

GREAT FALLS CURRENT

Principal, Ernest Leighty

Assistant Principal, Barbara DeHart



Main Office: 703-757-2100 Fax Machine: 703-757-2197 Clinic: 703-757-2110

Cafeteria: 703-757-2121 **Attendance: 703-757-2111**

Websites: Great Falls Elementary School: www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES FCPS: www.fcps.edu



2010-2011 BELL SCHEDULE:

GRADES 1-6

Monday

8:40 a.m. - 12:50 p.m.

Tuesday-Friday

8:40 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

8:15 a.m. - the earliest students may enter the building. Students report to the cafeteria for adult supervision.

8:35 a.m. - 5 minute warning bell.

8:40 a.m. - The school day officially begins. Students not in the classroom at this time are considered tardy. Parent and student must report to the office for a pass before proceeding to class.

KINDERGARTEN

A.M. Session

Monday

8:40 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

Tuesday-Friday

8:40 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



SEPTEMBER 2010

9/16 Room Parent/Office Equipment Training
9:00 a.m.

9/17 Room Parent/Office Equipment Training
9:00 a.m.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

Monday, September 20:

Hummel Kindergarten 6:30-7:15 p.m.
Fifth Grade 6:30-7:15 p.m.
JIP Fifth Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.
First Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.
JIP First Grade 8:30-9:15 p.m.
Third Grade 8:30-9:15 p.m.
JIP Third Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, September 21:

Keane Kindergarten 6:30-7:15 p.m.
JIP Sixth Grade 6:30-7:15 p.m.
Sixth Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.
Second Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.
JIP Second Grade 8:30-9:15 p.m.
Fourth Grade 8:30-9:15 p.m.
JIP Fourth Grade 7:30-8:15 p.m.

9/21 Ashmore/Nichols Field Trip-Riverbend
9/22 McDevitt/Worland Field Trip-Riverbend
9/30 Cybersafety Assembly, Grades 4,5,6
PTA Meeting, 2:00 pm

OCTOBER 2010

10/6 Vision & Hearing Screening Day
10/22 Student Individual Photo Day
4th Grade Field Trip – NSO
Reflections Contest Entries Deadline
10/29 End of First Grading Period
PTA Costume Dance

*See page 3 for October's grade level testing dates









Welcome from Mr. Leighty and Mrs. DeHart

Welcome to the 2010-11 school year! Our students are enthusiastic and ready to learn. The staff of Great Falls Elementary School greatly appreciates the time, skill, and effort donated by our renovation construction crew, parents and community members toward the opening of the new school year. Volunteers worked to prepare packets for Open House, landscape, and prepare for upcoming PTA events. Without their support, the smooth beginning of our new school year would not have been possible! Volunteer opportunities abound. Contact your PTA representatives to see how you can share your time and talents.

The *Great Falls Current/PTA Roadrunner Express* will be sent home once a month via e-mail. One exception will be this month. We are sending out our first newsletter this week to highlight important events and information, such as the Back-To-School night schedule. We will begin sending the newsletters home electronically, starting with the October issue, via the KIT message system.

The complete 2010-2011 school year calendar is available on the Fairfax County Public Schools website: www.fcps.edu Please consider scheduling vacation time around school holidays to avoid students missing instructional time. A list of test dates is included in this newsletter.

The staff of GFES is committed to a quality education for all our students. Please see page 2 for some helpful suggestions as to how parents/guardians can prepare children for a successful school day.

-  Be sure your child has a good nights sleep and eats a healthy breakfast before coming to school.
-  Teach responsibility by establishing a nightly routine of making sure all homework, class projects, etc. are in your child's backpack and ready to go for the morning.
-  Make sure your child arrives to school *on time*. In order to protect precious instructional time for all our students, please get your child to school on time and prepared for the days activities.
-  Make homework a priority. Ask your child about his/her daily successes and challenges and offer words of advice and encouragement. Keep the lines of communication open at home.
-  Take the time to read the Great Falls Current, our school newsletter (sent home via e-mail the last Tuesday of each month) which will contain a monthly calendar of events and testing, as well as information related to school policy and your child's education. Attached to the Current is the PTA Roadrunner Newsletter will keep you updated with volunteer opportunities and PTA sponsored events.
-  Every parent should have, and read a copy of the Great Falls Elementary School Parent Handbook. The handbook is available online on the school's website: www.fcps.k12.va.us/GreatFallsES or a copy may be requested in the main office. Many questions commonly called in to the school office are covered in this handbook, or in the monthly school newsletter.
-  Every Tuesday the teachers will send home a Tuesday Packet. This is a "non-destructible" envelope which will contain some of the student's work for the week, as well as any appropriate comments by the teacher. This envelope, which has space for your comments, is to be signed and returned to school the following day.
-  Attend Back to School Night. Come and meet your child's teacher and see the classroom. Grade level curriculum will be discussed as well as schedules and classroom procedure.

GREAT FALLS FACTS

- **Bell Schedule**

8:20 a.m. Warning Bell

8:25 a.m. School day officially begins. Students not in their classrooms at this time are considered tardy, and must report to the office to sign in before proceeding to their classroom.

For safety and security, parents of tardy students are required to walk their children into the building, sign in at the office, and walk their children to their classrooms.

Students are not permitted to enter the school building before 8:00 a.m.

12:35 p.m. Monday Dismissal Bell

3:05 p.m. Tuesday-Friday Dismissal Bell

- **Student Absence and Tardy Notification**

The telephone number to report absent or tardy students is 703-757-2111. Please call the attendance line by 9:00 a.m. This telephone number is a dedicated line that will connect you to a 24-hour answering machine, so you can leave a message any time after the school day. You will need to call every day your child will not attend school, unless you notify us of a specific return date.

- **Homework for Absent Students**

Please leave a message on the attendance line when calling your child's absence in. Teachers pick up messages during their lunch break; therefore, calling before 10:00 will allow the teacher sufficient time to pick up the message and prepare the homework during the school day. Homework will be ready to pick up in the office after school dismissal, or if you would like the homework sent home with another student, make sure to leave that student's full name and his/her teacher's name.

- **Forgotten Homework**

Sufficient time is provided at the end of the day for students to get ready to go home. Classrooms are locked when teachers are not in the room during and after school hours. Custodians are not authorized to unlock doors for anyone not employed by FCPS. Staff members are not permitted to give their keys to students or parents. Therefore, we cannot accommodate requests by students or parents to open a teacher's classroom for forgotten items.

- **Emergency Care Forms**

Listed on this form are the names and telephone numbers of people you have authorized to pick-up your child from school in case of emergency. When your child is sick, or has missed the school bus, etc., these are the people called when we cannot reach the parent. Therefore, please list local friends/neighbors and their telephone numbers under the 'Other Contact' section. **Students will not be released to anyone not noted on this Emergency Care Form. Once the child's Emergency Care Form has been submitted to our office, the addition or deletion of any contact person must be made by the parent. It is important to update this form as telephone numbers change. Changes to your child's Emergency Care Form can be made online, through the FCPS 24/7 Learning site. Follow the link to wecare@school.**

- **Changes of Transportation COT Program begins October 4th.**

At this time, students are not permitted to bring a friend home from school, by either bus or private transportation. Please make arrangements for your children to get together with friends after they arrive home from school. However, COT Forms may be used to notify the teacher if picking up your child before the end of the school day. Volunteers are needed before this program may begin. Contact PTA Chairperson Beth Stvan for information. No experience necessary. Training will be provided.

- **FCPS 24-7 Learning** (Blackboard) is the online resource that allows Fairfax County Public Schools students to extend learning beyond the traditional school day and beyond school facilities. Students and parents are invited to use FCPS 24-7 Learning to access homework and classroom assignments, view class calendars, explore links to enrichment activities, and much more. **Parents can now create their own account for FCPS 24-7. After registering and having their account validated at one of their children's schools, parents will have their own username and password to access all of their children's active courses, and will be able to update their children's emergency information through weCare@school. Updating weCare with the correct email address will ensure better communication via Keep in Touch.**

Before creating a parent account, please be sure to have the student ID numbers for your children available. You can find the FCPS student ID number on report cards and student class schedules.

- **GFES Parent Handbook**

The 2010-2011 Parent Handbook is in the process of being updated. It will be available online at our award winning website: www.fcps.edu/GreatFallsES. Many of the telephone calls received in the office are common questions covered in this handbook. If you would like a hard copy, please call or stop by the main office.

HEALTH ROOM VOLUNTEER TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

The Health Room welcomes all volunteers, not only to help care for our students, but also assist with administrative duties. Please consider volunteering for a few hours during the year. No experience is necessary. Training for student care is provided by the Fairfax County Health Department and is essential for anyone working in the school health room:

- Friday, October 8th, Oakton Library, 10:00 am-12:00 pm
- Wednesday, November 17th, Herndon-Reston District Office, 12:00 pm-2:00 pm
- Thursday, January 20th, Chantilly Library, 12:00 pm-2:00 pm

We need help with paperwork during the month of October and with Vision and Hearing Screening on October 6th. Please call Health Room Aide, Mrs. Dawna Poyner, 703-757-2110 to volunteer.

GREAT FALLS ES SCHOOL TESTING DATES

SOL Testing

- May 17- Grade 3 Reading
- May 18- Grade 3 Reading
Grade 5 Reading
- May 19- Grade 4 Reading
Grade 6 Reading
- May 24- Grade 6 Math
- May 25- Grade 3 Science
Grade 5 Science
- May 26- Grade 3 History
Grade 4 History
- May 31- Grade 3 Math
Grade 5 Math
- June 1- Grade 4 Math
Grade 6 History

- October 5 Naglieri test Grade 1 and 2
- October 19, 20, 21- CoGAT test Grade 2
- October 26, 27, 28- CoGAT test, only for students new to Fairfax County in grades 3-6
- January 26- Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT) compacted math students Grade 6
- March 9 and 10th SOL Writing Grade 5

Contact Mrs. Joanne Schilling 703-757-2117 for school testing information.



OCTOBER 22. Volunteers are requested for student picture day. Please call the school office if you are able to assist.

- **AM KISS & RIDE Drop off**

Parents are reminded that students are not to enter the school building before 8:15 a.m. Staff is not available until 8:15 am, and students may not be in the building unsupervised.

- **PM KISS & RIDE Pick up**

Have your child's name written on a large piece of paper, and place it on the passenger side of the windshield. Our adult staff patrol will use this to relay your child's name to our waiting students. Please don't assume you don't need to follow this rule because our staff patrol recognizes your car. Staff duty changes so the same person who may recognize you is not always on duty. We need to keep our Kiss & Ride line moving forward to avoid backups. Having your child's name readily available to our patrols to see will keep the traffic flow moving and make sure our students are safely put into the correct car.

- **TRANSPORTATION OFFICE – SCHOOL BUS QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS**

School bus routes and times are determined by the Office of Transportation. If you have questions or concerns about your child's bus transportation, during the school day please call the Transportation Office 703-249-7100. If there is an emergency after regular office hours, call the School Security office at 571-423-2000. They are on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are able to contact whoever is required to handle any type of situation regarding school buses.

The Transportation Services website has compiled a list of common questions and answers concerning school bus transportation. Please visit: <http://www.fcps.edu/fts/tran/faq/>



- **DISTRIBUTION OF NON-PROFIT FLYERS**

Twice a year, Fairfax County Public Schools permits non-profit organizations to send their information home with our students. These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Fairfax County School Board, the Superintendent, or this school. Contact the school office for more information.

FALL - Promotional materials are due to the school office by Friday, September 17, 2010

Distribution date is Tuesday, September 21st.

SPRING - Promotional materials are due to the school office by Friday, May 13th, 2011

Distribution date is Tuesday, May 17th.

- **HEALTHY EATING = HEALTHY STUDENTS**

In compliance with federal law 108-265, Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004, the Fairfax County School Board adopted a wellness policy to promote student health and contribute to the reduction of childhood obesity. The Office of Food and Nutrition Services in conjunction with the Office of Health and Physical Education, and other affected departments, and with input from parents and students, developed guidelines to implement the policy. The Wellness Policy brochure is available online: http://www.fcps.edu/parents/print/Wellness_Broch_web.pdf Students need to start the day with a healthy breakfast. Snack smart - when sending food to school, we encourage all parents to choose snacks low in fat, saturated fat and trans fat. Classroom snacks, birthday treats, celebrations, etc., should follow the healthy wellness policy by limiting sodium, candy and sugar. Healthy catered snacks and celebration foods are available from Food and Nutrition Services.



FCPS in Partnership with Northern Virginia Healthy Kids Coalition is promoting the 9-5-2-1-0 Health message.

9-5-2-1-0 for Health!

- 9- Get 9 hours of sleep
- 5- Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day
- 2- Limit screen time to no more than 2 hours each day
- 1- Get at least 1 hour of exercise each day
- 0- No sugary drinks!

Closed toe shoes are highly recommended for students to wear during the school day. Flip-flops and other open toed shoes do not provide enough foot support for activities such as recess and gym. Flip-flops are especially hazardous when walking up and down the stairs.



PTA ROADRUNNER



- **ROOM PARENTS NEEDED!!!**

Room parents are needed for Ms Kelley, Ms Rogers and co-room parents for Mrs. Wong, Mrs. Moer and Bentz Sensei---would be much appreciated!!! If you are interested please contact Amy Kiser at akiser@cox.net

- **PTA Meeting**

Mark your calendars-Sept 30th 2pm—hear the latest on school events, renovation-guest speaker from FCPS crime and violence to speak on bullying and cyberspace...

- **Art Enrichment**

The Art Enrichment Program is a fun and rewarding way to get involved with your child's class. Once a month, we conduct an orientation (less than an hour) to teach parent volunteers about the artist for the session and demonstrate a related art project, which will often be connected to a current exhibit at one of the many fine museums in the Washington area.

Then, it's your turn! The next month, you and other volunteers will go into your child's classroom to teach about the artist and art project. You don't need any prior experience to do this, just enthusiasm for the creative process!

The orientations will typically be held on a Wednesday at 9:15 a.m. in the cafeteria. **Our first art enrichment orientation will be on Wednesday, September 29th at 9:15 in the cafeteria.** Please call or e-mail Sharon Davis (703-759-7399, sbd10@mac.com) with any questions or to volunteer. Thanks for supporting the arts for our children!

- **Tool Box Kits**

Thanks to Patty Craver for helping us all get our school supplies with our School Tool Boxes. There is an opportunity for students in kindergarten and third grade to purchase extra Tool Box Kits. We would love to sell them so they don't have to be returned. Contact Patty Craver if interested.

DON'T THROW AWAY those school supply boxes! In an effort to stay green and help others...we are collecting empty school boxes for an organization that can use them to pack with school supplies for children who need! If you still have your box, please have your child bring it to school and leave it in the foyer!!!

- **Have any extra school supplies? Any back packs? Disadvantaged students in our area could really use them. There will be a collection box in the foyer to accept any donations of any unused school supplies and backpacks. Kids Care Club will pack the supplies and donate them to needy students in our area.**



Thanks to our in house landscapers--Linda Campbell and Lisa Walmsley--special thanks to the Walmsleys for remodeling the roof on our school sign.

- **Rosetta Stone** now at GFES. This year the PTA has purchased a group license for Rosetta Stone Online. This license will allow GFES students and their families to have access to this foreign language teaching tool at a much reduced price, and we join Colvin Run and Spring Hill elementary schools in being able to offer this program. Rosetta Stone can be accessed from any computer and allows users to work at an independent pace to learn a language of their choice. Under the PTA's license, 475 users may obtain access to this tool, with 25 languages available. The program is recommended for students as young as Kindergartners, although younger students with limited reading and computer abilities will require parental assistance. The PTA will make user IDs and passwords available on a first-come, first-served basis at \$100 per user ID. Should you have any questions, contact the Rosetta Stone Committee at RosettaStone@gfpta.org.

● **GROCERY RECEIPTS PROGRAM**

5 MINUTES TODAY GIVES GFES \$\$\$\$\$ EVERY TIME YOU SHOP!

Last year these programs raised over \$5,000 for GFES! It's free money every time you do your grocery shopping! Even if you registered last year, you must **re-register** this year. Link your grocery store saving card to the receipts program and GFES will receive cash back every time your saving card is used. And while we would love for you to only choose GFES, you do not have to choose just one child's school!

Please give this website information or use the back of the form for people you know who might want to link to GFES as well, like grandparents, aunts, friends or neighbors whose purchases might not currently be supporting a school.

DO IT YOURSELF ONLINE:

Safeway Club for Education School ID: 6509980

Website: www.escrip.com

For current eScrip members click "Yes, renew me!"

Giant A+ BonusBucks School ID: 01943

Website: www.giantfood.com / A+ BonusBucks / Designate Schools

Harris Teeter Together in Education School ID: 5220

Website: www.harristeeter.com / Community / Together in Education

Target School ID: 103630 Website:

<http://sites.target.com/site/en/corporate/page.jsp?contentId=PRD03-001825>

**OR
COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING AND WE'LL LINK YOUR CARD FOR YOU:**

Name:		
Street:		
City:		
Zip Code:		
E-mail:		
Phone:		
Giant Bonus Card	#	#
Harris Teeter Card	#	#
Safeway Club Card	#	#
Target	#	#

Thank you for supporting GFES by participating in this program!

***REFLECTIONS CONTEST THEME- "TOGETHER WE CAN"**



Hey, Roadrunners, the Great Falls Elementary School Reflections program for this school year promises to be even better than last year...Start working on your entries now! Aren't sure what you can or can't do? Rules and forms are available in the school office or at the Virginia PTA web site:

www.vapta.org/component/docman/cat_view/82-arts-in-education.html.



Please keep in mind **Reflections** entries must be turned in with your official entry forms no later than Friday, October 22. All entries can be turned in to the school office. **Have questions?** We won't leave you in the lurch, contact your Co-Chairs Cindy Gersony, at gersony@cox.net or 703-757-2866, or Linda Cameron-Cadenazzi, at lindacameroncadenazzi@yahoo.com or 703-707-0341. We'll be happy to help you!

Great Falls Foundation for the Arts offers a series of art classes designed specifically for elementary aged students. It's a great way for students to express themselves and discover new talents and interests! The fall semester starts early September. For more information contact McNair Bishop at the Great Falls Foundation for the Arts.