November 27, 2019

Dear AMS Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the second quarter of the school year. It is hard to believe that the holidays are already here. Thanks to all the parents and family members who came to visit us during American Education Week. It was great to see so many folks spend the day with our Eagles. Our teachers and staff have high expectations for academic achievement, and this standard combined with the hard work of our students has paid off this quarter. We are pleased to announce that 460 students earned Academic Honor Roll status, and 90 students earned straight A’s this quarter! Thanks to our parents and guardians for their support on the home front. Additionally, results from the first unit assessments in math and English/Language Arts have come in, and our students have scored higher than the county average. Outstanding job to our Eagles!

AMS faculty and staff works hard to provide in a safe and orderly environment at AMS so that students can learn and meet with success. As we begin a new term, it is important to review school expectations and rules with our students. To ensure we work together, we ask that parents and guardians please reviews the school rules and policies posted in the student agenda.

**Dress Code/Expectations** – The BCPS Student Handbook states, “All students have the responsibility to follow dress code expectations to help set the proper standard of school and social behavior.” Appropriate clothing for school is essential to support an atmosphere conducive to learning. Arbutus Middle students are expected to show good judgment, as well as respect for self and school, in their choice of clothing. Skin-tight clothing, see-through shirts, strapless shirts, halter-tops, or shirts that expose skin between the bottom of the shirt and the top of the pants/shorts/skirt may not be worn. Shirts that are low-cut or revealing are prohibited. Baggy pants that sag below the waist are not acceptable. Undergarments should not be visible at any time. Pajamas and/or slippers may not be worn. Shorts and skirts must be of appropriate length. Students who are not following the school dressed code will be provided with alternate options for clothing or will have the option of calling home for a change of clothes. As the cold weather arrives, this is a reminder that students dress appropriately for the weather and stow all jackets and coats in lockers.

**Fast Food Deliveries** - Over three hundred students eat in our cafeteria each day. We are happy to have this time to engage with our students outside of classes and give our Eagles time to socialize. In the interest of safety and to maintain orderly lunch shifts, we ask that parents do not
drop off fast food to individual or groups of students for lunch. We understand that there is an occasional situation when lunch cannot be provided from the home. In these cases, students are encouraged to use our cafeteria and/or pack a lunch. Any fast food lunches brought to the school will need to be consumed in the office or conference room. No outside deliveries from companies such as Grub Hub or Uber Eats are allowed for security reasons. Please contact administration with any questions regarding this school policy.

**Cell phones/Students on Social Media** – The school cell phone policy states that phones must be “off and put away in lockers” during school hours. Students have generally been very good at following this school rule, but as a reminder, students are not allowed to carry cell phones during the school day unless they have permission to have them at lunch. If students need to get in touch with parents for any reason, they can do so in the school office. Cell phones of students who do not comply with this rule will be taken and kept in the school safe for parent pickup. Additionally, we ask that parents and guardians closely monitor their children’s time on social media. Conflict between students that has started outside of school on social media sites can result in disruption to the instructional day. This is a growing problem in schools, especially among middle school students who do not always have the developmental maturity to appropriately navigate negative peer interactions on social media. Middle school students are very susceptible to social pressures and potentially dangerous interactions with strangers when they have unsupervised access to social media. We ask that parents and guardians do their part in keeping students safe by talking to them about interactions on social media sites, by being aware of their activity on social media, and by monitoring or limiting cell phone use.

**Emergency Contacts** - It is crucial that the school is provided with updated school parent/guardian contact information. Additionally, parents and guardians must notify the school office if there are any changes to emergency contact information. School-Identified Emergency Contacts can be found in Schoology. Carefully select the “Emergency Contacts” that you identify in your child’s Emergency Information. If you cannot be reached in a school-identified emergency, these are the individuals we will contact and the only individuals to whom we will release your child. For weather and other emergencies identified by the Baltimore County Police and/or Fire Department, we will consult the emergency contacts you have provided.

The faculty and staff at AMS wish our families a safe and happy holiday season!

Michelle P. Feeney  
Principal

*Home of Eagle P.R.I.D.E.*