



Dear Parents, Teachers, and Students,

Welcome back! We hope you've enjoyed the more relaxed days of summer and time with your family. As we embark on a non-traditional school year, I know we all have lots of questions, uncertainties, and some anxiety about how things will work and how our children will adjust to yet another layer of the temporary "new normal". While I wish I had all the answers to these questions, I do know this: our kids are resilient and they take their cues from us. They are still excited about a new school year and all that that brings - whether in person or online. While the inevitable technological issues are challenging and the disappointments that arise from not being physically in school are frustrating, I am hopeful that as time goes on this will improve. In the meantime, I keep reminding myself to try to model patience, adaptability, and enthusiasm for my kids because I know they are watching how I react to these situations. It's not always easy, but so much depends on it!

Given the circumstances, the PTA will be operating a bit differently this year. In response to the feedback on the parent survey, we will be prioritizing certain activities that can be conducted virtually and that the community is most interested in. The calendar of events will necessarily have to be more flexible as things change and we adapt to evolving conditions. In this context, we need your help and creativity this year more than ever before. Our kids don't get to do this year over again - this is their one and only chance at it, so let's do whatever we can to make it a good one! Please join the PTA, volunteer for an open committee position, sign up for Remind alerts, our listserv, and Facebook group, and help us fundraise as you shop.

Stay tuned for more information and best of luck in the new school year!

Alyson Kozma - PTA President



## Virtual Learning Tips

Distance learning is new to MCPS and requires us to approach education in a new way. As we work through this new model, we will need to adjust our plans and expectations as we become better e-learners. Here are a few tips to get us started:

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT  
SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR THE  
NEW SCHOOL YEAR:

PATIENCE

FLEXIBILITY

and grace



- Set up a good routine and stick to a schoolwork schedule
- Establish a consistent learning space
- Reduce distractions so children can focus on their teacher
- Avoid electronics during breaks
- Monitor student's online learning to keep them on track
- Help kids stay in touch with friends
- Reach out to your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns
- **Be positive and flexible!**

## DES PTA Links

- [Diamond ES PTA Website](#)
- [DES PTA Spirit Store](#)
- [DES PTA Membership Form](#)
- [DES PTA – Get Involved!](#)

## DES School Links

- [School Supply List](#)
- [MCPS Classroom/Canvas](#)
- [ParentVue](#)
- [StudentVue](#)

## MCPS Links

- [Meal Service Program](#)
- [Zoom Tips and Best Practices](#)
- [MCPS Digital Backpack](#)

## Calendar of Events

### September

- 1-4 – Decorate Your Door
- 4 – Early Release (11:30)
- 4 – Back to School Social
- 7 – No School (Labor Day)
- 21 – Restaurant Night
- 28 – No School

### October

- 2 – Early Release (11:30)

### November

- 3 – No School (Election Day)
- 5-18 – Virtual Book Fair
- 9 – No School (Prof Day)
- 11-12 – Early Release (11:30)
- 25 – Early Release (11:30)
- 26-27 – No School (Thanksgiving)



## Diamond Spotlight

### John S

**Teacher & Grade:** Mrs Trego – Grade 5

**What's your Superhero name and what powers do you have?** My Superhero name is Spiderman and my powers are climbing walls, shooting webs and superhero strength.

**What do you want to be when you grow up?** I want to be an architect.

**Who is your role model? Why?** My 18year old cousin, Nicholas, is my role model because he is nice, smart and he is strong.

**What are you doing to prepare for distance learning this year?** I set up a new desk and organized my supplies. I also check email.

### Ms Hugg

**What do you do here at Diamond and how long have you been at our school?** I am a fifth grade teacher and have been teaching at Diamond for 20 years

**If you could be an animal, what would you be? Why?** I would be an elephant because they are calm, intelligent, and protective.

**What is your dream vacation?** I would love to visit Greece!

**Where did you grow up? Which elementary school did you attend?** I grew up in a small town outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania called Belle Vernon. The name of my elementary school was Rostraver Elementary.

**Given our circumstances, what special message would you like to share with our fifth graders?** We know this is a challenging year, but you can do hard things and we will be here to help you!!!!



## Girls on the Run



**Calling all 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade girls!!**

Are you ready to run, build friendships, play games, and crush a team 5k? Then, Girls on the Run is just what you're looking for! [Learn more here.](#)

We will be holding practices outside and in-person (socially distanced) and will move to virtual in the event of any changes in COVID related protocols.

**Starting September 30<sup>th</sup>, practices will be held Monday and Wednesday from 4:30pm – 5:45pm on the Marquis Drive field next to Diamond.**

[Register here](#) and let one of the head coaches know if you have any questions.

Joanna Crandall: [jocrandall@hotmail.com](mailto:jocrandall@hotmail.com)

Elizabeth Petraglia: [Elizabeth.petraglia@gmail.com](mailto:Elizabeth.petraglia@gmail.com)

## Virtual Book Fair

We have now confirmed Book Fair dates.  
Mark your calendar!!

**November 5<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>**

This year will, of course, be a bit different. Our fair will take place virtually. We are looking into possibly hosting some special events during the fair to keep things fun for Diamond students, staff and families.

Be on the look out for more details soon as we re-invent Diamond's book fair experience while encouraging the love of reading for the entire Diamond community.



## Diamond Dolphins Spirit Gear

Show your Diamond pride while supporting the PTA. ***Our brand new Spirit Gear Store is open for business!***

We have some **new designs** to choose from, including a limited edition "face mask" logo, just for the 2020-2021 school year.

Every design is available on a wide variety of t-shirt colors, sizes, and styles. Not into t-shirts? You can also get Diamond ES tank tops, hoodies, sweatshirts, even face masks. Not into clothes? You can still get Diamond ES stickers, pins, mugs, magnets, pillows, tote bags, phone cases and more!



## Girl Scouts

The Girl Scout program prepares girls for a lifetime of leadership, success and adventure in a safe, no-limits place designed for and by girls!

**Girl Scout troops are forming and have spaces for girls and adults at Diamond ES.**

## Become a Girl Scout family!

To sign up to attend our **virtual meeting on 9/14/2020 6:00 PM** or to get more information go to the [Girl Scout Troop Formation](#) site.

**#WhereGirlsConnect**



## After School Activities

We have an outstanding selection of After School Programs for Fall 2020. Most of them take place VIRTUALLY! The [After School Activities](#) list is constantly being updated so please check out the Diamond ES PTA website for the most current program offerings

**IMPORTANT: Sign up directly with the program providers.**

Program Name	Program Description
<a href="#">Busy Bees</a>	Art program exploring different mediums while having fun. New theme for each session
<a href="#">Chess Club</a>	Theme of the week, student games and daily tournaments
<a href="#">Cook Kitiz</a>	NEW this fall!! An all-inclusive, educational and delicious cooking project delivery service, to have the Young Chef experience at home
<a href="#">Creative Kids Drama</a>	An innovative and dynamic literature based drama program. Explore and dramatize specially selected children's stories
<a href="#">Foreign Language</a>	A fun introduction to a new language where children learn and practice speaking with storytelling, puppets, songs, activities and games. Chinese, French and Spanish offered
<a href="#">Girls on the Run</a>	Inspiring 3-5 <sup>th</sup> grade girls to recognize their inner strength and celebrate what makes them one of a kind through running, activities and dynamic discussions
<a href="#">Hoop Education</a>	Learn, Sweat, Play is an outdoor afternoon program where kids can come out, run and play, and get a chance to socialize with other kids and coaches each day of the week
<a href="#">JumpBunch</a>	Focus on all phases of physical growth that include fine/gross motor skills, hand/eye coordination, body balance, agility, and muscle development right from home.
<a href="#">MSA Sports</a>	Social distancing skills based sports programs. Baseball, basketball, golf, soccer, street hockey and tennis offered
<a href="#">MusicStart</a>	A keyboard-based music learning system that balances fun and development of skills. Using familiar songs, it teaches all the necessary basics to get started playing music
<a href="#">Panda Programmer</a>	Online computer programming classes are a great way to learn coding remotely. Experienced teachers create an individualized curriculum for each student
<a href="#">Science &amp; Engineering</a>	Sparking curiosity in children with playful, interactive, hands-on science and engineering activities. Children learn by doing with exciting experiments and projects
<a href="#">Shining Kids Yoga</a>	Children develop strength, balance, and flexibility by learning basic yoga poses and breathing techniques. Kids will learn body awareness and gain self confidence
<a href="#">Silver Knights Chess</a>	Children learn the fundamentals of chess, develop playing strategies, and play practice matches with classmates
<a href="#">Spark Business Academy</a>	Children participate in innovative classes on financial literacy and entrepreneurship, laying the foundation for healthy financial habits early in life
<a href="#">Tippi Toes Dance Academy</a>	We incorporate our original dance music to introduce dancing or to further enhance the dance experience! Pop Stars (grades 1-3) and Hip Hop (grades 3-5) are offered



## Join the PTA Today!

You have your virtual school space ready, you picked up the Chromebook, you *finally* have all the usernames and passwords you need-- back to school is definitely different this year! But one thing that hasn't changed is that we still need YOU to join the Diamond PTA! Our PTA is more important than ever to keep us all connected this year, when we can't come together in-person as a community.

PTA dues this year are unchanged: \$20 for a single membership, a discounted \$35 rate for a 2-member family, \$15 for grandparents or other community members, and \$10 for Diamond teachers and staff. Remember, dues go directly back to Diamond students and teachers!

### What does Diamond PTA do?

- We are brainstorming creative ways to engage the Diamond community virtually, including virtual events!
- We reimburse Diamond teachers for supplies they need to make your child's virtual learning experience great.
- We support staff appreciation to thank our amazing teachers for all their hard work.
- We advocate for Diamond and for all of our children, at the county, state, and national levels. **This includes advocacy around school boundaries and COVID decision making!**
- We connect parents, sharing information and building community and friendships (all virtually for now!)
- We are busy parents, teachers, and staff just like you who want the best for Diamond's kids!

Joining is easy on our website: [despta.org/join](https://despta.org/join). We are encouraging everyone to sign up online rather than providing paper membership forms this year. But, if you are having issues with online signup or would like a PDF form emailed to you, please contact

Elizabeth Petraglia at [membership@despta.org](mailto:membership@despta.org).

Catch the wave – join the PTA TODAY!



# POTOMAC PIZZA.



[www.PotomacPizza.com](https://www.PotomacPizza.com)



**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21! 4-8PM**

CLICK THE FUNDRAISER TAB  
ONLINE AND SELECT YOUR GROUP

**DIAMOND ELEMENTARY!**

**20% OF THE  
DINE IN, CARRY OUT  
& DELIVERY SALES  
GO BACK TO  
THE SCHOOL!**



TRAVILLE - 9709 TRAVILLE GATEWAY DR.  
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850 301-279-2234

## Diamond ES Restaurant Night

You and your family  
deserve a break!

Join all your  
Diamond friends  
*(in a socially distant  
way, of course!)*  
in supporting the  
Diamond PTA and  
a local business

**Monday, September 21  
4-8pm**



## Cash for Diamond Dolphins

Here are some of the ways you can help earn money for Diamond Elementary PTA!  
Take a look at some of the partnerships we have. Thank you for your support!

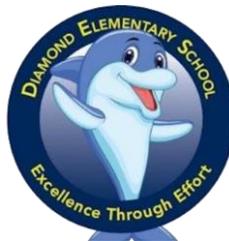


AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know! Same products, same prices, same service, and you can even use your current Amazon account. To get started, **go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Diamond Elementary School PTA as your charitable organization.** Then, every time you shop at smile.amazon.com. Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases back to the school.



**Box Tops for Education is going digital!**  
Download the new Box Top mobile app and scan store receipts for instant earnings. Traditional clip tops are being phased out, but are still found on some packaging. If you find a clipped Box Top, keep together and mail to the school.

**PTA - Box tops**  
4 Marquis Dr, Gaithersburg MD 20878



**Make a direct donation to the Diamond ES PTA!**  
Navigate to the [PayPal](#) page on the PTA website



When you shop Harris teeter brands, a percentage of your purchase is donated to the school that your VIC card is linked to. There is no limit to how much we can earn! **Link or Re-link your VIC card for 2020-2021 today! Re-linking is required every August. [CODE:7261](#)** Or e-mail [irene.chan.sf.331@gmail.com](mailto:irene.chan.sf.331@gmail.com) with your VIC number.



There are **codes found under the bottles caps or inside cardboard boxes of Coke products** that can be entered online for cash value. You can mail the plastic bottles caps and/or codes from cartons to school. If you prefer to enter the codes yourself, visit <https://us.coca-cola.com/give/> for more information.



## MCPS Recovery of Education Guide

On August 25<sup>th</sup>, the Montgomery County Board of Education voted to approve the MCPS Fall 2020 Recover Plan. MCPS will remain in a virtual-only instructional model through the first semester, which ends on January 29, 2021.

State and local health officials continue to monitor the situation in Montgomery County and will work together to determine when conditions in our county allow for students and staff to return safely after the first semester.

The [MCPS Recovery Guide](#) provides a roadmap for how the district will ensure students have flexibility and receive a high-quality learning experience. The recovery plan will be revised as we adjust to our new learning environment.

## Diamond ES PTA Calendar 2020-2021

### September

**1-4** – Decorate Your Door  
**4** – Early Release (11:30)  
**4** – Back to School Social  
**7** – No School (Labor Day)  
**21** – Restaurant Night  
**28** – No School

### October

**2** – Early Release (11:30)

### November

**3** – No School (Election Day)  
**5-18** – Virtual Book Fair  
**9** – No School (Prof Day)  
**11-12** – Early Release (11:30)  
**25** – Early Release (11:30)  
**26-27** – No School (Thanksgiving)

### December

**24-31** – No School (Winter Break)

The complete Diamond ES PTA Calendar will be available on the [website](#)



Click the links to **Stay in the Know**  
and to **Connect with Us!**



## Get Involved!

Joining the PTA is a quick and easy way to support our school. Simply fill out the online [PTA Membership Form](#).

Becoming an active member ensures that your child (or grandchild!) has lots of fun activities to participate in throughout the year. There are several ways to help:

- **Volunteer for a PTA sponsored event.** Be on the look out for volunteer requests (especially when we return to in-person activities!) on Facebook, Twitter, Remind and all our social media outlets
- **Become a Committee Chair.** Lead one-time or recurring programs. Pick one that requires a brief commitment or one that puts you in charge of a team. With so many committees, there is one that is right for YOU! Check out the full [Committee List](#). **Let us know asap if you're interested in any of these Committee Chairs:**
  - **Readathon**
  - **Restaurant Night**
  - **Staff Appreciation**
  - **NAACP Parent Representative**
  - **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Join the PTA Board.** Help us set the tone and trajectory for the PTA. Reach out to our current [Board Members](#) with any questions.
  - President: [Alyson Kozma](#)
  - VP - Community: [Chuck Clapper](#)
  - Treasurer: [Jennifer Gribskov Panackal](#)
  - Secretary: [Oksana Agba](#)



## PTA Meeting Info

Virtual meetings will take place each month. We will discuss PTA activities and get updates from school Administration

- Join us remotely by clicking the [Online Link](#)
- Join us by phone: 605.562.0400 (enter access code 239 3963#)
- Review notes, slides, audio recordings and related materials from previous PTA meetings: [PTA Meeting Records](#)

## Fundraising Opportunities

In addition to all of our great programs, activities and events, there are many other ways to financially support the PTA.

- **Direct Donation.** Support the PTA directly by navigating to the [PayPal](#) page on the PTA website.
- **Box Tops for Education.** Find more details [here](#).
  - Mobile: download the app and scan store receipts for instant earnings.
  - Traditional: Send box tops to school with your child.
- **Amazon Smile.** Every Amazon purchase supports the PTA at no cost to you. Simply shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Diamond Elementary School PTA.
- **Coca-Cola Give.** Navigate to [coke.com/give](https://coke.com/give), search for Diamond Elementary and scan the code under the bottle cap of [participating brands](#).
- **Harris Teeter's Together in Education Program.** Link your VIC card to 7261 (Diamond's school code).

Do you have an idea or feedback for the Diamond Gems Newsletter? **We'd love to hear from you!** Send your requests and comments to the [Diamond Gems Suggestion Box](#). We'll get back to you asap.



## 2020-2021 PTA Board, Committees, & Chairpersons

Board Position	Member	Email
President	Alyson Kozma	<a href="mailto:President@diamondespta.org">President@diamondespta.org</a>
Vice President – Community	Chuck Clapper	<a href="mailto:Community@diamondespta.org">Community@diamondespta.org</a>
Vice President – Fundraising	Need replacement	<a href="mailto:Fundraising@diamondespta.org">Fundraising@diamondespta.org</a>
Treasurer	Jennifer Gribskov Panackal	<a href="mailto:Treasurer@diamondespta.org">Treasurer@diamondespta.org</a>
Secretary	Oksana Agba	<a href="mailto:Secretary@diamondespta.org">Secretary@diamondespta.org</a>

Committee	Chair(s)
After School & Extracurricular Activities	<a href="#">Dipesh Shah</a>
Andrea Virga Winter Coat Drive	<a href="#">Shannon Phelan</a> <a href="#">Nazzi Kholdebarin</a>
Back to School Social	<a href="#">Kristy King</a>
Book Fair	<a href="#">Elsa Flores</a> <a href="#">Mílva Simões</a>
Box Tops & Giant A+	<a href="#">Irene Chan</a>
Bulletin Board	<a href="#">Elsa Flores</a> <a href="#">Luisa McFate</a>
Cluster Rep – Northwest	<a href="#">Andrea Richardson</a>
Cluster Rep – Quince Orchard	<a href="#">Bonnie Cybulko</a> <a href="#">Allison Fisher</a>
Cultural Arts	<a href="#">Ranjini Iyengar</a> <a href="#">Kristina Sracic</a> <a href="#">Lisa Weinstein</a> <a href="#">Mina Yoo</a>
Curb Appeal	<a href="#">John Rouse</a> <a href="#">Jayson Simmkoveak</a>
Diamond Gems Newsletter	<a href="#">Mílva Simões</a>
Directory	<a href="#">Pegah Borzognia</a>
Diversity & Inclusion	<a href="#">Purvi Desai</a> (Need a co-chair)
Dolphin Dash	<a href="#">Jass Gosal</a> (Need a co-chair)
Facebook Moderators	Executive Board
Family Fun Finn-Go Night	<a href="#">Nazzi Kholdebarin</a>
Family Fun Movie Night	<a href="#">Elsa Flores</a>
Family Fun Valentine Dance	<a href="#">Allison Fisher</a>
Fifth Grade Recognition	<a href="#">Allison Fisher</a> <a href="#">Asawari Ketkar</a> <a href="#">Megha Bavarva</a>

Committee	Chair(s)
Food Drive	(Need a Chair)
Fundraising - Readathon	(Need a Chair)
Girls on the Run	<a href="#">Joanna Crandall</a> <a href="#">Elizabeth Petraglia</a>
Group Moderator	<a href="#">Shannon Little</a>
Group Piano	<a href="#">Bonnie Cybulko</a>
International Night	<a href="#">Nazzi Kholdebarin</a> <a href="#">Reza Emtiaznoori</a>
MCCPTA Delegates	<a href="#">Alyson Kozma</a> <a href="#">Chuck Clapper</a>
Membership	<a href="#">Elizabeth Petraglia</a>
NAACP Parents Counsel Representative	(Need a Chair)
Nominating Committee	<a href="#">Billy Newson</a>
Pastries for Parents	(Need a Chair – 2021/22)
Principal's Coffee	<a href="#">Richard Burton</a>
Restaurant Nights	<a href="#">Bonnie Cybulko</a> (Need a co-chair)
Room Parent Coordinator	<a href="#">Sarah Burton</a>
Social Justice and Community Service	(Need a Chair)
Special Needs Representative	<a href="#">Dave Stevenson</a> <a href="#">Maggie Stevenson</a>
Spirit Wear	<a href="#">Katherine Hall</a> <a href="#">Dave Stevenson</a> <a href="#">Adynda Fara</a>
Staff Appreciation	<a href="#">Jamila Denney</a> <a href="#">Swati Dadhich</a> <a href="#">Corrine Lake</a> (Need a co-chair)
Website	<a href="#">Dave Stevenson</a>