# Rodgers Forge Chronicles

**RFES empowers all students to be lifelong learners who are committed to academic excellence and global citizenships.**

## January

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | School Reopens |
| 3 | Spirit Day |
| 8 | Coffee and Connect 9:15 AM |
| 9 | PTA Meeting 6:30 PM / SIT |
| 16 | DEI Meeting 6:00 PM |
| 20 | Schools & Offices Closed MLK Birthday observed |
| 22 | Swag Shop |
| 24 | Peacemaker House Party |
| 25 | 3-Hour Early Dismissal / 2nd Marking Period Ends |
| 29 | School Closed for Students PD for Teachers |
| 31 | College Gear Day |
| 31 | Jump Rope for Heart |

## February

| | |
|---|---|
| 5 | Coffee and Connect 9:15 AM |
| 6 | Report Card Distribution |
| 7 | Spirit Day |
| 10-14 | Book Fair Week |
| 17 | Schools & Offices Closed President's Day observed |

## *Principal's Greeting*

***January 2025***

Dear Rodgers Forge Families,

**Happy New Year!** I hope that you had a wonderful and relaxing winter break! Over the break, my family and I enjoyed walking around the "Forge" and taking in all of the festive lights that reinforce that **"Love Lives Here"**! The "RFES Love" continues inside of the walls of RFES, also. With help from the PTA in purchasing colorful lights, our SGA officers wanted to continue the tradition of demonstrating the same **CONNECTION** from classroom to classroom with lights. **They are just as beautiful and meaningful as the lights in the neighborhood!**

**Rodgers Forge Elementary has been ranked as the #1 elementary school in Maryland** according to the 2024 MSDE Report Card Data! This prestigious ranking reflects our school's excellence in multiple areas, including **academic achievement, academic progress, attendance, English language proficiency, school quality,** and **student success.** This recognition is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of our outstanding students and staff, and I could not be more proud of all they have accomplished.

I also want to take a moment to express my heartfelt appreciation to **all of YOU, our supportive families.** Your involvement, encouragement, and partnership truly make a difference, and it is through our collective efforts that we are able to achieve such great success. As the saying goes, "It takes a village," and we are so fortunate to have such a wonderful community at the Forge.

**A special congratulations goes to Ms. Thomas**, our dedicated first-grade teacher, who has been nominated by her colleagues as the **RFES Teacher of the Year**! Ms. Thomas is an exceptional educator who truly centers her work around the needs and growth of her students. We are so proud of her recognition and all the wonderful work she does in our school community.

**Additionally, we want to offer a bittersweet congratulations to Ms. Brooks**, our speech pathologist, who retired on January 1 after thirteen years of service at RFES. We are deeply grateful for her unwavering advocacy and the invaluable speech services she provided to our students over the years. While we will miss her, we wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement.

**I hope that your new year is off to a good start!!** I look forward to continuing to partner with you in 2025 as we continue to **LEVEL UP** our learning at RFES!

**RFESstrong,**

***Michele Rowland, principal***

# News from the Counselor's Corner

## Virtue for January

The virtue for the month of January is **UNITY**."Unity helps us work and live together peacefully. We feel connected with each other and all living things. We value the specialness of each person as a gift, not as a reason to fight or be scared. With unity we accomplish more together than any one of us could alone."

You are practicing unity when you …

- Treat all people as members of one human family
- See the gifts in differences
- Refuse to join in when others express prejudice
- Solve conflict through listening and finding solutions
- Care for the earth and all living things
- Act like a peacemaker wherever you go

## Theme for January Lessons

The theme for this month's lessons is **Character**. Students in primary grades will have lessons that focus on active and whole body listening, as well as self-control. The intermediate grades will focus on empathy, growth mindset, and responsible technology use (topics vary depending upon specific grade levels).

## Fifth Grade Field Trip

The fifth-grade students will be taking a walking field trip to Dumbarton Middle School in January. Please look for and complete the permission slip and registration paper that will be coming home and return to school asap.

## Family and Community Engagement News

Please check out the following website for a list of upcoming parent workshops including the one on January 10.

**January 10 – 12:30 PM**
**Lunch & Learn – Who You Gonna' Call? Not Ghostbusters!**
**Virtual**
**Presented by the Center for Family Success**
Need information, contacts, clarity? Getting the run-around or at a dead-end? Get your plan of action today. Learn how to find, ask, read, contact, and resolve your questions with the right person in a productive way.

https://cdnsm5-ss3.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2744/File/FACE/Parent%20U%20Schedule%20of%20Events%20Online.pdf

Lisa Ludwig, NCC
School Counselor

# The Reading (and Writing) Corner

*There appears to be some snow in the forecast…so grab your cocoa and get ready to write!*

**The Literacy Committee is excited to announce the**

## Winter Writing Contest!

Students can compose a writing piece in <u>any genre or format</u>

to fit the title…**SNOW DAY!!**

Entries must be composed by <u>individual students</u> and can be submitted in the box outside of Ms. Day's reading room by

**Friday, January 31st**

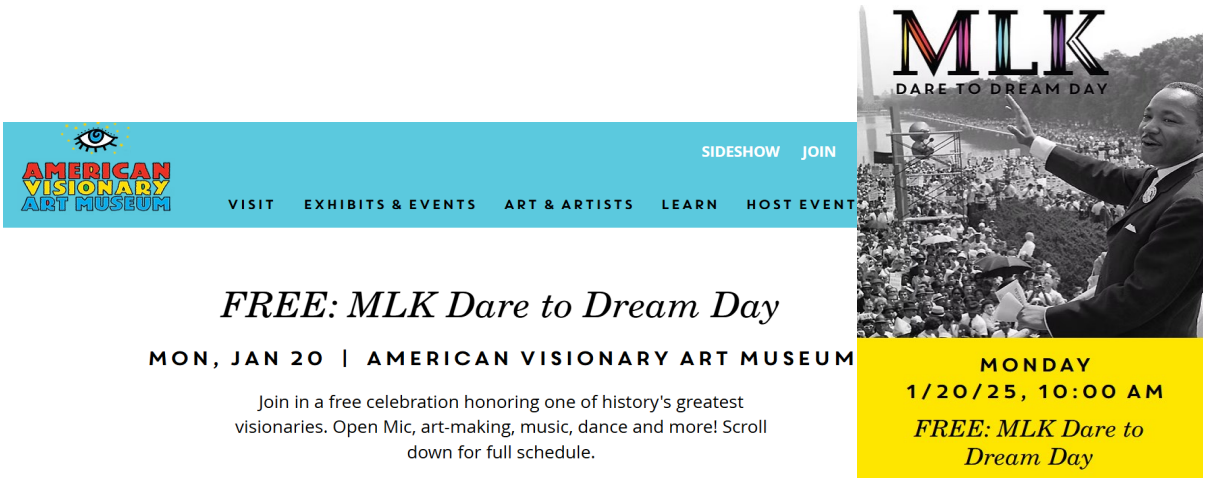
*** One winner per grade level will be chosen!

# RFES

## Happy New Year!

**In January,** we celebrate many special occasions, including New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Lunar New Year. You can explore BCPS Digital Content below to learn more about each of these events.

Free Local Event at the American Visionary Art Museum celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Click here for more information.




Lunar New Year celebration at the Walters Art Museum. Click here for more information.

WORLD BOOK STUDENT | GALE IN CONTEXT ELEMENTARY | BrainPOP | BrainPOP Français | BrainPOP Español

**Visit (BCPS Digital Content) for access to the books, articles, videos & more.**

# Vocal Music Note

**We certainly shared the many gifts of the season at the Winter Concert as well as showing off our many musical skills!**

**Congratulations** to the Chorus Club and 5th Grade students
for a wonderful concert. Your hard work and practice were evident!

**Third grade** will begin playing recorders the second full week in January.
Recorders will be available for $5 at the school store for anyone who needs to purchase one.

## Save these Date: Concert Connections

**Fifth graders** will participate in our Winter and Spring Concerts. The chorus, band and orchestra will be featured at both events. Concert attire will be white shirts and dark pants or skirts. More information will be sent home before the concert dates.
**Spring Concert**: May 20, 2025 @ 6:30

**March 11, 2025 @ 6:30** will be our school **STEAM Night.** 4th and 5th graders have the opportunity to share their talents at the **Coffeehouse**.

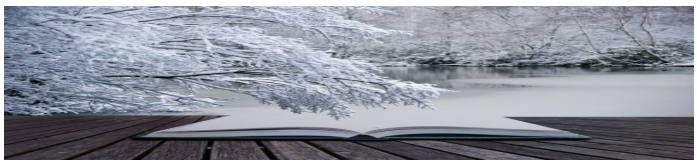
**Third Graders** will be learning to play the recorder. As part of our *Recorder Karate* program, we will celebrate our accomplishments with a concert on **April 8, 2025**. Our concert attire will be casual. School colors, red and/or white shirts, with jeans/pants/skirts and comfortable shoes.

## Any day can be a Box Top Day!

Our music department and all Rodgers Forge students benefit from the Box Tops program. We have earned $114 so far this year and will be using our funds for drums and new recorder and ukulele music!
**Please download the free Box Tops app** and scan your receipts from the grocery store, Target, and Walmart…wherever you buy Box Tops products!
Click the link or QR code below for more information!

https://www.boxtops4education.com/

# January Library Update!



**Hello everyone, from the place where we are warming up with great books, the Rodgers Forge library! Welcome to one of the most heartwarming months of the school year, and one filled with more great library units and lessons in our awesome library! Check out the bookshelves with some great choices for book checkout here at the Forge!**

## Dear Parents and Families:

Coming up in just one month - We will be working hard to keep kids reading and raise critical funds for our school with our Scholastic Book Fair from Monday, February 10th through Friday, February 14th, 25% of all sales go directly to the book budget for the Rodgers Forge Library!

The Fair will connect your kids to notable books and inspiring characters—helping them become lifelong readers. And you'll love the experience of being "Together At The Fair"!

Students will have the opportunity to have a 20 minute browsing time with their classmates. During this time they will be given a clipboard and a wish list paper. Then, later in the week, they will get a second trip to the library for a 30 minute buying time! You should see a stapled pamphlet come home with all the highlighted books at this year's fair, as well as the browsing and buying times for your child.

In addition, the Book Fair will be open on Friday, February 14th after school, so you can experience the joy of being together with great books at the 2025 Scholastic Book Fair!

Also – Ewallet will give you the opportunity to load up a set amount of money on an account so that your student doesn't have to carry cash!!

**These are some pictures of our "game-themed" library displays as we "put our pieces on the board" for a new year! Each week, your student will attend library media class, as we explore different types of literature and "be a part of the reading game together" in the search for information from books and online sources! They will enjoy read-aloud stories and get a chance to check out books! Kindergarteners and 1st Graders will be able to check out 1 book, 2nd – 4th graders take home 2, and 5th graders can check out 3!**

**January Lesson Focus – Award-Winning Books, Great Stories, and Creating Advertisements with Persuasive Techniques!**

In January, our 2nd graders will be exploring great literature and connecting story sequencing, writing persuasive letters, learning about complex character traits in literature, and many other literature connections. 5th Grade library units are in the middle of a focus on Award Winners! We will take a look at books that have won literature awards, with a special focus on the Black-Eyed Susan Award. Meanwhile, 3rd graders will be exploring complex character traits in award-winning literature! These are just a few of the topics we are covering. 4th Graders are learning about advertising techniques, while creating their own advertisements , 1st Graders are focusing on stories related to family, and Kindergarteners are becoming "Nonfiction Ninjas" as they explore the nonfiction section of the library!

# EBOOKS!!! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

What are ebooks? They are books you can read and check out on your computer right from BCPSOne!!! They have features like an on-screen reader, electronic bookmarks, and even the ability to take notes. Here is a direct link to the Library site!
https://baltimore.follettdestiny.com/common/welcome.jsp?context=saas007_1993744

## STAYING IN TOUCH

**Remember, if you have any questions, or need to contact me for any reason, you can email me at pholden@bcps.org!**

## No dogs on school property

Although we love FIDO, there are many students who are very scared of your family pet! If you are walking your dog as you walk your student to school, **please stop at the edge of the school property with your dog.** We have several students who get very anxious with the presence of dogs. Additionally, we have had a few situations where dogs have become aggressive when in the presence of another dog. We do not want students to be fearful of coming to school because of the dogs that are outside. We appreciate your understanding with this matter!

## Safety and the Drop-Off Lane

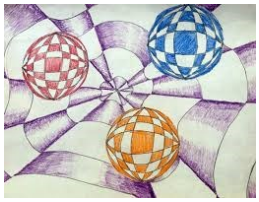
With the weather and visibility beginning to be a bit bleak with winter setting in, it is really important to be fully aware while driving in the drop-off lane. Once you drop off your child in the drop-off lane, please be sure to be pay attention to the crossing guard. **If she is crossing students and is holding the stop sign up, this applies to those cars in the drop-off lane also.** Those cars that are in the drop off lane must stop. Additionally, **please do NOT make a U-turn on Dumbarton Road in order to get in the drop-off lane.** Arrange your "commute" so that you are already in the correct lane prior to approaching Rodgers Forge. Thank you for your concerns about safety!!!

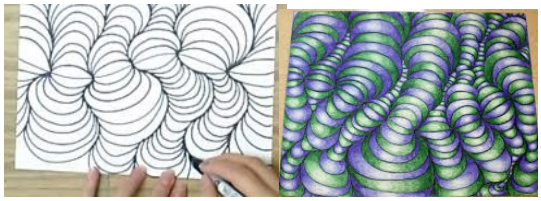
the ART room News

## In the Art Room!

**Grade 5 artists are continuing their Grafitti Thumbnail Sketches. They are working on their lettering unit involving different styles of graffiti lettering including TAG, THROW, and PIECE. Grade 5 students will be learning serveral techniques for creating both 2D and 3D letters to write their names.**

**Grades 4 artists will begin creating their Optical Art Drawings using a variety of artistic techniques, such as different values, shapes, and and sizes, to create the illusion of 3D objects and space.**





**Grade 3 student artists will be using a line, color, and value to begin creating an imaginary Op Art drawing that shows the Art Principles of Rhythm, Pattern, and Movement.**

**The 2nd grade artists are beginning to learn about several famous Optical Artists as they begin to create their OP Art paper weaving using contrasting colors. These young artist are learning the parts Grade 1 artists are including Language Arts into their artwork as they begin creating their Alphabet Soup Compositions. They are also learning all about parallel and intersecting lines, and how to create these lines using a ruler, as they create their plaid patterned table cloth/placemat for their Alphabet Soup art.**

**Kindergarten artists are "staying warm and cozy" in their art class as they begin creating their Patterned Mitten Compositions. These young artists will be exploring the art elements of SHAPE and COLOR to create different patterns.**

**Ms. Kotapish kkotapish@bcps.org**

We are continuing to get stronger every day in PE! We have some big PE events coming up in the second half of the year, Kids Heart Challenge, 5th grade ballroom dancing, Movement Education Equipment Course, Sports Day, and Teacher/5TH graders scooter ball game . Our unit of study in January is skills and activities related to the game of basketball. We kicked off our Kids Heart Challenge, (formerly known as Jump Rope for Heart) fundraiser with an assembly right before winter break. We will continue to explore ways to keep our heart healthy as we grow throughout the school year.

**Date:** 1/31/2025
**Where:** RFES Gym
**When:** During your specials area time

**Goal:** Raise $10,000.00

This event allows us to raise money for a great cause while earning free equipment for our P.E. classes. We are hoping to raise enough funds to order another 2 sets of these amazing scooters!

To get started download the Kids Heart Challenge App or visit heart.org/KHC to register.

A reminder students should wear tennis shoes and **bring water bottle**, hair pulled back/up to not interfere with vision and wear comfortable clothing for climbing, tumbling and moving each day they have P.E. Also, please make sure that shoes fit properly and have good traction. During recess wearing flip-flops, Crocs and open-toed shoes are not recommended for the playground equipment or the gym floor. Also check tennis shoes for good traction, if soles are worn down the shoes become very slippery when running.

## Upcoming Events

- Jump Rope for Heart January 31, 2025, To register visit: www.heart.org/KHC
- Ballroom Dancing (5th grade)-March 10, 2025-March 14, 2025
- Movement Education Equipment- March/Arpil2025
  - Be on the lookout for Parent Volunteers Sign-Up to help set-up and break down the equipment.
- Sports Day (Volunteers Needed-Info will be in March Chronicles)

June 2, 2022- grades K,1,2

June 3, 2022- grades 3,4,5

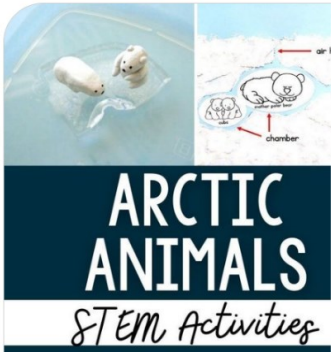
Have a healthy and active January! Mrs. Celenza

## January Green School Minute

## RFES is Keeping It Green!

Our Green School Council has started making plans for our Earth Week Fair, which will be on Friday, April 25th this year. We hope the weather will cooperate and we can be outside in the bus loop with helpful and informative information about keeping RFES as Green as we can! We will also have local vendors and Earth friendly businesses and resources. Be sure to put our Earth Day Fair on your calendar. And if you have a suggestion or know of an idea to add to our fair, please contact Michele Paris at mparis3@bcps.org.

We will likely have some cooler weather coming up along with some snowy days. Here are some great eco-friendly ideas that you can do at home this winter. If you can, take the opportunity to go outside and see what nature has to offer us in the winter in Baltimore! https://www.plt.org/educator-tips/activities-to-explore-winter-ecology/




With all the holiday gifts we will be receiving, it's also a great time to donate to your local charities. Have your child go through toys and choose those that might be suitable for a different age of child. Even adults can take this opportunity to clean out closets. Finding opportunities to give is a great way to practice re-using as well as helping those in need. The joy of giving can be a very powerful lesson for your child to learn.

Thanks for helping RFES Keep it Green!

If you get the chance to collect trash around the neighborhood, don't forget to record your collection for our efforts towards the Baltimore County Clean Green 15 Initiative.
https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/environment/cleangreen/cleangreen15.html