Director of Dining Services

More Helpful Information

- * **District Policies:** District policy and mandatory regulations can be located on our district web-site at <http://www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/Page/96>
- * **Snacks and Guidelines for Managing Life Threatening Health Conditions:** Please pack a healthy nut-free snack and water for your child. Water helps us maintain a clean classroom environment. Click [here](#) to review our guidelines and nut-free practices.
- * **Attendance Policy and Absence Reporting:** Please click [here](#) to review the district's attendance policy and FAQs. Kindly call the school's main number (609) 466-7606 and press one or dial 609-466-7610 to help us verify that your child will be absent from school. State your child's name, teacher's name, the date and reason for the absence.
- * **Backpacks:** While rolling backpacks are popular and convenient items for today's students, please note that these particular backpacks can pose a tripping hazard in our busy hallways and do not fit into students' individual classroom cubbies designed to hold his/her personal belongings during the school day.
- * **Games/Electronic Devices/Cell Phones:** Due to the risk of loss, damage, and disruption to the learning environment, the use of these items during the school day is strongly discouraged. Students are encouraged to engage in social interactions with their peers during lunch, recess, and on the bus ride to and from school. If games and electronics are brought to school, students will be required to keep them off and in backpacks during instructional time. Cell phones may not be used during school hours.

Village Elementary School
Home of Blazer the Bluebird
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*Blazer says,
"Be Your Best at VES!"*

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MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission as a forward-thinking community is to ensure that students grow into confident, compassionate, and successful learners in a global society by providing engaging and challenging educational experiences in a student-centered environment.

Six Day Rotational Schedule

September	Day
8	1
9	2
10	3
11	4
15	5
16	6
17	1

VES works on a six-day rotational schedule for related arts classes. Your child's teacher will inform you of the class' related arts schedule within the first few days of school. For the entire VES 2015-2016 six-day rotational calendar please visit the VES website at www.mtsd.k12.nj.us.

Health Office Request

Medications that must be administered to your child during the school day must be brought to the VES Nurse, Mrs. Cizin, The office will be open on August 26th during the Open House. Please contact her to schedule an appointment. 609-466-7606 option 3.

**The Pillar of Character for September is Responsibility!
October's Pillar of Character is Respect!**

Please visit the district's homepage for the 2015-2016 school district calendar.

HAVE YOU UPDATED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Montgomery Township School District is working to update our student database system with the most current contact information for parents and guardians.

Please be sure that you have updated your contact information, which is used for emails and phone notifications. It is important that parents and guardians, on a regular basis, follow the instructions provided to update this information so that you receive notifications on a regular basis.

If you do not have a Genesis / Parent Resources account please e-mail Jaime Velez (jvelez@mtsd.us).

Emergency School Closing Information

In the event of inclement weather, hazardous road conditions, or any other emergencies requiring us to close schools for one day, **phone messages** will be used to notify families. You may also check the following:

- **Message Line: 609-466-7610**
- **District Website: www.mtsd.k12.nj.us**
- **NJ 101.5 FM**
- **Channel 27 (Local Access Cable)**



VES Families:

In the event of an emergency school closing, the 6-day rotation cycle will remain unchanged. For example: If we have an emergency closing/snow day on Day 1, the following school day will remain Day 2. Missed days will be made up later in the school year. Please see the district calendar for details.



YMCA After School Program at VES

The YMCA of Princeton provides childcare before and after school for children who attend VES. The YMCA tailors its hours to accommodate working families, and offers children diverse and enriching activities in a safe and nurturing environment. Registration packets will be available in the main office. For more information, you may visit our website at: Princetonymca.org or call the YMCA After School Program Office at: 609-497-9622. Please clearly state your name, your child's name, and a phone number where we can return your phone call.

This newsletter is available online at www.mtsd.k12.nj.us/ves.