



## Principal's Corner

**Everyone must take time to sit and watch the leaves turn.** ~Elizabeth Lawrence

OCTOBER! It can't be...but I am glad that it is! October is a great month – we are past the nervousness about the new school year, we've settled into our back to school routines, and we have many fun activities this month! And what is not to love about a month that ends with jack-o-lanterns, costumes, parades, and candy?

Thanks to the work of our teachers and the support of the students and parents, we have had an incredibly smooth start given the hectic pace of renovation in August. I must admit, I was worried when they were laying sod and drying paint with hairdryers twenty minutes before Open House. However, it all worked out beautifully in the end and everyone is enjoying all of our fresh, new spaces.

You may have noted some changes in our students' schedules this year. Mr. Carmichael and I have worked with the teachers to create a schedule that focuses on preserving instructional time for our students and promoting Valiant Viking behavior in all settings. The first notable difference is our change in lunch scheduling, which now allows students to leave the cafeteria after twenty minutes and to transition to recess. We have only used this schedule a handful of days at this point, so we are monitoring closely to see if the majority of students have enough time to eat to determine if we may need to adjust the schedule for the future. Also, any student may remain in the café if they prefer and they can simply transition outside with the next group for the remainder of recess. I want to thank those of you who have offered suggestions and provided input for this schedule...we really appreciate it! Please know that we value your feedback and we will be closely observing to make sure the students are well cared for. Please be patient as we try this experiment! Both Mr. Carmichael and I have worked in schools where this schedule has worked beautifully over time, but we both value a schedule that works for *our* students.

The second notable change is that *NewsWave* is now at the end of the day. This is because our school has adopted the Responsive Classroom Approach which helps students learn how to build community, learn social skills, and create a positive learning environment. A critical element of this approach is the **Morning Meeting**, which occurs at the beginning of the day. Our new schedule helps each classroom have time for a Morning Meeting. Ask your child about their Morning Meeting and please note the insert on the next page about Responsive Classroom. You may see a full report at [www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research.html](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research.html).

Please visit the Renovation Blog which will be updated regularly now that school has begun. You can access the blog from our school's main webpage at [www.fcps.edu/ViennaES](http://www.fcps.edu/ViennaES). And...stay tuned for a survey regarding communication tools and strategies. As I think about modeling 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, I wonder if a "newsletter" may be a relic from the past. I am considering having a weekly update through a blog on the webpage rather than a monthly newsletter — we can post the pictures, updates, calendar, and more frequent communication about relevant topics on the webpage — but I want to hear from you. Be on the lookout for the survey that will come in a *Keep in Touch* in late October. Please take the time to provide your input; your voice will help determine how we decide to best communicate with each other!

Happy Autumn! *Jeanette*

## *Did You Know?*

In schools using the *Responsive Classroom* approach:

- Children showed greater increases in reading and math test scores.
- Teachers felt more effective and more positive about teaching.
- Children had better social skills.
- Teachers offered more high-quality instruction.
- Children felt more positive about school.
- Teachers collaborated with each other more.

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research.html>

It's Elementary...

September was busy! Our students: enjoyed the first-day assembly; 5th & 6th grades went to Madison for a Band demonstration; the 5th grade went to Wolf Trap for the annual International Children's Festival; parents flocked to the Back-to-School Night; and the kindergarten classes celebrated Apple Day. **See below for the two-month calendar of upcoming events.**

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### TWO-MONTH CALENDAR

October:

• 5	"Bubbling Potions" (2nd grade)	Auditorium	9:00– 11:10 am
• 6	Mrs. Marquand's Class—Walking Field Trip	Vienna Fire Station	9:30-10:30 am
• 6	Kindergarten Reading Meeting	VES Library	7:00-8:00 pm
• 7	Mrs. Lynch's Class— Walking Field Trip	Vienna Fire Station	9:00-10:30 am
• 9	1st Grade Field Trip	Glen Echo Park	9:30 am-1:30 pm
• 12	Columbus Day Holiday — NO SCHOOL		
• 12-16	Appreciation Week — Bus Drivers, Cafeteria Staff, Custodians		
• 13	Mrs. Forman's Class—Walking Field Trip	Vienna Fire Station	9:45-11:00 am
• 16	GRANDPARENTS' DAY	various rooms	times TBD
• 19	PTA Meeting	VES Library	7:00-9:00 pm
• 20	Fall Picture Day	TBD	times TBD
• 20	3rd Grade Economics Field Trip	Vienna Shopping Center	9:00 am-12:00 pm
• 21	Kindergarten to Cox's Farm Festival	Cox's Farm	9:00 am-1:30 pm
• 22	RAIN DATE for Kindergarten Field Trip	same	same
• 22	Preschool Field Trip	Burke Gardens	9:15 am-12:15 pm
• 23	Diffendoofer Day	Gym/Stage	2:00-3:00 pm
• 23	PTA "Hallowingo"	TBD	6:30-8:30 pm
• 30	First Grading Period Ends		

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## ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAMS (AAP) [formerly GT]

### CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) offers a continuum of advanced academic services for all students in grades K-8. Learning experiences are designed to develop higher-level thinking through enrichment, acceleration, and extension of the Program of Studies. Teachers, administrators, and Advanced Academic Resource Teachers (AARTs) work together to provide the following Levels of Service:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies, Grades K-6 (Level I)**

The Advanced Academic Resource Teacher and classroom teachers teach nine higher order thinking strategies across all subject areas and grade levels.

- **Differentiated Lessons in Areas of Academic Strength, Grades K-6 (Level II)**

The Advanced Academic Resource Teacher collaborates with classroom teachers to provide additional challenges and resources within the general education program. The Young Scholars Model included in this level is designed to find and nurture advanced academic potential in students from historically underrepresented populations.

- **Part-Time Advanced Academic Program, Grades 3-6 (Level III)**

Students identified by a local school screening committee for advanced academic services (Level III) are challenged through models and strategies designed to extend and enrich the POS in the four core subject areas.

- **Full-Time Advanced Academic Placement, Grades 3-8 (Level IV)**

Students found eligible for placement in a full-time Advanced Academic Program (Level IV) through a central selection process receive a highly challenging instructional program in the four core subject areas.

- **IBMYP: Selected Schools, Grades 6-10**

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program is designed for students ages 11-16. The program helps students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world.

- **Honors, Grades 7-8**

Students who demonstrate high achievement in one or more areas of academic strength may participate in honors courses in any of the four core academic subject areas.

### SCREENING

Multiple criteria are reviewed to determine eligibility for all FCPS Advanced Academic Programs. Formal identification begins with Level III services. The local school AAP committee determines student eligibility for school-based services. The countywide AAP Central Selection Committee determines eligibility for full-time AAP (Level IV) placement.

### TESTING

Each fall all FCPS second-grade students, as well as students in third through seventh grades who do not have ability test scores, are administered the Cognitive Abilities Test and/or the Naglieri Nonverbal Test. A second-grade screening pool is established using these test results. Students in the second-grade pool are automatically screened for full-time AAP (Level IV) placement. Parents/guardians may exercise their one-time retest option during the September-October testing cycle.

### REFERRALS for FULL-TIME ADVANCED ACADEMIC PLACEMENT LEVEL IV (Grades 2–7)

Parents/guardians of students not in the second grade screening pool may initiate the full-time AAP (Level IV) screening process by completing and submitting an ***AAP Level IV Referral Form to the local school principal no later than February 5, 2010.*** No late referrals will be accepted. Second graders **not** in the pool and **all** third through seventh graders are screened only by referral. Forms are available on the AAP website and in the *Parent Information Packet* available at the local school.

See the next page for dates of the **2009 AAP Parent Information Nights**

**2009 AAP PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS**

- Thursday, October 8            McLean HS                    1633 Davidson Road, Mclean, VA 22101
- Tuesday, October 13           Oakton HS                    2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, VA 22181
- Thursday, October 15           Annandale HS                4700 Medford Drive, Annandale, VA 22003
- Monday, October 19           West Potomac HS            6500 Quander Road, Alexandria, VA 22307

Meetings will be held in the auditorium from 7:30 to 9:00 pm and are open to the public; no registration is required. Directions are available at [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com).

For additional information contact:

- local FCPS elementary or middle school
- Advanced Academic Programs Office at Lacey Center 703-846-8670
- Advanced Academic Programs Office web site: <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt>

**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; and
- are more likely to participate in activities.

**Plus...eating breakfast may 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, bagel, milk and yogurt. Parents, don't forget your own breakfast. You are a role model for your children.**

**A Message to Parents from our Cafeteria Manager**

When sending in a check to add money to your child's lunch account, please write the child's name, teacher name **and their PIN Number** on the Memo line of the check (or on the envelope containing the check). **Thank you!**

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**We Need Your Help!**

Please provide your child with any utensils they may need in their lunch boxes and ensure that they can open any containers that you send. Due to budgetary constraints, the cafeteria can no longer provide spoons and forks for students who bring their own lunch. But don't worry...we do have extra utensils available if they are needed; no child will remain spoon-less :) Also, ask your child what they ate for lunch. Some students are eating too many sweets and ignoring the healthier portions of the their lunch.

## Information from the Information Center, THE LIBRARY!

As the new school year gets underway, I wanted to share some information with you. Did you know that you can access our school library from home? You can and, at the same time, you may also see every other school library within Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Now you or your student can check at home, before coming into the school library, whether our school has a specific book that you may be interested in your student reading. It might be something for a class project. Do we have the books needed? Check from home while the thought is current.



Here is how. Log onto the following website: **libcat.fcps.edu**

It's that simple. Around the middle of the webpage you will see where it says **LIBRARY**. Next to that it says **ALL**. Click on the drop-down menu button and you can select **VIENNA** as the school you want to search. Begin your search of an author, a specific title or any subject matter that you want.

Also, at Back-to-school Night, for those who could attend, I handed out an information sheet with several on-line databases listed. All FCPS schools have free access to these databases. We use them in school frequently but you can also use them from home. For those who were not able to make it to Back-to-school Night or didn't pick up one of the information sheets, I have provided each classroom with extra copies. Have your student ask his or her classroom teacher or ask me in the library. Any of us would be happy to give them the information sheet to take home.

Later this year I will provide a brief description of some of these databases. Please stay tuned for further information in a later edition of the **Vienna Times!**

Terry Love, Librarian