



Lancer Times

August 26, 2011
Volume 1 Issue 1

Longfellow Middle School, 2000 Westmoreland Street, Falls Church, VA 22043
<http://www.fcps.edu/LongfellowMS> (703)533-2600

WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Longfellow Middle School Faculty, Parents, and Guardians,
Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year at Longfellow Middle School. Our students will soon meet new teachers, begin their studies, take part in our after-school activities programs, and make new friends. Longfellow is an outstanding school, and our teachers, counselors, and administrators are ready to help you make a smooth transition and have a great year. Our teachers are planning exciting and challenging lessons, and we encourage all students to participate in clubs, activities, and community service opportunities. We also have high expectations for behavior. Longfellow has a Positive Behavior Support and Intervention Program which can best be summarized by our Lancer Code that states, "Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe."

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Carole Kihm, Principal

P.S. Keep in Touch (KIT) messages from the principal. I will be sending weekly KIT messages automatically to the email addresses you provided. Please note you do not need to sign up for KIT; however if you are not receiving messages call Pam Molina after August 25th (703-533-2603). Also, the county keeps parents informed of weather closings and other important information at www.fcps.edu/kit/.

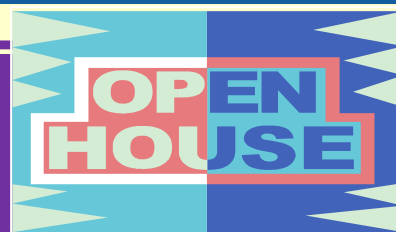
ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS' REACH FOR THE STARS CORNER:

Our **character trait** for the month of September is "Respect". Respect is showing high regard for authority, people, and yourself. Remember to treat others the way you want them to treat you.

September's Five Tips for School:

- Remember to write your homework in your agenda book.
- Be on time for school.
- When in class be prepared and pay attention
- Make a goal for each of your classes.
- Read daily.

OPEN HOUSES



OPEN HOUSES FOR ALL 7TH AND 8TH GRADRES

Longfellow will hold two Open Houses so you can become familiar with the school. Please download and complete all forms prior to your scheduled Open House. After turning in your forms during the Open House, each student will receive a locker number and combination and can take a self-guided tour of the school. If you have a conflict on your assigned date, you may come during the other session.

7TH AND 8TH GRADERS: OPEN HOUSE DATES AND TIMES

LAST NAMES BEGINNING	DATE	TIME
A through K	August 31, 2010	5:30 to 7:30 pm
L through Z	September 1, 2010	5:30 to 7:30 pm

At www.LongfellowPTA.org you will find and can download the following forms for registering your child at Longfellow Middle School for the 2011-2012 school year. If you do not have computer access, you may request forms from the Longfellow front office 703-533-2600.

7TH AND 8TH GRADERS: SIX REQUIRED FORMS

1. Emergency Care Information
2. Health Information (SS/SE-71, rev. 2/09) use SS/SE-71 with the 2/09 revision date
3. Blanket After-school Permission Form Only use the form from www.LongfellowPTA.org
4. Opt-out Form: Family Life Education Only return this form if your child chooses NOT to participate
5. Opt-out Form: Directory Only return this form if you choose NOT to release your information
6. Opt-out Form: Guidance Only return this form if you choose NOT to use the service of the Guidance Department

ORIENTATION

Additionally, we invite all 7th graders and NEW 8th graders to attend an Orientation on Friday, September 2, 2011, from 9 to 11 am. Longfellow will distribute schedules during the Orientation. If you cannot attend, you can pick up your schedule on the first day of school, September 6, 2011 by reporting to the cafeteria.

FCPS provides transportation to and from our feeder elementary schools for those students who would normally ride a bus.

Parents should plan on returning to their base feeder school at 11:15 to await the return bus arrival. Please note that the bus may not return to the base school until as late as 11:45. We ask you to be patient.



IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE NEWS:

Please – be diligent about contacting the school regarding ALL of your child’s absences!

Keep in Touch (KIT) Attendance Messages

If you receive a KIT phone call and/or email message notifying you of an absence and you know the reason, please call the Longfellow 24-hour Attendance to leave a message stating the reason. If you do not know the reason for the absence, or if you believe you received the message in error, please ask your child(ren) for an explanation. Then please email or call the Longfellow staff member who would best be able to verify the reason. The staff member could be a teacher, a counselor, an administrator, the clinic aide, or another appropriate adult. (Click [HERE](#) for staff email addresses). The staff member will let you know if the absence can be verified and will pass the information on to the Attendance Secretary. If you have questions, please contact Ann Vari, the Longfellow Attendance Secretary, by email (Ann.Vari@fcps.edu) or phone (703-533-2601).

Excused - versus - Unexcused Absences

Our policy on whether an absence is excused or unexcused is based on the law of the State of Virginia. Absences are excused **ONLY** for the following reasons: illness, medical appointment, death in the family, observance of a religious obligation, and suspension from school. ***Reasons such as missing a bus, traffic, and family trips are not valid and are not excused.*** On rare occasions we will excuse travel if you present a verifiable itinerary that includes experiences that are truly educational based on the curriculum of FCPS (e.g., guided tour of a national park, including learning about plant and animal species and geology). Travel, in general, though possibly educational, will not be excused. Family trips should be planned during the roughly ten weeks of vacation your child has each year. Regular attendance is important for successful progress. We are being rather strict about this policy because of the emphasis on SOL tests and FCPS promotion benchmarks. In the past, regular attendance would have assisted a few students in passing (instead of failing) their SOLs and benchmarks. There is no substitute for regular attendance!

Early Check-Out

Parents who wish to check out students during school hours should send a note stating the time and reason. Students should take early check-out notes to the main office prior to 7:45 a.m. Please do not call the attendance line to arrange an early check-out. If a student is to walk, ride a bike, or take a cab, the parent-signed note must so state. If a person other than the parent is to pick up a student, a note must state the person's name. Students will come to the main office at the appropriate time and will only be released when the adult comes into the office to sign them out. Students who later return to school must sign back in at the main office and receive a pass to class.

Tardiness to School & Classes

All students who report to school after the 7:45 a.m. bell must sign in at the main office and bring a note from home explaining the reason for tardiness. Tardies are excused or unexcused based on the criteria stated above. Repeated tardiness is disruptive to the educational process and will result in disciplinary action.

IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE NEWS (Cont.):

Unplanned All-Day Absences

If some emergency requires absence from school, the parent should inform the school by calling the 24-Hour Attendance Line before 9:30 a.m. If the student is absent due to illness, the parent should include a description of the symptoms in the message. If the parent does not contact the school, the Keep in Touch system will attempt to contact the parent by automatic phone call and by email. If the Keep in Touch system is unsuccessful in contacting the parent, the student must bring a note from home to the main office specifying the reason for and the date of the absence. Parents also may leave a message on the 24-Hour Attendance Line.

Prearranged Absences

Parents may sometimes request in advance that their child(ren) be excused from school for reasons listed above. When these occasions occur, students must bring a note from home to the main office or send the Grade Level Administrator (Ms. Eaton -8th Grade; Ms. Padgett -7th Grade) an email with copy to the Attendance Secretary (Ann Vari). The note or email should explain the circumstances and include dates of the departure and return, if known. If the absence is approved, the student will receive a prearranged absence form to take to all teachers. Requests for prearranged absences should be sent one week in advance of departure date. This may not be accomplished by calling the attendance line.

Homework During Illness

Due to the high volume of requests, the parent is responsible for requesting assignments from individual teachers. The main office cannot assume this responsibility. You may contact teachers by referring to the email addresses at Communicating with Staff.

Short-term Illness of Three Days Or Less: Parents should review information on Blackboard.com. For excused absences of one to three days, students will be given ample time to make up the work missed upon returning to school (generally one make-up day for each day of absence).

Illness of More Than Three Days: For an excused absence, the parent may call the guidance office in order to request assignments.

Homebound: Homebound instruction is available to all students who anticipate an extended absence due to serious illness of at least four weeks. Medical statements indicating such an extended illness are required. As soon as there are indications of a prolonged illness, please telephone the guidance counselor.

FCPS REGULATIONS:

Student attendance -- <http://www.fcps.edu/Directives/P2232.pdf>
<http://www.fcps.edu/Directives/R2234.pdf>



DRESS CODE

All students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene, or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as gang symbols, the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains threats is prohibited. (See page 19, chapter II.A.2.I. for additional information regarding gang-related clothing.) Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative, is prohibited.

Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to: sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back, studded belts, chain belts, clothing constructed of see through materials, and head coverings unless required for religious or medical purposes.

Parents or guardians of students requiring accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other good causes should contact the principal. Students not complying with this code will be asked to cover the non-complying clothing, change clothes, or go home. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action.

There is only one Dress Code in FCPS, and you can link to it at:
<http://tinyurl.com/3vl2uq2>



RENOVATION

Longfellow has been under construction for over 2 years. The renovation project has gone very smoothly under the leadership of Jim Wyne, our construction manager. We have a beautiful new library, Lecture Hall, cafeteria, 2 gymnasiums, Art room and gallery, Rain Garden which is an outdoor classroom, and all new classrooms. They still have to complete the music wing, family and consumer science area, technology education areas, Student Services and the clinic. The administrators and front office will move into a new space on September 19th.

Principal Kihm meets with Jim Wyne, our construction manager, daily in order to be briefed on the progress of the renovation. The renovation will be completed by March 2012! We are definitely ahead of schedule!

One of our goals at Longfellow is “maintaining excellence at Longfellow Middle School throughout the renovation process.”



LUNCH PRICES

Breakfast: Students - \$1.50

Reduced *breakfast* prices for qualifying students-**No charge**

Adults - \$1.95

Lunch: Students - \$2.75

Reduced *lunch* prices for qualifying students-\$.40

Adults - \$3.65

Milk (sold separately): Students and adults - \$.60

Soy Milk - \$.70

Water - \$1.00



TARDY POLICY

This is how we will encourage your on-time attendance:

- 2nd Tardy Teacher gives students a verbal warning.
- 3rd Tardy Teacher contacts parents (phone, e-mail, or letter) and assigns a consequence.
- 5th Tardy Administrator assigns an after school admin detention.

Subsequent tardies to a single class

After student has served After School Detention further consequences are at the discretion of the administrator based on a case by case basis.

THANK YOU PTA

Longfellow has a fantastic partnership with our PTA. We have SMARTBOARDS in every classroom, agenda books for our students, many technology labs for classroom use, our beautiful Rain Garden, textbooks for use at home, Hospitality Committee events monthly, volunteer opportunities, and many more benefits because of the efforts of our amazing PTA. Please join our PTA and become a contributing member of our Longfellow family!

YOUNG MCLEAN SISTERS, FOUNDERS OF THANKSUSA, STICK TO THEIR IDEALS

To read the article please go to the following link:

<http://mclean.patch.com/articles/young-mclean-sisters-founders-of-thanksusa-stick-to-their-ideals>

KISS AND RIDE RULES

AM Kiss and Ride Rules:

- Enter in the main driveway of Longfellow School and turn left to head to the rear of the school.
- Yield to any cars or buses that might be exiting the front of the school.
- Continue towards the back of the school and move up to the furthest point along the curb. The Farthest end point for drop off is the end of the sidewalk just down from entry door #4 (It will be marked with a sign).
- Students may enter the building through door #3 or #4.
- All students must wait in the Cafeteria until 7:30.



After Drop Off - Kiss & Ride drivers shall proceed towards the basketball court. Turn left onto the exit and another left to head towards the front to the exit. Please maintain the posted 1- MPH speed limit and yield to all pedestrians. Continue straight and merge onto the front loop where you must stay to the left.

We do not have permission to use the driveway to the right (not owned by Chesterbrook Assisted Living).

Drivers exit either right or left onto Westmoreland Street at this time. If left turn traffic becomes a problem left turn capability will be reconsidered. Do not use Hopewood Drive as a cut through. It is private property and cannot be used unless you have permission to use that road.

School buses have the right away in the parking lot so please let them pass in front of you.

There is to be no dropping or picking up on the shoulder of the road or in the turn lane in front of 2030 Westmoreland St. This is *against the law* and it is dangerous for students and drivers.

PM Kiss and Ride Rules:

PM pickup is towards the rear of the building (the same as the morning drop off). Cars may begin lining up in Kiss & Ride at 2:30 PM. Pull all the way to the end of the curb so other cars may pull in behind. When exiting, please follow the Exit directions for the AM Kiss & ride. Pick up of students on the road is not permitted. Stopping in the turn lane along Westmoreland will not be allowed.

Longfellow MS

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