

# GREAT FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Principal, Ernest Leighty

Assistant Principal, Barbara DeHart

Main Office: 703-757-2100

Fax Machine: 703-757-2197

Clinic: 703-757-2110

**Attendance: 703-757-2111** -24 Hour Answering Machine. Please call before 9:00 a.m. to report absence or late arrival.

Website: Great Falls Elementary School: [www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES](http://www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES)

## OCTOBER 2008

- 10/3 Fall Individual Picture Day
- 10/13 School Closed – Columbus Day
- 10/21 1<sup>st</sup> Gr. Field Trip to Green Springs  
COGAT Abilities Test, Grade 2
- 10/22 COGAT Abilities Test, Grade 2
- 10/23 COGAT Abilities Test, Grade 2
- 10/24 Vision and Hearing Screening
- 10/29 1<sup>st</sup> Gr. Field Trip to Riverbend Park  
Fairfax County Budget Mtg., 7:00 p.m. at  
McLean Community Center
- 10/30 1<sup>st</sup> Gr. Field Trip to Riverbend Park  
PTA Dance  
End of First Grading Period

The complete school year calendar is available on the Fairfax County Public Schools website: [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

## CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

Wednesday, October 1, is the first day students may go home with one another directly from school, by school bus or private transportation. Unfortunately, **BUS #11 is at full capacity and not be able to accommodate any students who are not assigned to this bus.** Any requests sent to bring a friend on this bus will be denied. Change of Transportation forms were sent home, along with instructions on how to use them. Please use the Change of Transportation (COT) Forms whenever your child has a change in their normal routine of going home, or if they would like to bring a school friend home. Please limit COT usage for play dates to twice a month.



**2008-2009 GFES Parent Handbook** The 2008-2009 Great Falls Elementary School Parent Handbook is now available. The handbook covers everything from school hours and emergency closing schedules, to policies, procedures and instructional information. Example:

### FEES

- Student Assignment Notebook replacement - \$3.00
- Tuesday Packet replacement - \$2.00
- Recorder replacement - \$4.25
- Returned Check Fee - \$7.00
- Textbooks or instructional materials – cost will vary. You will receive notification from school Finance Officer of replacement value.
- Copying of student records/transcripts – Parents may receive one copy at no cost of all report cards, test scores, and other information about the child. Additional copies may be obtained upon payment of a \$5.00 duplicating fee. Please see the GFES Parent Handbook for more details.

### FORGOTTEN ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Please help your child to develop a routine of placing things which must be brought to school in a designated place the night before in order that lunch money, school books, and homework will not be left at home. We would like the classrooms to be free of interruptions. Please make sure your child is prepared for school. Making sure everything is in your child's backpack the night before school will help to teach your child responsibility, and help get the day started on the right foot! If you must bring forgotten items to school, do not go directly to your child's classroom. Procedures have been put in place to prevent disruption to classroom instruction. Please put your child's name and teacher name on the item, report to the office to sign in and get a visitor badge, then bring the forgotten item to the appropriate location:

**Lunch** – Cafeteria, place on the table on the stage. The cafeteria hostess will let your child know his/her lunch is there.

**Musical Instruments** – Cafeteria Stage. Students will check here before band/strings class.

**Homework/Assignments** – Leave at the office. Items will be placed in the teacher's mailbox.

**Anything else** – Bring to the office.

Teachers and students are aware of these locations. Students are told to check these areas in the event a forgotten item was brought to school. We will not call the classroom, disturbing class instruction, to tell a student a forgotten item has arrived. Again, please do not bring forgotten items directly to the classroom.



### **Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> Picture Day Parent Volunteer Program**

We appreciate your assistance! Please find the volunteer duties listed below:

- *Must be available for minimum two hour shift*
- *Grooming assistance of the child such as: combing hair, cleaning faces, etc.*
- *Runner/escort to and from the classroom*
- *Assist in keeping children in a single file line and talking to a minimum*
- *Assist in recording package information*

If you are available and able to perform these duties, please contact Kim Mister, in the school office, to schedule your volunteer shift time. *As a thank you for your service, you will receive a complimentary photography package of your child.* Please indicate your package selection on the order envelope, and write "Volunteer" across the bottom of the envelope.

**Kiss & Ride:** Due to the high volume of families using the Kiss & Ride in the afternoon, it is a potential hazard to other drivers on Walker Road. The line is also blocking the school buses from entering the school grounds. **We are asking all our families who live within our school boundaries to have their children ride the school bus instead of coming to pick them up.** Please remember that morning Kiss & Ride ends at 8:20 a.m. If you must use the Kiss & Ride, please follow the guidelines sent home in the Kiss & Ride contract.

### **GIFTED AND TALENTED (GT) PROGRAMS-LEVELS OF SERVICE**

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a continuum of gifted 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 GT resource teachers work together to provide the following Levels of Service:

> **Level I GT services** provide lessons in critical and creative thinking skills for all FCPS students in grades K-6.

> **Level II GT services** include differentiated instruction at an advanced level for many FCPS students through collaboration between the classroom teacher and the GT resource teacher. The Young Scholars Model included in this level is designed to find and nurture gifted potential in students from historically underrepresented populations through more challenging curriculum and instruction. Middle school students who take one or two Honors classes are receiving Level II services.

> **Level III GT services** for identified students include the GT school-based program in grades 3-6; in middle school, students take three Honors classes.

> **Level IV GT services** are for those students found eligible for the full-time GT center program in grades 3-8 or taking full Honors at the middle school.

#### **SCREENING**

Multiple criteria are reviewed to determine eligibility for all FCPS gifted services. Formal identification begins with Level III services. The local school GT committee determines student eligibility for school-based GT services. The countywide GT Central Selection Committee determines eligibility for GT center placement.

#### **TESTING**

Each fall all FCPS second grade students, as well as students in third through seventh grade who are missing an ability test score, are administered the Cognitive Ability Test and/or the Naglieri Nonverbal Test. A second grade GT center screening pool is established using these test results. Students in the second grade pool are automatically screened for GT center placement. Parents may exercise their one-time retest option during the September/October testing cycle.

#### **REFERRAL**

Parents/guardians of students not in the second grade screening pool may initiate the GT center screening process by completing and submitting a **Gifted and Talented GT Center Referral form to the local school principal no later than February 6, 2009.** 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 GT web site and in the Parent Information Packet available at the local school.

#### **2008 PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS**

October 2 - McLean High School · October 15 - Oakton High School · October 22 - Annandale High School

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 your local FCPS elementary or middle school GT Programs at Lacey Center 703-846-8670 or visit the GT web site: [www.fcps.edu/DIS/qt](http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/qt).

*Fairfax County wants your input on closing the budget gap for FY 2010. Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools invite you to a dialogue session on Wednesday, October 29, 7:00-9:30 p.m. at the McLean Community Center. This is one of the 20 community dialogue sessions scheduled to gather comments from the public. Registration is required. For more informational or to register, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget) or call 703-324-2391, TTY 711.*