



THE GREAT FALLS CURRENT

Great Falls Elementary School Website: www.fcps.k12.va.us/GreatFallsES
 Main Office 703-757-2100 Fax 703-757-2197 Fairfax County Public Schools: www.fcps.edu

24 Hour Attendance Line: 703-757-2111 Please call by 8:40 a.m. whenever your child will be absent or tardy

FEBRUARY 2012

- 2/1 3rd Grading Period Begins
- 2/3 AAP Parent Referrals Due
- 2/7 Progress Reports Sent Home
- 2/9 PTA General Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 2/10 3rd Grade China Day
PTA Bingo Night
- 2/13-17 PTA Book Fair, School Library
- 2/15 Spelling Bee, Grades 4-6, 9:00 a.m.
PTA Book Fair Night, 5-8:00 p.m.
- 2/16 Strings Concert, 2:00 & 7:00 p.m.
- 2/17 Assembly, 1:00 & 2:00 p.m.
- 2/20 Holiday – School Closed
- 2/28 Yearbook Cover Contest Deadline
- 2/29 4th Gr. Field Trip – NSO

*MARCH

- 3/7 2nd Gr. Field Trip – Sully Plantation
Mrs. Temple's Class
- 3/8 2nd Gr. Field Trip – Sully Plantation
Mrs. Wong & Ramirez's Classes
- 3/9 Individual & Class Photo Day
- 3/23 Yearbook Order Deadline
- 3/29 Kindergarten Orientation, 9:00 a.m.
- 3/30 3rd Grading Period Ends

*APRIL

- 4/2-9 Spring Break – School Closed
- 4/10 4th Grading Period Begins
- 4/17 Progress Reports Sent Home

*MAY

- 5/4 6th Grade Class Photo
- 5/11 4th Grade Field Trip – Richmond
6TH Grade Field Trip – Pamplin, VA
- 5/17 PTA General Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 5/28 Holiday – School Closed

*JUNE

- 6/5 Band Concert, 2:00 & 7:00 p.m.
- 6/13 Chorus Concert, 2:00 & 7:00 p.m.
- 6/18 Recognition Ceremony
- 6/19 6th Grade Promotion
Last Day of School

* Schedules are tentative and may change with the possibility of school delays/closures due to inclement weather. Activity dates are updated monthly.

GREAT FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECEIVES 2012 GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

We are proud to announce Great Falls ES has received the 2012 Virginia Index of Performance award for advanced learning and achievement from Governor Bob McDonnell and the Virginia Board of Education. The award recognizes schools and divisions that exceed minimum state and federal accountability standards and meet or exceed a number of performance indicators.

DISMISSAL TIME

Parents, please call in cases of EMERGENCY ONLY in the afternoon to change children's transportation.

The end of the school day is hectic, and there is limited time to track down the teacher and to notify your child of the change. Last minute changes interrupt class instruction time, and are confusing for children and staff.

Please use the Change of Transportation forms sent home the beginning of the school year for any changes in your child's daily transportation.

IT'S TIME TO PREORDER YOUR GFES YEARBOOK!



Pre-order forms will be sent home in each child's Tuesday Packet. The price of each yearbook is \$20.00

Please complete all the information on the payment envelope. If paying by check, please make payable to Provine School Pictures.

March 23, 2012 is the last day to place an order. Only those who pre-order will be guaranteed a copy, so send your order in early! Yearbooks will be distributed in June.

YEARBOOK COVER CONTEST

You can help make this year's school yearbook cover the best ever! It's time to be creative and design a picture for the cover of the Great Falls Elementary Yearbook. Designers must use the following guide-lines:

Paper color: White

Paper size: 8 1/2 X 11 inches

Use markers, crayons, colored pencils or water colors to fill the whole paper.

Make sure there are no spelling errors

Student art work only - No adult help please

Deadline to enter: February 28th

GEOGRAPHY BEE RESULTS

Great Falls Elementary participated in the National Geography Bee sponsored by the National Geographic Society, again this year. On January 6th, students in the fourth through sixth grades competed to see who would represent our school in the national contest. After the preliminary round, two representatives from each classroom competed in their grade-level competitions. Following the grade-level competitions, representatives from each grade level went on to participate in the school competition.

Grade Level Representatives:

4th – Nick, John, Aiden

5th – Laura, Benji, Reilly

6th – Tommy, Andy, Trevor

Laura emerged as the winner of the school competition. After many rounds of very difficult questions, Andy was our first runner-up.

Congratulations to all participants and our grade-level representatives. We wish Laura the best of luck in the next round of the National Geography Bee.



**March 9th:
Spring Pictures**



6TH GRADE STUDENTS ATTENDING COOPER MIDDLE SCHOOL NEXT YEAR:

February 15: Curriculum meeting (AM) for parents of rising 7th graders at Cooper MS, 9:30am in room 130.

February 16: Elective Fair for rising 7th grade students and their parents, 7pm, Cooper MS.

March 1: Snow date for Elective Fair, 7pm, Cooper MS.

February 23: Curriculum meeting (PM) for parents of rising 7th graders at Cooper, 7pm in room 130.

ATTENDING KILMER MIDDLE SCHOOL NEXT YEAR:

Curriculum Night for parent and rising 7th grade students is Thursday, February 16, 6:00-7:30 p.m. Snow date is Thursday, February 23rd.

COT-Change of Transportation
Please use the forms provided by the PTA.
Copies are available on the PTA website.
Volunteers are needed to keep this program.
Contact PTA Chairperson Judy Meeks for information.

Bus 9 is still unable to accept visitors.

ATTENTION PARENTS OF 5th GRADERS:



All fifth grade students are required to receive a booster dose of Tdap vaccine prior to entering 6th grade. Sixth graders cannot begin school in the fall without documentation of having the Tdap booster or having a tetanus-containing vaccine within the past five years. Please check your child's immunization records and if the booster is necessary, provide proof of immunization to the school no later than June 18, 2012. Contact school public health nurse, Patricia Nader, with any questions.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Parents, please remind your child to stay after school the morning of their after school activity. We often receive phone calls at the end of the day requesting we call the classroom to remind students to stay after school. Please understand we cannot interrupt instructional time unless there is an emergency. Teachers do receive a list of students enrolled in PTA sponsored after school programs; however, when the dismissal bell rings, it is the student's responsibility to report their program.

SURVEY OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

A Survey of Preschool Children will be sent home in your child's Tuesday Packet. It is not necessary to return this survey unless you have a preschooler ready for kindergarten. Children who will reach their fifth birthday on or before September 30, 2012 must be enrolled in kindergarten for the 2012-2013 school year, unless the parent or guardian notifies the school in writing that they do not wish the child to attend school until the following year.

If you have a child who is eligible to attend kindergarten in the 2012-13 school year, please complete this survey and return it to school by March 30, 2012. **This survey is not a kindergarten registration.** You will still need to complete the proper registration forms to enroll your child. Registration packets are available in the school office, on the FCPS website: www.fcps.edu or at the Kindergarten Parent Orientation on March 29, 2012.

Kindergarten 2012-2013



WILL YOUR CHILD BE 5 YEARS OLD BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2012?

If you answered yes, it is time to register your child for Kindergarten at Great Falls Elementary.

2012-2013 KINDERGÄRTEN ORIENTATION

Parents and children eligible for 2012-13 kindergarten are invited to an overview of the school's kindergarten program on **Thursday, March 29, 2012 from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. in our school cafeteria.**

Rising Kindergarten students will meet our kindergarten teachers in the classroom for a special welcome and activities. Parents will meet in the cafeteria to receive information about required immunizations, physical examinations and health forms from the public health nurse. Classroom teachers will also present information on the kindergarten curriculum and the daily schedule.

This is an excellent opportunity for parents unsure of whether or not their child is ready for kindergarten to come, listen, and make an informed decision.

Registration packets are available online, www.fcps.edu. Click on the 'Forms' link, then select the 'New Students Enrolling' option under Bundled Forms for Parents. Registration materials will also be available in the school's main office.

To register a student in Fairfax County Public Schools, parents must provide:

- Proof of residency (original Deed, contract, copies not accepted)
- Proof of birth/citizenship (must be original birth certificate, copies will not be accepted)
- Health Documentation (All requirements are noted on the FCPS Registration Requirement Form)
- Completed Home Language Survey.

Parents who bring completed registration materials may register their child directly after the Kindergarten Orientation. The Physical/Immunization Form may be turned in at a later date.

Plan ahead- A completed physical and all required immunizations must be received before your child may start school. March and April are good months for obtaining a child's physical examination. Remember to keep a copy of the physical for your future personal use, such as summer camps and save a call to your doctors office.

Please help us spread the word to neighbors and friends who have preschool children, and live within the Great Falls Elementary School Boundaries.

PTA February Newsletter

Art Enrichment

Students this month are taking on one of the world's great painters, Picasso, as they make their own construction paper cubist collages. You can get an in-depth look at Picasso by visiting the exhibit on him in the National Gallery's West Building from January 29th through May 6th. The exhibit showcases many of the master's drawings over the course of his long career.



GFES
Be Mine Bingo!
and
Bake Sale!

Save the Date
Friday, February 10, 2012
6:00 - 9:00 pm

School Cafeteria

Come Join the Fun!



We Need Bakers!

*To make your favorite goodies for the
Bake Sale!*

All treats will be sold for \$1.00.

Please group and wrap items accordingly.

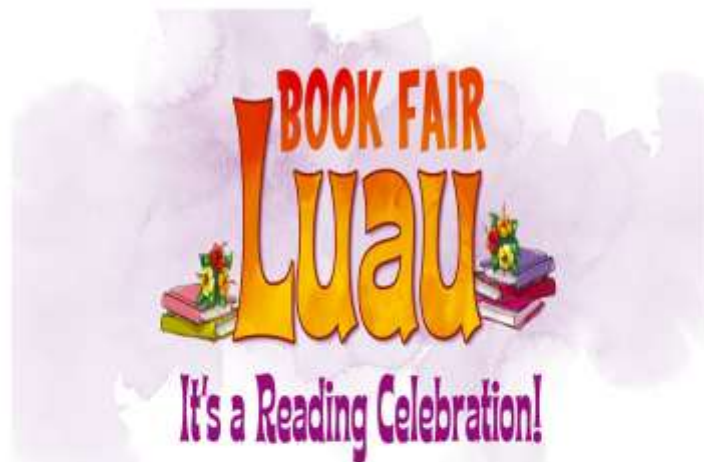
GFES IS all "A-BUZZ" ABOUT THIS YEAR'S SPELLING BEES

Students in grades 4-6th participated in classroom Spelling Bees at the end of January. Each classroom will have its own separate Spelling Bee. The top two winners from each class will compete in the School Bee on February 15th, 9:00 a.m. in the gym.

** In the event of inclement weather the School Bee will be held on February 22nd.

The study word lists are posted on the GFES PTA website: www.gfepta.org

We're looking forward to a great Spelling Bee season!



**Your Scholastic Book Fair is coming to GFES
February 13-17!**

Every class will have a chance to browse and buy. There will also be a very special family evening on
Wed., February 15th from 5:00-8:00.

The kids will find books with exciting stories, books with amazing science facts, books with crazy sports pictures...plus beautiful books, funny books, sweet books and goofy books.

We'll need parents to help the kids choose books and run the registers--it is fun and so important. A good portion of the proceeds stays in our school, the kids get great books to read, and teachers can refresh their classroom libraries.

If you can't attend, or want to shop from a larger selection, please visit our online fair at www.scholastic.com/schoolbookfairs/2973023. Make your plans to come to our Book Fair Luau and volunteer, too!

We will have a schedule of time slots for each class, so you can request the volunteer slot when your child is at the fair. For questions or to volunteer now, please contact Katie Maguire (ktquilts@msn.com) or Chris Morrissey (chrismorrissey@cox.net).



SCHOLASTIC
Read Every Day. Lead a Better Life.

Winter means budget time in Fairfax County!

The FCPS school board is actively working on the budget for 2012-13 so this means it's time to learn about what has been proposed at <http://fcps.edu/news/fy2013.shtml>. Major increases from last year's budget include requesting funding from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to reflect the increased student population attending Fairfax County Schools (this population increase was not fully funded by the county in previous tight budget years), funds to build new schools in areas of the county where they are needed, and extending the learning time for students. The proposed budget includes a 2% pay increase for all FCPS employees, and eligible teachers would receive step increases as well. The proposed budget also requests funding of \$0.9 million for Elementary World Languages (12 positions) to expand immersion programs to 2 additional schools and expand FLES (2-3 times per week for 30 minutes of foreign language instruction) to 8 additional schools, as well as funding staff development, translations, and materials to support foreign language instruction at the elementary school level.

Here is the budget timeline:

January 30-31 - School Board holds public hearings on budget

February 2 - School Board conducts budget work session

February 9 - School Board adopts FY 2013 Advertised Budget

February 21 - Fairfax County Executive releases FY 2013 Advertised Budget Plan and County Board of Supervisors (BOS) advertises tax rate

April 10 - School Board presents budget to County BOS

April 10-12 - County BOS holds public hearings on budget

April 24 - County BOS FY 2013 budget mark-up determines budget package and tax rate

April 30 - School Board conducts budget work session

May 1 - County BOS approves the FY 2013 Adopted County Budget, tax rate resolution, and transfer amount to schools

May 10 - School Board's FY 2013 Approved Budget is presented for new business

May 15-16 - School Board holds public hearings on budget

May 17 - School Board conducts budget work session

May 24 - School Board adopts FY 2013 Approved Budget

Please read about the budget, learn what is being proposed, and get involved!