

# THE CLARKSBURG CHEETAH

Week of January 27, 2025



**TRANSLATED NEWSLETTER:** [Amharic](#) [Chinese](#) [French](#) [Korean](#) [Spanish](#)

## IMPORTANT DATES:

- Tuesday, 1/28** Last day of the Second Marking Period
- Wednesday, 1/29** No School for Students - Professional Day for Teachers
- Tuesday, 2/4** PTA Meeting (Virtual - [LINK](#)), 6:30 PM
- Monday, 2/17** Holiday - Presidents' Day - No School for Students and Staff
- Friday, 2/28** Early Release Day - Students Dismissed at 1:20 PM

Dear Clarksburg Elementary School Families,

I hope that everybody had a relaxing and enjoyable weekend. It looks like the weather is going to give us a break from the bitter cold and wintry precipitation. As you know, we do not have school on Wednesday due to a Professional Day for teachers. When students return to school on Thursday, they will be starting the third making period. It is hard to believe that we are already at the midway point of the 2024-2025 school year.

The Clarksburg Elementary School Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Week of Service is continuing for one more week. The project is centered on collecting personal care items for the Clarksburg Little Free Pantry. Please see all of the details for this event later in this newsletter.

Please see the additional information below to learn more about the exciting things that we are doing and the Montgomery County Public School system is offering. As always, please contact the office if you have any questions or concerns. Take care and stay safe.

Sincerely,

*Carl Robert Bencal*

Carl Bencal  
Principal

**CLARKSBURG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR SERVICE PROJECT**



**2025**

**PERSONAL CARE ITEMS DRIVE**

**All Items Collected will be donated  
to the  
Clarksburg Little Free Pantry**

**Items will be collected from  
Tuesday, January 21st - Friday, January 31st**

Grade Level	Collection Assignment
Kindergarten	Deodorant and Body Lotion
Grade 1	Dental Floss and Dental Picks
Grade 2	Liquid Hand Soap and Bar Soap
Grade 3	Body Wash and New Washcloths
Grade 4	Shampoo and Conditioner
Grade 5	Toothpaste and Toothbrushes

**PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILDREN BRING IN THEIR DONATIONS AND GIVE  
THEM TO THEIR HOMEROOM TEACHERS.**

## MCPS Media Announcement Regarding Change of School Assignments (COSA)

### Student Transfer Application Season Schedule from February 3, 2025 through April 1, 2025

ROCKVILLE, Maryland – Montgomery County parents/guardians who wish to request a Change of School Assignment (COSA) for their children from their home school may begin the process during the upcoming transfer season; from February 3 through April 1, 2025.

Students in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) are expected to attend the school within the established attendance area in which they reside (home school) or assigned in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students may apply for Change of School Assignment (COSA) from the home school, or the school of assignment through the IEP process, based on the following criteria:

- When a documented unique hardship is shown: Students may apply for a COSA when extenuating circumstances related to their specific physical, mental or emotional well-being or their family's individual or personal situation could be mitigated by a change of school assignment.
- When a family moves within Montgomery County and wishes to continue attending their former home school, they may request a COSA without demonstrating a unique hardship. Such requests may be considered for a remainder of the current school year only, with the exception that students in Grade 11 or 12 may be granted a COSA to stay through high school graduation.
- When a student seeks to attend the school where a sibling will be enrolled in the regular/general school program, or a special education program, during the year the student wants to enroll.
  - ▶ When a sibling attends a magnet, language immersion or other application program at elementary level, a COSA may be approved to the regular school program for other sibling on a case-by-case basis. Such approval requires consideration of available classroom space, grade-level enrollment, staffing allocations, or other factors that impact the schools involved.

*The criteria above regarding siblings do not apply if a boundary change has occurred or if the sibling is in PreK. Consideration will be given to school capacity and other issues that impact the ability of the requested school to admit new students.*

The transfer process begins in the home school, where parents/guardians may request the *Change of School Assignment (COSA) Information Booklet* through ParentVue. The booklet describes the process, and provides useful information. Beginning the first week of February 2025, the COSA booklet will be available in both English and Spanish. Exempt countywide programs that do not fall under the transfer guidelines are listed in the booklet.

New for the 2025-2026 school year, parents must submit their request for a change of school assignment (COSA) online through their ParentVue portal. The parent making the request will be copied on an email notification sent to the administrative team of the student's current school shortly after the submission; this will serve as their "receipt" of request and will be sent to the email they entered when completing the online form.

For information about assignments for students residing in the Northeast, Downcounty or Middle School Magnet Consortium areas, please contact the Division of Consortia Choice and Application Program Services at 240-740-7800 or visit their website at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/schoolchoice](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/schoolchoice).

For more information about the transfer process, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the principal at their home school. Non-english speaking students and parents/guardians who may require assistance may contact ASK MCPS to get the information they need by telephone at 240-740-3000. Telephone operators who speak English and Spanish are available from 7:30am to 5:30pm, Monday through Friday. Parents who speak languages other than English or Spanish who call the ASK MCPS telephone line and identify their language will have their questions answered through a telephone interpreter.

## Montgomery County Public Library's MoComCon Contests

MCPL's annual MoComCon Art and Essay Contests are OPEN and accepting entries. The deadline for Art and Essay Contest entries is **Monday, February 24, 2025 at 5 PM!**

Combine your love of art and fandoms by entering MoComCon's 2025 Art contest! Create artwork of your favorite character from any fandom, book, television show, movie, game, or invent your own original character! There are three categories for this contest: Child (Grades 3-8), Teen (Grades 9-12), and Adult (Ages 19+).

[Art Contest Form \(PDF\)](#)

If you love to write, then MoComCon's essay contest is for you! Write an essay, using the following prompt: *Sell your fandom!* In this essay, imagine you get on an elevator and are heading to your favorite comic convention. You have the length of the elevator ride to convince your fellow riders to come to the convention with you. In your essay: 1) tell them about your fandom, 2) why you like your fandom and, 3) recommend some of your favorite characters, authors, books, etc. that would help a new fan explore your fandom. The Essay Contest is split into three age groups: Child (Grades 3-5), Middle School (Grades 6-8), and Teens & Adult (Grade 9+).

[Essay Contest Form \(PDF\)](#)

Entry forms for both the art and essay contests must be included with all submissions and all submissions must be submitted electronically. Contest finalists and winners will be notified by e-mail or phone prior to MoComCon.

### Cosplay Contest Happens at MoComCon 2025!

Is cosplay or dressing up more your style? Our Cosplay contest is for you! The Cosplay contest is open to ages 13-adult on the day of MoComCon, Saturday, March 22, 2025. Entry forms will be accepted at the Black Rock Center for the Arts (adjacent to Germantown Library) starting at 1:30 PM. on Saturday, January 25. No electronic submissions will be accepted. The contest is limited to the first 20 entries in each age group. Parent/guardian signature is required for ages 17 and under.

Children ages 0–12 may participate in a cosplay parade that will be held on Sunday, March 23, 2025 at the Germantown Library. Line-up begins at 1:30 PM. Parade begins promptly at 1:45 PM. First 30 kids only. Children's names will not be announced. Children will not be judged.

[Cosplay Contest Form \(PDF\)](#)

MoComCon 2025 will take place at the BlackRock Center for the Arts on Saturday, March 22, 2024 and at the Germantown Library on Sunday, March 23, 2024! For more information, please visit the MoComCon [website](#).

## **Due to Weather Closures, MCPS School Year Extended by One Day**

This January has been a challenging month for our community, with freezing temperatures, snow and icy conditions affecting our daily routines. Students, staff and families have navigated these tough weeks with resilience, being cautious while traveling and layering up against the cold. We can now look forward to a welcome warm-up in the coming days; however, we must make a necessary adjustment to the school calendar due to the weather-related closures earlier this month.

Schools and offices were closed on Monday, Jan. 6, 2025, Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025, and Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2025. The 2024–2025 MCPS school calendar includes 182 instructional days, two more than the state of Maryland's minimum requirement of 180. As a result, the closures on Jan. 6 and Jan. 7 will not affect the school calendar. However, the closure on Jan. 8 requires using one designated make-up day in the calendar. **The school year will be extended by one day, with the last day of school for students now scheduled as an early release day on Monday, June 16, 2025. Additionally, Friday, June 13, 2025, which was scheduled as an early release day, will now be a full instructional day for students.**

Should there be more closures, further calendar adjustments will need to be considered, MCPS may request a waiver from the state-mandated 180 instructional days from the Maryland State Department of Education. To qualify for a waiver, however, MCPS must demonstrate efforts to make up lost instructional time, including adjusting the existing school calendar.

During severe weather, closure decisions are made to maintain the safety of students and staff. Should our community receive any further weather-related closures, resulting in necessary calendar changes, those changes will be determined and communicated swiftly.

Clarksburg High School Presents:



**By Jeffrey Hatcher**  
adapted from the book  
by Harry Allard and James Marshall

**JANUARY 31 AT 7:00PM**  
**FEBRUARY 1 AT 1:00PM & 7:00PM**  
**CLARKSBURG HIGH SCHOOL - 22500 WIMS RD.**

**ALL TICKETS \$5**

Bring a Children's book for a chance to be entered in  
a raffle! All books will be donated to local  
elementary schools