



# MCNAIR NEWS



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## A NOTE FROM DR. WEST...

Dear McNair Families,

I love November. It is a great time of year! We have fall leaves, crisp air, parent conferences, Veterans Day, and one of my favorite holidays, Thanksgiving. This is a time when we stop to reflect about the goodness in our lives and be grateful for the opportunities we have. There is no gift greater than being able to teach and support children on a daily basis. You send us your best every day and it is an honor and a privilege to work with them and have your support in our endeavors.

Our teachers are looking forward to meeting with you to discuss your child's progress during our Conference Days next

week. This is a great time for all of us to revisit learning goals for our children. If you do not have an appointment yet, please email your child's teacher to schedule a time. Our hope is that every parent will join us to discuss their child's growth and progress.

You have sent us keen learners with quick wits and great senses of humor. As I walk through the building, I see students who are engaged in learning, enjoying the experience, and interacting with positive attitudes.

I see parents coming in to volunteer, greeting their children with big smiles at the end of the day, coming to parent events, and networking with each other.

I feel that we have a strong sense of community at McNair and am grateful that it continues to grow and develop. With our boundary changes and the opening of a GT Center we have had many changes. We have embraced them and welcomed the new members of our community. Please know that we are glad each and everyone of you are here. We welcome your feedback, and wish you a wonderful November and a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Theresa West  
Principal



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 29/30	Fundraiser Order Pick Up
Oct. 30	Story Book Character Day
	<b>PTA Movie Night</b> 6:00 PM
	First Grading Period Ends
Nov. 2-3	Teacher Work Day/ Parent Teacher Conferences NO SCHOOL
Nov. 17	PTA Meeting 6:00 PM
Nov. 25	Early Dismissal 1:15 PM
Nov. 26-27	Thanksgiving NO SCHOOL
Dec. 15	PTA Meeting 6:00 PM
Dec. 23	Early Dismissal 1:15 PM
Dec. 24-Jan.1	Winter Vacation
Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Jr. B-day NO SCHOOL
Jan. 19	PTA Meeting 6:00 PM
Jan. 28	Second Grading Period Ends
Jan. 29	Teacher Workday No School
Feb. 1	Teacher Workday No School
Feb 15	President's Day NO SCHOOL
March 29-April 2	Spring Vacation NO SCHOOL

## FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30TH IS STORY BOOK CHARACTER DAY



Story Book Character Day is Friday, October 30th. We will celebrate learning and literacy on

that day by dressing up as our favorite character and bringing in the book to share with our classmates and friends. Dressing up as a Story Book Character and bringing in the book is a voluntary activity. If your child chooses not to dress up and only bring in the book with their favorite character to share, that is fine.

We do ask that mask, scary or gory costumes not be worn to represent a story book character.

We expect students who dress up to be able to talk about the story and their character. We look forward to a great day of learning about a variety of characters and hope to inspire continued enjoyment and love of reading. As always, your child's teacher is a tremendous

tremendous resource and can provide additional information if necessary.

Don't forget to dress up as your favorite character and to bring in your BOOK to share on Friday, October 30th.

Please see page 5 for additional information about choosing a character for Story Book Character Day.

## MCNAIR PHONE NUMBERS

Office: 703-793-4800

Attendance: 703-793-4747

Clinic: 703-793-4810



Stay home if you are sick. Wash hands often with soap and water!

## H1N1 (SWINE FLU) UPDATE

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) is partnering with the Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) to monitor the progression of the 2009 H1N1 Influenza (swine flu). The Fairfax County Health Department follows the guidelines of the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and provides recommendations to the school system.

As you may know, flu can be easily spread from person to person. Fairfax County Public Schools is taking steps to reduce the spread of flu. It is the school system's goal to keep schools open to students and functioning in a normal manner during this flu season. But FCPS, needs your help to do this.

Here are a few things you can do to help:

- **Teach your child good hand hygiene etiquette.**

**Hands should be washed frequently with soap and water, and hand washing should last for at least 20 seconds.**

- **Teach your child to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues.** If a tissue is unavailable, children should cover their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm, or sleeve instead of their hands.
- **Learn the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius, or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and a very tired feeling. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.

- **Keep sick children at home.** Any child who is found to be sick while at school will be sent home. It is also important

to keep sick children at home for at least 24 hours after having a fever or showing signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing drugs.

- **Plan now for your children's care if you or your children become ill with the flu and need to stay home.**
- **Stay informed.** FCPS encourages you to visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov). or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu.

For more information about the flu in our community and what our school system is doing, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/news/swineflu.htm> or call your school.



Use these tips to get your child's attention and cooperation.

## HOW TO TALK SO KIDS WILL LISTEN . . . AND TALK . . . TO YOU

Parents can do a number of things—especially when they're upset—that cause kids to tune them out. Heeding these dos and don'ts will help you get your child's attention and cooperation.

**DON'T lecture.** Nothing makes a youngster's eyes glaze over faster than a long-winded, one-way monologue.

**DON'T moralize.** When you say things like—"Don't you understand? If we expect people to be polite to us, we have to be polite to them. You wouldn't want anyone doing that to you, would you?"—kids feel you're talking down to them. Why should they listen to someone who thinks they're dumb and worthless?

**DON'T use clichés.** Lines like, "This is for your own good" and

"You'll thank me for this one day" draw attention away from the real issues. Kids want to hear the specific reasons you have for a decision.

**DON'T try to make your child feel guilty.** It's good to let children know how their actions affect you. But they'll feel manipulated if you say things like, "How could you!" and play the martyr—"You're putting me in my grave!"

**DON'T speak in extremes**—saying things like, "I'll never trust you again" or "You're always late."

**DO get your child's attention.** Stop what you're doing and focus on him or her. Get close to your child. Touch your child on the shoulder. Look your child in the eye.

**DO reduce noisy distractions** when you are talking to your child. Turn off the radio and the TV.

**DO show an interest** in what your

child thinks and feels. Give reasons for your decision or position. Check to see if your child understands. Ask your child to share her side of the issue. Acknowledge what your child says and try to empathize—even if you disagree.

**DO ask specific concrete questions.** Not, "How was school today?" but "What do you like best in math?"

**Note:** Copyright 2009. Reprinted with permission from the Parent Institute. Additional tip sheets and other resources for parents can be found on the Family and School Partnerships web site at <http://www.fcps.edu/cco/fam/ptips.htm>.



We build our thinking and problem solving skills when we play games!

## ADVANCED ACADEMICS CORNER — THE POWER OF PLAY

HELPING CHILDREN BUILD SKILLS TO THINK CREATIVELY AND LOGICALLY

BY KATIE LE

ADVANCED ACADEMICS TEACHER

Parents often ask how they can help their children develop critical and creative thinking skills at home. With the wealth of workbooks that are for sale and activities on the computer available, it can be hard to make a decision about what is just right.

The best answer for how to develop meaningful, higher order thinking skills may be right at our finger tips and can cost no money at all — in fact, it's actually child's play. The next time you discover your child playing, either alone, with a friend, or with a group of friends, sit back and observe the thinking skills that are involved in the game. It is likely that you will see examples of:

- Persistence

- Gathering data through all senses
- Questioning and posing problems
- Taking responsible risks
- And many other habits of thinking that are essential to becoming an effective learner and problem solver.

While children are playing 'Capture the Flag' a game where teams try to capture the opposing team's flag while protecting their own, notice how children plan out their steps and discuss possible consequences and alternatives to their plans. Watch children think strategically as they play a board game, and then persist

to overcome the obstacles of their opponents. Take notice of how, when inventing a new game, children think creatively and innovatively, using the resources around them in new and inventive ways.

As we move into cooler months full of holidays and celebrations, this is the perfect time to enjoy family and friends while fostering higher order thinking skills through play. For a list of games and toys that foster critical and creative play, visit <http://www.nagc.org/> and click on 'PHP Winning Toys/ Games'.



### Advanced Academic Information Coffee

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

8:45-9:45 AM

McNair Parent Resource Center (Room 102)

Please join us for an overview of Advanced Academic Programs (formerly called Gifted Programs) in Fairfax County Public Schools and at McNair. We hope to see you there!



**Veteran's Day Program**

November 11th at 7 pm presented by McNair Third Graders!



**MCNAIR MUSIC NOTES**



It has been a busy start to the school year in music classrooms at McNair. **Veterans Day, Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup>** is rapidly approaching! The Third Grade will be presenting a program honoring veterans and reflecting what they are learning about Veterans Day and other patriotic holidays. **Please plan to support our Third Graders by attending this program at 7:00 pm Wednesday November 11th.** They will also present their program to students during school the day. Information has already been sent home for parents.

Students in Fifth and Sixth

Grade are settling into routines for general music, chorus, band and strings. Fourth Graders are having one hour of general music per week and either chorus or strings for another hour. *Parents can be looking for a chorus letter outlining upcoming performances for their children soon!*

Students in primary grades K-2 have been singing, dancing, and playing songs about autumn, apples, and pumpkins. We have been providing listening lessons for students to learn to hear components of music as they hear the music. In November, we will continue learning the components of music through seasonal activities especially Thanksgiving.

Additionally, we would like to request any white shirts/blouses and black pants/skirts that your children have outgrown and no longer need to be donated to our chorus performance program. If you have any of these items and would like to give them to the music department, please contact us via email ([vejuntilla@fcps.edu](mailto:vejuntilla@fcps.edu) or [jmhatcher@fcps.edu](mailto:jmhatcher@fcps.edu)).

We thank you for your continued support of the music program. Please do not hesitate to contact us about your child's involvement in music!

Your General Music Team,  
Mrs. Juntilla & Ms. Hatcher



Be a part of the budget solution. Join a discussion group!



**FY 2011 BUDGET COMMUNITY DIALOGUE CONTINUES**

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) and the Fairfax County government are teaming up again this year to solicit community input to help meet a significant projected budget deficit for FY 2011. Fairfax County is in the midst of a multiyear cyclical downturn requiring that county and school decision-makers continue to make expenditure and revenue adjustments.

The school system's ongoing challenge is to develop a budget with an appropriate level of services that is both sustainable and acceptable to the community. As part of the budget process, FCPS and Fairfax County are hosting a series of budget community dialogues in September, October, and November.

Citizens are invited to engage in facilitated small-group discussions to help find solutions to close the FY 2011 budget gap. Registration is required.

The remaining community dialogue meetings will be held as follows:

- **Thursday, October 29,** from 7 to 9 p.m. in the South Lakes High School cafeteria and the Woodson High School cafeteria.
- **Saturday, November 14,** from 10 a.m. to noon at the Kings Park Library, the Sherwood Regional Library, and the George Mason Regional Library.

FCPS and Fairfax County officials will give budget presentations, followed by

small-group discussions facilitated by staff members. To register, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget) or call 703-324-2391, TTY 711. Citizens who are unable to attend the community dialogues are welcome to pass along their comments and suggestions by calling 703-324-9400 or completing a budget feedback form at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget).

**Note:** To watch a video previewing the FY 2011 budget, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/DIT/streaming/>



## GETTING TO SCHOOL SAFELY...



- Plan a walking route to school and choose the most direct way with the fewest street crossings.
- Please **only** cross streets at controlled intersections and in crosswalks where available. **Students should not cross in the middle of a street unless the crossing is supervised by a crossing guard or a police officer.**
- Please walk to and from school with other students and go directly home.
- Please use the sidewalk at all times and avoid crossing parking lots.
- Please park in the lower parking lot to walk students in to school and use the upper lot (Kiss and Ride) to drop off students.

**Thank you for helping us keep our students safe!**

## STORY BOOK CHARACTER DAY CONTINUED...



### PROCEDURE FOR STORY BOOK CHARACTER DAY

- PICK YOUR FAVORITE BOOK.
- REREAD THE BOOK — ASK WHICH CHARACTER IS MY FAVORITE.
- WHAT COULD YOU WEAR TO LOOK LIKE THAT CHARACTER?
- DRESS UP LIKE THAT CHARACTER (NO MASK OR SCARY/GORY OUTFITS).
- BRING YOUR BOOK TO SCHOOL AND BE ABLE TO SHARE WHO YOUR CHARACTER IS AND WHY YOU LIKE THEM.



Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will sponsor several Employee of the Year award programs to recognize and reward employee excellence. All contracted employees are eligible to be nominated for one of the awards:

- **Teacher of the Year** — Nominations due by December 11, 2009. All certified teachers who instruct a group of students on a regular basis are eligible for nomination. Teachers must have 5 consecutive years of experience within FCPS.
- **Outstanding First Year Teacher** — Nominations due by March 5, 2010. Same criteria as Teacher of the Year except the teacher must be a first year teacher.
- **Support Employee of the Year** — Nominations due by February 12, 2010. All employees except principals and teachers are eligible for this award.

Additional information and forms are available at [www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/awards](http://www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/awards).





## Science Fun for Your Kids

There is no school subject quite as ripe for family fun as science. And it's an area where children need extra enrichment now, more than ever, because the national No Child Left Behind initiative is causing schools to focus more intently on math and reading and spend less classroom time on science. That's where you can make a big difference in your child's learning, and have a great time doing it. Check out these terrific resources.

### On the Internet

There's no excuse ever again for a child to say he or she has nothing to do. The Internet is your family's door to a wonderland of science games and activities—and your children won't even notice they're learning. These are just some of the excellent sites available for you and your kids. Puzzles, games, and science fair ideas are just a few of the resources in this science dedicated site for children and their families. [www.sciencenewsforkids.org](http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org)

From developing “accidental scientists” in the kitchen to exploring human perception, this site is chock-full of some of the most fun science activities ever assembled. [www.exploratorium.edu](http://www.exploratorium.edu). Find interactive games galore on geography, astronomy, and zoology. <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Games> Remember that old game Operation? Kids can play a virtual version online at this site, while learning how different systems of the body work. This fun site, from London's Centre of the Cell, will keep school kids (and their parents) entertained and informed. [www.centreofthecell.org/centre/?page\\_id=301](http://www.centreofthecell.org/centre/?page_id=301) This great resource for families offers dozens of safe, educational home experiments using materials easily found around the house. It's divided into categories, including water, structures, the five senses, patterns, life sciences, forces and energy, engineering, and chemistry. <http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/sci> Check out the cool resources available at this site from the land down under, the National Science and Technology Centre in Australia. [www.questacon.edu.au/activities](http://www.questacon.edu.au/activities)

From egg-speriments to fun tricks like the giraffe spit experiment, this great site lets kids have fun learning through experimenting, discovering things like how polar bears stay warm and the ecological consequences of oil spills. [www.sandiegozoo.org/education/science\\_experiments.html](http://www.sandiegozoo.org/education/science_experiments.html)

Games, puzzles, and activities about the Earth and the solar system can be found at this site. [www.windows.ucar.edu/tour/link=/games/games.html](http://www.windows.ucar.edu/tour/link=/games/games.html) Enlisting the help of Tinker Bell and the rat from the movie *Ratatouille*, the U.S. Department of Energy provides a great selection of games and activities on energy and conservation. [www.eere.energy.gov/kids/games.html](http://www.eere.energy.gov/kids/games.html) If you ever finish doing all the cool science experiments on this site, you can check out the other activities that get kids' brains engaged too. [www.funology.com/laboratory](http://www.funology.com/laboratory)

### On Television

The Discovery Kids Channel is probably the best source of science-oriented television shows for kids these days, offering both *Bindi the Jungle Girl* and *Grossology*.

### Books

The Magic School Bus series, a classic collection of books, lets kids follow Ms. Frizzle into the bizarre and amazing world of science, from inside the body to outer space. Looking for a great collection of activities to do at home? Get your hands on either of these: *The Kids' Science Book: Creative Experiences or Hands-On Fun* or *The Everything Kids' Science Experiments Book: Boil Ice, Float Water, Measure Gravity—Challenge the World Around You!*

### Magazines

Children love getting their very own magazines in the mail during the year. Depending on the age of your children, any of these will open their eyes to the science and the world around them: *Click Magazine*, *ASK*, *Odyssey Magazine*, *Ranger Rick*, and *National Geographic Kids*. Build bonds with your children by exploring some of these sites online. Go to the library to pick up back issues of the magazines or copies of the books, and set some time aside to help your children discover the wonders of the scientific world. Learning has never been so much fun!

RP 32:6

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