



Assessments Drive Instruction

Teachers at Westlawn assess students on a daily basis and use assessment results to drive instruction. This allows teachers to plan instruction that helps all students learn. In addition to teacher created assessments, grade level teams also analyze division-wide assessments such as eCart and MRA.

eCart, which stands for Electronic Curriculum Assessment Resource Tool, includes two division-wide assessments to be given during specified testing windows (fall and spring). eCart allows teachers to access curricular resources, create assessments, and receive test results within 48 hours. Additionally, teachers work collaboratively to plan and create common assessments to be administered through eCart on a continual basis. The curriculum piece of this tool provides teachers with a repository of resources to guide instruction that will meet the needs of students based on the assessment

results available through eCart. Assessments items on eCart are similar to SOL test items and help prepare students for the spring SOL tests. However, most importantly, by analyzing eCart test results, teachers have an opportunity to plan instruction that will target the students' areas of need.

Recently, students in grades three through six participated in the fall eCart mathematics and reading tests. Working collaboratively with the Westlawn math specialists, teachers in grades three through six will analyze the eCart data and develop an intervention plan for the grade level. The teachers will focus on creating and planning a RAP (Repetition and practice) schedule. The idea behind RAP is to target students' areas of need through short repetition on a daily basis. The teacher begins a RAP by celebrating what the students did well on the test and then shares a problem most students struggled with. By showing the

composite result for the entire grade level or class, students are not singled out and feel free to share why they think there was a misunderstanding of the concept. This then leads to practice solving problems similar to the problem that was a struggle. At the end of the week, students are given a short assessment to gauge how well they understand the concept.

Students in first and second grade recently took the MRA or Math Reasoning Assessment. Teachers in these grade levels received the assessment results through eCart and will analyze the results to tailor intervention to meet the varying student needs. They will look at both grade level results and individual class results. Their goal is to draw upon the strengths of their grade level colleagues and to learn from each other so they can provide the best instruction for our students.

Rising 7th Grade GT Center parents

You are invited to Luther Jackson Middle School's Gifted & Talented Center Open House scheduled for Wednesday, February 4 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. (Snow Date, Tuesday, February 10). Visit the Parent Chat Room, meet administrators in the Library, and speak with teachers and current students in open academic classrooms. Live music and refreshments will be available throughout the evening.

RSVP: 703-204-8122 or e-mail Julie.Rosenau@fcps.edu

Winner of Healthier US School Challenge!

Since 2004, USDA's Food and Nutrition Service has been recognizing schools that have taken a leadership role in helping students learn to make healthy eating and active lifestyle choices through the HealthierUS School Challenge. Schools have been awarded a gold, silver or bronze level award for making changes to their school nutrition environments, improving the quality of the foods served, and providing students with more nutritious, healthy choices.

Westlawn was selected as a winner of a silver HealthierUS School Challenge Award. The award was presented to Ms. Suarez and Mrs. Vanderhye on Tuesday, December 2, 2008 by the Under Secretary of Food and Consumer Services, USDA. When you visit the school, please take a look at the banner in the lobby and the certificate in the main office.

Inclement Weather Plans

Due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, it may be necessary to close schools for the entire day, to open schools late, or to close early. Full details on the decision process and the timeline for those decisions are outlined on the county webpage at <http://www.fcps.edu/news/weather.htm>

In every case of a schedule change, tune in to cable Channel 21, check www.fcps.edu, or call the FCPS hot line at 800-839-FCPS (3277). To receive this information via e-mail, sign up for the FCPS Keep in Touch e-mail notification system. The news will also be carried by radio and television stations, which are notified as soon as a decision is made. Do not phone the school for this information.

Two Weeks At-A-Glance **December 8th - December 19th**

8	9 Parent Partner 8:00am - 9:00am	10 PTA Barnes & Noble Night	11	12
15	16 Parent Partner 8:00am - 9:00am Winter Concert- 1:15 & 7pm	17	18	19 PTA Gingerbread House Workshop 2:40 - 3:30

Spotlight on Learning

Kindergarten **Thanksgiving Lunch**

The Kindergarten classes celebrated Thanksgiving on Wednesday, November 26th. The children were engaged in many learning activities as Pilgrims and people from the Wampanoag tribe. They acted out the Thanksgiving story, played pin the waddle on the turkey, read the story of Thanksgiving and decorated special turkey cookies. The children then gathered together to share the food they had made in their classrooms including pumpkin pie, cranberries, butter and cornbread. They exchanged necklaces and placemats sang songs and feasted together at one long table. Each Wampanoag thanked a Pilgrim for inviting them to the Thanksgiving feast! We had a fun morning celebrating our special Thanksgiving Day !



Upcoming Dates

December 24th-January 2nd...Winter Break
(Office will be CLOSED)
January 5, 2009.....Students Return