

June, 2007

### **About Our Students**

- Five Pulley Career Center students have been offered paid positions during the summer at National Airport where they participated in work experiences this past school year. They will work in the automotive department, lost and found, the sign shop, and restocking security bags, brochures, and slippers. The teachers have been working with these students to ensure that they can travel independently to their new summer jobs.

### **Especially for Parents**

- A new transportation service, TaxiAccess, is available to Fairfax County residents with disabilities through a pilot program that began May 1, 2007. TaxiAccess provides subsidized taxicab service to county residents who are currently registered users of MetroAccess, a transportation service provided by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Participation in TaxiAccess will be reserved exclusively for Fairfax County residents who have completed the registration process with MetroAccess and can be found on the active roster of county MetroAccess users. For additional information about qualifying for ridership privileges with MetroAccess, contact the Office of MetroAccess by phone at 301-562-5360 (press option #4), TTY 301-588-7535; by e-mail at [metroaccess@wmata.com](mailto:metroaccess@wmata.com); or by mail to 8405 Colesville Road, Suite 400, Silver Spring, MD, 20910-6341. Further information about MetroAccess is available at [www.wmata.com/metroaccess](http://www.wmata.com/metroaccess).
- Representatives from Career and Transition Services, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, and Fairfax/Falls Church Community Services Board are updating and finalizing their Interagency Cooperative Agreement. The two agencies work with FCPS to transition students with disabilities who are exiting school. We are fortunate to have such a collaborative relationship with these two agencies.
- The Virginia Department of Education and the Department of General Services will conduct two community meetings to present the work completed to date to design the new consolidated state school for children with sensory impairments. The consolidated school will serve children who are deaf, blind, or have multiple disabilities in addition to a sensory impairment. The first meeting will be held on June 18 at the Virginia School for the Deaf, Blind, and Multi-Disabled at Hampton in the Bradford Hall Auditorium at 7 p.m. The second meeting will be held on June 19 at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind at Staunton in the Healy Auditorium at 7 p.m. Architectural staff will provide a brief presentation on the conceptual design for the new program, campus renovation, and new construction for the Staunton campus site. A question and answer period will be provided. The meetings are open to the public. Sign language interpreters will be provided. For further information contact: Catherine Pomfrey, Virginia Department of Education, (804) 225-3252

### **About our Staff**

- On May 7 FCPS Teachers of the Visually Impaired attended the annual Virginia Department for the Blind and Visually Impaired conference for teachers. They received updated professional

information from Debbie Pfeiffer, state specialist, Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Vision Impairment. They also received information on low vision devices and new classroom presentation technology.

- During the week of April 30 through May 3, members of the Office of Special Education (OSE) secondary team, in collaboration with *Autism Partnership* consultants provided an *Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Hands-on Training* for secondary inclusive schools resource teachers (ISRTs). The training took place at Robinson High School, where students with autism participated with the ISRTs in hands-on work sessions.
- On May 4 and May 5, 2007, twenty four FCPS staff attended a workshop entitled *Direct Instruction Reading Mastery 1*, which was co-sponsored by FCPS and Parents of Autistic Children (POAC-NoVa). Faith Fischer from the Verbal Behavior Network Training based out of Brick, NJ, conducted this day and a half workshop designed to instruct staff, parents, and private providers on how to teach students with autism to read using the direct instruction method.
- On May 9, 2007, PAC teachers and instructional assistants attended a workshop on teaching in the natural environment (NET) offered by the Office of Special Education ABA team. The training focused on how to address specific skills, including communication skills, through systematic instruction while in more natural settings within the classroom.
- On May 9 three members of the OSE secondary team attended a seminar entitled, *Asperger's Disorder & Autism*. Ami Klin, Ph.D., of the Yale University Child Study Center, conducted the seminar for professionals who work with individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
- On May 10 members of the OSE secondary team conducted a low incidence lead teacher meeting. Sixty-five secondary teachers of students with low incidence disabilities, ISRTs and pyramid resource specialists (PRSs) attended. Topics included: SEA STARS - the new online IEP program, Career and Transition Service (CTS) assessments, and summer training opportunities. The highlight of the day was a "Teacher Share Fair" in which individual or teams of teachers presented teacher-developed instructional materials and curriculum activities.
- On May 14 members of the OSE secondary team joined specialists from Instructional Services Department at the final school-year meeting of high school special and general education teachers of Standards of Learning (SOL) remediation courses. The group addressed special education topics and celebrated their successes in supporting student achievement.
- On May 17 members of the OSE secondary team conducted a session for middle and high school special education English teachers on how to implement the Unit Organizer Routine. This teaching routine, part of the Content Enhancement routines developed by the Center for Research on Learning at the University of Kansas, is a research-based strategy proven to increase the academic achievement of a diverse student population
- On May 30 Assistive Technology Services hosted over 300 technology outreach program support (TOPS) teachers at the Government Center for the end of the year meeting. One representative from each of the 19 TOPS groups shared a project related to the focus of the group.
- The Office of Special Education is offering six training sessions for cognitive reading strategies (CRS) this summer. CRS is a comprehensive, specialized reading program that has been used successfully, in conjunction with balanced literacy, with students who are reading significantly below grade level, but are assessed on grade level curriculum. Training will be provided for both CRS Level 1 and CRS Level 2. CRS Level 1 is for students who read below a second grade reading level. CRS Level 1 includes systematic and direct instruction in all 5 components of reading with an emphasis on high level comprehension strategies and writing skills. There will be four training

sessions for CRS Level 1 on the following dates: June 25-28, July 16-19, August 6-9, and August 13-16. CRS Level 2 is for students who are reading at or above a second grade reading level and focuses on high level comprehension strategies such as paraphrasing, cause and effect, and literary analysis. A particular emphasis is placed on reading non-fiction texts, note taking, and research skills to write an informational report. CRS Level 2 is being offered for the first time in FCPS to special education teachers. Two sessions are offered this summer, July 23-26 and August 13-16. Teachers may register through My PLT.

- There will be a variety of training opportunities for staff providing ABA enhanced autism services during the summer of 2007. PAC and elementary autism staff will have the opportunity to fulfill their core training requirements by completing ABA fundamentals, VB fundamentals, and beginning hands-on trainings. In addition to the week long Beginning Hands-On Training offered for the fourth consecutive summer, teachers and instructional assistants will also have the opportunity to participate in small-group and advanced hands-on trainings to learn how to work with groups of children. For information on these workshops contact Liane Sprunk, [liane.sprunk@fcps.edu](mailto:liane.sprunk@fcps.edu). The ABA summer training calendar will be posted online at <http://www.fcps.edu/ss/ABA/>.