

The Carson Courier

Volume 12, Issue 1

August 2009

*"Rediscovering... the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in."
from Rachel Carson's "A Sense of Wonder"*

INCLUDED IN THIS EDITION:

- FAQs – A must-read for students and parents
- School Supply List
- News and information you'll need to prepare for the first day of school
- "Clip & Save" page with frequently-needed school contact information (*next page*)

Important Dates to Remember in

SEPTEMBER

- September 4:
Seventh Grader &
New-to-Carson eighth
grader Orientation
- September 8:
First Day of School
- September 10:
8th Grade
Back-to-School Night
- September 11:
Last Day to turn in
Emergency Care and
**1st Day Packet
forms**
- September 17:
7th Grade
Back-to-School Night
- September 24:
Fall Portraits

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL....

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year at Rachel Carson Middle School. I hope each student has a challenging and successful year full of excitement and accomplishment. The Rachel Carson Courier is a monthly newsletter that is full of valuable information about what is happening in the school. Another important source of information is the school's website. You can choose to preview the school's Courier at this site. You can access the site at <http://www.fcps.edu/RachelCarsonMS/>. In addition, I highly recommend that all parents provide an email address on their student's Emergency Care Form. This will ensure that each household receives the "Keep in Touch" emails we send from time to time. If you ever have any comments, suggestions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the teachers, counselors, or administrative staff. Also, our teaching staff utilizes BlackBoard.com to post classroom information and upcoming projects and assignments. This site has been beneficial to parents in assisting their children in organizing their Daily Assignment Books and pacing their work. Please take the time to review the introductory pages of the Daily Assignment Book with your child to examine Rachel Carson's routines and policies. Communication is one of the most important keys to our success in working with your children.

As I walk around the school building and see the supplies rolling in, the classrooms sparkling clean, and the teachers beginning to work in their rooms, I am struck with a sense of excitement for the coming year. Before the students walk through the main doors on September 8, there is much to be accomplished. Students' schedules, technology upgrades, teacher assignments, school calendar, supply distribution, etc. need to be finalized before the start of school. By the time the students start their first class, everything will be in place due to the hard work and dedication of the Rachel Carson Staff. One team that I would like to give special recognition to is our custodial staff. They have worked diligently through the summer to make our building shine. Over the past 11 years, it has been a pleasure to walk into a clean building each day. Parents and visitors are constantly making remarks about the condition of this facility and how it still looks spanking new. The devotion that the custodial staff exhibits each and every day creates a safe and pleasant learning environment that is second to none.

As we start a new school year, I encourage you to stay active in your child's life and to keep informed of his or her academic course work through contacts with teachers and counselors. At Rachel Carson we have been blessed with parents who continue to remain involved in their children's activities and provide support to the teaching staff. Let's work together to make the 2009-2010 school year the best that it can be.

*"The ocean and I have many pebbles to find and wash off and roll into shape."
-- William Stafford*

Sincerely,

Augie Frattali

Orientation for 7th Graders & 8th Graders New to Rachel Carson

All 7th graders and all 8th graders **new** to Rachel Carson are invited to attend an orientation on **Friday, September 4**. Students will come to Rachel Carson for orientation in the morning from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. Transportation will be provided to and from the following locations:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Crossfield ES | 8:30 a.m. |
| Floris ES | 8:30 a.m. |
| Fox Mill ES | 8:30 a.m. |
| Hunters Woods ES | 8:30 a.m. |
| McNair ES | 8:30 a.m. |
| Oak Hill ES | 8:30 a.m. |

All of the buses going to Rachel Carson should have the school name in the bus window.

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

We welcome all students and parents to the 2009-2010 school year at Rachel Carson Middle School! As we begin this school year together, we would like to share with you some of the many services available to students and parents through the guidance/student services department. If at any time you have questions regarding your student, scheduling, conferences, or special programs, please call us at 703-925-3614. We are:

Director of Student Services:

Cheryl Weaver

Registrar/Guidance Assistant

Lesa Lloyd

703-925-3614

Counselors:

Lead Counselor: Brenda Humphrey

703-925-3618

Teams: 7D, 8Z

Jamie Mahoney

703-925-3620

Teams: 7B, 8X

Rebecca Little

703-925-3619

Teams: 7C, 8Y

Joni Fraundorfer

703-925-3616

Teams: 7A, 8W

Test Coordinator

Amy McLaughlin

703-925-3617

Clerical Assistant

Celeste Moore

703-925-3613

Parent Liaison

Maria de Barrios

703-925-3603

TEAMING

As part of the middle school philosophy, all students will be assigned to a team of teachers (English, social studies, math and science). All teams will be assigned a counselor and administrator who will work with students, parents, and teachers. Teaming assists both students and teachers to take a large number of students (over 1200) and place them in manageable groups that interact on a daily basis in both an educational and social environment. This enables teachers to plan interdisciplinary instruction with their team teachers.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counselors are assigned to two teams of students. The counselor is part of the instructional support staff for the students on each team and will meet students in the classroom to present classroom guidance units, in small groups, or individually. Students may initiate contact with the counselor by filling out a referral form and/or parents may request counselors to talk to students when there may be a problem that is interfering with the academic progress of the student. Counselors may meet with a small group of students over a period of weeks to help the students to address common issues or concerns that middle school students may experience. Some examples of these might include: making friends, how to deal with anger, improving study skills, and coping with divorce of parents. **At no time will a student be part of an on-going counseling group without the permission of a parent or guardian.** Counselors work with parents in a number of ways and they are available to set up and facilitate conferences with their team of teachers and/or administrators. When requested or indicated, counselors will assist parents by making referrals within the school system or to community agencies. In addition to helping parents with issues regarding their child, counselors will occasionally sponsor speakers and support groups for parents.

PARENT LIAISON

Ms. Maria de Barrios is our part time Parent Liaison here at Rachel Carson. Ms. de Barrios is here one day a week (to be determined once school starts). In her position, she assists in transitioning new students and parents, arranging translation services for non-English speaking families and providing assistance in a variety of ways to our Carson students and parents. Ms. de Barrios is fluent in Spanish. If you or someone you know could use this kind of aid, please call Ms. de Barrios at 703-925-3603.

ORIENTATION DAY

At the **Orientation Day** on **Friday, September 4, 7th grade students and new-to-Carson 8th grade students** will have an opportunity to visit the school and meet their teachers from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Students should go to the nearest elementary school (approximately 30 minutes before they are to be at school) to board the buses for the Rachel Carson Middle School Orientation (see article on previous page for bus stop locations & times). Students should bring a spiral notebook, a pen and a pencil for Orientation Day. As they enter the school, students will report to the gymnasium for the principal's welcome and then they will go to the schedule pick-up room as indicated on the **Schedule Pick-Up Room List** (included in this newsletter) to receive their schedule of classes and directions for the day. They will then meet with their team of teachers who will assist students in understanding their schedule and begin the process of orienting the students to the building and the middle school experience.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

On Tuesday morning, September 8, 2009, all students will report to their **Schedule Pick-Up Room** as indicated on the **Schedule Pick-Up Room List** (included in this newsletter). During this time, students will receive their schedules and be given directions for the rest of the day. During eighth period, students will receive a packet of forms that they will bring home to be completed by their parents. **Lockers will be issued to students only after all forms have been completed and returned to the learning seminar teacher.** Attendance will be taken and announcements made in the first period class.

SCHEDULES

The guidance staff would like you to know that in developing the master schedule to meet the needs of **all** students, there are inevitable "conflicts" that arise. If at all possible, students were given their choices of electives as they originally indicated, but occasionally this was not possible. Please understand we have done our best to honor your requests. Schedule changes will only be made if schedules are incomplete or there is a conflict of classes. (Unless it is an emergency, no elective changes will be made within the first two weeks.) Requests for changes need to be made in writing to the counselor. The teachers will give directions to the students as to how they can initiate a conference with their counselor regarding their schedule. **We cannot honor requests for specific teachers, teams, or special friends.** We are unable to accommodate unscheduled "drop-ins" by parents during the first week of school. Please call and make an appointment with your child's counselor if you need to talk to her during this time.

FIRST DAY ATTENDANCE

Please be aware that Fairfax County policy (6510) states that if a student is not here on the first day of school (September 2), they will automatically be un-enrolled. If your child will not be here on Sept. 8 for some reason, please be sure to let the Guidance/Student Services office (703-925-3614) know so that re-enrollment can take place quickly and easily upon your child's return.

REPORT CARDS AND INTERIM PROGRESS REPORTS

We encourage all students and parents to communicate regularly regarding their student's academic progress in school. All students will be issued a Daily Assignment Book (DAB) with places for students to write their assignments on a daily basis. Please become familiar with this very helpful tool. One way teachers communicate with parents is through the Interim Progress Reports and the end of quarter Progress Reports (Report Cards). Please mark your calendar with these dates as the students will be bringing their reports home to you.

Interim Dates:

October 9
December 11
March 5
May 14

Report Cards:

November 6
February 5
April 16
June 30 (report cards are mailed home)

MOVES & CHANGES

If your child will not be attending Rachel Carson this fall, please call the student services office ASAP at 703-925-3614. If you have moved or are planning to move (within our school boundaries) during the school year, please call the guidance office, as we will need to update your address and telephone numbers. Please keep the school informed of any changes in telephone numbers in case we need to contact you during the school day due to an emergency.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Student Services

1. **When will my child get his or her schedule?** 8th grade students new to our school and all 7th graders will pick up their schedules during the Orientation on September 4. Those who didn't attend on the 4th will get theirs on the first day of school. Up until that time, counselors are busy trying to adjust schedules to meet individual needs and level of classes.
2. **Will my child get the electives he or she requested, and if not, why?** We tried very hard to give each child the electives that he or she requested - at least one of their top three choices. If for some reason that did not occur, most likely their schedule could not accommodate it (ie. not available when your child had a free period, etc). Please keep in mind that your child's schedule only lists first semester electives. Often the second semester will have the other elective that your child selected. Full year electives are given priority. There will be no elective schedule changes for the first two weeks of school unless it is absolutely necessary (i.e. elective taken the prior year or placement in the wrong level).
3. **Can my child bring a back pack the first day?** We do not advise this as lockers are not available until parents have completed and returned the paperwork sent home the first day. Students are not permitted to wear or carry their back packs during the day.
4. **Can my child take Algebra in the 8th grade if he or she does not qualify for it in the 7th grade?** Yes.
5. **If my child did not qualify for honors classes in 7th grade, can he or she be screened for it in the 8th grade?** Yes. In early May the counselors seek information from the teachers which indicates they feel a child can handle the honors level courses. Counselors and the Director of Student Services will meet to determine 8th grader honors placement. Referrals can be made by parents or teachers in late April for this screening process through your child's counselor.
6. **Can I meet with my child's teachers before school starts?** Teachers come back shortly before school opens and they have in-services, meetings and other functions that they are required to attend. In addition, they have to set up their rooms and plan instruction. We do not encourage a meeting during this time due to the fact that their time is very limited and needs to be focused on preparing for the opening of school. In addition, until the first day of school, schedules are not entirely set, which could mean changes in teachers. Please wait until after the first day of school to schedule team meetings through your counselors.
7. **When will we get our SOL scores?** We have been informed by the testing office that a contract has been given to an agency to mail out test scores to families toward the latter part of August. If you have not received your test scores by the start of school, you are welcome to contact your Counselor to see if the school has any test data that can be shared.
8. **Can I drop by to see the counselor?** Please make an appointment to see the counselor. They are extremely busy the first few weeks of school and cannot accommodate drop-in visits. Phone numbers are listed in the Courier.
9. **My child has a 504 Plan. When can I meet with teachers to review and explain why it was put into place?** In the first few weeks, we usually like to have the teachers form their own opinions about the needs and expectations of your child at the middle school level. Once the teacher has gotten to know your child, ask the counselor to set up a meeting to review the 504 Plan to make sure that it is appropriate at the middle school level and best meets the needs of your student.

Opening of School Information

The following information will serve as a valuable reference to both parents and students through the coming school year. You might want to keep this information handy as questions come up during the months following.

- Tuesday, September 8 is the first day of school. It is a regular, full day.**
- Class schedules will be distributed to 7th graders and **new 8th graders** at the orientation on Friday, September 4. Students who are unable to attend the orientation will receive their schedules upon arrival on the first day of school in their assigned schedule pick-up room. A list of those schedule pick-up rooms will be posted in the lobbies, and can be found in this newsletter. **We cannot provide schedules in advance.**
- When arriving at school for the orientation, all students will report to the gymnasium.
- A list of bus stops and first stop pickup times for regular education students entitled to school system transportation is provided in this newsletter. Some students in special education programs (e.g., GT Center) will

receive transportation information in the mail. Other special education students will be called by their bus drivers. Please be patient the first weeks of school while the Transportation Office adjusts bus routes and pickup times to balance runs. Runs have been consolidated due to budget constraints. Please check your bus stop information for any changes.

- ❑ Students who are driven to school should arrive between 7:40-7:50 a.m. Private cars must not pull all the way down around the bus loop but should follow parking lot markings to our “**Kiss and Ride**” drop off area.
- ❑ Students may bring lunch from home or purchase lunch in our cafeteria. No glass bottles are permitted. The basic lunch will cost \$2.75 though some items may be purchased a la carte. We will also serve breakfast for \$1.50 in the cafeteria before first period starting in mid September. Students who would like to open a new account or add to an existing one may bring a check to orientation to be given to their first period teachers. After Tuesday, students may bring checks to the cafeteria during breakfast, during first period or at lunch. Checks should be made out to “Rachel Carson Middle School Cafeteria,” and the student’s name should appear in the memo section of the check.
- ❑ Physical education uniforms and towel service are available. Information about purchasing these items will be sent home in the first day packet and is also included in this newsletter.
- ❑ **Under no circumstances should a student bring large sums of money or other valuables to school.** Students are notorious for “forgetting” to lock up such materials in hall or gym lockers, and as a result, such items could “disappear” and might not be reclaimed.
- ❑ Textbooks are issued to students during the first several days of school. Students are responsible for the care of these books and are expected to provide covers for them. **Full replacement fines (sometimes in excess of \$40) are assessed for textbooks or library books that are lost or damaged beyond reasonable use.** Lesser fines are levied for text or library books that are damaged to a lesser extent.
- ❑ **Accident, dental, and life insurance** are available. Information about these optional policies will be available for interested students in the guidance office or through our Parent Liaison. Premium fees and requests for reimbursements are made directly through the insuring agency, not the school. **The school does not provide medical payments for students who sustain injuries at school (e.g. in physical education).**
- ❑ **In the event that a student will be absent from school, parents are requested to contact the office by phone at 703-925-3636 or by email at CarsonMS.Attendance@fcps.edu before 9:30 a.m.** If a parent has not contacted the school regarding the absence, a written excuse signed by the parent must be supplied to the attendance secretary when the student returns to school. Students who are tardy to school or who must be excused before the close of the school day must bring a note signed by a parent to the main office in the morning. Parents must come into the main office to sign their child out for any early dismissal. Please bring photo identification with you. **IDs are required when entering the building and especially when checking out a student.** If students come back to school after checking out, they must sign in at the main office before returning to class.
- ❑ If a parent wishes to prearrange a student’s absence from school, a request must be made in writing to the principal. At least three days notice is expected. It is the responsibility of students to arrange to make up missed tests and assignments after their return from an absence. **Assignments are not provided in advance of absences unless the absence will be for three or more days.**
- ❑ Conferences with the team of teachers are scheduled by the counselors. Conferences with administrators are scheduled by calling them directly. Do not hesitate to discuss concerns with staff members; a conference or a phone call early may avoid a more serious problem later! Questions about class procedures, activities, or a grade should be addressed to the individual teacher before calling a counselor or administrator.
- ❑ Students are released from school at 2:50 p.m. Parents who pick up students from school at afternoon dismissal must park in a designated parking space. If no parking space is available, the driver must leave the school parking lot and return after buses have departed (approximately 3:05 p.m.). No car may “stand” in any lane, but must be in a parking space. There are **no** exceptions to this rule.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS’ MESSAGE

Anticipation and excitement are in the air here at Rachel Carson as the staff gets ready for the arrival of students new to Carson and the return of our newly minted 8th graders. As we enter our 12th year as a school community, our theme will be “Greater by the Dozen.” We are looking forward to a great year together as we work with one another to ensure the success of every student who joins our community of learners.

The staff has been working hard to make sure that students have the facilities, materials, and instruction they need to ensure every student has a great educational experience here at Rachel Carson. As parents, you can help your child be successful by staying informed and involved and providing the foundation for your child’s increasing academic and social independence as s/he embarks on this new and exciting leg of the educational journey. Middle school is, indeed, an exciting time, with lots of new opportunities for learning through classes and activities, new social opportunities and challenges, and increasing independence. The staff at Rachel Carson is fully prepared to offer the appropriate level of

nurturing and support as students' knowledge, interests, and skills expand and change in these crucial years and as students become more and more able to chart their own course. Your 7th graders will be greeted by a staff that is willing and able to support them in this new and in some ways more complex learning environment, and the 8th graders will move upstairs to new responsibilities, expectations, and trust in their developing ability to manage themselves, their academic lives, and their behavior.

We are dedicated to meeting the diverse needs of all of our students at Rachel Carson and fervently believe in the importance of creating a partnership with parents and guardians to support every student's success. This "students first" orientation and this tradition of nurturing a community of support for students are what make Rachel Carson a great place for students to go to school. As the assistant principals at Rachel Carson, we look forward to welcoming your student into this tradition. Although we both work with all students at Rachel Carson, Mrs. Ballou has primary responsibility for the 7th grade, and Mr. Brown has primary responsibility for the 8th grade. It is our job to support your student, you, and the teachers and counselors in any way we can to ensure your child has a great year. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any ideas, questions, concerns, or needs:

Shawn.Brown@fcps.edu, 703-925-3626

Tamara.Ballou@fcps.edu, 703-925-3608

We look forward to sharing this year with you and your student. Just as Rachel Carson Middle School is "Greater by the Dozen," we have faith that your student will achieve greater and greater things as the school year unfolds.

Sincerely,

Shawn Brown and Tamara Ballou

SCHOOL SUPPLIES – STARTER SET

Rachel Carson Middle School **2009-2010 School Year**

- Blue and black pens
- # 2 pencils
- One pack of colored pencils
- Three highlighters
- Eraser
- Glue sticks
- One metric/standard ruler (with holes for notebook; or shorter ruler to store in pencil pouch)
- Three packs of 3 x 5 inch index cards
- Paper reinforcements (optional)
- Five book covers (do not get the "sticky" type)
- Graph paper (1/4 inch)
- One 2.5 or 3 inch 3-ring binder
- Two 1.5 inch 3-ring binders
- Lined filler paper
- One 8.5 x 11 single subject spiral notebook (at least 100 pages)
- Zippered pouch that can be attached to the binder
- Box of tissues
- Five packages of subject dividers (for a total of 25 tabs)
- One marble composition book

Special 8th grade Foreign Language supplies

- One 2 inch three-ring binder and zipper pouch
- One 8.5 x 11 single subject spiral notebook (100 pages)
- Two packs of 3 x 5 inch index cards

Special Math Supplies:

- One three-ring binder (1.5 inch)
- Pad of graph paper (4 or 5 squares to an inch)
- One protractor (**for Geometry Honors**)
- One compass (**for Geometry Honors**)
- Calculator

For Math 7 and Math 8:

Purchasing a TI-30X scientific calculator for use at home is recommended.

For Algebra 1/Algebra 1 Honors/Geometry Honors:

Either a TI-83, TI-83 plus, or a TI-84 plus calculator. (NO TI-85, TI-89, or TI-92.) Students may purchase one or check out a loaner for the school year.

Parents: It is suggested that you note your calculator's serial number and that you label it with your child's name immediately.

Special Music Department Supplies:

The Music Department will require a materials and/or uniform fee.

The team and elective teachers may have additional supply requirements and additional material fees. Other supplies for special projects may be needed in the future. Students will be advised when necessary. Some of these supplies need to be replenished throughout the year.

For safety reasons, please do not permit your student to bring laser pointers to school.

PLEASE NOTE: Backpacks on wheels DO NOT fit in the lockers.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

Parents, we are looking forward to meeting you and introducing you to our wonderful school. For our eighth grade parents, Back to School Night will be Thursday, September 10. Back to School Night for our seventh grade parents is Thursday, September 17. Both evening's events will begin at 7:00 p.m.

During these evenings, you will have a chance to meet your child's teachers and counselors, as well as our administrators. You will also learn about classroom and school policies in addition to the curriculum to be studied in each class. The PTA's goal is to have the Student Directory available for purchase at the back-to-school nights.



The PTA will be serving your choice of turkey, Italian, or veggie subs with chips, and a drink (approximately \$5.00) in the RCMS cafeteria before both Back to School Nights from 5:45–6:50 p.m. (Sept. 10 for the 8th grade and Sept. 17 for the 7th grade).

SCHOOL HEALTH ROOM

GREETINGS FROM THE RACHEL CARSON HEALTH ROOM. Our goal is to ensure that your student will enjoy a healthy and safe school year. Please read the following information and feel free to call your school health aide, Mrs. Susan Tindall at 703-925-3610, or your school public health nurse, Mrs. Judy Podlesney, RN, at 703-326-6563, should you have any questions. A school health aide, not a registered nurse, staffs the clinic from 7:50 a.m.-2:50 p.m. The school health aide is not permitted to diagnose illnesses/injuries. School health aides provide care in accordance with FCPS guidelines. There are certain situations when a student must go home, e.g., a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, an undiagnosed rash or any signs of suspected communicable disease. This is for the safety and welfare of all our students.

HOW CAN YOU HELP THE HEALTH ROOM provide the best possible care?

- Return a completed **Emergency Care Form** for your child and list emergency contacts that can be reached and will pick up your child should he or she become sick or injured at school. Notify the school of any changes in emergency care information, for example, a change in work number. Please do not use yourself as the emergency contact.
- Should your child have any specific health concerns, please contact Judy Podlesney, RN, at 703-326-6563.
- If your child has any PE restrictions, please inform the PE teacher directly and let the health room know as well.
- Keep a sick student at home. It is difficult to concentrate and perform well when feeling ill. If your child has a fever, please keep him or her at home. A child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

IF MEDICATION IS NEEDED AT SCHOOL, specific guidelines in accordance with the FCPS Medication Administration Regulation must be followed.

- A **Medication Authorization Form** must be on file in the health room for any medication administered during the school day. Forms are available in the health room or can be printed from the fcps.edu website. Parents or

guardians must complete and sign Part I, and the physician must complete and sign Part II of the Medication Authorization Form. Parents may sign for over-the-counter pain medications for the entire school year for the following conditions: muscle pain, orthodontic pain, menstrual cramps and headache. Parents may also sign for the entire year for antibiotics and anti-viral medications.

- Medications must be in the original container and labeled with the student's name, name of medication, dosage to be taken at school and frequency or interval of dosage when applicable. In the case of over-the-counter pain medications, parents are encouraged to send in small bottles due to medication storage space.
- Students may NOT transport medication to and from school. The only exception to this is **high school students** may carry over-the-counter medication only to and from the health room.
- Middle school students are permitted to carry over-the-counter cough drops and throat lozenges in the original container.

For your convenience, Mrs. Tindall, School Health Aide, will be available during Orientation on Friday, Sept. 4, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. should you need to drop off medications and/or paper work.

PE DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Students PE Supply list

- **Master Lock**
- **Uniform**
- **Folder (pockets / and brads)**
- **Deodorant**

Cost for a Uniform:

Shirt and Shorts (required) - \$12.00

Shirt - \$4.00

Shorts - \$8.00

Towel service for the year (not required but suggested) - \$10.00

Shirt, Shorts, Towel service – \$22.00

The RCMS PE Department will sell student uniforms on Wednesday, August 26th from 1pm to 3pm in the gymnasium. In addition, uniforms will be sold during all PE classes the first week of school. However, the more uniforms we sell before the school year, the faster our students can begin to participate in class.

Every student needs a pad lock in order to receive a PE locker. We suggest the Original Master Lock with a black face because they hold up better. The RCMS PE Dept. will start issuing lockers on the first day of school to students who bring in a lock.

PTA NEWS

Dear Parents,

It's hard to believe summer is ending and we are rapidly approaching the start of another school year! I hope everyone had a fun and relaxing summer!

This will be my second year as your PTA president. I will have both a seventh and eighth grader attending RCMS...which concludes the end of the Clark line. I thoroughly enjoyed my first year as PTA president and look forward to another exciting year! That being said, I know how many of you were active volunteers in your elementary schools and I encourage you to keep up that volunteer spirit in middle school

There are many opportunities (and needs) for volunteering at the middle school. It does not have to be a huge commitment; any time you can give is greatly appreciated. We have a rather immediate need for front office volunteers. Due to county budget cuts, RCMS lost its full time front desk secretaries. They will be sorely missed. As a volunteer community we need to step in and help the front office to continue to run smoothly. If you have a few extra hours each week or each month, please consider volunteering. Please see the volunteer form in the first day packet for more info.

In the first day packet you will also find information regarding obtaining a student directory. If you have a business you would like to advertise, the directory is the perfect place! Membership information for RCMS PTA is also included in the packet. The phenomenal administration and staff at RCMS gives so much to our children; let's strive for 100% membership to show as a community how much we care.

In the past, the PTA has avoided fund-raising activities by relying on the generosity of parents with their contributions to "Friends of Carson". Information regarding FOC is available in the packet, if you are interested in making a donation.

Throughout the school year we will hold "Spirit Dining Nights" and "Subway sales" at school events. Both of these are a great opportunity to let someone else do the cooking while trying different area restaurants. I look forward to seeing you there!

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the 2009-2010 RCMS PTA officers:

- 7th grade vice president- Karen Andrich
- 8th grade vice president- Sofi Cahoon
- Secretary- Courtney Bulger
- Treasurer- Bill Vigen

Thank you for accepting these positions and I look forward to working with you. Our PTA meetings are typically held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. I look forward to seeing you there and getting to know the members of this community.

As always, thank you for supporting the PTA. If you have any questions, concerns or would like to become involved, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE to give me a call at 703-742-6103. Enjoy the dwindling days of summer; I look forward to a GREAT year!

Chris Clark-PTA President
Csclark721@verizon.net

Rachel Carson PTA Membership

The Rachel Carson PTA supports many worthwhile projects during the school year, as well as supplementing the programs provided by Fairfax County. Please help enhance your child's middle school years by joining the Rachel Carson PTA and help RCMS reach another milestone by attaining 100% PTA membership! Membership forms will be included in your back to school packet and are available on the RCMS website under "**General Information**" then "**PTA**" (<http://www.fcps.edu/RachelCarsonMS/geninfo/pta.htm>).

The cost for an individual membership is \$10.00. If both parents wish to join, which we encourage and very much appreciate, the cost is \$20.00. Please fill out the tear off section of this letter and return it to school in the attached envelope with the appropriate fee. Checks should be made payable to "Rachel Carson PTA". If you have questions, please e-mail Laurie Gibson at lauriegibson@cox.net.

Why Buy a School Lunch?

Lunches reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans which recommend no more than 30 percent calories from fat, 10 percent calories from saturated fats, and limited trans fats, sodium and sugar.

- Lunches provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories
- Age appropriate portions based on established federal lunch patterns
- Several choices, salad lunches and milk available daily
- Food is prepared and served under safe and sanitary conditions
- Costs less than bringing an equally nutritious lunch from home

Compare the costs of a lunch brought from home with school lunch prices and you will see that the school lunch is a bargain. **Cost of a Sample Lunch from Home Determined from prices at local grocery store 8/09**

| | Elementary | Middle/High |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Bread (white), 2 slices | \$.28 | \$.28 |
| Turkey slices, 3 oz | \$1.50 | \$1.50 |
| Potato Chips, (small bag) | \$.33 | \$.33 |
| Baby Carrots (6-8) | \$.30 | \$.30 |
| Red Grapes (20) | \$.63 | \$.63 |
| Milk, 1/2 pint (at school) | \$.60 | \$.60 |
| Bag, napkin, etc | \$.10 | \$.10 |
| Labor, 15 minutes | free | free |
| Total Cost | \$3.74 | \$3.74 |
| | | |
| Lunch purchased at school | \$2.65 | \$2.75 |
| Savings | \$1.09 | \$.99 |

The Carson ***Courier***
will be “delivered” to you electronically
beginning with the October 2009 edition.

Each edition of the *Courier* will be posted on the Rachel Carson MS website:
www.fcps.edu/RachelCarsonMS/.

A ***Keep in Touch*** (KIT) email will be sent to notify you that the latest edition has been posted. If you haven't already done so, please ensure that you have supplied a valid email address with your child's contact information, either by completing that section on your student's Emergency Care Form or by using Parent View. For more information on ***KIT***, please visit the FCPS website: <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/>



Accessing the newsletter online will consume less of our resources – both natural and financial – as well as allow our readers faster access to the latest news from RCMS.

If you do not have email or Internet access, or for any reason need a paper copy of the *Courier* via US mail, please fill out this flyer and send it to Mrs. Hofrichter in the Carson Middle School office by October 1, 2009.

Please continue to mail me a copy of the RCMS Courier.
(Please print legibly.)

Parent Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

1st SEMESTER 2009 - 2010

September 4 and September 8, 2009

7th Grade

SCHEDULE PICK-UP ROOMS

| FIRST FOUR LETTERS OF LAST NAME ... | | TEACHER | ROOM |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|
| A | Alva | Ms. Walsh | A103 |
| Amir | Aure | Ms. Miles | A104 |
| Ausa | Bice | Ms. Jurek | A105 |
| Bidw | Bull | Ms. Cahill | A106 |
| Bund | Chon | Ms. James | A107 |
| Chro | Davi | Ms. Carr | A108 |
| Delu | Drin | Ms. Patway | A109 |
| Dsch | Fish | Ms. Kay | A112 |
| Fitz | Gavi | Ms. Bickford | A116 |
| Gazo | Harb | Ms. Long | A125 |
| Hark | Hill | Ms. Gammon/Mr. Wright | A129 |
| Hoel | Indu | Ms. Moir | A130 |
| Irwi | Kall | Mr. Shah | B104 |
| Kalm | Kimb | Ms. Toweson | B105 |
| King | Land | Ms. Moritz | B106 |
| Lara | Lino | Ms. Piazza | B107 |
| Liu | Mann | Ms. Dalkin | B108 |
| Manu | Mill | Ms. Wilson | B109 |
| Minn | Naka | Mr. Tarrant | B111 |
| Nakh | Nyse | Mr. Wenk | B112 |
| O | Pate | Mr. McCrory | B115 |
| Path | Qian | Ms. Couch | B125 |
| Qu | Robi | Ms. Pease | B126 |
| Rohe | Salv | Ms. Douglass | C105 |
| Samb | Sham | Mr. Baker | C106 |
| Shap | Song | Ms. Poole | C107 |
| Sont | Tala | Ms. Betschart | C108 |
| Tam | Uppu | Mr. Bolt | C125 |
| Vale | Wabe | Mr. Evans | C127 |
| Walt | Wojc | Ms. Wolfe | D107 |
| Wolf | Z | Mr. Hudson | D108 |

8th Grade

SCHEDULE PICK-UP ROOMS

| FIRST FOUR LETTERS OF LAST NAME ... | | TEACHER | ROOM |
|-------------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|
| A | Ashm | Ms. Hanna | A203 |
| Asmu | Barg | Ms. Gibson | A204 |
| Basa | Caho | Ms. Burgett | A205 |
| Capo | Ciss | Ms. Gerhardt | A206 |
| Clar | Cruz | Ms. Romano | A207 |
| Cyme | Dolc | Ms. K. Williams | A208 |
| Dole | Elte | Ms. Heininge | A209 |
| Elwe | Fost | Ms. Asuncion/TBD Science | A212 |
| Frai | Ghaf | Ms. Hamilton | A213 |
| Ghob | Gupt | Ms. Anderson | A216 |
| Guru | Hipp | Mr. Colgan | B204 |
| Ho | Hump | Ms. Adams | B205 |
| Hutc | Javi | Ms. Powers | B206 |
| Jaya | Katr | Mr. Bogert | B207 |
| Keat | Krei | Ms. Outland | B208 |
| Kuty | Leon | Ms. Palmer | B209 |
| Levy | Madd | Ms. Younts | B210 |
| Maha | Mcca | Mr. Buchholz | B211 |
| Mccl | Metz | Ms. Crossen | B214 |
| Mich | Muti | Ms. Bryant | C142 |
| Myer | Ocon | Ms. Hoyseth | C207 |
| Onei | Patt | Ms. L. Williams | C208 |
| Payt | Pott | Ms. Carey | C209 |
| Prak | Rend | Ms. Sky | C210 |
| Rhoa | Sae | Ms. Baska | C211 |
| Sain | Shep | Ms. Geiser | C214 |
| Sher | Spad | Mr. Bickford | E105 |
| Spea | Subi | Mr. Campagna | Gym |
| Suh | Tuck | Mr. Kappatos | Gym |
| Tunu | Wals | Ms. Lohman | Gym |
| Wang | Xue | Ms. Molnar | Gym |
| Yang | Z | Mr. Mosher | Gym |

September 2009

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--------|------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|----------|
|  | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 Orientation for 7 th graders and new-to-Carson 8 th graders 9:-00-11:00 a.m. | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 1 st Day of School | 9 | 10 8 th Grade Back-to- School Night 7:00 p.m. | 11 All 1 st Day Packet Forms Due Today including Emergency Care | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 7 th Grade Back-to- School Night 7:00 p.m. | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 Fall Portraits | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | |

October 2009

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|---------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|----------|
|  | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 Columbus Day Holiday School Closed | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 Hearing & Vision Screening | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |