The Monument

Principal's Message

Welcome back to school. We have enjoyed the first month back together as a BMS family. Students have already acclimated back into the school building as teachers have worked hard to establish routines and get students back into a regular school day. We have been able, as a staff, to establish a baseline of the skills students have now after a prolonged period of virtual learning.

As teachers have focused in on the learning, we have seen skills related to social emotional learning infused throughout the school building. Students are already living up to our high expectations as they complete tasks related to reading and math standards. We have seen lessons across the building working on topics such as: properties of a solid, where students had the chance to determine if objects were hard or soft, heavy or lite, would float or sink in water. Students also had a chance to look at character in a story where they had to identify and describe the characters based on the attributes of the characters.

As a leader, I have made goals to get students back into the various common spaces in the building such as the apartment, vocational, and sensory rooms to build on their functional and community living skills. The school team has stepped up to get these spaces back and ready faster than I had even anticipated. As a credit to our families, maximizing independence is also further along than anticipated. As partners in the work, our families clearly worked hard in the past year to maintain student’s independence in the bathroom. As a reward our team has effectively continued the effort and students have been able to quickly get back into those routines.

In the rest of this newsletter you will discover more of the wonderful things going on with students each and every day.

Upcoming Events/Announcements

- Move-a-thon will be October 4th-8th
- DLM Fall Testing Administration through October
- New Twitter #BMSSeagulls
- Parents are invited to join morning meeting: Log in under child’s information, Google Meets nickname: GoodmorningBMS
- October 15th, No School for students
- Please update information in Focus (https://tinyurl.com/BCPSFocus) or with the office staff 443-809-7000
- Mistake in planner, School is open on 10-6-2021
- Picture Day Nov. 8th
Elementary

September gave us a chance to learn from the students about both their reading and math skills. We also got into the new routines of the building and classroom.

For the month of October the elementary school grade level will be focusing on two specific standards in reading and math. For reading, students will be identifying characters in a familiar setting. The second standard students will be working on in reading will be to identify the main topic in the story.

For math students will be working on counting objects to 10 and representing the quantity with the corresponding numeral. Our elementary age students will also be working on sorting shapes of same size and orientation.

Middle

This September has been all about getting into the routines of the school. For many of our students learning new classes and new friends. We have focused on school rules, PBIS, and identifying how we feel within the Zones of Regulation. We have used this learning to help kids understand characters in a story. For some it is identifying who a character is, for others the students worked to understand how the character might feel. In math it was a lot of baselines, to make sure students were where we thought they were. We have jumped around a bit to see what they knew about shapes, numbers, money, time and other skills they may need to know later on.

For the month of October the middle school grade level will be focusing on two specific standards in reading and two specific standards in math. For reading, students will identify details in a text that are related to the theme or central idea. Students will also identify words or phrases in the text that describe or show what the narrator or speaker is thinking or feeling. For math, students will match two similar geometric shapes that are proportional in size and in the same orientation. Students will also identify equivalent number sentences. For science, we will be exploring the environment, ecosystems in the environment and biomes on earth.
High

The high school team has hit the ground running to start the new school year. In reading, the students learned about national, state, and local leaders, and how as citizens they can help make their community a safe place to live. This unit culminated with a few of the students getting to meet some of these leaders at an event to honor Battle Monument’s success with the Clean Green 15 Litter Challenge. Classes also read *Harry Potter and The Lightning Thief* as a fun way to learn about characters and setting. In math, classes have been working on functional skills like counting money and groups of objects. In science, classes have had fun learning about the different states of matter, and in social studies students have had the chance to learn about various current events like the launching of SpaceX Inspiration4.

Looking ahead to October, the focus in math will continue to be on functional skills while reading and science will have the students learning about different ecosystems.

**Student Spotlight**

**Cameron**

Cameron working on making transitions and change. As many of us know, 2021 has been a year filled with changes. After almost a year and a half of virtual school, Cameron returned to BMS as a high school student with a new teacher and class. There were a few challenges when she first returned, but after only a few days, Cameron is excelling. She shows interest in materials, stays on top of checking her schedule, and even helps her peers complete tasks and check their schedules. Special area teachers have also noted that Cameron’s engagement has improved, along with her interest and new level of independence (Terri Flynn, Art).
Related Services

Related services have been on a roll to start the school year both literally and figuratively. Students are quickly adapting back into their routines. The related service providers have been updating protocols related to PT, OT and communication needs. They have been reaching out to families and seeing just what the kids can do.

The Maximizing Independence program is back up and running. Mr. Dave has the schedule humming and is working closely with staff to make sure the needs of every child is being met. Special thanks to our PTs Ashley and Emily for their work with staff throughout the building to make this possible.

Our vocational and sensory rooms are also open and ready for business thanks to Ms. Erin. Teachers are already moving into those spaces for lessons. We will be working with our post secondary partners to update the vocational room as well as a rec/leisure space to help prepare our students for their life after school.

Health Suite

We have had the opportunity to welcome our new school nurse this September, Ms. Lauren Azure. She will be working with our high school classes. Below is the information for our health suite if you need to reach out.

Office number: (443)809-7119
Elementary School  Rebecca Knight  rknight2@bcps.org
Middle School  Rose Healy  rhealy2@bcps.org
High School  Lauren Azure  lazure@bcps.org

Health Assistant: Karrie Merryman  kmerryman@bcps.org

Transition

Worksites are coming for our students who are transition age. We have our two worksites ready to go at Red Brick Station in White Marsh as well as the BCPS Exchangeree. At each site students get to perform tasks similar to that which they may be expected to when moving into the adult community. For instance at Red Brick Station, students help to prepare the restaurant for opening getting silverware ready as well as salt and pepper shakers. At the BCPS Exchangeree it is all about the organization as the students move and organize the materials under the direction of a boss and with the support of BMS staff. We are excited about getting these back up and running after a year hiatus.
PBIS

BMS is starting the year off right with our school code of Conduct: S.A.F.E. That means we have Safe bodies, we're Able to use our voices, signs, and devices to communicate, we Follow our routine, and we stay Engaged in learning! Be on the lookout for "Gotcha" stickers as our awesome students get caught doing their greatest! And remember, Monday is school spirit day, so get out those BMS SAFE t-shirts and hoodies.

Special Areas

Integration of skills from the classroom into the special areas has been the theme. The special areas have been working SEL and functional skills into each of their lessons during the first month of the year. There has been a large focus on getting back into routines, the zones of regulation, and what it means to be in music, art, library or PE.

In library, Ms. Boer has been using community helpers to support the reading skills and identifying safe people within the school and community if children need assistance. She has also adjusted the routine to include a new choice time for students where we can discover more about their interests and skills.

In art, students have been doing 3D sculptures as well as painting their emotions using colors from the zones of regulation. Ms. Flynn shared information about some artists she knows and the students worked hard to emulate those designs.

In music, it been a lot about the zones of regulation and using a drum beat to represent how we are feeling. Student beating fast or slow, loud or soft to share how they were feeling. Bringing it right back to the zones of regulation that they are being taught every day in the classroom.

Ms. Cole has kept up the work of building endurance and working with students on what they enjoy. After establishing the expectations for PE, Ms. Cole has begun the badminton unit. Students started with the equipment, built to hitting a balloon back and forth and are finishing with playing a full game with a net in between first with a balloon, then a birdie. Building endurance and scaffolding skills to meet the students where they are and grow skills from there.
UPCOMING WEBINAR SERIES

Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITIES
Assistive Technology Program

Show Me The Money!

A month-long financial capability and resiliency webinar series focused on knowledge-building, resources, and services for people with disabilities to increase financial stability.

Brought to you by
October 1

**Homeownership for People with Disabilities**
11am-12pm

Mady Ciulu, MD Department of Housing & Community Development
The Maryland Mortgage Program (MMP) provides 30-year fixed-rate home loans to eligible homebuyers purchasing in Maryland. Loan terms are competitive with other home loan products on the market, but what makes MMP unique is the range of associated financial incentives and other assistance that, for many homebuyers, means the difference between being able to purchase and continuing to rent. MMP down payment assistance can only be obtained with an MMP first mortgage; it is not a standalone option.

October 6

**Financing Through The Transition Process**
2pm-3pm

Eric Jorgensen, Special Needs Navigator
Did you know there are State and Federal programs available to help your child when they leave High School? They can get assistance to buy groceries, supports to live independently, and coaching on how to find and keep a job - just to name a few. You're not going to want to miss this opportunity. Join us, don't be left in the dark.

**Maryland ABLE:**
**A Financial Planning Tool for People with Disabilities and their Families**
6pm-7:30pm

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/October-Webinar-Series-Focused-on-Financial-Resiliency.html?oeidk=a07e3a2zesar0100847&aid=s6emZw8cAGTc
Kelly Nelson, Maryland ABLE
Join us to learn how an ABLE account can help promote personal choice, independence and financial stability for people with disabilities. Kelly Nelson from Maryland ABLE will share an overview of how ABLE accounts can help people with disabilities and their families to save and invest for the future without jeopardizing federal and state means tested benefits such as SSI and Medicaid. Attendees will learn about eligibility, enrollment, tax-advantaged savings and investment options and how to use the ABLE account to pay for qualified disability expenses.

October 7

Work Without Fear: Using “Work Incentives” to Protect Benefits When You Work
1pm-2:30pm

Michael Dalto, High Note Consulting
Many people with disabilities who get cash and medical benefits from the government, and who are considering paid work, face some daunting questions:
· What will happen to my cash benefits if I work?
· Can I keep my medical benefits?
· Will I have more money?
Learn how safety nets called “work incentives” help protect benefits when you work, and make sure you come out ahead. Discover the Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS), a work incentive that can help you buy technology and other items to reach a work goal. And find out how to get FREE help from a certified Benefits Planner to use work incentives.

October 12

Financial Literacy for Business Owners
10am-11:30am

Tameka Payton, Psychometric Solutions
This session is designed for participants to explore and refine their knowledge of the basic terms and practices for both personal and business finances. Participants will also explore capital resources and strategies for financial success in their small business. Participants receive information and resources that are intended for special populations, including persons with disabilities, race and gender minorities.

Financial Planning Across The Lifespan
3pm-4pm

Elizabeth Yoder, Planning Across the Spectrum
As your family grows, your needs change. We will review the stages of planning for your children as they receive a diagnosis and grow to adulthood. We will review some of the government benefits programs and resources available to them at all stages.

October 13

**Special Needs Trusts**
12pm-1pm

Sage Hart, O’Byrne Law, LLC
Sage C. Hart, Esq. will provide a brief overview of common benefit programs and the planning tools, such as special needs trusts and an ABLE account, that may be used to preserve an individual’s eligibility for means-tested benefits while also setting aside funds for that individual’s future. The development of a special needs plan will aim to take into account present and future needs as well as to support the autonomy and independence of the individual with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.

October 14

**Credit Smarts**
11:00am-12:00pm

Sue Rogan, MD CASH Campaign
Credit Scores affect many aspects of a person’s financial health. Learn from Sue Rogan, AFC® how to check the data on your credit report, access your credit score and build your score to a 700+ so that you can access credit, obtain a fair interest rate and build assets.

**Low Interest Loans to Purchase Assistive Technology**
3:30pm-4pm

Tanya Goodman, Maryland Assistive Technology Financial Loan Program
Join us to learn about the Maryland Assistive Technology Loan Program, a Division of the Maryland Department of Disabilities which offers low interest loans to Marylanders with disabilities and their families to obtain assistive technology to help a person with a disability live more independently and productively. Loan amounts range from $500 - $50,000, with loan repayment terms up to 96 months. Restrictions apply.

October 15

**Special Needs Trusts** (Repeat Session)
6pm-7pm

Sage Hart, O’Byrne Law, LLC
Sage C. Hart, Esq. will provide a brief overview of common benefit programs and the planning tools, such as special needs trusts and an ABLE account, that may be used to preserve an individual’s eligibility for means-tested benefits while also setting aside funds for that individual’s future. The development of a special needs plan will aim to take into account present and future needs as well as to support the autonomy and independence of the individual with disabilities to the greatest extent possible."

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/October-Webinar-Series-Focused-on-Financial-Resiliency.html?oeidk=a07e6emZccAGTc
October 16

**How do You Invest?**
12:30pm-1:30pm

Kerrie Carden, Equip, LLC
Take the knowledge you gained from the first seminar and focus on the fun part: building your wealth through investing! Join Kerri Carden, founder of EQUIP, LLC and a Stanford University grad, as she shows you clear, easy ways to invest, perfect for investors just starting out - no matter how much $ you have to invest!

October 18

**Maximizing Your Money**
2:00pm-3:00pm

Sue Rogan, MD CASH Campaign
People with disabilities often are concerned about building a secure financial future. Attend this workshop to learn tips on the psychology behind financial decisions, successful ways to track your dollars, and ensure that you are working your way to financial independence.

October 19

**Maryland ABLE:**
**A Financial Planning Tool for People With Disabilities and their Families** *(Repeat Session)*
12pm-1:30pm

Kelly Nelson, Maryland ABLE
Join us to learn how an ABLE account can help promote personal choice, independence and financial stability for people with disabilities. Kelly Nelson from Maryland ABLE will share an overview of how ABLE accounts can help people with disabilities and their families to save and invest for the future without jeopardizing federal and state means tested benefits such as SSI and Medicaid. Attendees will learn about eligibility, enrollment, tax-advantaged savings and investment options and how to use the ABLE account to pay for qualified disability expenses.

October 20

**Financing Higher Education**
11am-12pm

Donna Thomas, MHEC

October Webinar Series Focused on Financial Resiliency

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) will provide an overview on the various state financial aid programs available to students planning to enroll at a Maryland post-secondary institution.

**Do You Know Who Has an Eye on YOUR Money?**
2pm-3pm

Sue Rogan, MD CASH Campaign
Consumers reported losing more than $3.3 billion in fraud in 2020, an increase of $1.8 billion from 2019. Consumers who have a disabilities are often a target for fraud. Attend this workshop to learn the latest scams and how to avoid losing your money to them.

**October 22**

**Employed Individuals with Disabilities**
1pm-2pm

Shannon Minnick, Independence Now
Meet Shannon Minnick, the Deputy Director of Independence Now, to learn more about the Employed Individuals with Disabilities (EID) program. The EID Program extends Medical Assistance (Medicaid) health benefits to working Marylanders with disabilities for a small fee.

**October 27**

**Conquering Debt**
1pm-2pm

Sue Rogan, MD Cash Campaign
Join Sue Rogan for this interactive webinar on how to deal with debt collectors, and create a plan to reduce your debt.
If you need accommodations, including live captions, please contact Lori Markland, lori.markland@maryland.gov no later than 7 days before the session you're registering for, indicating the name of session(s) you will need accommodations for.

Disclaimer
Attendees of these trainings should be aware that there are known and potential privacy and confidentiality issues with the Zoom System (Cloud Service, Web application, and/or Application). While every effort has been made to ensure the security of this meeting, factors out of the State's control introduce risk. Participants should evaluate the risk associated with the application and platform and determine if the risks preclude the use of the service. The State provides no warranty regarding the security of the application, confidentiality of the information discussed, or the privacy of information collected by the application and/or service. Security events impacting the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of a meeting (e.g., ZoomBombing) must be reported to the State Security Operations Center (soc.info@maryland.gov).

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