



GLASGOW PANTHER

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Mark Your Calendars...

Oct 12	Columbus Day Holiday
Oct 13	The next PTA meeting will be held at 7pm in the Lecture Hall. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.
Oct 15-16	Picture days
Nov 2 & 3	Student holidays

President’s Thoughts

by Joni Foerter, PTA president

We’re excited about the new school year, and we hope you join and support the PTA.

The school year is young, but we’ve already had some significant efforts by some of our volunteers...

- Thanks to all who made pizza-bingo night a success—in particular Sylvia Winkler and Gail Rostamie.
- Thanks to the Hospitality Committee—Marta Erceg, Jackie Woodrum, and Marianne McManus—and all the parents who donated food and other baked goods, showing the staff our appreciation at the back-to-school breakfast.
- Thanks to all who worked the spiritware and other tables at our recent events.

What is the List Serv?

Have you heard about the Glasgow list serv but don't know what it is? It is a way parents can share information about goings on inside and outside of the school. Are you new to Glasgow and have a question? Is there a local show you think other Glasgow students would enjoy? Do you know of a community service activity that needs volunteers? Any or all of these areas would be great to post on the list serv. Want to be a member? Just e-mail Robin Kline at kline3537@aol.com and tell her you would like an invitation. It is that easy!

Message from the Board

by Kaye Kory, Mason District School Board Member

Welcome to a new school year at Glasgow Middle School.

Thank you for trusting us to deliver the education your children deserve and will serve them as they prepare for college and careers. I assure you that your trust is well-placed; Glasgow Middle School and FCPS offer the very finest education in the country. We live up to our reputation! Those of you who are returning know this well. Families of new students have an exciting academic discovery ahead.

I urge you to become involved in your children's education. Meet your child's teachers. Volunteer in the classroom. Join the PTA. Research shows that students whose parents actively participate in their education achieve at higher levels than those whose parents do not.

Please support your child and our teachers to make the most of this educational opportunity.

You have all heard that we are in difficult budget times and will likely have to make budget reduction decisions that will reduce services to all students. I will continue to advocate for equity in these decisions. I expect to be discussing these issues with you at PTA meetings over the coming months.

Please call upon me to solve problems, raise questions, and to ensure that your voice is heard.

Principal's Corner

by Deirdre M. Lavery, Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

For the last three years, Glasgow's instructional leadership team and general faculty have been thinking critically about how we assess student

achievement. Based on our study, we have developed several fundamental understandings. We believe:

1. The purpose of assessment is to monitor, report, and increase students' learning.
2. Students are the most important stakeholders for assessment, grading, and reporting.
3. Assessment policies and procedures should be consistent, transparent, and equitable across classrooms, subject areas, and the school as a whole.
4. Increased student achievement depends on effective formative assessment.
5. Grades are one component of a more extensive plan to communicate students' academic progress.

This year, we are putting these principles into practice, making important changes in the way we grade and report student progress. We will, of course, follow Fairfax County Public School's middle school guidelines for grading and reporting. The final grades students receive will be governed by the changes adopted last spring by the FCPS School Board. Our new practices will also meet the demanding standards required as an International Baccalaureate World School. Most importantly, the changes we're making will bring greater consistency, transparency, and equity to the way students are graded and to the ways we report their progress.

As a professional learning community, we have taken several important steps:

- We have carefully aligned our course content (determined by Virginia's standards of learning) with the learning objectives for MYP Humanities (Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, and Organization/Presentation). We are developing assessment tasks that provide information about student achievement for each of these four criteria.

- We are distinguishing between assessments *for* learning (designed to help guide our decisions about teaching and to give students valuable feedback on how they can improve their understanding and performance) and assessments *of* learning (designed to make judgments about student achievement).
- We are separating our assessment of students' work habits (behavior) and approaches to learning from what they know and are able to do (understanding). We will gather information and provide feedback while students are learning, but we will not penalize students for learning as a work-in-progress.
- Some tasks we assign may not figure into a student's quarterly achievement grade, but we will use all assignments in our grading and reporting of students' engagement and work habits.
- We will offer multiple attempts for students to demonstrate mastery and achieve success.
- We will assess all major learning objectives against criteria that are public, precise, and available in advance.

Beginning this year, we are determining students' grades using a system that weights tasks according to their significance for helping us measure achievement. Each subject area has specific objectives and corresponding assessment criteria. They vary in name and number. Assessment tasks may provide information about more than one criterion. Each quarter, teachers will analyze student achievement for each criterion, determine an achievement level, combine levels to derive a criterion level total, and use that total to determine a final grade based on official MYP achievement bands.

We realize these new practices sound unfamiliar. They are far removed from the system that most of us know best, in which teachers determine the percentage of correct

answers or award points for completing assignments, and then either average those results or determine a ratio of points earned out of points possible. Either way, the result is usually a percentage score that teachers use to award letter grades based on the (recently revised) FCPS grading scale.

We believe the Middle Years Program provides a more effective blueprint for grading and reporting that will strengthen our teaching practice, offer students more ownership of their learning, and involve parents as more informed participants in their students' education.

With your student's quarterly progress reports this year, you'll be receiving detailed information and explanatory notes that will help you understand these changes. We are discussing our new procedures in great detail with students in every class. Our teachers, instructional leaders, counselors, and administrators look forward to answering your questions.

Volunteer! Get Involved and Help Support Band, Chorus, and Orchestra!

by Lynette Blacksten

The Glasgow Music Boosters meet the first Wednesday evening of every month. Music Boosters conduct a variety of fundraisers and activities to support the music teachers and our talented students. The major activity at Glasgow is an all-day Spring trip to a regional competition. Unlike at most schools in Fairfax County, the Music Boosters heavily subsidize this trip for all students.

By helping the Boosters, you can get involved. If you have questions or would like to help in some way, please contact Lynette Blacksten (Lynette.Blacksten@fcps.edu) or Stephen Shook (Stephen.Shook@fcps.edu).

Why Buy a School Lunch?

by the FCPS Office of Food and Nutrition Services

Why should Glasgow students consider buying a school lunch as opposed to bringing one from home?

- Lunches reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans that recommend no more than 30 percent calories from fat, 10 percent calories from saturated fats, and limited trans fats, sodium, and sugar.
- Lunches provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.
- Portions are age-appropriate, based on established federal lunch patterns.
- Students have several choices each day. And salad lunches and milk are available daily.
- Food is prepared and served under safe and sanitary conditions.

Compare the cost of a lunch brought from home with school lunch prices and you will see the school lunch is a bargain.

Component	Cost for GMS student
Bread (white), 2 slices	\$.28
Turkey slices, 3 oz	\$1.50
Potato chips (small bag)	\$.33
Baby carrots (6-8)	\$.30
Red grapes (20)	\$.63
Milk, 1/2 pint (at school)	\$.60
Bag, napkin, etc.	\$.10
Labor, 15 minutes	free
Total Cost	\$3.74
Lunch purchased at school	\$2.75
Savings	\$.99

Use Common Experiences to Teach Your Children Math

by the Ellen Glasgow Mathematics Department

Welcome back, Glasgow students and families! The mathematics department is excited to begin another year working with the Ellen Glasgow community. We believe a strong mathematics education is vital to a student's academic success, and we look forward to working with your students to provide just that.

As you put the finishing touches on your back-to-school preparations (which undoubtedly last until the end of September) don't forget that trips to the store to replenish supplies, or even to get groceries, can be a mathematics lesson in the making. No matter your child's age or skill level, a store contains a multitude of learning experiences. For example, have children round prices to the nearest dollar and then to the nearest 50 cents to practice rounding and estimation skills. Consider the subjects of tax, discount, budgets, credit/debit cards, checkbooks, and wholesale and retail prices as meaningful discussion topics. You might be surprised with what your students already know and what you can help them to understand.

With the current focus on the economy the importance of educating children with a strong number sense is a responsibility we can all share. We hope our lessons do not end when our students leave our classrooms, but rather continue to shape their futures.

PTA Committee Openings

Here are two important volunteer positions the PTA is looking to fill:

- Legislative: The legislative committee reports back to the PTA on matters that are going on at the county, state, and federal level that may affect us at Glasgow.

- Grants: With budgets getting tighter, we have heard that schools around the county are finding grants to fund various programs. Are you interested in helping us?

Neither position requires a large time commitment or experience—just a willingness to help.

Please contact Robin Kline at kline3537@aol.com if you are interested or if you want additional information.

Reader's Digest Fundraiser Begins

The PTA's biggest fundraiser, Readers Digest, is officially over. But you can still submit your orders before October 9. The PTA gets to keep 45% of every dollar sold for gift wrap and gifts and 40% for every dollar sold in magazine subscriptions. Please help to support Glasgow.

If you have any questions about the fundraiser or want to volunteer, please e-mail Robin Kline at kline3537@aol.com or Joyce Gendell at joyce@gendell.com.

Every student can make a difference!

Stuart Corner

by Sarah Shannon

This new column will, I hope, help future students and their parents transition into the new and sometimes daunting world of high school. Throughout the year I will list upcoming events that might be of interest to you and your family. My hopes are that these articles will give you a peek into high school and help you understand changes and also tell you about exciting opportunities for you and your family to share.

Quick facts: J.E.B. Stuart High School is located at 3301 Peace Valley Lane in Falls Church. Their principal is Pamela Jones.

The Stuart vision: The Stuart community—staff, parents, and students—is committed to providing our students with an education that prepares them for the global economy and life in the 21st century.

The Stuart mission: To provide educational programs and resources for our diverse population to ensure academic success; social, emotional, and physical growth; and the development of productive and responsible citizens.

Upcoming sporting events: The informative web site www.raidersports.org will tell you when, where, and who is playing which sport. Does your child have an interest in volleyball or golf or football? Here you will find information on where to go and watch. Games are inexpensive and are a great opportunity for families to see athletes up-close and personal. So learn about all the great sports that Stuart has to offer!

Happy Citizenship Day, Glasgow!

On September 17, Glasgow celebrated Citizenship Day in many fun, meaningful, and creative ways. We also celebrated because recently two of our very own teachers—Mrs. Privitera and Mr. Karoma—became American citizens. With several student groups they shared how becoming a citizen has changed their life and future. What does citizenship mean to *you*?

Constitution Day Trivia!

So how much do you know about the Constitution? (Answers on page 7.)

1. When was the Constitution signed?

2. How many individuals signed the Constitution?
3. How many “Articles” are in the Constitution?
4. Which state had the most signers to the Constitution?
5. Which “Article” deals with the Executive Branch of Government?
6. Which “Article” deals with the Judicial Branch of government?
7. How many amendments are there to the Constitution?
8. Name the only amendment that has been repealed.
9. Which amendment protects us from illegal searches and seizures?
10. What does the phrase “full faith and credit” mean in Article IV of the Constitution?
11. Which amendment was the most recent one to pass?
12. Name the two houses of our government.

Glasgow Celebrates the International Day of Peace

On September 21, 2009, the students at Glasgow Middle School celebrated the international day of peace. This day, first established by the United Nations in 1982, is a day in which the entire world stops to observe the ways we can all end our conflicts peacefully.

To commemorate this day the students at Glasgow completed a reflection piece that allowed them to discuss ways in which they have solved problems they have faced in a non-violent manner. At the same time, the students reviewed the importance of exploring different

options of conflict resolution and how the world might be different if we all worked together to solve our problems in a peaceful manner. Finally, the students learned about the most prominent people who have worked for peace in history. This activity allowed the students to learn and discuss the most famous quotes by these peaceful people. It also gave the students an opportunity to understand the significance of their work in our world’s history.

Community and Service (CAS) at Glasgow!

by Michelle Peters, GMS teacher

As we begin the 2009-10 school year I would like to reflect on all we accomplished last year in our service learning experiences.

- Our students completed 15,859 community and service hours!
- 100% of our student population participated in the community and service program.
- Every team and subject area led a CAS service learning project!
- We made the world a better place in:
 - Guatemala by sending school supplies and books to our sister school.
 - Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, by providing 10+ car loads of canned food to area homeless shelters and food banks.
 - Swaziland and South Africa by making “hug blankets” for orphaned street children.
 - Third-world countries all over the world by participating in a week-long service learning project on hunger, disease, poverty, and education with the help of the organization Action Against Hunger.

- Ghana, South Africa, and Swaziland by creating books used by schools to teach literacy and math.
- Rural Virginia by creating, digging, and protecting an organic garden that fed those in need.

I am so proud to be a part of such a caring school!

This year (2009-10) holds so many new possibilities and experiences. Our CAS school theme is “I Was Here,” and we will focus on “Peace & Conflict” all over the world, all year. Some highlights of what is to come and projects to be explored:

- AFRICA! We will work on projects located in Sudan, South Africa, Swaziland, Sierra Leon, Ghana, and Kenya.
- The MIDDLE EAST—Afghanistan and Iran
- Project Serbia
- Helping schools in West Virginia
- Environment 911—exploring ways kids can help Mother Earth

By June of 2010 our school community will be able to say “I was here” as they look at the globe, knowing their service learning has benefited many around the world.

PTA Reflections Contest

Calling all photographers, artists, writers, composers, choreographers, and film producers!

Let your talent shine!

We encourage Glasgow students to participate in PTA’s Reflections Program. The program offers students the opportunity to create works of art for fun and recognition. Please attend an information session on Wednesday, September 30, sponsored by Ms. Saunders, to receive entry forms and go over the rules.

The 2009-2010 theme is “Beauty is...” Think about beauty and what it means to you. Then create an original piece of artwork in: music, dance, film, literature, visual arts or photography.

Entries are due October 22, 2009 Good luck to all our students!

Please call or email Liz Greer, PTA Reflections Chair, at 703-534-7115 or ejgreer@yahoo.com for more information.



7th graders creating the organic garden at the 4-H center in rural Virginia

Constitution Day Trivia Answers

Answers to the quiz starting on page 5.

1. September 17, 1878
2. 39
3. 7
4. Pennsylvania
5. Article II
6. Article III
7. 27
8. Amendment 18
9. Amendment 4
10. It means that all states must respect the laws of all other states.
11. Amendment 27
12. The US House of Representatives and the US Senate

The next PTA meeting will be held on Tuesday, **October 13**, at 7pm in the Lecture Hall. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Ellen Glasgow Middle School Contact Information

Phone numbers: 703-813-8700 / 703-813-8750 Attendance 703-813-8787

Office Staff

Principal	Deirdre Lavery	Guidance Office Asst.	Erica Jones
Administrative Asst.	Gail Rostamie	Counselor	Bianca Aloma
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Assistant Principal 6 th	Steve D'Adamo	Counselor	Sara Fontana
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The Glasgow Panther is published by the Glasgow Middle School PTA. Articles for the Panther can be sent to GlasgowNews@yahoo.com. Send articles as MS Word attachments only. **Have a Glasgow calendar item?** Contact Mark Goldenberg at GlasgowNews@yahoo.com to have your PTA or school event published. Newsletter submissions are due the Friday after the PTA meeting. Please make sure entries apply to dates one week after the meeting and beyond.

“¿Habla español? Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre la escuela de su hijo o necesita hablar con los maestros o el consejero, llámenos al 703-813-8719. Estamos siempre contentos de servirle”