

# ALDRIN ADVISORY



“A FAMILY AFFAIR: HOME AND SCHOOL REMAINING FOCUSED ON LEARNING... CHILD-BY-CHILD”

October 1, 2009

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ Fall Picture Day—October 2
- ◆ Sixth Grade Class Picture—October 2
- ◆ Principal's Town Hall Meeting—October 8
- ◆ PTA Meeting—October 8
- ◆ Family Portrait Night—October 15
- ◆ Parent Conferences—November 2 & 3

## Highlights from Principal's BTSN Remarks

The 2009 - 2010 school year opened smoothly with nearly 600 students arriving to their classrooms eager and ready to start a new year of learning. That afternoon President Obama made his historic address to Aldrin students and other students across America - challenging them to work hard, set educational goals, and take responsibility for their learning.



The first week of school was highlighted with a visit by the Apollo 11 astronaut, Dr. Buzz Aldrin, our school assembly to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1969 moon landing and our 15<sup>th</sup> year as a Fairfax County public school. Our students listened attentively to Dr. Aldrin's challenges and his responses to their questions. They also made all of us proud, and especially the second astronaut to walk on the moon, when they sang along with Buzz Aldrin's musical video rap, "Rocket Experience".

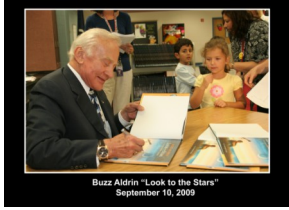


Many of our students also had a close-up look at the Apollo 11 astronaut as he autographed his new children's book,

Look to the Stars, which they had purchased.

Once again, high numbers of Aldrin students passed their SOL tests in reading, writing, math, science and social studies, with a substantial number of students scoring pass advanced, many with perfect scores of 600! Our school-wide pass rate for English Achievement in reading and writing was 94%, up from 90% and 93% for Math Achievement, up from 85%. The pass rate in English and math for nearly all of the other six sub-groups by which we are annually measured evidenced some of the highest one-year pass rate gains since the 2002-2003 school year - a real reflection of the hard work and efforts of our teachers and your children. I fully anticipate that Aldrin Elementary will be honored by the Virginia School Board and Governor Kaine for our *Academic Excellence* as a Virginia Elementary School for a third consecutive year. Additionally, nearly 50% of our 65 sixth graders met the criteria that allow them to take a compacted sixth and seventh grade math curriculum - truly reflecting the excellent mathematics teaching these students have received from kindergarten through grade 5.

Aldrin parents, teachers, and all professionals must continue to work together to live out our school theme *A Family Affair: Home and School Remaining Focused on Children and Learning... Child-by-Child*. Every Aldrin professional continue to have a complete understanding of their enormous responsibility to provide a safe and caring environment for each child. They remain committed to building and maintaining meaningful relationships with children; implementing "best practice" instructional strategies to ensure a positive impact on student learning; utilizing fre-



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- ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
- BUZZ ALDRIN

## Apollo 11 Lands on the Moon - 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In continuing the first week celebration of Dr. Buzz Aldrin's famous 1969 lunar landing, teachers and Aldrin families received a complementary copy of "A Guide for Educators" today from the Penguin Young Readers Group. This discussion guide is intended for classrooms, library, and reading group use but may also be used at home with your children. The guide provides a brief overview of five books about space exploration that are appropriate for elementary-aged students, and connects these publications to language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science curricular areas.

quent formative assessments to determine if what was taught was learned and to drive future lessons and ensure that these lessons are matched to the needs and strengths of students; and learning how to harness the power of technology to enhance the lessons they provide for each child. Aldrin teachers are also intent on teaching each child to think critically, to analyze, to problem solve and to gain a global awareness of others; knowing that these powerful skills will shape our children's future success in school, and prepare them for the American workforce as young adults.

Our partnership with parents requires home and school to work together as never before - helping children to learn the importance of honesty, integrity, moral character, and ethical judgment; guiding them to take responsibility for their learning, actions, promises and commitments, and in the manner in which they respect people, property, and authority. Most importantly, the home-school partnership must help children to learn to place their own self-interests in perspective with the interests of others in mind, and how to make smart decisions that will result in keeping each child safe. Teaching

these valuable life skills to children is our mutual responsibility. We must teach these skills by modeling them for our children and then hold one another accountable for our actions in this process. Let us continue to always remain open to hearing what is being asked or being told to one another, while keeping the needs of each child clearly in focus. I ask that you continue to trust and listen to the Aldrin professionals and remain open to what they are telling you. We will in turn do the same.

Whether you are new to our school community or if you have been with us for many years, you can be assured that Aldrin Elementary continues to be a safe, exceptional place for your child to learn and to excel, where all are afforded a gifted-quality education. I promise you that teachers will work hard to provide meaningful and enriching instructional lessons for your child, and will make sure that homework is appropriate and manageable. Please continue to be your child's "cheerleader" and advocate while supporting every Aldrin professional in his or her efforts to teach, nurture, and safeguard your son or daughter.

## Friendly Reminder about Traffic Safety Laws

Please be aware that Fairfax county Police will ticket motorists making U-turns or parking in marked turning lanes on Center Harbor Road. They will also ticket the driver if

anyone in the car is not wearing their seatbelt whether the car is in the Aldrin parking lot or on a Fairfax County roadway. Let's work to keep everyone safe.

## Fall Picture Day Tomorrow, October 2

Our annual fall pictures will be taken tomorrow, October 2, beginning at 9:30 a.m. The photographer has assured us that these pictures will be ready in time for Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays when our families may wish to share

that special picture with grandparents or other relatives and friends. The flyer you received on September 24 contained specific information, including the cost of fall pictures.

## FCPS Regulation Regarding Backpack Flyers

FCPS Regulation 1367.2 provides guidelines for posting and distributing via students' backpacks nonprofit flyers / informational materials from non-school associated groups or individuals in schools, and for the use of school newsletters and Back-to-School Nights by such entities.

At Aldrin Elementary, backpack distributions will occur at the beginning of the year on September 24 and on the first Thursday of the second, third, and fourth academic quarters—November 5, February 2, and April 13. Nonprofit flyers and information materials may also be dis-

played in a clear magazine-style rack that is located next to the entrance to the main office in our school lobby.

**Note:** All items must first be approved by the principal (or designee) and contain the following disclaimer—"These materials are neither endorsed by nor sponsored by the Fairfax County School Board, the Superintendent, or this school." or they will not be sent via student backpacks or placed in the rack. If this process is not followed, the item will neither be sent home via students' backpacks nor placed in the lobby rack.



## Kiss & Ride Safety

Whenever children and parents cross the parking lot when moving toward or away from the school building, they often encounter cars that are using the Kiss & Ride lane. This presents an unsafe situation for the child, parent, and car driver. In the effort to always keep children safe, parents who drive students to school or who pick them up in the afternoon must use our Kiss & Ride lines rather than parking prior to escorting the child into

the school in the morning or when meeting the child in the afternoon and then walking him/her to the car. Using the Kiss & Ride lines may seem to take longer; however, on most days all children are in the building by 9:10 am and afternoon riders are on their way home by 4:10 pm. Thank you in advance for following our Kiss & Ride routines and keeping all Aldrin students safe.

## Staff and Visitor Parking

Reserved spaces for most staff parking are located on the playground side of the building where buses discharge and load. Additional staff will also park in the front parking lot. During the school day when parking for school events, parents and visitors are asked to use the front parking lot, any legal street parking areas, and the Baron Cameron Park located behind the

school. During evening events, the playground side parking area may be used. The row of parking spaced located directly in front of the Exit 2 door and adjacent to the curb is intended for the use of our parents of preschool and their children. If possible, please try to save these spaces for the drives of these young students.

## 2009-2010 Thanksgiving Luncheon

Mark your calendar and plan to attend our Thanksgiving luncheon on Thursday, November 19. Important information will be coming home in a *Thursday Recorder* in November. As this special day approaches, it is important to make sure

that your child has money on his/her lunch card since that will be how your child's meal is purchased. We look forward to having you join us for this great annual event!

"SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IS OUR MAIN CONCERN"



LUNCH PRICES:  
ADULTS: \$3.65  
CHILDREN: \$2.65



## ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (AAP) [formerly GT] CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a continuum of advanced academic services for all students in grades K-8. Learning experiences are designed to develop higher-level thinking through enrichment, acceleration, and extension of the Program of Studies. Teachers, administrators, and Advanced Academic Resource Teachers (AARTs) work together to provide the following Levels of Service:

### **Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies, Grades K-6 (Level I)**

The Advanced Academic Resource Teacher and classroom teachers teach nine higher order thinking strategies across all subject areas and grade levels.

### **Differentiated Lessons in Areas of Academic Strength, Grades K-6 (Level II)**

The Advanced Academic Resource Teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to provide additional challenges and resources within the general education program. The Young Scholars Model included in this level is designed to find and nurture advanced academic potential in students from historically under-represented populations.

### **Part-Time Advanced Academic Program, Grades 3-6 (Level III)**

Students identified by a local school screening committee for advanced academic services (Level III) are challenged through models and strategies designed to extend and enrich the POS in the four core subject areas.

### **Full-Time Advanced Academic Placement, Grades 3-8 (Level IV)**

Students found eligible for placement in a full-time Advanced Academic Program (Level IV) through a central selection process receive a highly challenging instructional program in the four core subject areas.

### **IBMYP: Selected Schools, Grades 6-10**

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program is designed for students ages 11-16. The program helps students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world.

### **Honors, Grades 7-8**

Students who demonstrate high achievement in one or more areas of academic strength may participate in honors courses in any of the four core academic subject areas.

### **SCREENING**

Multiple criteria are reviewed to determine eligibility for all FCPS Advanced Academic Programs. Formal identification begins with Level III services. The local school AAP committee determines student eligibility for school-based services. The countywide AAP Central Selection Committee determines eligibility for full-time AAP (Level IV) placement.

### **TESTING**

Each fall all FCPS second grade students, as well as students in third through seventh grades who do not have ability test scores, are administered the Cognitive Abilities Test and/or the Naglieri Nonverbal Test. A second grade screening pool is established using these test results. Students in the second grade pool are automatically screened for full-time AAP (Level IV) placement. Parents/guardians may exercise their one-time retest option during the September-October testing cycle.

### **REFERRALS for FULL-TIME ADVANCED ACADEMIC PLACEMENT LEVEL IV (Grades 2-7)**

Parents/guardians of students not in the second grade screening pool may initiate

**The AAP Level IV**

**Referral Form is due**

**to the Aldrin office**

**no later than**

**February 5, 2010**



the full-time AAP (Level IV) screening process by completing and submitting an *AAP Level IV Referral Form* to the local school principal no later than February 5, 2010. No late referrals will be accepted. Second graders **not** in the pool and **all** third through seventh graders are screened only by referral. Forms are available on the AAP website and in the *Parent Information Packet* available at the local school - Enclosure 3.

### 2009 PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

Thursday, October 8 McLean HS 1633 Davidson Road, Mclean, VA 22101

Tuesday, October 13 Oakton HS 2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, VA 22181

Thursday, October 15 Annandale HS 4700 Medford Drive, Annandale, VA 22003

Monday, October 19 West Potomac HS 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria, VA 22307

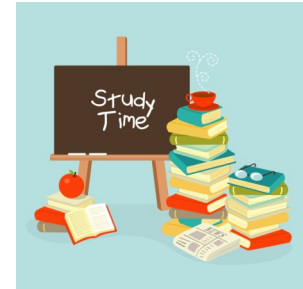
Meetings will be held in the auditorium from 7:30 to 9 p.m. and are open to the public; no registration is required. Directions are available at [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com).

For additional information contact:

Mrs. Lewis at Aldrin Elementary, 703-904-3882 or [CALewis@fcps.edu](mailto:CALewis@fcps.edu)

Advanced Academic Programs Office at Lacey Center 703-846-8670

Advanced Academic Programs Office



## Family Portrait Night Scheduled

It is not too late to participate in our annual *Family Portrait Night* on **Thursday, October 15, 2009 from 5 - 9 p.m.** Our school photographer, Blanton Studios, has assured me that you will receive your pictures in time for the holiday season and that you will be able to select from your proofs, process your order, and receive your finished photos from home. Ten dollars of the \$20.00 sitting fee will

be given to our school and you will receive a 10" x 13" photo for your donation. I intend to use the money we make to reduce the cost of our school yearbook for all students and for other instructional supply needs that may arise during the remainder of this year. Contact Mrs. Aschenbach (703-904-3806) for details about how to reserve a sitting time.

PLEASE CALL

MRS. ASCHENBACH

AT 703-904-3806

TO SIGN UP FOR

YOUR FAMILY

PORTRAIT

## Principals Town Hall Meeting

Mr. Marinoff and Aldrin staff will share the 2009-2010 **Aldrin School Improvement Plan** and discuss the process used in devel-

oping the plan. This meeting will follow the business portion of the PTA meeting on Tuesday, October 8 at 7:00 p.m.

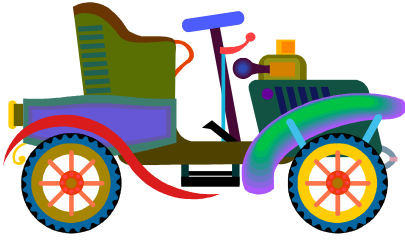
## Please Be Aware

The public can easily access a Virginia State Police web site for individuals registered in the "Sex Offender and Crimes Against Minors Registry" and reside within the same or contiguous ZIP CODE as their organization / entity. Persons can request to automatically be notified of

said registrants under "Community Notification" whenever someone new is added to the registry. The "Sex Offenders and Crimes Against Minors Registry" can be accessed on the Virginia State Police Internet Home Page at <http://sex-offender.VSP.state.va.us>



## Dismissal Reminders



In an effort to always keep children safe and fully utilize our door/video entry access security system parents are asked to follow the established dismissal process at the end of each school day. Thus, it is no longer practical to have parents wait inside of the school (alcove or lobby) for children at dismissal and parents who plan to pick-up their children at dismissal should do so through established Kiss & Ride procedures.

Students utilizing **Kiss & Ride** will be dismissed from the little theater by Aldrin instructional assistants and escorted to cars by patrols from 3:55 - 4:10 pm. Parents are to follow the *Kiss & Ride* procedures which were provided in the contract they signed.

Students who **walk home from school** should leave via exit 5 lobby doors and proceed along the sidewalk to cross with the crossing guard. Parents meeting their children to walk them home should wait outside under the exit 5 walkway overhang.

**Bus riders** will be called as buses arrive and are to leave the school via exit 5 lobby doors.

**Please note** - If your child's usual transportation routine home changes (walker, bus rider, Kiss & Ride) you must send a note to the classroom teacher in the morning and then follow the procedures which are noted above.

### Dismissal Timelines:

**3:50 pm (Monday 1:20 pm)** - Patrols will arrive at the kindergarten classrooms to escort bus riders to their respective buses and SACC personnel will escort kindergarten students in that program to the SACC rooms.

**3:55 pm (Monday 1:25 pm)** - Students using *Kiss & Ride* or SACC students in grades 1-6 or students designated as **Walkers** will be dismissed from classrooms to go home. Students using *Kiss & Ride* should proceed directly to the little theater where they will be dismissed following established procedures. SACC students are to walk directly to the SACC classrooms. Walkers will proceed to Exit 5 to meet their parents who should be waiting outside under the Exit 5 walkway overhang to meet their children. Parents and students should then use the crossing guard if crossing Center Harbor Rd when walking home.

**3:55 - 4:05 pm (Monday 1:25 - 1:35 pm)** - Bus riders will be dismissed as buses arrive and students waiting in the Little Theater will be dismissed using the following procedure: upon seeing the child's last name displayed in the windshield of the parent's car, a staff member will radio ahead to the Little Theater and a patrol will escort the child to the curb in front of exit 1 to help the child into the car.



**FOR  
TRANSPORTATION  
EMERGENCIES  
AFTER 4:30 PM  
PLEASE CALL  
703-249-7100**



## Transportation and Parking Arrangements



Aldrin students travel to school each day as walkers, bus riders, or Kiss & Ride car riders. Because the many streets leading to and surrounding our school are not safe crossing locations, students are not permitted to ride bicycles to school. Whenever a child's usual transportation

routine for going home changes (walker, bus rider, Kiss & Ride), parents must send a note to the classroom teacher in the morning so that the school will be aware of the change. Parents are then to follow the procedures for dismissal and transportation that are contained in this newsletter.