



Lanier PTA News May/June 2009

Sidney Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road, Fairfax, VA 22030 (703) 934-2400 www.fcps.edu/LanierMS/

Calendar

May

- 1 Music Department Trip to Hershey PA
- 7 - 9 Disney's "Aladdin Jr." at Lanier, 7:30 PM
- 13 PTA Meeting, 7 PM
- 20 Concert/Cadet Band/ Percussion Ensemble Concert at Lanier, 7PM
- 21 Symphonic Band Concert at Lanier, 7PM
- 25 Memorial Day Holiday
- 27 Orchestra Concert at Lanier, 7PM

June

- 8-12 Final Exams
- 10 PTA Meeting, 7PM
- 18 Last Day of School

September

- 8 First Day of School

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A Message from the Principal

"Assets" Help Students Thrive

By Scott Poole and Michael Jones

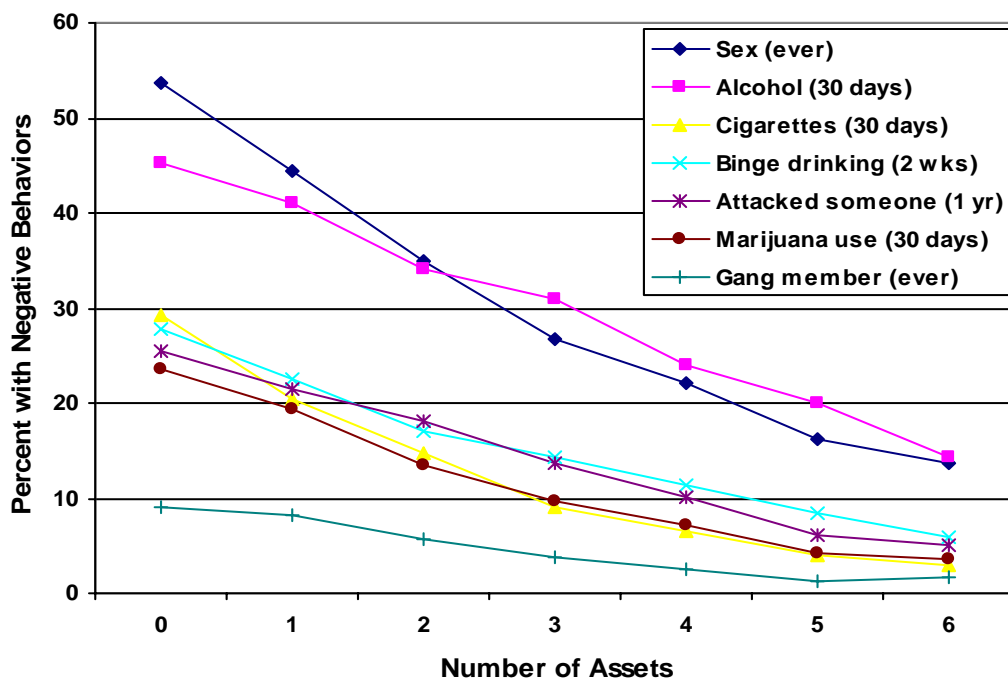


In an effort to proactively educate students about making good decisions, our counseling department recently invited Mr. Michael Jones, an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug (ATOD) Teacher in the FCPS Office of Special Services, to speak to our students. Many students and staff members were interested in and impressed by what he had to say, so I asked him to help me co-write an article to share some highlights of his message with parents. The following information and statistics come from his presentation, and I have tried to add some context by providing an overview of what we are doing at Lanier to address the issues raised by Mr. Jones.

The health and safety of young students are paramount in their obtainment of academic success and overall well-being. One danger associated with the adolescent years is the experimentation with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Research indicates that the earlier the age of first use, the more likely of continued extensive use throughout adulthood. According to the 2008 Fairfax County Youth Survey, 8th graders reported the following use:

2008 Youth Survey		8 th Graders (EVER USED)
	Alcohol	39%
	Tobacco	15%
	Marijuana	7%
	Inhalants	14%

Please remember that these statistics are for all students in Fairfax County, not just those at Lanier Middle School. Regardless, we all maintain that our goal is to promote abstinence and offer various educational and prevention strategies that delay the onset of first use. In examining the Youth Survey, results indicate that the more “Assets” or “Protective Factors” a student possesses, the less likely he/she is to engage in risky behaviors. “Assets/Protective Factors” include good grades, extracurricular activity involvement, community connections, praise from parents, and positive adult role models. Therefore, the ultimate goal is to increase the total number of “Assets” and Protective Factors’ a student possesses. As shown in the graph below, there is a direct correlation between Assets/Protective Factors and the percentage of students with risky behaviors:



At Lanier, we are working hard to provide as many of these Assets as we can. A few of our most important initiatives include Pride Time/Soaring and our After-School Program. For 30 minutes

every Monday-Thursday, students at Lanier have an opportunity to be remediated if they are missing work and/or struggling with a particular course concept. Students also have a chance to be enriched if they are already performing at a high level. In an effort to recognize students that are doing well both behaviorally and academically, they are allowed to “Soar” during Pride Time for one day each week; this means that they may play in the gym, read in the library or talk with their friends in the cafeteria. Our highly successful After-School Program also serves between 800-1000 students each week by providing opportunities for students to participate in a wide variety of activities.

In closing, I encourage you to apply the lessons learned from Mr. Jones by encouraging your son or daughter to actively participate in the Assets that Lanier has to offer. Ask them if they are Soaring on a regular basis. If they are, be sure to praise them for making good decisions; if they aren’t, ask questions to learn why. As for After-School, learn about the programs we offer by visiting our website and encouraging your son/daughter to participate in those that he or she has an interest in. All these programs are free, well-supervised by trained personnel, and safe. During the summer months when school is out of session, be sure to find other “Assets”

outside of school to fill the void. In short, the message Mr. Jones makes is quite simple—students have a much greater tendency to stay out of trouble when the adults in their lives surround them with positive influences.

PTA President's Letter

Dear Lanier Families-

Thank you to everyone for making our **Live at Lanier** event another great success! The event helped raise over \$6000 for our school. A big round of applause goes to our very own Lanier students who put on two magnificent talent shows. We are so fortunate to have such talent at Lanier. Thank you to our students and families in the audience for being so supportive of all the performers.

Thank you to all our parent and teacher volunteers who helped volunteer their time selling tickets, concessions, monitoring the Silent Auction and the auditorium. Our events would not be successful if it weren't for the involvement of our Lanier families and teachers.

A big thank you goes to our Silent Auction co-chairs Judy and Chuck McClimans for time spent soliciting donations for the event. Because of their hard work and persistence, we had over 60 incredible auction and raffle items.

It is hard to believe that the end of the school year is right around the corner. This will be our last newsletter of the school year. We have two more PTA meetings, May 13 and June 10. Our June meeting will be a potluck dinner and we would to have some guests!

We are still in need of some volunteers slots for our 2009-2010 PTA board. The full PTA board will be voted in on May 21st prior to the Spring Band Concert. If you would like to volunteer for a position or know someone that might be perfect for the role, please contact me at dmortiere@aol.com.

2009-2010 Lanier PTA Proposed Board

President: Pam Wagner
Vice President/Spirit Wear: Lisa Mountjoy
Secretary: Laura Allsopp
Treasurer: Lisa MacCammon
Ways and Means/Fall: Lisa Mountjoy
Hospitality Co-chairs: Debbie Bermudez-Bernier
VACANT co-chair
Volunteers: Eileen Payne
PALS Desk: Kim Johnson
Newsletter Editor: Cathy Miller
Newsletter Distribution: **VACANT**
Directory: **VACANT**

Lanier PTA News
2009

Membership: **VACANT**
Minority Rep: **VACANT**
Library Rep: **VACANT**
Band/Orchestra/Chorus Rep: **VACANT**

With this being our last newsletter, this also means many personal "lasts" for me. In a few months, I will be ending my 8 years at Lanier. I can honestly say these have been some of the best years for my 4 children and also wonderful years for me. It is going to be very hard to say goodbye to Lanier but as I mentioned to a few, I will be back next year to sit and enjoy the talent show!

I would like to personally thank:

- Our Lanier teachers and assistants for providing our children with the best learning environment we could ask for. Thank you for your dedication to the teaching profession and helping to make our children well prepared for the high school environment. Thank you for bringing out the best qualities in our students, pushing them to strive to do their best, bringing out their creative and talented side and for helping to make them grow to be well rounded, independent individuals.
- Our assistant principals, counseling and guidance staff for promoting positive values in our children and ensuring their class schedules fit their needs.
- Our security officer, Officer Gil, for personally knowing each student that comes through Lanier and for making our school's safety his top priority. Nothing gets past him!
- Our custodial staff for keeping our school clean and always willing to help with our school events.
- Our administrative assistants - Mrs. Oplinger, Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Ewell for always greeting everyone who enters the school with a warm welcome and for always being there for me when a favor (actually many!) was needed.
- Our parent volunteers - your help throughout the years is what makes our school the school that it is. Volunteering in the middle schools is just as important to our children as when we volunteer in the elementary schools. We could not run our events, be it a fundraiser, band, orchestra, music concert, book fair, school play

or sending in food for an event if we did not have the support of our parent volunteers. THANK YOU!

- Our school principal, Dr. Scott Poole. Our PTA has always had the full support of Dr. Poole. He solicits input from the parents to ensure that Lanier continues to provide the best learning environment for our children. Our concerns, ideas and suggestions are important to him. He is an open communicator and our children are his main priority. It has been my pleasure to have served as PTA president under the administration of Dr. Poole.
- Finally, I would like to thank the many parent volunteers that have served on Lanier's PTA board over the years. Without these volunteers, I could not have done my job as your PTA president. You've been a tremendous support to me and our school community by being willing to step in and help in anyway you could. Thank you to Judy McClimans, Laura Allsopp, Mary Stinnett, Ann Bush, Cathy Miller, Laura Welke, Eileen Payne, Janice Wyatt, Lisa Mountjoy, Suzi Ginch, Cynthia Jaekle, Patti Pfeiffer, Michelle Gates, Debbie Bermudez-Bernier, Tu Phillips and Missy Edwards.

I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer with your families. Thank you for all your support over the years.

Warm regards,
Diane Mortiere
Lanier PTA President
703-502-3994

PTA Asking for Teacher Appreciation Week Donations

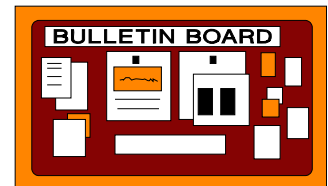
This year, *Teacher Appreciation Week* is May 4-8, 2009. The PTA is asking for gift card donations (restaurants, stores, coffee shop, etc) or monetary donations to purchase gift cards for the teachers. Our goal is to be able to give each teacher a gift card to show them how much we appreciate them. We are in need of 80 cards and so far we have 12 donations. If you would like to donate, please send your gift card/certificate(s) or monetary donation in an envelope addressed to the PTA with *Teacher Appreciation* marked on the front. You can have your child drop your donation off at the main office at school or you can mail

it to Lanier Middle School, Attention: PTA Teacher Appreciation. Please include your name on the donation.

For any questions, please contact our Hospitality volunteers Michelle Gates at mgates@specialolympicsva.org or Debbie Bernier Bermudez at debbiebermudez@gmail.com

Thank you in advance for your donation!

Guidance News



Girls Leadership Conference and Boys Leadership Conference

Select 7th and 8th grade young men and young ladies will have the opportunity to attend a Girls Leadership Conference and a Boys Leadership Conference at the end of May. Mrs. Williams will attend the Girls Leadership Conference with our young ladies, and Mr. Kamins will attend the Boys Leadership Conference with our young men. This will be a great opportunity for those involved.

Students Speak at School Board Meeting

Five Lanier students recently attended an evening school board meeting where they had the opportunity to respond to questions from school board members about their experiences at Lanier. Thank you for doing such a great job representing Lanier!

Students involved were:

Leah Evans
Leah Johnson
Jason Monroe
Takondwa Kakusa
Alex Rubin

Rising seventh grade students energized by Lanier Orientation

On April 1st and 2nd, we held an orientation at Lanier for our rising 7th grade students. Students from our feeder elementary schools heard our award-winning band and choral programs, which were very well-received by a great audience of upcoming Lanier students. Several of our 8th grade student leaders helped us with this event, acting as tour guides and/or serving as part of our student panel, answering questions asked by sixth grade students. Thank you for your enthusiastic

participation with this event. Our local elementary schools appreciated your efforts and energy. Our rising 7th grade class is excited about coming to Lanier next year!

Standards of Learning Tests Information and Schedule

By Diana White
Student Testing Coordinator

Students in Grades 7-8 in our school will be taking the **Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests** from May 19 – June 1, 2009. It will be very helpful if you can avoid appointments which may take your child out of school during this time period. Also, it will help your child perform his or her best if he or she has had a good night's rest, a healthy breakfast, and comes to school with a positive attitude.

The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) tests are required of all students in Grades 3-8 across the state by the Virginia Department of Education. SOL tests measure the extent to which students have learned the content and skills specified in the Virginia SOLs. Content areas tested include reading, mathematics, history/social science, science, algebra and geometry.

The purpose of the testing is to provide information about student achievement in several subject areas. Scores from the tests will be used to determine whether students fail to meet standards, are proficient in meeting the standards, or advanced in the standards.

Scores will be sent directly to your home from the scoring service, sometime in August.

The SOL testing schedule is as follows:

May 19 – Science 8
May 20 – Civics 8
May 21 – History 7
May 22 – Reading 8
May 26 – Math 7
May 27 – Math 8 & Math Honors 7
May 28 – Reading 7
May 29 – Make Ups
June 1 – Algebra I & Geometry
June 2-5 Make-up Tests 7 & 8

PALS Testing Schedule:

May 11-15 - PALS Testing
June 3-5 – PALS Make-ups

Electronic Policy for SOL Testing

Students are strongly encouraged to leave all electronics (iPods, cell phones, games, etc) at home on test days. If students bring any electronics to the testing classrooms, they will have to relinquish them to proctors. If a phone goes off in a testing classroom, this will result in a testing irregularity. This could result in all students having to retest.

Thank you for your understanding.

Standards of Learning Tests Study Resources

By Diana White
Student Testing Coordinator

In preparation for the spring Standards of Learning tests, I wanted to encourage you to use the ePAT to help prepare your child for the upcoming online testing. Virginia Department of Education is providing Electronic Practice Assessment Tools (ePAT), a program designed for students to interact online with released SOL test questions.

Information on how to access the ePAT can be found at the PEMSolutions site www.pearsonaccess.com. Once there, select Virginia from the drop down asking if your state has access. Next, click on GO to PEMSolutions link and select the **ePAT** tab at the top of your screen. Make sure you download and install the ePat Launcher before using the tools. Additional information can be found under both the **Practice Assessments Tools** and **Resources** tabs. No user name or password is required to access the ePATs.

There are several tests that are available online. The mathematics (2006) is available for 7th graders. The 8th graders can choose from the Reading (2002), Mathematics (2003) and/or Science (2004). End of

Course tests are Algebra, Geometry, Chemistry and Biology.

This will be a great resource to familiarize your child with the online tools and the actual SOL online format. The testing window is May 19-June 5th. All of the tests during this period will be online. I will post the exact schedule as we finalize the dates.

We hope this will be helpful. Please call or email me if you have any questions. 703-934-2407, Diana.White@fcps.edu.

Lanier's Spring Musical:



By Mrs. Brenda Scott

Be sure and make plans to attend Lanier Middle School's production of Disney's "Aladdin, Jr." on May 7 – 9 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets will go on sale Monday, April 20th in the cafeteria during lunches. Pre-sale ticket prices will be \$3.00 for students and \$5.00 for adults. Tickets, at the door, will be \$5.00 for students and \$7.00 for adults. **(See Flyer at end of Newsletter)**

"Aladdin" is a great show for all ages. We are encouraging all the elementary schools and community at large to support our students in this endeavor. We have extremely talented students at Lanier and know that you will be entertained. You won't want to miss this outstanding opportunity. Mark your calendars today!

Literacy Corner

(Editor's Note: Watch this space for articles on Literacy from the Office of Middle School Instruction)

Series Books:

Making Book Choices Easier

Children's series books have come a long way. Did you grow up with Nancy Drew? The Hardy Boys? The Lord of the Rings? Do you still seek out series books? So do teens! Whether a book becomes a series or stops at a sequel or two, they can certainly keep your teen excited and engaged in reading for as long as the author keeps writing. Here are a few popular middle school series (or books with sequels) to consider:

- ❖ *A Living Nightmare: Cirque de Freak Series* by Darren Shan -- A very strange group of circus performers
- ❖ *Artemis Fowl* by Eoin Colfer -- Action-packed fantasy starring a criminal mastermind
- ❖ *The Princess Diaries* by Meg Cabot -- A New York teen takes on a new life of royalty
- ❖ *The Series of Unfortunate Events* by Lemony Snicket -- The final book has just been published.
- ❖ *The Golden Compass* by Philip Pullman -- Sophisticated fantasy, three books
- ❖ *Stormbreaker: Alex Rider Adventure* by Anthony Horowitz -- Action! Adventure!
- ❖ *Among the Hidden* by Margaret Peterson Haddix -- A future society has become a totalitarian state.
- ❖ *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* by Ann Brashares -- Imagine how a perfect pair of jeans can change lives.
- ❖ *Tiger: The 5 Ancestors Series* by Jeff Stone -- Five orphans, computer games and Japanese anime
- ❖ *Sammy Keyes Series* by Wendelin Van Draanen -- An interesting teenage sleuth; move over Nancy Drew!
- ❖ *Ender's Game* by Orson Scott Card -- The young Ender must save the world.
- ❖ *Uglies* by Scott Westerfield -- Everybody becomes pretty in this future world.

Clinic News

Student Medications

The end of the school year is coming soon! If your student has medications in the clinic, please remember to stop by and pick them up by the last day of school. If your child will be attending summer school the medication authorization form from this year will be accepted there. Watch for a reminder notice from the clinic and call the school Public Health Nurse, Kathleen Snow, at 703-934-2440 if you have any questions. Thank you.

Fairfax High School Events



(Editor's Note: This space will be used to provide information on various Fairfax High School events that may be of interest to our Future Fairfax High School Rebels.)

Fairfax Chorus

What: Spring Show

Who: Everyone!

When: Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Time: 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.

Location: Fairfax High School Auditorium

The final public concert of the season will be the always popular **Spring Show** on Wednesday 5/27/09. Disney music is the theme this year, so mark your calendars now and plan to enjoy our Fairfax Choirs and small groups give their all one last time as they perform your Disney favorites. This free concert in the auditorium begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.

For additional information on this event and Fairfax choirs, please visit the FHS Choral Department website www.fhschorus.net.

Fairfax Players

Upcoming Fairfax Player Events at the High School:

- May 1 - 9, 2009 - A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum
- June 2009 - Greater Tuna



A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum...!

Fairfax High School (the FX Players) will be presenting Stephen Sondheim's musical **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum**, May 1-9. In a desperate attempt to win his freedom, the slave, Pseudolus, attempts to help his young master, Hero, earn the love of a girl. But the Captain wants the same girl. And poor Erronius is looking for his lost children. This musical comedy is the FX Players Cappies show. (Cappies are the Critics and Awards Program for High School Theatre and Journalism). Discounted tickets may be purchased in advanced through the website only: www.fxplayers.org. *Please note: this production may not be suitable for elementary aged children.*

Sports

Interested in attending a sporting event at Fairfax High School? Check out the high school's athletic web site for more information at www.fairfaxhighsports.org

FCPS Newswire

(General Items of Interest for Parents from the FCPS Newswire Website)

2009-10 School Year Calendars Available

The calendars for the 2009-10 school year have been posted and are available online at <http://www.fcps.edu/cal.htm>.



The Puma Pounce 5K Race and 1.5 Mile Fun Run at Colin Powell Elementary School - May 9, 2009

The Puma Pounce 5K Race and 1.5 Mile Fun Run" will be held May 9, 2009 at 8 a.m. at Colin Powell Elementary School. The race is open to the public. This race benefits the PTA's Playground Fund as well as the Educational Fund at the school. Please come out to support the school as well as enjoy a morning of fitness, food and prizes.

If you register by April 9, the cost is \$20 per person. After that it is \$25 per person. (Every registrant gets a t-shirt and goodie bag at the race.) Make your check out to: Colin Powell Elementary School PTA and mail it or drop it off at the school.

Please contact Brenda Hinkle at iceskater@hinkles.com or Michele Mezher at mmezher@juno.com for more information. The race registration form is available to download at <http://www.cpespta.org/home>.

Thank you,
Michele Mezher
Colin Powell PTA Puma Pounce Committee Co-Chair

City of Fairfax Theater Company: Auditions for Summer Production -- Children of Eden

The (new) City of Fairfax Theatre company will be holding auditions for its summer production of **Children of Eden**, which will be performed July 31-August 9, 2009. Auditions will be held at Fairfax High School on May 23rd and May 30, 2009 from 9am to Noon and auditions are open to the community. Potential actors should prepare a one minute contemporary monologue and 16 bars of a song. Children 12 and under should prepare a song to sing and be ready to answer some basic questions (such as how old they are, where they go to school, and be able to describe a pet or sibling.)

Volunteers will also be needed for carpentry, electrics, costumes, props, publicity, box office and concessions. If you are interested in assisting in any capacity, please send an e-mail to fairfaxcitytheatre@gmail.com.

You may also visit the website:

<http://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org/CFTC/Welcome.html> to find out about the theatre company, purchase tickets for any performance, or to get information about the Summer for Youth programs or Internships for high school and college students.

Summer Band and Orchestra Camp

Sponsored by Franklin Middle School Band
Boosters

Camp Details: www.fcps.edu/FranklinMS

Location: Chantilly High School (Due to roof repairs at Franklin MS, the camp will be held at Chantilly HS)

Dates: June 24 - July 17

Daily Hours: Orchestra -- 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Band -- 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Cost: \$160.00 per student

Free Camp Tee Shirt

Students will study the following areas:

- All brass, woodwinds, percussion, string instruments
- Music Theory

The camp is offered to the following band and orchestra students:

- Grades 3rd - 10th (exceptions are made at the discretion of the director)
- Beginning Band/Orchestra
- Concert Band/Orchestra
- Symphonic Band/Orchestra

A concert featuring all performing groups is scheduled for July 17th.

Parents interested in an application can obtain one from the Franklin Website listed above or email Lawrence Walker at Lawrence.Walker@fcps.edu.

Lanier Late Bus Schedule

Late buses are available on the following days for Lanier students:

- Mondays at 4:10
- Wednesdays at 4:45
- Thursdays at 4:45



2008 - 2009 Lanier PTA Board Members

President: Diane Mortiere, dmortiere@aol.com
Vice President: Missy Edwards, medwards@alliancemicro.com
Secretary: Laura Allsopp, LAllsopp@aol.com
Treasurer: Judy McClimans, judy.mcclimans@cox.net
Ways and Means: Suzie Ginch, ginch.clan@verizon.net
Lisa Mountjoy mlmountjoy@aol.com
Volunteers: Eileen Payne, EPayne@e-ware.net
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Newsletter Editor: Cathy Miller milebfxva@aol.com
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Directory: Mary Stinnett, marystinnett@cox.net
Membership: Ann Bush, dbush2@aol.com
Minority Representative: **VACANT**
Hospitality: Michelle Gates
Debbie Bermudez-Bernier
Giant/Safeway/Boxtops: Cynthia Jaekle CJaekle@imsfood.com
Teacher Representative: Tu Phillips AnhTu.Phillips@fcps.edu
Music Representative: Patti Pfeiffer rpfeiffer1@verizon.net
Library Representative: Patti Pfeiffer rpfeiffer1@verizon.net

Newsletter Available On-Line

The newsletter will be available on-line on the Lanier Middle School web site at <http://www.fcps.edu/LanierMS/> prior to the paper copy arriving at your home due to the distribution process.

PTA Fundraising Opportunities



1. Giant Food

Register your Giant Bonus Cards. You must redo this every year. This just takes a minute and it is a good fundraiser for Lanier school. Lanier MS code is 01877 and here's the website to enter your info:
www.giantfood.com/aplus/aplus.



2. Safeway

Safeway contributes up to 3% of your purchases to our school. Register your Safeway Card - go to
www.escrip.com/ Lanier school ID 148861819.

3. Office Depot

Ask Office Depot to give Lanier credit when you check out.



4. Box Tops For Education

Collect box tops from assorted products and turn them into the PAL room near the library. Check out the website at www.boxtops4education.com.

Lanier Middle School's

Production of

Disney's

Aladdin Jr



Music By
Alan Menkin

Lyrics by
Howard Ashman and Tim Rice

Book Adapted and Additional Lyrics by
Jim Luigs

Music Adapted and Arranged by
Bryan Louiselle

Based on the Screenplay by
Ron Clements and John Musker
Ted Elliot and Terry Rossio

TICKETS:

Pre-sale

- Student \$3
- Adult \$5

At the Door

- Student \$5
- Adult \$7

PERFORMANCES:

7:30 PM

May 7th, 8th & 9th

Thursday - Saturday
@ Lanier Theater

DISNEY'S ALADDIN JUNIOR

is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019

Phone: (212) 541-4684 Fax: (212) 397-4684 www.MTIShows.com

Sidney Lanier Middle School
3801 Jermantown Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

