

November 2004

Especially for Parents

- The Parent Resource Center (PRC) will be offering a series of workshops for parents in Spanish. The series is entitled *Understanding Special Education and the IEP* and will include individual sessions highlighting information on the process of writing goals and objectives, choosing appropriate accommodations and modifications, and making decisions about service delivery options and placement. For further information, please call Carmen Noonan at 703-802-2069.
- The Fifth Annual RATE (Real Assistive Technology for Everyone) Conference, sponsored by Integrated Technology Services, was held at Rachel Carson Middle School on Saturday, October 16, 2004. The conference was attended by 134 Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) teachers, 45 parents, and 12 participants from other school districts. One teacher commented, "Each session provided me with vital information to help jump start assistive technology in my classroom," and a parent wrote, "Thanks so much! I can't believe this was free! What a great resource!"
- Nearly 100 students and parents attended a presentation by Ann Deschamps, career and transition liaison, on October 18, 2004, entitled *Considerations for Students with Disabilities in the College Admissions Process*.

Especially for Staff

- The Very Important Paraprofessional (VIP) Conference was held November 2, 2004, at Frost Middle School. Over 300 paraprofessionals attended 37 workshops on a variety of topics including instructional support, behavior management, and professional development opportunities.
- Richard Lavoie, nationally renowned consultant on learning disabilities and best known for his videos *How Difficult Can This Be*, *The F.A.T. City Workshop*, and *Last One Picked, First One Picked On: The Social Implications of Learning Disabilities*, will offer a workshop specifically designed for FCPS called *The Hidden Curriculum: Strategies that Work with Learning Disabled Kids* on Dec. 14 and 15, 2004, at the Northern Virginia Community College in Annandale.

- A web seminar, developed by the Council for Exceptional Children, is being offered on November 9, 2004, at 4:00 pm at Carl Sandburg Middle School. The seminar is entitled ***Behavior Management for the "Tough to Teach"*** and will include information on principles that support effective behavior intervention.
- A new curriculum focused on the Standards of Learning for English and mathematics is being piloted in basic skills classes at four middle school sites--Hughes Middle School, Luther Jackson Middle School, Poe Middle School, and Sandburg Middle School--during this school year. Special education secondary staff members have made several visits to the pilot sites to observe classes and meet with teachers to gather feedback. The observation notes and feedback will be used to plan for countywide implementation of the curriculum.
- Additional training for three reading programs will be offered to secondary special education reading teachers in November and December. The reading programs include: ***Reading Excellence: Word Attack and Rate Development Strategies*** (R.E.W.A.R.D.S.), ***Read Naturally***, and the ***Wilson Reading Program***.
- Upcoming training scheduled for November for staff providing services to or supporting elementary level students includes:
 - ***Programming for Students with Moderate Retardation and Severe Disabilities***, targeted for principals, pyramid resource specialists, and inclusive schools resource teachers supporting moderate/severe disabilities programs, November 8, 2004.
 - ***Life Skills Curriculum***, targeted for staff members serving students who require skill development in specific skills related to daily living, November 11, 2004;
 - ***Social Stories***, targeted for social workers, November 17, 2004.
 - ***Applied Behavior Analysis and Discrete Trial Teaching***, targeted for staff members working with students with instructional and behavioral challenges, November 18, 2004.
 - ***Aspergers Syndrome and High Functioning Autism***, for school staff members at Kings's Glen Elementary School, November 15, 2004, and ***Programming for Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities***, for school staff at Freedom Hill Elementary School, November 22, 2004.

Other

- The Fourth Annual ***National Inclusive Schools Week*** will be celebrated December 6-10, 2004. The celebration will focus on the importance of "Working Together." Large color posters and a CD full of ideas, handouts, activities, and information have been purchased for each school in the division. Inclusive schools resource teachers, in collaboration with pyramid resource specialists, will support individual schools as they celebrate the benefits and successes of an inclusive community.
- Staff members are compiling a summary of current research and literature on the topic of ***Gifted/Learning Disabled or Twice Exceptional Students***. Information is also being collected on practices used within FCPS, in surrounding districts, and in selected programs around the country.

- ***National Disability Mentoring Day*** took place on October 20, 2004. Thirty-eight students participated in activities and workshops sponsored by 18 local businesses. Some of the participating businesses included Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Fairfax County Government, Lockheed-Martin, Metrocall, Northrup-Grumman, and WETA.
- Peggy Belmont, program specialist for Therapy Services, was presented the Scott Sullivan Leadership Award from the Virginia Physical Therapy Association at their recent annual conference on October 15 and 16, 2004. This award was given for her outstanding leadership service to the physical therapists of Virginia. She was recognized for her active involvement in serving the state organization and her vision, initiative, integrity, and teamwork in supporting the profession of physical therapy and all Virginia physical therapists.

