

Dear Parents:

**Here's the latest news from Lanier:**

\*H1N1 Update and Request: The Lanier Middle School community, along with Fairfax County and the commonwealth of Virginia, is seeing an increase in reports of influenza-like illnesses. According to the Virginia Department of Health, Virginia has reached the classification of "widespread" for influenza-like illnesses, and almost all the influenza virus circulating in the state at this time is 2009 H1N1 influenza. Lanier Middle continues to work closely with FCPS and the Fairfax County Health Department as we face the challenges of an active flu season. Influenza-like illness is widespread in the community, and therefore it is in the schools. Because of this, Fairfax County Public Schools is not sending out notification to school communities regarding a single confirmed case of influenza or a group of confirmed cases at a particular school. The medical community is testing only a small number of influenza cases, so information on confirmed versus unconfirmed cases is not helpful. However, the Health Department continues to monitor absenteeism at individual schools and to monitor the severity of illness caused by 2009 H1N1. If the virus begins to cause more severe illness than what we are currently experiencing, FCPS will work with the Health Department to implement appropriate response measures. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages school systems to remain open whenever possible due to the social and economic impact that school closures have on the community. FCPS continues to follow this guidance. The symptoms of H1N1 flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and include fever plus a cough and/or a sore throat. Persons with influenza-like illness should stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever, or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medicines. We encourage everyone in our community to help keep the flu from spreading by washing hands regularly and covering coughs and sneezes.

\*Beware of Students "Smoking Smarties": Please be aware that "Smoking Smarties" has become quite popular with a number of our students. As shown in the attached link, students "smoke" Smarties brand candy by crushing them in their package, inhaling the crushed up pieces, and exhaling them as "smoke." I have spoken to students about this matter during via school-wide announcements and warned them of the health dangers involved as well as the problems that come with buying and selling of candy at school. Teachers have been notified to send students to the office starting via a disciplinary referral if they are seen engaging in this practice.

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/03/23/earlyshow/health/main4885437.shtml>

**Reminders:**

\*The November PTA newsletter is posted on Lanier's homepage. The link is:

<http://www.fcps.edu/LanierMS/pta/oct09.pdf>.

\*Healthy Youth Survey Coming Soon: On Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, our eighth grade English teachers will be administering the 2009 Healthy Youth Survey to eligible 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. A letter about this survey was mailed home on September 15, 2009. The survey takes about 55 minutes to complete. Student responses are kept completely confidential. Please visit the following website:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/youthpdf.htm> for more information about what questions will be asked and how you can opt out your son or daughter if you so desire. If you decide to opt-out, please return the opt-out form as soon as possible to your child's guidance counselor. Our 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ESOL Level 1 and Level 2 students will not take the survey. Also, our self-contained special education students will not take the survey. Our special education students in team-taught English 8 classes can take the survey, but there are no accommodations available to complete it. Many of these students may be exempted from taking the survey by their teachers or by parents. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

\*For your planning purposes, please be aware that Lanier will be closing school 3 hours early (at 11:55 a.m.) on Friday, November 13, 2009 and Friday, January 8, 2010 for staff development. Please know that regular bus service and lunch will be provided. Thank you for your time and assistance.

\*After School Programs: Late buses are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 4:30 pm. Students were provided information about the many after-school activities that are available to them. Students may also log onto their Blackboard 24-7 account for more information.

### **In the Community:**

\*The City of Fairfax School Board will hold its monthly business meeting on Monday, November 2, 2009. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. and will be held at the City of Fairfax City Hall, Room 100. The following topics will be discussed:

- **Student Representative Report: Jonathan Early**
- **Parent Program at Providence Elementary School: Jesse Kraft, Principal**
- **Road Map Focus Group Report: Ann Monday, Superintendent**

\*Budget Discussions Begin: The following is a message from Deputy Superintendent Richard Moniuszko: Reading the tea leaves regarding the FY11 budget, we're going to have to be assertive to ensure that the community is aware of the impact of another year with no increase. Dr. Dale and Leadership Team continue to work on the Superintendent's budget for FY11, and it's not a pretty picture. It's still a work in progress, but this budget will contain another round of cuts similar to those in FY10. For the second year, FCPS will participate with Fairfax County government in communicating the serious nature of our budget situation, and participate with them in community dialogues. *It's important for parents and staff to participate*, as these meetings will be the first step in communicating the impact of FY10 budget cuts, and potential harm of further cuts in FY11. Format will be similar to last year, with participants attending a staff presentation followed by focus groups where they can express their opinion.

\*The  
Fairfax High School                      Saturday, November 14, 10:00 a.m.                      Kings Park Library, Sherwood Library,  
George Mason Regional Library

Theatre department is offering a one day drama camp for grades 1-8 on the upcoming teacher workday, Tuesday, November 3rd from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The cost is \$40. All proceeds support the FHS theatre students. Please see [www.fxplayers.org](http://www.fxplayers.org) for full details and a registration form.

\*Calling All Girls: Come to the free cheerleading clinic Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> 8:00 am- 11:00 am at Infinity Cheerleading; 2940A Prosperity Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031. See attached link for more information: <http://www.fcps.edu/LanierMS/bryc.pdf>.

Have a good weekend,

Scott Poole, Ph.D.  
Principal, Lanier Middle School