

LUTHER JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4 NOVEMBER, 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

As Thanksgiving Day approaches, we are thinking of all the things we are thankful for at Luther Jackson. We couldn't accomplish our many successes without our wonderful parent volunteers! Here are just a few reasons we are grateful this year:

1. The parent volunteers who helped our School Health Aide, Mrs. Prentice, during vision and hearing screenings in October.
2. The parent volunteers who came to Luther Jackson Clean Up Day and helped us beautify our grounds.
3. The parent volunteers who are members of the PTA.
4. Merrifield Day was a success with your attendance and support.
5. A wonderful group of students who demonstrate Respect, Responsibility and Honesty on a consistent basis.
6. Our teachers care! They not only support your students during the school day, they give countless hours after school too — helping out with the after school program, ensuring your child is

able to make up tests, and staying after to go over class work if needed. They are always here when they are needed, often long after the last bell has rung!

7. All of us are working with less as we absorbed cuts in our staff, while our school population has grown by more than 100 students over last year's population. We thank all parents who have helped us out with envelope stuffing in the beginning of the year, and newsletter folding and stuffing every month.

Our December holiday schedule is posted below for your information:

December 24—January 1: Winter vacation; no school for students. The main office will be closed during this period.

Monday, January 5, 2009—Happy New Year! All return to school!

You'll receive another newsletter for December with this information repeated, but you may want to mark your calendars now.

Louise Porter, Principal

NOVEMBER CHARACTER
EDUCATION THEME:



HONESTY

TWO EARLY CLOSING DAYS IN NOVEMBER!

Make sure you mark your calendars for two early release days for students dates in November.

Thursday, November 19, is a three hour early release (11:40 am). Our teachers will be attending a professional development activity.

Wednesday, November 25: Two hour early release for the Thanksgiving holiday! The last class of the day ends at 12:40.

Students are to go straight home those days. There are no late buses on either day.

THANKSGIVING LUNCH IS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

Come join your student for a Thanksgiving lunch in the cafeteria on the 20th of November.



We'll have turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and pumpkin dessert!

OH, THE WEATHER OUTSIDE IS FRIGHTFUL...OR AT LEAST IT WILL BE SOON!



It is that time again when the weather brings freezing rain, ice, and snow. Because of weather and travel conditions schools may open late, close early, or be cancelled altogether. Information about this will be announced through television (Channels 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and Red Apple 21), radio, and email. The "Keep in Touch" Message system, which already lets you know about attendance, is used by FCPS to alert our community that there is a change in the school day. Every effort is made by school officials to make their decisions by 5:00 am for delayed openings or cancellations. Please check your television, radio or email before calling the school. We, too, may be delayed on those days!

STUDENTS SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Report cards are being mailed on November 6th. Remember, there is a new grading scale, so you might see pluses and minuses. For more information, please refer to the FCPS website <http://www.fcps.edu/news/grading.htm>.

If you are concerned about your child's progress in school, please contact the teacher about a specific subject or your child's counselor about progress in general. The counselor can arrange for you to meet with your child's teacher(s) to discuss your concerns.

You can help your child be more successful academically by following these tips on how you might assist your child academically:

- **Providing** a place to do homework, and showing interest in what he/she is doing in class. Ask your child to explain to you how to do the math problems that have been assigned for homework. Ask your child to tell you about the book he/she is reading in English.
- **Insisting** that your child stay after

school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and/or Thursdays when late buses are available .

- **Checking** your child's planner each day to make sure homework is recorded, completed and placed in a binder to turn in the next day.
- **Assisting** your child weekly to organize his/her binder and backpack.



IMPACT AID — IT AFFECTS US ALL!

Our annual requirement to fill out Impact Aid forms starts in early November. It is a requirement from FCPS that every family with a student fill out this form, so we expect a 100% return.

When your student brings

home this form, which simply asks if the parent or guardian of a student works for the Federal government, please fill it out and sign and send back with your student. You will need to fill one out for each of your children.

The mission of the Impact Aid Program is to disburse Impact Aid payments to local educational agencies that are financially burdened by federal activities and to provide technical assistance and support services to staff and other interested parties.

YOUTH SURVEY TO BE TAKEN BY 8TH GRADERS

Recently, letters were sent to the parents and guardians of all 8th grade students, advising parents that their son/daughter will be taking a Youth Survey. This survey will be administered here at Luther Jackson on November 12 and 13.

OPEN HOUSE FOR PARENTS OF CURRENT STUDENTS ON NOVEMBER 11!

Wednesday, November 11 is Veteran's Day and many of our parents have the day off from work. We find that it is a good day to schedule a parent open house. Parents of current students are invited to stop by during the day and visit in your child's classrooms, eat lunch with your child, meet their teachers, and greet the administrators. The class schedule for the day is as follows:

- 1st period 7:50—8:38
- 2nd period 8:42—9:25
- 3rd period 9:29—10:13
- 4th period 10:17—10:59
- 5th period—8th graders 11:04—12:02
- 5th period—7th graders 12:06—1:04
- 6th period 1:08—1:52
- 7th period 1:56—2:40

Throughout the day there will be "Meet and Greet" opportunities with teachers and administrators. Stop by for some light refreshments and to introduce yourself to your child's teachers and counselor. These sessions will not be conducive to individual parent conferences to discuss your child's academic progress. If you wish to discuss specific concerns, you will be able to sign up with the counselor for a follow-up phone call or conference. All meetings will take place in the library, and you'll be able to see the administrators there, too. The teams will be in the library at the following times:

- 8:50—9:20 Survivors and Dynamos
- 10:25—10:55 X-Treme, Galaxy and LJ United
- 1:15—1:45 Quasar, Griffins

Please note that the other teams (Seekers and Superstars) have already had either a dessert or breakfast social for parents and students.



LJ PTA News

NOVEMBER 2009

LJMS *BARNES & NOBLE* BENEFIT BOOKFAIR

On Friday, **November 13th**, Saturday, **November 14th**, and Sunday, **November 15th**, *Barnes & Noble*, at 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, will host a fundraising event to benefit LJMS. When you present an LJMS voucher prior to making your purchases a percentage of the net sale will be donated to our school.

Bring your students, friends and family to *Barnes & Noble* on either **November 13, 14 or 15** and make holiday purchases that will help fund school events and projects. There will be lots of activities for kids of all ages to enjoy:

- See our school band and orchestra perform
- Get your child's face painted
- Make bookmarks
- Come to Story Time during the day

To benefit LJMS you *must* present the *Barnes & Noble* voucher which is available at school and on the school's homepage. To download the voucher, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/LutherJacksonMS/>. For more information, call **Jackye Brant** at 703-204-8288 or email jlbrant@fcps.edu.

OUR NEXT PTA MEETING IS WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, AT 7 PM IN THE LIBRARY. PLEASE JOIN US!

VOLUNTEER CLASSIFIED

Restaurant Coordinator – We are looking for a volunteer to schedule and organize “Restaurant Nights” for the PTA. Duties include locating restaurants willing to host an event and share a night’s profits with LJ. If interested, please contact **Dean Shepard** at dean.shepard@verizon.net.

School Store Volunteers – Parents are needed to regularly help sell school supplies to our students during lunch (pencils, paper, etc). Currently, the store is only open on Tuesdays and Fridays from 11 am to 1 pm. For more info, please contact **Gail Brodfuehrer** at ghastings7@aol.com.

VOLUNTEER THANKS

Thank you to the many volunteers who came out to help with the *Merrifield Fall Festival*. You helped make the event a great success. Thanks too to the parents who worked on the *Fall Dance*. Our students had a great time.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE – JOIN THE PTA TODAY!

To date PTA membership represents only about a quarter of our total student population. We have great plans for this year but we need *everyone's* participation. You can help LJMS by joining the PTA! Membership dues are only \$10 per person. To become a PTA member, fill out and clip the coupon below. Return it to the front office along with your check made out to “LJMS PTA” in an envelope marked: **PTA MEMBERSHIP**.

PTA MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Please print clearly)



Name of parent(s)/guardian(s) _____

E-mail address _____ Phone Number _____

Student name _____ TA Teacher _____

\$10 Membership dues enclosed? Yes _____ Check made out to LJMS PTA? Yes _____

NOVEMBER 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Student Holidays	3 Student Holidays	4 2nd Quarter Begins	5	6 Report Cards Mailed	7
8	9 Smile! Picture Re-take Day! 	10 2:15—A/B Honor Roll party for 7th graders	11 Veteran's Day Parent Open House, All Day 2:15—A/B Honor Roll party for 8th Graders	12 2:15—All A Honor Roll party for 7th & 8th Graders	13 Barnes and Noble Fundraiser for LJMS	14
15 Barnes & Noble Fundraiser for LJMS	16 Club Picture Day	17	18 7:00 pm: PTA Meeting, Library; please join us!	19 11:40 am—Early Release for Students; no late buses	20 Thanksgiving lunch in cafeteria—join your student!	21
22	23	24	25 12:40 pm—Early Release for Students; no late buses	26  Happy Thanksgiving! School is Closed!	27	28
29	30					

WHEN YOUR STUDENT IS SICK...

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. FCPS continues to work closely the Fairfax County Health Department as we face the challenges of an active flu season.

Because of this, FCPS 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.