

# Principal's Update

October 1, 2010

(Click to see last week's edition)

Dear Clifton ES Families,

Thanks to everyone who "rocked the red" at our Fall Family Picnic! Although we had a sea of adults and children wearing red, it quickly became evident that we would not be able to take a group picture without a sound system or megaphone. Several parents shared their impressive whistling and/or yelling skills in an attempt to draw the group together, but to no avail. The children were very excited about the red balloons that we had planned to launch. It became quite obvious that many of the children did not want to release their balloons, and we decided to adapt our plan by simply giving the balloons to the students. At any rate, everyone had a wonderful time, the food was delicious, and I enjoyed getting to know our families and community a bit better. Thanks so much to Mrs. Vittori for organizing the picnic and to all parents and families who assisted with setting up, grilling, serving, and cleaning up!

Back to School Night (BTSN) Survey Results

Thanks to everyone who responded to the BTSN Survey. All respondents indicated that the staff was friendly and approachable; the evening was well organized; clear, user-friendly materials were provided; and helpful information and resources were provided. The vast majority of respondents reported that they felt the time with teachers was very productive and that they are confident support systems are in place to ensure student success. Most of you indicated that the best part of BTSN was meeting with the teachers. Suggestions for improvement included providing better audio, a clear start time, and less time in the cafeteria; improving the sign up process for Blackboard Parent View; staggering meeting times for grade levels on one night; extending time with teachers; and providing more clarity about specials and Advanced Academics. We appreciate your input, assistance, and support in improving BTSN for all.

Boundary Study

Many of you are aware that Clifton ES is included in a boundary study that the School Board recently authorized. The study is looking at potential solutions to overcrowding and under utilization at several elementary schools in the southwestern area of the county. These may include elementary boundary and program changes and possible building additions at some elementary schools as possible solutions. In addition, potential elementary realignments could result in potential movement of students from Robinson Secondary to either Lake Braddock Secondary or Centreville High and its feeder, Liberty Middle.

No decisions have been made at this point. All potential options are proposals, and parents and interested citizens will have the opportunity to discuss these at the following boundary meetings on Monday, October 25, and Tuesday, October 26, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the cafeterias of the following schools.

Monday, October 25, 7-9 p.m.

- Greenbriar West Elementary School, 13300 Poplar Tree Road, Fairfax
- Union Mill Elementary School, 13611 Springstone Drive, Clifton
- Virginia Run Elementary School, 15450 Martins Hundred Drive, Centreville

Tuesday, October 26, 7-9 p.m.

- Colin Powell Elementary School, 13340 Leland Road, Centreville
- Fairview Elementary School, 5815 Ox Road, Fairfax Station
- Willow Springs Elementary School, 5400 Willow Springs School Road, Fairfax

The same information will be presented at each meeting. Registration at <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/planning/southwesternstudy/index.htm> is requested for these meetings to ensure adequate space and handouts are available. More information will be sent to you next week in a backpack letter.

Breakfast- A Great Start to Being Smart!

October is Breakfast Month in Fairfax County Public Schools. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It "breaks" the "fast" by replacing the energy reserves used overnight. School aged children, especially teens, are the biggest breakfast skippers. Research shows students who eat breakfast learn better, are more alert and attentive, and are more likely to participate in activities. Eating breakfast may also reduce the risk of childhood obesity. If you have a breakfast skipper in your home, plan and offer quick nutritious choices such as juice, whole grain cereal and toast, breakfast bar, or bagels and milk or yogurt. Parents don't forget your own breakfast. You are a role model for your children.

Fall Fundraiser Update

The PTA's fall fundraiser, Clifton Elementary Savings Books, is winding down. To date our students have sold almost 600 coupon booklets. Way to "rock the red!" So many students have sold at least 3 coupon books that we do not have enough funky monkeys for all of them. The new distribution date for monkeys is next Friday. Thank you for your patience!

Next Friday, October 8, we will recognize the efforts of our top sellers by hosting an on-campus "Games 2 U" party. Students who sold 5 booklets (or 8 per family) will attend this fun event from 2:00 - 3:00. Students who sold 10 booklets (or one child per family) will visit the "Money Machine" during the "Games 2 U" event. PLEASE RETURN any unsold books to your child's teacher. We have to return them for credit. Please contact Laurie Vidovich (703.815.9310 or [vidskids@cox.net](mailto:vidskids@cox.net)) with any questions. Thank you for supporting the PTA!

Keep Rockin' the Red with Clifton Elementary Spirit Wear!

New to Clifton ES or looking to keep Rockin' the Red with Cliff the Cardinal? Then click on over to the Clifton ES Spirit Shop at <http://cliftoncardinals.promoshop.com> for a great selection of t-shirts, hoodies and pajama pants. Hurry, the shop is only open from Friday, October 1 through Friday, October 15. Place your orders now for classroom delivery no later than the week of November 8. When ordering, please include your child's name and classroom teacher in the Notes field for one of your purchased items so we can insure correct delivery. Size chart information can be found in the left navigation area of the web site. Also, stop by the Clifton ES PTA table at Clifton Day on October 10 to purchase Rockin' the Red car magnets...just another way to show your Clifton ES spirit. A special thank you goes to Chris Mazzatenta/Mazza Designs of Clifton for designing the Rockin' the Red logo. If you have any questions regarding spirit wear, please contact Rob Jones at (703) 752-0290.

Arts in the School Is Seeking Docents!

Don't let the name intimidate you. If you enjoy art, like being in your child's classroom, and love the sense of a finished product, then this is a perfect fit for you! Arts in the School (AITS) is a PTA sponsored program that is offered in addition art. Portfolios are provided by Greater Reston Art Center, and this year we are exploring the works of Gauguin, Andrew Wyeth, Japanese Art, Klee and Early American Sculpture. If you are interested, or even curious, please join us. Please contact any of the coordinators or visit the Clifton PTA website for more information: Sydney Sawyer - [sydneysawr@aol.com](mailto:sydneysawr@aol.com); Heather Williams - [shg@cox.net](mailto:shg@cox.net); Trish Robertson - [rtrishr@gmail.com](mailto:rtrishr@gmail.com); Jackie Bullis - [tbullecwh@aol.com](mailto:tbullecwh@aol.com)

PTA Meeting and Volunteer Coffee, Tuesday, 10/5, 9:30 a.m. in the Clifton ES Café.

If you expressed interest in volunteering during this school year, please attend! This is also the perfect opportunity for you to meet the PTA Committee Chairs, learn about volunteer opportunities, and enjoy your morning coffee with new & old friends. For more information, please contact Annette Abutayeh ([703.988.9333](tel:703.988.9333)/[Annette718@aol.com](mailto:Annette718@aol.com))

Foreign Language Experience (FLEX) Online Registration

The deadline for FLEX registrations is drawing near! Don't wait to register! Your child could benefit from learning another language. The list of courses and the link to register online are available on the PTA website: <http://www.cliftonpta.org/>. Please contact your PTA FLEX representatives: Karen Gentry ([kgentry85@hotmail.com](mailto:kgentry85@hotmail.com)) or Dawna Thompson ([dawnathomps@gmail.com](mailto:dawnathomps@gmail.com)) if you have questions.

Mark Your Calendar

10/5-PTA Meeting and Volunteer Coffee

10/5-10/7-NNAT for Grade 1 & 2 students 10/8-Games to You Party for Top Fundraisers 10/10-Clifton Day 10/11-Columbus Day-No School!

10/15-Fannie Mae Walkathon

10/19-10/22-CogAT for grade 2 & new students to FCPS