

# FamilyGram

Spring 2009

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[www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

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As part of a continuing effort to reduce costs, summer school for high school students will differ from last year.

## Direct From the Superintendent: FY 2010 Budget Update

Since the budget was released in January, several events have occurred that clarify our budget situation. Fairfax County Public Schools received final state revenue allocations that included nearly \$24 million in federal stimulus funding. Because of this infusion of funding, along with other savings, the School Board was able to reduce its request for a transfer increase from the Fairfax County budget from

almost \$57 million to \$21 million. This funding is needed to help offset the cost of educating approximately 5,000 additional students expected to enroll in FCPS for the 2009-10 school year as well as the costs related to opening two new elementary schools in the fall.

In addition, we have asked the Board of Supervisors to restore nearly \$4

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## Summer 2009 Program Information— What You Need to Know

This summer, the FCPS high school general education program will differ significantly from last year, while the elementary and middle school academic programs again will offer school-based intervention programs tailored for each location to meet students' academic needs.

Each high school will offer summer programs to support students who need credit recovery or Standards of Learning (SOL) remediation, or who participate in the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) program. FCPS will offer acceleration (new) courses through its Online Campus.

Course dates will vary depending on the program and are available at <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/index.htm>.

The elementary and middle school programs will be open only to FCPS students and will provide continuity between summer and regular school year learning goals and activities. School-based teams at each school will identify participating students who will benefit most from the summer programs. These students will be invited to attend by their school principal. General education elementary and middle school summer

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## Fairfax County School Board Votes to Reject Later High School Start Times Proposal

The Fairfax County School Board has voted to confirm the existing school start time structure for Fairfax County Public Schools. Generally, under this existing structure, high schools open first, then middle and elementary schools. The Board rejected a possible bell schedule, known as Iteration 3, which used a three-tiered approach that would have started some elementary schools first, high schools second, and middle schools and other elementary schools last.

Based on a report from its Transportation Task Force, the School Board considered the possibility of changing school start and dismissal times, beginning with the 2009-10 school year. In addition to new start and dismissal times, the Transportation Task Force report offered recommendations that would also improve the overall effectiveness of FCPS' transportation system. The changes would have affected elementary, middle, and high school students. Because changing school start and dismissal times could affect work schedules, child care arrangements, and after-school activities—including athletics—the School Board heard from the public through seven community dialogues and an online survey about the pros and cons of the changes.

“The School Board reached out to the community through public meetings and an online survey and heard personally from a multitude of people through e-mails, conversations, and telephone calls about the start times issue,” said School Board chair Dan Storck. **“The message from students, parents, and the community was to leave the current start and dismissal structure as is.”**

“Because Fairfax County is facing its most challenging budget year in recent memory, we need to use our resources in the most efficient way possible,” says Superintendent Jack D. Dale. “We will continue to seek transportation efficiencies while maintaining our current bell schedule structure.” The FCPS Department of Facilities and Transportation Services annually reviews and makes minor adjustments to start times to improve efficiencies throughout the school system.

For more information, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/news/start.htm>.

### Superintendent's message, continued

million in cuts in the Fairfax County budget to fully fund school resource officers, clinic room aides, Head Start classes, and the middle school after-school program. These programs are vitally important to the safety and security of our students.

We understand that the current economic situation is affecting all of us, and we will work together to get through this while maintaining our world-class instructional program. It is important to remember that, even through these tough times, our students continue to excel and we will continue to focus on our student achievement goals.

A more detailed article is on page four of this issue of *Familygram*. I encourage you to stay informed throughout the budget process, because this is the most serious issue our school system has faced in decades. We are hopeful that the Board of Supervisors will approve our revised request to cover membership increases and restore Fairfax County cuts to FCPS programs.

The Board of Supervisors will approve its transfer to FCPS on April 27. The School Board will then amend its budget, if necessary, and public hearings will be held May 12-13. The School Board will adopt its approved budget on May 21.

**Jack D. Dale**  
Superintendent of Schools



## FCPS to Change Weighting, Grading Scale Starting in 2009-10 School Year

The Fairfax County School Board has voted to change Fairfax County Public Schools' grading scale by increasing the grade point weight for Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), dual enrollment college, and honors courses and has directed Superintendent Jack D. Dale to recommend "variants on a basic ten-point grading scale with pluses and minuses" for implementation at the beginning of the 2009-10 school year.

The change means that students who take **AP and IB courses will have an additional .5 weight—for a total of 1.0**—added to their grade point average (GPA) calculation. The vote made this change retroactive for all AP and IB courses on current student transcripts effective January 2009. Seniors will get credit in the GPA calculation for AP and IB courses they are currently taking.

Since all students are expected to take the AP or IB exam that corresponds to the course(s) they are taking, FCPS gives the extra points in the seventh semester calculation for the courses students take as seniors. Students enrolled in **designated dual enrollment college courses will receive an additional .5 weight—for a total of 1.0**—effective during the 2009-10 school year.

In addition, **students who take an honors course will have an extra .5 weight** added to their GPAs for each honors course taken, effective for the 2009-10



school year. No decision has been made yet regarding whether the .5 weight for honors courses will be retroactive for all current high school students. A task force will meet in the next few months to review all honors courses and corresponding curriculum.

A recommended list of honors courses will be forwarded to the Superintendent and the School Board. This will allow the Superintendent time to determine consistency in what constitutes honors-level classes.

"The School Board received considerable feedback from the community about this issue," said Dan Storck, School Board chair. "We felt it was important to make the change so that our students can be judged comparably with students around the country when college admissions and scholarships are at stake, while maintaining the high academic standards that Fairfax County public schools are known for."

The new grading scale will include pluses and minuses in an attempt to more accurately represent student achievement while aligning FCPS more closely with grading scales in other school districts and reflecting the high academic standards of Fairfax County Public Schools.

Superintendent Jack Dale will present a recommendation for a new grading scale to the School Board on **April 20**. For more information, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/news/grading.htm>.

### FCPS Directives Available Online

Virginia's Standards of Quality require all school divisions to notify the public annually of the availability of the school system's policies. Fairfax County Public Schools policies are available at <http://www.fcps.edu/Directives/>. A continuous review process ensures ongoing examination and revision of each policy, regulation, and notice as needed.

Any citizen who requests a hard copy of a directive has a right to receive it and should be provided the most current version printed from the web site. The School Board office, at Gatehouse Administration Center I, maintains the historical records of all directives.



## FCPS Superintendent Reduces FY 2010 Budget Transfer Request

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Superintendent Jack D. Dale has revised downward his request to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for an increase in the transfer of funds to FCPS for the FY 2010 budget. The request has been revised from \$56.8 million to **\$21.3 million**. The revision was made possible, in part, due to cost savings from the FY 2009 budget, an influx of state stabilization funding, and a revised enrollment projection of approximately 800 fewer students than originally projected for FY 2010.



addition, Dale also requested that the county restore reductions to the number of Head Start classrooms and FCPS' middle school after-school program.

FCPS has advertised \$157.5 million in budget reductions in the FY 2010 budget, which, if adopted, would result in an addition of 0.5 student per teacher in general and special education classes and reductions of 10 percent in central support offices and has frozen salaries for all FCPS employees. Even with the increased enrollment, the school system will see a reduction in the cost per pupil of \$498 below FY 2009 levels.

“We are making a good faith effort to trim costs whenever and wherever possible,” said Dale. “The state stabilization funding, which came from federal stimulus funds, has helped ease the financial burden significantly. We have identified an additional \$8 million in cost savings in the current budget and have more current demographic information on projected enrollment figures for FY 2010, enabling us to reduce that number by approximately 800 students. Our FY 2010 budget remains \$10.3 million less than the FY 2009 approved budget.”

“We are still facing an increased enrollment of approximately 5,000 new students during FY 2010. We urge the Board of Supervisors to fully fund the FY 2010 budget,” states Dale. “This action is in the best interest of the children and citizens of Fairfax County.”

In addition to the revision in the transfer request, Dale is requesting that the Board of Supervisors reinstate the proposed reductions from Fairfax County's FY 2010 advertised budget, which include the elimination of school resource officers (SROs) from middle schools and the reduction of funding for clinic aides by \$750,000.

**Note:** The School Board presented the FY 2010 budget to the Board of Supervisors on March 31. There is still time to provide your feedback on the budget to the Board of Supervisors before the transfer is approved on April 27 by going to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/survey/fy10suggestions.htm>.

“These county employees are critical to student safety and well-being,” adds Dale. “Any reduction in the level of services would have an unacceptable impact on students.” In

For More Information on the  
FY 2010 Budget

To learn more about the FY 2010  
advertised budget, go to  
<http://www.fcps.edu/news/fy2010.htm>.

# 2009 High School Graduation Schedule

High School	Date	Time	Location	Postgraduation Party Location
Annandale	June 15	7 p.m.	Constitution Hall	Wakefield Rec. Center
Centreville	June 16	9:30 a.m.	Patriot Center	Centreville High
Chantilly	June 15	7:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	Chantilly High
Edison	June 16	2:30 p.m.	Constitution Hall	Lee District Rec. Center
Fairfax	June 15	Noon	Fairfax High Field House	Fairfax High
Falls Church	June 1	1:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	Providence Rec. Center
Hayfield	June 15	4:30 p.m.	Hayfield Secondary	Adventure Park USA
Herndon	June 17	7:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	Herndon Community Center
Lake Braddock	June 16	2 p.m.	Patriot Center	Wakefield Rec. Center
Langley	June 15	11 a.m.	Constitution Hall	Langley High
Lee	June 17	2 p.m.	Patriot Center	South Run Park
Madison	June 17	4:30 p.m.	Robinson Secondary	Vienna Community Center
Marshall	June 16	10:30 a.m.	Constitution Hall	Spring Hill Rec. Center
McLean	June 15	2:30 p.m.	Constitution Hall	Dave and Buster's
Mt. Vernon	June 18	4 p.m.	Mount Vernon High	Dave and Buster's
Oakton	June 17	9:30 a.m.	Patriot Center	Oakton High
Robinson	June 16	7:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	ESPN Zone
South County	June 18	2 p.m.	Patriot Center	South County Secondary
South Lakes	June 16	4 p.m.	South Lakes Field House	Reston Community Center
Stuart	June 2	4 p.m.	Stuart High	Wakefield Rec. Center
TJHSST	June 13	7:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	TJHSST
West Potomac	June 17	2 p.m.	Patriot Center	Dave and Buster's
West Springfield	June 15	9:30 a.m.	Patriot Center	Lee District Rec. Center
Westfield	June 18	7:30 p.m.	Patriot Center	ESPN Zone
Woodson	June 16	2:30 p.m.	Robinson Field House	Oak Marr Rec. Center

Alternative Schools and Centers	Date	Time	Location
Bryant Alternative High School	June 16	7 p.m.	Bryant Auditorium
Mountain View School	June 18	2 p.m.	Centreville High
Pimmit Hills School	June 16	7 p.m.	Annandale High

**Note:** This schedule is subject to change. For the most up-to-date schedule, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/news/grad.htm>.



# Keep in Touch Subscription Service Is Here

The Keep in Touch (KIT) messaging system has a new feature. Now you can subscribe to receive information on specific topics you choose. You may also subscribe to receive community outreach messages from the school division and up to five schools. This service is in addition to the KIT messages you may already be receiving.



**This new community subscription portal is for receiving information in addition to the announcements that you are already receiving if your child's contact information is in the student information system (SASI) database.**

Subscribing or unsubscribing in the subscription portal will not affect the information you already receive from the KIT system.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q1: Do parents need to update their contact information to receive KIT notifications?**

**A:** Yes, if it is not correct. Here's how. If you have a **Parent View** account in FCPS 24-7 Learning, log on, then click on [weCare@School](mailto:weCare@School) and update your contact information there OR go to your child's school and ask to fill out an emergency care information form.

If you don't have a Parent View account, you can get one by following the instructions found at <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/parentview.pdf> (How to Access FCPS 24-7—PDF document).

For additional assistance with Parent View, call **1-866-434-8880**. You will need to go to the school to verify your identification (remember to bring your child's student ID number with you).

**Q2: Why should I subscribe if I'm already receiving KIT messages?**

**A:** If you subscribe, you will be able to receive KIT messages about topics that interest you. You may choose to receive FCPS systemwide announcements, such as School Board updates, news releases, or opportunities to volunteer.

You may also want to subscribe to receive KIT messages from the schools in your neighborhood or to be notified about sports events, visual and performing arts shows, or general announcements. You may update or unsubscribe at any time.

If you do not currently have contact information in either the FCPS student database or the FCPS employee database, you may subscribe to receive FCPS announcements such as delayed school openings, School Board updates, and KIT messages sent from schools that interest you. Maybe you'd like to be notified of a theater production at the high school in your neighborhood. Or maybe you have friends or grandchildren and want to keep up with their school news. You may update or unsubscribe at any time. To join now, go to <https://signup.blackboardconnect.com/fcps/Default.aspx>.

**Q3: If I update or unsubscribe in the subscription portal, will I still receive KIT messages emergency announcements from FCPS or my child's school?**

**A:** Yes, you will still receive KITs that FCPS and/or your school deem important for you as a parent to receive. To update your contact information, you will need to follow the instructions in question 1. Unsubscribing through the subscription portal will not remove your contact information at your child's school.

## For More Information

To learn more about the Keep in Touch subscription service, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/index.htm>.



# Tips for Parents: Cyberbullying

A second at the keypad can cause long-lasting damage. As more and more kids discover new ways to share information, they have unfortunately found more and more ways to harm each other. Just as nasty comments on a playground can cause a lot of pain, cyberbullying can really hurt our kids.

## What Is Cyberbullying?

It happens when kids use their phones or the Internet to create and send harassing or humiliating messages and images. Nasty comments, lies, and embarrassing photos, videos, and polls can be spread widely through instant messaging (IM) or phone texting and by posts on social networking sites. It can happen anytime—at school or home—and can involve large groups of kids. The combination of the boldness created by being anonymous and the desire to be seen as “cool” can cause a kid who normally wouldn’t say anything mean face-to-face to show off for other kids.

## Why It Matters

Nothing crushes kids’ self-confidence faster than humiliation. And just imagine a public humiliation sent instantly to everyone they know. Sadly, hurtful information posted on the Internet is extremely difficult to prevent or remove, and millions of people can see it. Most cyberbullying happens when adults aren’t around, so parents and teachers often see only the depression or anxiety that results from being hurt or bullied. This emotional damage can last a lifetime.

## Parent Tips for All Kids

- Give them a code of conduct. Tell them that if they wouldn’t say something to someone’s face, they shouldn’t text it, IM it, or post it.

- Ask your kids if they know someone who has been cyberbullied. Sometimes they will open up about others’ pain before admitting their own.

## Parent Tips for Elementary School Kids

- Keep online socializing to a minimum. Let them use sites like Webkinz or Club Penguin where chat is prescribed or prescreened.

- Explain the basics of correct cyber behavior.

Tell your kids that things like lying, telling secrets, and being mean still hurt in cyberspace.

- Tell kids not to share passwords with their friends.

## Parent Tips for Middle School Kids

- Monitor their use. See what they’re posting; check their mobile messages.

- Tell your kids what to do if they’re harassed. They shouldn’t respond or retaliate; they should block bullies immediately, and they should tell you or an adult they trust. They shouldn’t delete the messages because, in persistent cases, the content should be reported to a cell or Internet service provider.

- If your kid is doing the bullying, establish strict consequences and stick to them. That goes for mean or sexual comments about teachers, friends, and relatives.

- Remind them that all private information can be made public. Posts on friends’ walls, private IMs, intimate photos, little “in” jokes can all be cut, pasted, and sent around. If they don’t want the world to see it, they’d better not post or send it.

- Don’t start what you don’t want to finish. Game chat can get ugly fast. Make sure your kids are respectful because hurtful retaliation happens all the time.

## Parent Tips for High School Kids

- Tell kids to think before they reveal. At this age, kids experiment with all sorts of activities, many of which should not be made public. Remind your teens that anything they post can be misused by someone else.

- Remind them they aren’t too old to ask for your help. There are things some kids can handle on their own, but, sometimes, they just need help. Coming to their parents isn’t babyish; it’s safe.

**Source:** Common Sense Media, [www.commonsensemedia.org/](http://www.commonsensemedia.org/).



## New Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Categories to Start for All Students in Fall 2009



The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) requires all states to collect information on the race and ethnicity of public school students. The federal government has developed new categories for reporting this

information. The new categories are designed to provide a more accurate picture of the nation's ethnic and racial diversity.

Currently, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) asks parents and guardians to provide information on each student's race and ethnicity at the time of enrollment. Beginning with the 2009-10 school year, FCPS will ask the **parents and guardians of newly enrolling students AND the parents of all current students** to provide information on their children's ethnicity and race using the new categories.

The USDOE defines the new categories as follows:

### Ethnicity

**Hispanic or Latino.** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

### Race

■ **American Indian or Alaska Native**—A person who has origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains a tribal

affiliation or community attachment.

■ **Asian**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

■ **Black or African American**—A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

■ **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

■ **White**—A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

The data collected will be used in the same manner that such information is currently used. For example, the federal government uses racial and ethnic data in reporting and analyzing test results, such as those for the Standards of Learning.

The new categories will replace all existing categories for use in state and federal data collections that include data on ethnicity or race.

### For More Information

Information on the collection of data on race and ethnicity is available on the FCPS web site at [http://www.fcps.edu/news/ethnicity\\_race/index.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/news/ethnicity_race/index.htm).

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## 2009-10 School Year Calendars Available

The calendars for the 2009-10 school year have been posted and are available online at <http://www.fcps.edu/cal.htm>.

## Early Enrollment Encouraged for New Fairfax Families, Language Assistance Available

The best time for school enrollment is as soon as possible after arrival in Fairfax County. Registration appointments can be scheduled by calling the school your child will attend. If you know someone who has children to enroll in FCPS and who needs help with English, please advise the family to call Student Registration, where skilled multilingual staff members will help families during the registration process.

Encourage your friends who need help with English to make an appointment today to register their children by calling Student Registration at **703-876-5230** or **703-876-5240**.

## Notice to Guardians About Student Enrollment

County residents who are taking care of children whose parents are not living in Fairfax County and who need to enroll the children in FCPS should contact Student Registration.

A change in enrollment status may be necessary if a parent who had initially enrolled a student has now left Fairfax County. Virginia law and FCPS School Board policies and regulations set criteria regarding the enrollment of children by nonparents.

Be aware that having legal custody is only one of the requirements that must be met. Call Student Registration at **703-876-5231** for more information.

## Fairfax County School Age Child Care Program (SACC) Offers Many Options

Are you looking for a fun, safe place for your child to run, think, create, imagine, and build friendships? The Fairfax County Office for School Age Child Care (SACC) program offers exciting and innovative before-school, after-kindergarten, after-school, winter, spring, and summer camp programs for children attending kindergarten through sixth grade.

SACC is operated by the **Fairfax County government** (not by FCPS) and is located in most Fairfax County public elementary schools, as well as in Key and Kilmer Centers, which serve children with multiple types of disabilities, who are aged 5-21.

SACC is open to all Fairfax County families in which all adults in the home are working 30 or more hours per week, are attending school full time, or are disabled. Fees are offered on a sliding scale based on gross household income. A separate fee applies to each program. Children may be registered or placed on a waiting list up to a year in advance.

For more information about SACC's child care services and programs, call **703-449-8989** or go to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/childcare/sacc.htm>.

### Prefer to Read *FamilyGram* Online?

An electronic version of this newsletter can be downloaded for printing or viewing by going to <http://www.fcps.edu/mediapub/publicat/familygram/spring2009.pdf>. (Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.)



## Summer 2009 programs, continued

programs will run **August 3-21**. Individual school administrators will have complete information about their summer program plans, and parents will complete the paperwork for the summer classes at their child's school. FCPS will offer the elementary and middle school programs at no charge.

**Note:** The summer academic programs are contingent upon final approval of the FCPS budget by the School Board on May 21.

### Details for Elementary School Students

- Individual schools will determine the instructional priorities at each site.
- FCPS will provide transportation to **select** elementary school summer programs only within the assigned summer school attendance areas. Summer bus stops will differ from school year bus stops.

### Details for Middle School Students

- Middle schools will focus on acquiring literacy, practicing numeracy, and preparing students for the next academic school year.
- FCPS will provide transportation to **most** middle school summer programs only within the assigned summer school attendance areas. Summer bus stops will differ from school year bus stops.

### Details for High School Students

- Credit recovery, ESOL, and SOL remediation will be offered at each high school where enrollments permit. Schools may combine course offerings.
- Courses and prerequisites will be available online at [www.fcps.edu/DIS/index.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/index.htm).
- Credit recovery courses will be limited to FCPS registered students only.
- Acceleration (new) high school courses will be open to currently enrolled FCPS students and eligible non-FCPS students.
- Tuition for credit recovery or remediation courses is \$700 with a sliding scale of 10 percent, 50 percent,

or 100 percent based on eligibility for free or reduced price lunch.

- Tuition for acceleration (new) courses—offered only via FCPS Online Campus—will be \$800 with a sliding scale of 10 percent, 50 percent, or 100 percent based on eligibility for free or reduced price lunch.

- Registration will be held at each high school **beginning May 11**.

### Services for Students With Disabilities

Extended school year (ESY) services will be provided to identified students with disabilities in accordance with their individualized education programs (IEPs). These services are intended to maintain progress in critical life skills for students for whom a prolonged break in services may cause regression or significantly jeopardize gains made during the regular school year.

FCPS staff members discuss the need for ESY services with parents and/or guardians at the annual IEP meeting each year. If parents or guardians think their child's needs may have changed since the annual IEP was completed and want to request an IEP addendum, they can do so by contacting their child's special education teacher or department chair.

In addition, preparation for the eighth grade reading and math SOL and WorkKeys© assessments will be provided at Key and Kilmer Middle Schools for high school students working to complete literacy and numeracy requirements for a modified standard diploma. ESY learning community dates will be:

- Preschool Session 1: July 7-24 (four hours/day)
- Preschool Session 2: July 27-August 13 (four hours/day)
- Elementary: July 7-31 (three hours/day)
- Middle school and high school: July 6-August 6 (five hours/day)

For additional information, go to [www.fcps.edu/ss/SpecialEd/summerschool/index.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/ss/SpecialEd/summerschool/index.htm), or call the Office of Special Education at **571-423-4190**.

### Enrichment Programs and Courses

A wide range of noncredit enrichment learning



opportunities are offered for students eager to strengthen academic skills or pursue personal interests this summer including full-day camps for elementary and secondary students.

■ **Kids Campus** (grades K-6)—Provide your child with a memorable summer experience at Kids Campus! Your youngster will join friends from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day for six fun-filled hourlong units, lunch, and two supervised break sessions. Various dates and locations, beginning July 13.

■ **Get an Edge** (grades 6-8)—Curious and imaginative minds find expression in these full-day camps: Communication, Foreign Language, Creative, and Skills Edge. Various dates and locations, beginning July 6.

■ **Like Magic!** (grades 2-5 and 6-8)—Learn the tricks of the trade in this weeklong camp. Begins July 13 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

■ **Enrichment Courses** (grades 6-12)—Numerous options exist for sharpening academic skills or expressing creativity. Offerings include: Effective Study Skills; Fundamental Skills of Algebra; Introduction to Algebra 2, Geometry, or Pre-Calculus; Introductory Keyboarding; Vocabulary Sleuths; and Young Writer's Workshop. Various dates and locations, beginning July 13.

■ **Driver Education Program**—Both components of the driver education program, classroom and behind the wheel, are offered throughout the summer at many FCPS high schools. Various dates and locations, beginning June 1.

■ **Foreign Language Mania** (grades 7-9)—Explore a country's language and culture in these 30-hour, three-week programs. Offerings include: Chinese, French, German, and Spanish. Various dates and locations, beginning July 13.

■ **Spanish Tutorial** (grades 7-9)—Learn or review Spanish 1 vocabulary with fun and engaging lessons that encourage the use of oral and written communication and reading. Various dates and locations beginning May 4.

■ **SAT and PSAT Preparation** (grades 8-12)—In partnership with Cambridge Educational Services, day and evening classes are available for students enrolled in grades 8-12 during the 2008-09 school year. Various dates and locations, beginning July 6.

■ **TJHSST Admissions Test Prep Seminar**—The Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) Admissions Test Preparation Seminar is open to students who will enter grade 8 in the 2009-10 school year and want to prepare for the entrance exam. Coursework focuses on admissions test-related mathematical and verbal reasoning, essay writing, and study strategies. Participation in this course does not constitute application, admission, or acceptance to TJHSST. The program runs July 6 through July 17 and July 20 through July 31.

For more information, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/aceclasses/>.

■ **Institute for the Arts**—Celebrating its 22nd year, the Institute for the Arts (IFTA) offers performing and visual arts enrichment programs for rising 7th grade students through rising 12th grade students. This summer, more than 700 of the county's most talented and motivated artists and performers will come to Robinson Secondary School to explore, experiment, create, learn, and perform. IFTA will be Monday-Friday, July 6 through July 30. An audition or portfolio review is required for proper placement into some courses. For more information, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OHSICS/FineArts/IFTA/index.htm>.

■ **Tech Adventure Camp** (grades 5-7)—FCPS offers Tech Adventure Camp to give current fifth, sixth, and seventh grade students an opportunity to explore careers and technology as they rotate through six areas over a two-week program. This year's courses include: Creating the Shot, Design Studio, Hollywood Here We Come, Invent the Future, Make the Game, and Well Fit...Well Fed. The tech camp will be at the Chantilly Academy and Lee High School, July 6-17.

For more information, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OCTE/events/TechCamp.htm>.

## Key Dates and Times for Summer High School Courses

A list of key dates and times for high school courses can be found online at <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/Summer/index.html>.

## Important Immunization Requirement

### Do You Have a Student Entering Sixth Grade Next Year?

If yes, he or she may need a booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis). Sixth grade students cannot begin school in the fall without documentation of having had either the Tdap booster OR documentation of having had a tetanus-containing vaccine within the past five years. Parents and guardians of current fifth graders should check their children's immunization records.

■ If your child is 11 years old, he or she should get the Tdap immunization, and documentation should be provided to the school.

■ If your child is still 10 years old, he or she may receive the Tdap vaccine, Boostrix, which is approved for 10-year-olds, or you may wait until the 11th birthday to receive the vaccine approved for 11-year-olds.

■ If your child's 11th birthday is after the first day of school, your child must have a medical exemption from the doctor stating when he or she will receive the Tdap immunization in order to attend school.

Documentation that your student has received this immunization should be brought to the school registrar. Fairfax County Public Schools tracks compliance for this state requirement, and students who do not meet the requirement by the first day of school will be excluded from school.

Students can receive immunizations required for school at no charge at any Fairfax County Health Department walk-in immunization clinic. The school public health nurse may be contacted for more information about the health department clinic hours.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Donaldson, health and home instruction specialist, Student Registration, at [571-423-4402](tel:571-423-4402) or [elizabeth.donaldson@fcps.edu](mailto:elizabeth.donaldson@fcps.edu).

## Results of Fall Readership Survey; *FamilyGram* to Go Electronic This Fall

Last fall, FCPS conducted a readership survey to determine whether or not *FamilyGram* is meeting your needs and what could be done to improve it. Over 3,000 readers responded, and, as a result, some changes will be made for future issues, such as **moving to an electronic version beginning this fall** (which was also made necessary by budget cuts), having at least four issues per year, and reducing the length of most articles when possible.

Some survey results include:

### 1. *FamilyGram* is a valuable source of information about FCPS.

- Strongly agree—36.8 percent
- Agree—49.2 percent
- Undecided—10.8 percent
- Disagree—2.2 percent
- Strongly disagree—1.0 percent

### 2. How do you prefer to read *FamilyGram*?

- In print—24.3 percent
- Electronically and/or online—75.7 percent

### 3. In general, I prefer to read articles in *FamilyGram* that are:

- One to four paragraphs long—68.8 percent
- Approximately one page long—24.3 percent
- One to two pages long—6.9 percent

If you would like to view the results of the complete survey, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/familygramsurveyresults.htm>.

### Final Thought ...

“You have a lifetime to work, but your children are only young once.”

Polish proverb

