



The Lion's Roar

**All the Latest News from
Lane Elementary School**

Where students communicate, collaborate & care

**7137 Beulah Street
Alexandria, VA 22315**

**703-924-7700
www.fcps.edu/LaneES**

Jay Nocco
Principal

Roxanne Salata
Assistant Principal

Pam Cherry
Administrative Resource

Katie Reynolds
LEAD Administrative Intern

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From the Principal's Desk ...



Dear Parents,

Can it really be December? Our school year seems to be flying by at a feverish pace. Over the next few weeks, during this holiday season, try to take some time to reflect on what is really important in our busy lives. If you and your family celebrate this time of year with the giving of gifts, consider how you could give and share the following:

- the gift of curiosity
- the gift of literacy
- the love of learning

As you shower your children with these gifts, raise their level of curiosity by learning new things together. Keep asking them the question “Why?” Model your own love of literacy by setting aside a time each night for everyone in the family to read. Share your love of learning and show your children your connection to the school by volunteering to help with school events and projects. Make plans to attend more school events in the new year ahead.

Children may outgrow fashion trends, toys may get lost or break, and new technology seems to become obsolete before it even hits the store shelves. The gift of education, however, can never be taken away, will never get lost, and will only increase in value over time.

All of us at Lane wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a Happy New Year!

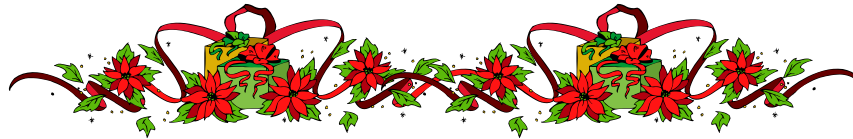
~ *Jay Nocco*
Principal

Please make a note of the following holiday schedule changes:

Winter Break begins Friday, December 23rd.

Thursday, December 22nd is a FULL school day.

School will resume with regular school hours on Tuesday, January 3rd.



What Time Does School Begin?

Please remember that our school day begins at **9:15 a.m.** Students *must* be in their classrooms when the bell rings at that time—not in the Kiss & Ride lane. Our bell schedule coincides with the computer clocks, which use the World Time Clock. We apologize if there has been some confusion about the correct time because of our new electronic sign in front of the school. The sign originally displayed the incorrect time but was recently adjusted to the same time that our bell schedule follows. Now that the sign is fixed, we are hopeful that it will coincide with the time we have always used inside the building (World Clock).



If your child is late to school—meaning he or she arrives after 9:15 a.m., after the staff members have left Kiss & Ride—you must go into the Front Office and sign in in the tardy log. A staff member will give your child an attendance card and then walk him or her to class. This process takes up more time, which means your child may miss part of the classroom's morning routines. Arriving on time, before 9:15 a.m., eliminates this problem.

We understand that unexpected things happen in life, and from time to time we all run late. We appreciate every effort you make to get your child here on time for the full school day.

More Holiday Attendance Reminders

During this time of year, many students are absent from school for holiday-related reasons. If you know ahead of time that your child is going to be absent, please call the office and let one of the office assistants know. This will save time and confusion when your child does not report to school.

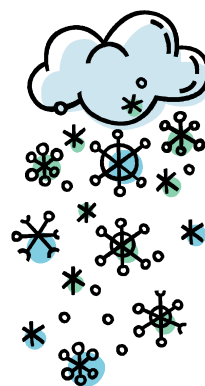
If you need to pick up your child early for any reason, please let the office and your child's teacher know ahead of time. Simply send a note or an e-mail to the teacher in the morning. This will enable the teacher to have your child packed up and ready to go at the time you designate, which can save time once you arrive at school. Please note that we cannot call your child down to the office to be dismissed until you have come into the office, presented a photo ID, and signed your child out.

'Tis the Season

Below is a summary of the FCPS holiday season activities' guidelines. Please keep them in mind if you are participating in a school holiday event. Share them with your children, too, to help explain our school holiday traditions.

- Classroom activities associated with religious holidays must be relevant to the instructional program.
- Students are invited to share information about their religion's traditions with classmates as a way of helping all students understand the religious diversity of our community.
- Music programs, pageants, and plays sponsored by the school do not reflect any one religion.
- Displays, recorded music, and decorations in school offices and public areas at Lane are seasonal and not overly religious; however, student instructional work that may have religious aspects may be displayed along with other student work.

Have a wonderful holiday season!



It's Beginning to Feel a Lot Like Winter

We've only seen a few snowflakes so far, but if this winter's weather follows in the path of this summer's earthquake and the fall's hurricanes and flooding, inclement weather policies will be very important! Now is the time to familiarize yourself with Lane's snow-related schedule changes for days when school starts two hours late, ends two hours early, or is closed altogether due to bad weather. You can find complete details in the School Handbook

(<http://www.fcps.edu/LaneES/handbook2011-2012.html>). Here are our inclement-weather hours:

If schools open two hours late, Lane will open at 11:15 a.m. All morning activities will be cancelled.

If schools close two hours early, Lane will dismiss at 1:55 p.m. All after-school and evening activities will be cancelled.

If schools are CLOSED, no classes or activities will be held.

Remember to make arrangements for child care for your children for those days when school schedules change.

FCPS tries its best to make a decision about delayed openings or closures for the day by 5 a.m., so be sure to tune in to local TV, radio, or the FCPS Emergency Announcement web page, <http://www.fcps.edu/news/emerg.shtml>, to get the word as early as possible when the weather is bad. You will also get e-mail notification if you sign up for Keep In Touch on the FCPS homepage.

Decisions about early closures are usually made by 10:30 a.m. to give parents time to make arrangements to pick up their children or be home when they arrive home from school. Stay tuned to the media outlets listed above to get the word as quickly as possible when inclement weather threatens during the school day.

More information regarding FCPS inclement weather policies and decisions about closings can be found at <http://www.fcps.edu/news/weatherdecision.shtml>.

Spelling Bee Buzz Has Begun

It's time to start S-P-E-L-L-I-N-G in preparation for our annual schoolwide spelling bee!

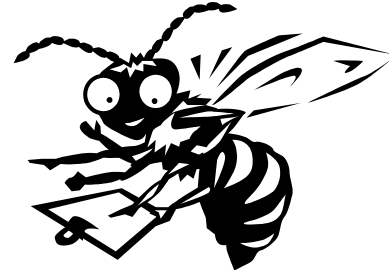
Lane is excited to continue participation in our community's spelling bee program again this year. This month, each class in first through sixth grade will hold a classroom spelling bee.

The top two spellers from each class will then participate in the school bee, which will be held on **Wednesday, January 11th at 2 p.m.** in the cafeteria.

The Lane school champion will advance to the Fairfax County Spelling Bee in March. The winner of the Fairfax County Spelling Bee will have the honor of participating in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. from May 27th through June 1st, 2012.

To prepare for the class bees, each grade level can use the School Spelling Bee Study Lists supplied by Scripps Spelling Bee, which can be found on our school website at <http://www.fcps.edu/LaneES/spellingbee.html>. The classroom bees will be conducted using these words. The school bee will use a completely different set of words. Many of the additional words for the classroom and school spelling bees will be taken from the word lists found on the website www.myspellit.com.

Complete contest rules for both the classroom and the school bees are available in Lane's Reading Room as well as on the Scripps Spelling Bee website: www.spellingbee.com.



Library Book Fair a Great Success!

Thanks to all the families who came to the Book Fair last night for our Family Shopping Night. It was so great to see so many people buying books and having such a good time together.

The Book Fair will continue until Friday this week. Students have browsed through the books and made their wish lists. Books can be purchased at school through Friday morning.

Thank you for supporting the Lane Library, and happy reading!



Music Notes: The Sounds of December

Submitted by Bev Ogden and Joy Petty, Lane Music Specialists



Composer of the Month – Tchaikovsky

Peter Tchaikovsky was a Russian composer who will be forever famous for his *Nutcracker Ballet* and his *1812 Overture*. This ballet is performed in many places in our area during the December holidays, and the *1812 Overture* is often performed on July 4th because the music is written to include actual cannon fire!

During the month of December students will be learning songs for the December 22nd Sing-Along. This is a tradition at Lane, where the entire school gathers together to sing songs of the season and recognize many of the cultures represented here at Lane.



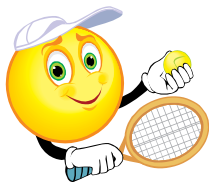
Parents of 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students:

Please note that all upcoming music assignments can be found in each your child's music pocket folder, along with any necessary study materials. Also, all written and graded assignments must be signed by a parent and returned to school. We want you to know how your child is doing in music!

Have a safe and happy holiday season. Happy Everything, Merry Always!

From the P. E. Department: Put Exercise on Your Holiday Schedule!

Submitted by Linda Farace and Tiffany Schutt, Lane P. E. Specialists



“Exercise and recreation are as necessary as reading. I would rather say more necessary, because health is worth more than learning.”

- Thomas Jefferson

As we enter into December and prepare for more holiday celebrations, we all start to feel the effects of our Thanksgiving feast and other seasonal treats. At the same time, our weather begins to get colder, and it gets a little more difficult to squeeze in exercise or physical activity. However, this is the time we *need* to schedule exercise into our routines. We encourage you to find community activities for your children to participate in or spend time with them by using the recreational facilities available in our community.

November flew by as we spent the month working on our striking-skills unit. Our Lane students had the opportunity to work with both short- and long-handled implements. We spent time learning and practicing striking skills, such as using tennis rackets and hockey sticks, to improve our hand-eye coordination.

As December arrives, we will be moving into our educational gymnastics unit. This unit will provide our students opportunities to work on strength, balance, and flexibility, while developing and creating mini routines.

Please continue to encourage your children to dress appropriately on their P.E. days with sneakers and loose-fitting clothing.

Counselors' Corner: Making the Holidays Less Materialistic

Submitted by Rachel Hoover and Matt Beckwith, Lane Counselors

Adapted from Kidshealth.org

The “gimmies” are all around us during the holiday season. It can be hard for kids — and parents — to look beyond all of the product-driven hoopla and remember what the holidays are really about. It’s not the gifts but what’s behind them that’s important — the spirit of giving. Help your kids learn the fun of giving, and how rewarding it can be to look for, make, and wrap something special — or *do* something special — for people they care about and others who are in need. Here are five ways to curb materialism in your kids and reinforce the real reason for the season:

- **Teach kids to question marketing messages** – Explain, when your kids ask for products they see advertised, that commercials and other ads are designed to make people want things they don’t necessarily need. And these ads are often meant to make us think that these products will make us happier somehow. Talking to kids about what things are like in reality can help put things into perspective.
- **Focus on family traditions** - Traditions that focus on family or friends can be a great way to put meaning back into the holidays. Talk about which family traditions your family loves the most. Then figure out how you can put more emphasis on them. Find out what the holidays mean to others. Have your kids talk to a grandparent, parent, uncle, or aunt about how they spent the holidays growing up. Build some new traditions. If you don’t have any family traditions, it’s never too late to start. Get together around activities that you all enjoy, such as cooking or ice-skating. Ask your kids what they would enjoy doing every year and make an effort to do it.
- **Teach kids to give of themselves** - Volunteerism can show kids that giving your time, effort, and kindness is more rewarding than just expecting to receive lots of presents.
- **Give gifts with meaning** - Of course, gift giving will always be a large part of the holiday season. And with good reason — it can teach kids to really consider what might make others happy and what’s important to people they care about. Watching loved ones’ faces as they open presents that your children put a lot of heart and thought into can make the holidays more worthwhile for your kids. But presents don’t always have to be purchased in a store. Teach your kids how to put some real meaning and feelings into their gifts this year and beyond. Making their own presents can help show just how much kids care and can make the experience of giving more rewarding for both kids and their gift recipients.
- **Be a good holiday role model** - Show your kids that the holidays can be joyous and fulfilling, not just a stress-ridden time that revolves around marathon shopping trips. Emphasize early on that it’s not about tons of presents but giving and receiving a few heartfelt gifts.

By starting early with traditions that emphasize the true meaning of the holidays and the caring thoughts behind gift giving, you can help to mold your kids' perspectives on the holiday season and what it means to both give and receive all year long.

Reviewed by: [Steven Dowshen, MD](#)

Happy Holidays from the Lane PTA!

The Lane PTA would like to wish all Lane families a wonderful Winter Break and a joyous holiday season. There are a couple of activities planned for December.

- This **Friday, December 9th**, they will offer the popular **Drop & Shop babysitting evening** for parents who'd like a couple of kid-free hours during this busy time of year. Reservations are required. You can download the registration form on the school website.
- On **Tuesday, December 20th**, the PTA invites you to **Kumo Asian Bistro for Restaurant Day**. Throughout the entire day, a portion of total sales will be donated back to our school. Takeout and dine-in orders both count!



COMMUNICATE, COLLABORATE, CARE

The first PTA meeting of 2012 will take place on Tuesday, January 3rd, the day we return from Winter Break. We hope to see you there!



Upcoming Events

**Monday, December 5 –
Friday, December 9**

Annual Library Book Fair

Friday, December 9

PTA Drop & Shop Fundraiser
6 – 9 p.m.

Tuesday, December 20

PTA Restaurant Night at
Kumo Asian Bistro
All day, including takeout

Friday, December 16

SCA Spirit Day – Pajama Day

**Friday, December 23 -
Monday, December 31**

Winter Break
***School and Office closed.
School reopens on Tuesday,
January 3***

Tuesday, January 3

PTA Meeting
7 p.m., Lane Library