Dear Orchard Hill Families,

The season of fall is upon us and our school has been very busy with many activities taking place. Most recently, our Halloween parades were a success and of course the children looked adorable in their costumes!

Our students have had many enriching opportunities over the past two months including the Scholastic Book Fair, Fire Prevention Week, and Character Education kick-off assemblies for the Week of Respect. Everyone at our school is working hard at being *Bucket Fillers* and earning *High Fives*. The children are excited about earning High Fives. Read more about this school initiative in the Counselors Corner of this newsletter. The Kindergarten students enjoyed learning about school bus safety from a very friendly character *Otto the Auto*, brought to our school through the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Most importantly, the teachers and their students have settled into classroom routines and are working together as a community of learners.

Each November, time is set aside for Parent-Teacher Conferences. This is an occasion to discuss your child’s progress with his/her teacher. You are encouraged to take advantage of this time to meet with your child’s teacher as this fosters a strong home-school connection.

As Thanksgiving approaches, we are reminded of the many blessings we are thankful for here at Orchard Hill. Naturally we are always thankful for the magic our teachers bring to our classrooms each day and the smiles and memories your children provide us. We also wish to thank the PTA and their many volunteers for all of the ways they go above and beyond to support our students, teachers, and community. They truly add a special touch to our school.

Warmest regards,
Mrs. Scotti and Mr. Meurer

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**Montgomery Township School District**

**Growing Confident, Compassionate and Successful Learners!**

**Important Dates:**

- Nov. 7-8: NJEA Convention, Schools Closed
- Nov. 12: BOE Meeting 7:30pm (UMS)
- Nov. 21: PTA Meeting 9:45am (VES)
- Nov. 21, 22, 25, 26: Parent Teacher Conferences, Early Dismissal, 1:30pm
- Nov. 22: MES PTA Winter Carnival, MHS 6-9pm
- Nov. 22: BOE Meeting 7:30pm (UMS)
- Nov. 26: BOE Meeting 7:30pm (UMS)
- Nov. 27: Early Dismissal, 1:30pm
- Nov. 28-29: Thanksgiving Recess, Schools Closed
- Dec. 2-5: PTA Holiday Gift Fair
- Dec. 17: BOE Meeting 7:30pm (UMS)
- Dec. 19: PTA Meeting 9:45am (OHES)
- Dec. 23-Jan. 1: Winter Break, Schools Closed
- Jan. 2: Return from Winter Break
- Jan. 16: PTA Meeting 9:45am (VES)
- Jan. 20: Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Schools Closed
Guidelines for a Safe and Happy Bus Ride

Our goal is to teach children how to behave safely while waiting at the bus stop and riding the bus to and from school. Your support in reinforcing positive bus behavior is important. The following are appropriate points of discussion to have with your child about riding the school bus:

- Be on time for the bus to avoid having to run to the bus.
- Eat breakfast before school since eating on the bus is not allowed.
- Go directly to your seat and fasten your seatbelt.
- Place your backpack away from the aisle so students do not trip over it.
- Stay buckled and seated the entire time on the bus.
- Be respectful of the driver and others by using a school voice.
- Always listen to the bus drivers. They are in charge!
- If someone is not following the rules on the bus you can speak to the bus driver when the bus is stopped. It is not okay to imitate the same behavior.

The home and school partnership is important for student success in all areas. With your help, together we will teach the students our expectations of them while riding the school bus.

Help Keep Our Children Safe ~ TRAFFIC REMINDERS

- When dropping children off in the morning, please remember to use one of the two drop off places instead of the bus lane. PreK and Kindergarten get dropped off on the circle driveway by the Burnt Hill Road entrance. First and second grade get dropped off at the East Gym by the main parking lot. If you are dropping off your PreK or Kindergarten child and an older sibling please use the PreK/Kindergarten drop off by the Burnt Hill Road entrance.
- Parking in any fire zone or a non-designated spot is not permitted at any time.
- The 10 minute parking in the front of OHES is for children who are late, picking up a sick child, or delivering items to the school. If you are visiting the school for more than 10 minutes you should park in the main lot.
- Parent Pick-Up begins in the East Gym at 3:45 pm. Parents should enter the gym and go to designated grade level areas to complete sign-out sheets. Children will be dismissed to parents. This process is intended for the safety of the children.

When exiting the parking lot please be kind and courteous to fellow drivers. Your cooperation in ensuring a safe arrival and dismissal of our very young students is appreciated.
Notes from the Nurse’s Office

On a good day, the Health Office will treat approximately 50 students; these visits include sick students, medication administration, first-aid, blood glucose monitoring and a host of other needs. As the cold and flu season quickly approaches this number will likely increase. Please remember that a sick child belongs at home to rest and recover. They must be fever free without the use of a fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Children that have had a gastrointestinal illness, (vomiting and/or diarrhea) also need to be home for 24 hours without symptoms and tolerating their regular diet before returning to school. When your child is sent to school sick they will not be a productive learner and will be spreading germs.

Increased awareness of pediculosis (head lice) symptoms is important and your parental cooperation is very much appreciated. Please monitor your child for the signs and symptoms of head lice:

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair
- Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites. Irritability.
- Sore on the head caused by scratching. These sores can sometimes become infected.

You need to carefully inspect your child’s hair by parting it into small sections. Using natural sunlight makes it easier to see lice and nits more clearly. If you suspect your child has head lice please inform the school nurse. If you are unsure of what you are looking for please call the Health Office and the nurses will be able to schedule a time to meet with you and your child.

Educating your child is an important aspect of lice prevention. Children should avoid putting their heads together. Head to head contact is by far the most common way to communicate lice. Teach your child not to share hair brushes, hair clips, towels, hats, helmets of anything else that comes into contact with the hair. It is prudent if your daughter has long hair to braid it or put it up.

Asthma: If your child has a history of asthma and has needed to use their rescue inhaler within the last 6 months that medication needs to be kept in the Health Office. Please call the office to obtain the necessary paperwork.

Life-threatening allergy: If you have not provided the appropriate medication and Allergy Action Plan please do so immediately.

We are here to provide the necessary medical care for your child during their school day but we may not be able to render that care without your cooperation. Please supply us with what your child needs to be safe and healthy during their school day.

Pam Schrum, R.N.
pschrum@mtsd.us

Ann Messineo, R.N.
amessineo@mtsd.us

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Parent conferences will be held from Thursday, November 21 through Tuesday November 26.

Parent pick-up will begin on these days at 1:15pm. Buses will depart by 1:30pm. Lunch will be served on these days.

Conferences are scheduled to last about 15 minutes. This time is intended for you and your child’s teacher to discuss your child’s transition to school and progress to date.

Please see tips in the box to the right on ways to ensure a successful parent-teacher conference.

Making the Most of Parent-Teacher Conferences

Just as our teachers prepare for upcoming conferences, parents should too. Here are some ideas to consider:

- Talk with your child before the conference. Ask if there is something he or she would like you to discuss at the meeting.
- Ask questions. Come to the conference prepared to ask questions regarding your child’s academic as well as social growth.
- Share information about your child. No one knows your child better than you and this strengthens the home-school connection.
- Raise issues of concern. Listen to what the teacher has to say and work together to find solutions.
- Take notes. If something is unclear after the conference follow up with the teacher for clarification.

After the conference, share with your child what is helpful. Focus on the positive and set a goal or two. It’s important for your child to know that both the teacher and you are there to support a positive school experience.

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Pam Schrum, R.N.
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Ann Messineo, R.N.
amessineo@mtsd.us
The weather is turning cooler and the children will have outdoor recess unless temperatures drop below freezing. Please dress your child appropriately.

Please mark your child’s outerwear with a name. This makes it easier to reunite clothing with its owner. Be sure to check the Lost and Found located in our cafeteria when visiting the school.

Guidance Counselor’s Corner

During October, all students were introduced to the Pillar of Respect during Red Ribbon Week of Respect. On October 7, students attended an assembly where they listened to a story read by Mrs. Scotti and Mr. Meurer titled *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* The author’s message encourages positive behavior and throughout the book she shows children simple ways to show kindness and appreciation for others. As a school, we will continue to use the symbol of giving a *High 5* as a way for everyone at OHES to encourage positive behaviors. Each classroom teacher was given *High 5* postcards to fill out when they notice individual students demonstrating good character. These are turned in to the principals and students get an unexpected visit from Mrs. Scotti or Mr. Meurer in recognition of showing good character and being *Bucket Fillers!*

**Character Pillars for November and December**

**Citizenship**
How can I be a good citizen?

**Trustworthiness**
What does it mean to be trustworthy?

Students will practice the character pillars of Citizenship and Trustworthiness in the coming months. It is important for our children to understand the many ways one can demonstrate good citizenship and trustworthiness! Our students have many opportunities throughout their school day to practice these pillars. Following are some examples:

- Be a good friend and neighbor
- Share to make your school and community a better place
- Obey laws and rules; respect authority
- Protect the environment
- Return something found that doesn’t belong to them to an adult
- Answer questions honestly
- Be a good friend

Be sure to visit the School Counselor webpage! You will find information on reinforcing these character pillars at home.

Wendy Senatra, School Counselor OHES
Heather McCarthy, School Counselor OHES/VES
Kick off your weekend right with a great night of Family Fun for OHES and VES families. This event is sponsored by the MES (Montgomery Elementary school/OHES +VES) PTA. Admission is $20.00 per family in advance and $25.00 at the door.

Admission includes:

Entertainment – Boardwalk style carnival games with prizes, giant inflatable games, two 30 minute magic shows (show times: 6:30pm and 7:30pm), craft tables, tattoos, etc.

*There will also be Balloon Artists and Face Painting for a small fee.

In addition, as a part of our fund raising efforts please support:

Teacher Auction - Teachers from OHES and VES will donate special events to be completed with a child(ren) by the end of the school year, i.e., lunchtime pizza parties, trip to the movies and museums, making puppets, playing games, craft activities, puppy play date, etc. This is a silent auction.

Classroom Basket Auction - Classes from OHES and VES will donate items to create baskets, i.e., spa night for mom, Legos basket, Justice basket, Toy Store Mania basket, golf/sports, local gift cards, etc. This is a silent auction.

Food – There will be carnival food - popcorn, cotton candy, hot dogs, chips, hot pretzels, and drinks for sale.

To volunteer to help or if you any have questions, contact Christine Petrane at cpetrane@yahoo.com
The Montgomery Township SEPTA will be holding their annual clothing drive during the week of November 18 – 22. Drop off locations are available at all schools. Orchard Hill will have a collection box located in the main foyer for your convenience when visiting the school. This is an opportunity for you to clean out your closets and donate gently used clothing and support SEPTA.

For additional information, contact Rosy Thakkar by email at Rosythakkar@aol.com

Box Tops for Education!

Orchard Hill Elementary School is collecting Box Tops! Be sure to send these in with your child as each class is working towards a prize - a snow cone party! You can support our schools by shopping online and earning box tops! There are over 150 retailers like Target, Toys R Us and Macy's who work with Box Tops online and will contribute one box top for every $10.00 spent. Follow this link to learn more and see a complete list of retailers:

www.boxtops4education.com

Market Day is Here!

Each month, order restaurant-quality food for your family and help your school at the same time. It’s so simple. Just follow these three easy steps:

1) Go to www.marketday.com
2) Place your order
3) Go to OHES on the designated pick-up date

It’s that easy!