

Questions & comments
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**Falls Church High School
Fairfax County Public Schools
Science Department
7521 Jaguar Trail ~ Falls Church, VA
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To: Parents, Guardians and **Rising 9th Grade Science Students**

June 2009

From: Falls Church High School Science Department

Re: **Required** Summer science enrichment activity for rising Biology students

This summer, The Falls Church High School Science Department would like to emphasize a summer reading requirement to encourage students to read as they prepare for the upcoming school year. The FCPS Summer Reading List has been revised for 2009 at the request of parents, students and FCHS staff. FCPS is migrating from a list of specific titles to a genre-based assignment in which students at each grade level *may choose their own selections* within a framework based on the English Program of Studies. Details on the reading list can be found on the FCPS website: <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/readlist/hs.htm#find>

All science students are required to read *at least* one book, and encouraged to stay abreast of *current events* by reading newspapers, magazines, reliable Internet sources, National Geographic magazine, Discover Magazine, Scientific America, etc. In addition, Discovery Channel and National Geographic air excellent documentaries on TV during the summer months. This will help you prepare for discussions that we will be having on current events including environmental, ethical and moral issues in science. Science is everywhere, comics, TV, radio, and magazines. *Have fun and good luck learning through your summer readings. And remember Science matters!!!*

Please remember that school starts on **September 8, 2009**. We are looking forward to meeting you!

To assist you, we have identified some essential web sites

- **2009-10 School Year Calendar** (<http://www.fcps.edu/cal.htm> - All FCPS calendars in different languages)
- **Falls Church High School web page** <http://www.fcps.edu/FallsChurchHS/>
 - Parents: Sign up for “**Daily Announcements**” to be e-mailed to you; to keep up with what students may forget to tell parents and inquire about parent’s access to *Blackboard 24-7*.
 - Sign up for the FCPS “**Keep in touch**” via e-mail for county news; *including snow-closings!*
- **Virginia Department of Education** links to Standard of Learning and more! <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/pos/>
- **Excellent Resources for Biology SOL review** “*Roadmap to the Virginia SOL – EOC Biology*” (ISBN 0-375-76443-7”)

Many changes have been implemented to ensure all students at FCHS will be successful and productive community members. Please plan to attend “**Jaguar Kick Off**”...Wednesday, 5 – 9 pm - September 2 : You will have an opportunity to meet the administrators & some teachers, collect important forms for school events, sign up for clubs, etc.. Also, plan to attend “**Back to School Night**” on September 30, 2009 @ 7pm, to learn more *details* about your child’s classes and to meet their teachers.

In order to highlight science in your everyday activities; ALL SCIENCE CLASSES will participate in a Scientific Research Project. Your science teacher will discuss these details in September. (Note: “Scientific Research Project” does not have to be science fair; we have lots of ideas and opportunities to make science relevant in your life!) We are excited about the changes and additional opportunities that have been identified to allow students to enrich and enhance their science knowledge. Our expectations are to enrich your science experience exponentially!

******* Science Fair Summer Assignments required for Honors Biology Students*******

During the 2009-2010 school year, **All Honors Biology** students are *required* to research, design, and complete a science project which will be entered in the Science Fair. The FCHS Science Fair is scheduled for February 3, 2010. In order to begin preparing, you need to start researching ideas for your experiment. Evidence of this research will be collected and teachers will begin approving topics when you return to school in September. Remember science fair projects are “independent research” activities, therefore very little class time will be devoted to project work, and so you need to begin preparing now! *Details of the summer assignment are on the back of this page.*

Note to parents: *We are soliciting businesses to provide contributions to be awarded as prizes for Science Fair participants. If you can make a donation, please contact us at above e-mail addresses.*

Science Olympiad (*one of many enrichment activities!*)

This is a countywide competition in which each school forms a science team that will compete in various scientific categories. With the guidance of science department members, students will prepare throughout the course of the year, with mini-competitions and activities in class, and then compete in the county competition sometime in April 2010. Your teacher will provide more details when school begins. We would love to have you on the science team, so plan on being a pod member and come show off your talents!!!! (<http://soinc.org/>)

CC: Ms. Catherine Benner, Principal; Ms. Cheryl Allen, Science Administrator;
Mrs. Marcia Bellamy & Mr. David Tripp, Department Co-Chairpersons

FCHS Science Department works together with our students to achieve success!!!