

The Carson Courier

Volume 13, Issue 3

October 2010

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

A LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Veteran's Day has always been a valued opportunity to honor the contributions and sacrifices of those who have given so much for our country. We would like to invite you to join us for our annual Open House on Thursday, November 11. What better way to honor the contributions of our veterans than to celebrate the freedom they have preserved that enables us to educate a new generation. We hope you will join us for at least a portion of the day. You will be able to attend your child's classes and see firsthand all the exciting things that happen daily in our classrooms.

As children reach the age of adolescence they are presented with more difficult choices as well as peer pressure to conform. As parents, it is important that we provide our children with a safety net. This is not an easy task with our jobs consuming much of our days and our children seeking more independence and less interference from mom or dad. There are some proactive measures that are essential in keeping in touch with the lives of our children.

- Know where your child is and with whom at all times;
- Avoid situations where there is not an adult to supervise (especially private parties and activities in homes);
- Network with the parents of your child's friends to ensure they adhere to your limits and expectations;
- Constantly monitor the use of phone and internet use (especially instant messaging, MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube) – Students feel a sense of anonymity when they are using electronic communication devices;
- Keep in contact with your child's school through the school counselor and teachers;
- Encourage your children to take part in after-school activities. This is an important part of school life and extends and enriches our daily programs. Mondays are designated for academic help only. Clubs and activities meet on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Late buses are provided all three days;
- And most importantly, talk with your child on a daily basis.

By setting limits and keeping track of children's activities you can continue to monitor their growth and avoid those "poor choices" that can have lasting effects. As always, if you are concerned with your child's development please do not hesitate to contact his or her school counselor. Counselors are equipped with many resources (inside and outside school) to assist parents in raising a healthy adolescent.

A major contributor to your child's academic success is for the student to be present and on time for his or her classes. There is much educational research that highlights the importance of time in the classroom and its correlation to student accomplishments. *"Opportunity to learn has the strongest relationship with student achievement of all school-level factors."* (Marzano, 2000) Whenever possible, please schedule doctor appointments and vacations around the school calendar so that your child reaps the full benefit of our courses and programs. Reasons for excused absences include illness, late buses, death in the family, doctor or dentist appointments, observance of religious holidays, or another reason acceptable to the principal. Unexcused absences and tardies include family trips, child care problem, oversleeping, missed bus, and cases that involve private transportation to school.

The end of the first quarter is upon us. In the main, we have been very pleased with the progress our students are making and the commitment they are showing to their schoolwork. That said, they are still children and can certainly experience bumps in the road. Should you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or counselor.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at our Open House.

Augie Frattali
Principal

Rachel Carson Administrative Office
Ph. 703.925.3600
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

August FrattaliPrincipal
 Cheryl Weaver..... Director of Student Services
 Tamara Ballou Assistant Principal
 Sybil Mack Assistant Principal
 Phil Hudson Special Project Administrator
 Pat LeeAfter-School Program Specialist
 Michele Ford..... Office Assistant
 Eileen Harrington..... Finance Technician
 Nancy Hofrichter..... Administrative Assistant
 Margie McCarthy Office Assistant

Rachel Carson Attendance Line
Ph. 703.925.3636

Accessible 24 hours a day
7 days a week!



If you prefer using your computer to notify us if your child will not be in school for any reason (except early check-out) or if he/she will be tardy, just send an email to:

CarsonMS.Attendance@fcps.edu.

Please do not send homework requests or early dismissal requests to this email address.

Pre-arranged absences must be done **three (3) school days in advance** and **be approved** by an administrator. If you know your student will be absent, have him or her bring a note to the front office giving the dates and reason for the absence. We will start the pre-arranged absence process which will notify the attendance secretary as well as the teachers, and the student will be given his or her assignments for the time he or she will be out. At that point the pre-arranged absence form is submitted to the administrator for approval.

FORGOTTEN ITEMS

Parents are welcome to bring forgotten items to the front office.

Instructional time will not be interrupted to inform students when an item is dropped off.

It is the student's responsibility to check for forgotten items.

Please refrain from calling the Carson MS office asking that a message be delivered to your student. We cannot interrupt instructional time to give messages from home to students.

RCMS Student Services
Ph. 703.925.3614
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Cheryl Weaver Director of Student Services
 Brenda Humphrey Lead Counselor
 Esther Ferrell..... Counselor
 Joni Fraundorfer..... Counselor
 Rebecca Little Counselor
 Jamie Mahoney..... Counselor
 Lesa Lloyd..... Guidance Assistant
 Celeste Moore..... Clerical Assistant
 Donna Winston..... Social Worker
 Stephanie Harris Psychologist
 Maria de Barrios.....Parent Liaison
 Ph. 703.925.3603
 Susan Tindall.....School Health Aide
 Ph. 703.925.3610

Please visit our school website and bookmark it as a "Favorite." Check the website often for the latest news about RCMS, Couriers, curriculum, calendars, lunch menus, PTA news and links to FCPS 24/7, Keep in Touch, and emergency announcements.



Rachel Carson MS Website:

<http://www.fcps.edu/RachelCarsonMS>

VISITING RCMS

All outside doors are locked. Our staff and students have been instructed not to open any locked doors for visitors. All visitors are directed to the main entrance marked **Door #1**. Press the doorbell located on the wall to the right of the right-hand set of doors, and when asked, display your photo ID and state the nature of your visit. When the door latch is released, pull the door open and proceed to the **Main Office** on your right.



Remember that we ask for photo identification when you pick up your student or visit the school.



YOU ARE INVITED TO
CARSON MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR OUR

VETERAN'S DAY PARENT OPEN HOUSE

on Thursday, November 11, 2010.

- Spend all or part of the day with us! Visit your child's classrooms throughout the day.
- This event is for parents or guardians only. Due to our increased enrollment, space for chairs will probably not be available, so some classrooms might be "standing room only". For this reason also, siblings, relatives and friends will not be able to attend this event.
- **All guests must present a photo ID at registration.** All cell phones, pagers and other communication devices must be turned off or on silent mode while you are in the classrooms. Remember that this is not a time for conversations with others, including your child.
- You will not be able to join your child for lunch in the cafeteria because the cafeteria is at capacity. If you would like to bring a bag lunch, you are welcome to eat in our Conference Center (Room B127), or you may attend the PTA meeting in the Media Center at 12:00 noon.
- In the interest of student safety in the parking lot, plan to arrive after 8:15 a.m. and leave by 2:25 p.m. Due to security and parking restrictions, we prefer that once you exit the building you do not return.
- Please remember this is an open house and not the appropriate time to discuss individual student concerns. If you would like to set up a conference, please stop by the student services office.
- Since we anticipate a large turnout, consider carpooling with other parents, if possible, to facilitate parking. Parking is not permitted across the street in the Lincoln Park lots, nor in the Nysmith School lot for this event.
-

ALL CARS MUST BE MOVED FROM THE BUS LANES BY 2:25 P.M. TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE BUSES THAT BEGIN ARRIVING AT 2:30 P.M.

Flyers will be sent home with students a few days prior to the Open House. This flyer will include a section where you and your child can fill in his or her daily schedule. **Bring the flyer with you** to Open House to use as your guide throughout the day.

If you have any questions about the Open House, please call 703-925-3600.

Please be sure to review the calendars at the end of this newsletter for other Important Upcoming Events.

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

As always, the Student Services staff has been very busy working with students, teachers, and parents to assist students to be more academically successful. Counselors have been working with students on their assigned teams, in the classroom, individually, and in small groups. In addition, the counselors have spent time this month working with students on each team to discuss the very important topics of bullying and sexual harassment, and conferencing with parents and teams and helping with the TJ application process for interested 8th grade students. In the near future, small groups will be starting to help with organizational skills.

Career Information

If you have not already done so, and are interested in helping to share your career with our students, please call Rebecca Little at 703-925-3619. Instead of a single career day in which careers are addressed for our students, we are imbedding that information in our curriculum with speakers throughout the year. Later on in the year the counselors will begin working with their team students on interest inventories and goal setting that will help students relate their interests to careers.

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

October 22	TJ applications due – 3:00 (no exceptions)
October 29	1 st quarter grading period ends
November 1 & 2	FCPS Teacher Workdays (NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS)
November 5	First quarter report cards sent home
November 11	Student Services Advisory Council (10:00-11:00 a.m. in Rm. B127) Parent Open House (bring a book to read during Learning Seminar)
November 18	All A Honor Roll Celebration
November 24	Early release (2 hour early closing)
November 25-26	Thanksgiving Holiday

If at any time you wish to have a conference with your child's counselor and/or team of teachers, please call the counselor assigned to the team. The counselor will make the appointment for you and assist with facilitating the conference. It is important that you contact the counselor first in order to make an appointment for team conferences. The counselors have many responsibilities and are often not available on short notice or if you just stop by the school without an appointment. The counselors are:

Jamie Mahoney	Teams: All Stars, Wolves Ph. 703-925-3620
Rebecca Little	Team: Trailblazers, X-treme team Ph. 703-925-3619
Brenda Humphrey	Teams: Explorers, Voyagers (Lead) Ph. 703-925-3618
Joni Fraundorfer	Teams: Dream Team, Dolphins Ph. 703-925-3616
Esther Ferrell	Teams: Champions, Yellow Jackets Ph. 703-925-3617
Madeja Jamil	Counselor Intern

Student Services Advisory Council

We are currently looking for parents and students who would be willing to be a part of the Student Services Advisory Council. This committee was formed last year in order to provide an avenue for continued communication and to better meet the needs of our students and the needs of the community. We only have two meetings a year--one per semester, but it is here that we would hope to have feedback on the programs and services offered through Student Services and develop new plans to meet the needs of our students, parents and community. Our first meeting will be on November 11, 2010, from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in room B127. If you and/or your child would be interested in serving on this committee, please give your name(s) to your child's counselor. This is a great way to participate in an activity with your child in trying to make a difference.

8th Grade Parents:

Please take the time to read the 2010 Fairfax Youth Survey letter that went home on Monday, September 20. If you need another copy of the letter, have your child stop by Student Services to pick one up. Certain translations of the letter and opt out forms are also available in Student Services. If you do not wish for your child to participate in the survey, please complete and return the opt-out form on the back of the letter to RCMS Student Services office by October 29, 2010.

Cyber bullying

As mentioned earlier, this month the school counselors have talked about bullying and sexual harassment with students through classroom lessons. Cyber bullying is a more recent form of this behavior and is becoming more prevalent in today's society. Cyber bullying is the use of electronic information and communication devices to bully, intimidate, and harass an individual or a group through personal attacks or other means. It is often repeated over time and involves a power imbalance between the perpetrator and a victim. According to National Crime Prevention Center, more than 40% of teenagers report being bullied online. Some modes of cyber bullying are sites such as MySpace, Facebook, Xanga, YouTube, personal blogs/websites, & text messaging. It is essential as parents to talk to your children about cyber bullying and the safe use of technology. For more information on this topic, visit the following website: <http://www.cyberbully.org>. Free booklets are also available in our media center.

Progress Reports

In order for us to e-mail your child's progress reports on a regular basis, we need an accurate e-mail address for you. If you were unable to check your e-mail address at one of our Back to School Nights, please make sure your child's teachers have the correct address or contact Celeste Moore in the Student Services office at 703-925-3613.

Federal Impact Aid Forms

The first week in November your child will be bringing home a Federal Impact Aid Survey form for you to fill out, sign and return to school the next day. **The Federal Impact Aid Program** attempts to compensate local school districts for their loss in tax revenue due to a federal presence in their district boundaries. Last year Fairfax County Public Schools received approximately \$3,500,000 under this program. All information given on this form is strictly confidential. Due to a strict deadline, it will be necessary to call those who do not turn in this form by the required due date. Thank you for your assistance in helping FCPS to provide the best education and services for all of our children. **It is extremely important that all students return this signed form regardless of parental employment!**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

REMINDER

Parents, please remember that the Main Office and Student Services Office close at 4:00 p.m.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS' MESSAGE

Here we are, well into the first quarter of this Lucky 13th year at Rachel Carson. Students should be accustomed to the routine and feeling comfortable with class and school expectations. They should also have a good idea of their homework load and be settling into routines at home for completing homework assignments and turning them in on time.

Our first electronic progress reports went home on Friday, October 15, so parents should have an idea of how well students are doing in their new classes this year. These progress reports will be coming home every two to three weeks throughout the year to provide detailed information about how things are going in each class, and to give students and parents an opportunity to celebrate successes and address any challenges or concerns. A new feature of the progress reports this year is the "M" grade, which indicates an assignment is missing. An "M" may be made up, up until the Wednesday before the next progress report, at which time it will become a zero, so pay attention to this "red flag" and use the opportunity to get missing assignments made up.

Remember to make use of the Daily Assignment Book (DAB) to help keep up to date on assignments and expectations. Teachers are also available regularly after school to provide extra help, work with students to get caught up after absences, and give students time to work on assignments in the school setting.

With the advent of late busses, which began October 4, the after-school program is in full swing. Each student should make an effort to take part in at least one after-school activity or club. That's a great way to meet friends, hone skills, have fun, and really feel a part of Rachel Carson Middle School. Students can check the cafeteria bulletin board or the After-School Program Blackboard site for information about clubs.

Please remember to contact your child's counselor or administrator if you have concerns or questions. We are here to help ensure that your child has a successful school year.

Sybil Mack, 7th Grade Administrator (B, C, D, and E teams)
Tam Ballou, 8th Grade Administrator (V, W, X, and Y teams)
Phil Hudson, 7th and 8th Grade Administrator (A and Z teams)

PTA NEWS

Dear Parents,

Happy Fall! I hope everyone has gotten off to a great school year. As I walk into school, it is great to see the smiles and laughter of our young people. By now, all of you should have received the fundraising information for Rachel Carson. A lot of time was spent in picking out quality items that would support our goal of becoming more environmentally friendly. We hope you will consider purchasing the entire bag of products and support our "first" green fundraiser. The monies raised will all be used for the students in the building this year! Thank you for your support.

We invite you to come to the school on Veterans Day, November 11, 2010, for a great open house as well as a PTA luncheon meeting. This was the most popular meeting last year and we encourage you to try to attend. Spending the day in the life of your child and having lunch with parents and staff help build the community that we all want to be a part of.

Thank you for your support of the fundraiser and I hope to see everyone on November 11.

Sincerely,
Courtney Bulger
PTA President

From Fairfax County Public Schools' Energy Zone!

BREAKFAST – A GREAT START TO BEING SMART

October is Breakfast Month in Fairfax County Public Schools. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It "breaks" the "fast" by replacing the energy reserves used overnight. School aged children, especially teens, are the biggest breakfast skippers. Research shows students who eat breakfast:

- Learn better
- Are more alert and attentive
- Are more likely to participate in activities
- Eating breakfast may also reduce the risk of childhood obesity

If you have a breakfast skipper in your home, plan and offer quick nutritious choices such as juice, whole grain cereal and toast, breakfast bar, or bagels and milk or yogurt. Parents don't forget your own breakfast. You are a role model for your children.



Come Join
Rachel Carson Friends and Families
for a fun evening of fun and fund-raising to support
Rachel Carson PTA.



Tuesday, October 26, 2010

4:00PM – 9:30PM

Baja Fresh will donate 15 % of all eat-in
and take out sales back to RCMS PTA.

Any Questions?
Contact Judy Misbin-May
703-707-9611 or mayfamily5@gmail.com

Clock Tower Shopping Center
2405 Centreville Road Herndon, VA 20171

You are invited to
Fairfax County Public Schools
ESOL Parent Meetings



Light Dinner and Child Care

Dinner will be available from 5:30 until 6:30 p.m. only.

Interpreters will be provided for the following languages: Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Learn about:

- Instructional Services including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and preparing for college and career
- Helping your children with their education
- Services to support families in Fairfax County Public Schools
- Community resources available in Fairfax County

Choose one:

October 25, 2010 Marshall High School 5:30-9:00 p.m. 7731 Leesburg Pike Falls Church, VA 22043	November 3, 2010 Hayfield Secondary School 5:30-9:00 p.m. 7630 Telegraph Rd. Alexandria, VA 22315	November 8, 2010 Chantilly High School 5:30-9:00 p.m. 4201 Strinofellow Rd Chantilly, VA 20151
--	---	--

Pre-registration is requested but not required. To pre-register online go to:

<http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OESOL/index.htm>,

For more information in English call (571) 423-4660, or for information in:

- Korean: 571-423-4951
- Spanish: 571-423-4950
- Vietnamese: 571-423-4956

To pre-register by written reply, complete the section below:

Please cut off and return to your child's ESOL teacher or school parent liaison.

Date (choose one): October 25, 2010 at Marshall High School
 November 3, 2010 at Hayfield Secondary School
 November 8, 2010 at Chantilly High School

Number of adults: _____ Phone number _____ Email: _____

Adult name(s): _____


Number of children needing childcare: _____ Age(s): _____

Language(s): _____

Children's school(s): _____

School Staff: Please PONY registration to Neshmy Tellez Beltran at Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, so that it is received at least one week before meeting date. School staff and volunteers can also enter this registration information on the web page listed above.

November 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Teacher Workday Students do not attend	2 Teacher Workday Students do not attend	3 Impact Aid Survey forms sent home	4 Impact Aid Surveys due	5 Photo Re-takes 1 st Quarter Progress Reports Sent Home	6
7	8	9	10	11 Veteran's Day Parent Open House Student Services Advisory Council 10:00 B-127 PTA Meeting Media Center 12:00 n m	12	13
14	15	16	17 Fall Play 3:30 p.m.	18 All A Honor Roll Celebration 3:15 p.m.	19 Fall Play 7:00 p.m.	20
21	22	23	24 FCPS Students Released Two Hours Early. Carson students dismissed @ 12:50 p.m.	Thanksgiving Break November 25 – 26		27
28	29	30				

December 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Choral Concert 7:00 p.m.	7 Band Concert 7:00 p.m.	8 Orchestra Concert 7:00 p.m.	9 Band Concert 7:00 p.m.	10	11
12	13	14 PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m. RCMS Media Center	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 FCPS Students Released Two Hours Early. Carson students dismissed @ 12:50 p.m.	Winter Break - Dec. 23-31		25
26	27	28	29	30	31	A HAPPY NEW YEAR
	Winter Break - Dec. 23-31					