

June 2004

### Especially for Parents

- Integrated Technology Services (ITS) held its annual Chatterbox Fair on May 22 at Kings Glen Elementary School. This very successful event drew over 100 families with more than 300 people in attendance. Linda Boca, the mother of a pre-school student, shared her family's experience at this event with Bill Reeder, coordinator, ITS. *"I just want to take a minute to let you know what a wonderful time Vincent and I had at the Fair. It must have taken a lot of time to pull it together, and you did a great job. The students that ran the games were great with the kids, explaining and showing them how to play. Thank you again for a great time."*
- ITS will again provide assistive technology (AT) support to students with disabilities attending summer school. ITS staff members and Technology Outreach Program Support (TOPS) teachers will be providing on-site support on a regular basis throughout the summer session. This will include:
  - Assign an ITS staff person to each summer school site who will establish a regularly scheduled support time.
  - Provide software, peripherals, and communication devices as needed.
  - Offer additional summer software checkout as requested.
  - Provide each summer school special education class with appropriate software as needed.
  - Offer on-site training opportunities as requested.
  - Offer course specific summer school training with specific software.
  - Send an ITS staff member to each site to collect all of the software and equipment at the end of summer school.
  - Provide project support to special education staff members by request.
- The fifth and sixth grade social studies textbook review committees held their first meeting on May 2, 2004, and will continue to meet periodically during June and July. The committee will make textbook recommendations to the School Board. Several special education teachers represented students with disabilities, as did parents who were appointed by School Board members. Elementary special education team members will attend the committee sessions as non-voting members.
- Based on an ACSD recommendation, two sample case management letters have been drafted, *with collaborative input from ACSD members*, for special education teachers to use to communicate with parents and fellow teachers regarding case management assignments and responsibilities in secondary schools.

- The office of special education will pilot the use of a reading card at several elementary and secondary sites this spring. The reading card is used as a teacher-to-teacher communication tool to record instructional interventions and individual student progress for those students whose special education services emphasize direct and specialized reading instruction.

### Especially for Staff

- The Office of Special Education is offering over 80 workshops and seminars for teachers and assistants from June through August. Topics include: technology, literacy, inclusive practices, diagnostic and student assessment, best practices in mathematics, behavior, and specific disability areas such as autism, emotional disabilities, and speech and language impairment, as well as a specialized two-day institute for paraeducators at both the elementary and secondary levels. The Office of Student Services is also offering several training sessions on local screening, eligibility, and evaluation for teachers and student services personnel.
- An ABA Hands-on Workshop: *Applied Behavior Analysis Teaching Strategies* will be held from June 22-25 at Lynbrook Elementary School.
- Several workshops on literacy are being offered in June for teachers. These include: *Improving Comprehension by Encouraging Visualizing and Verbalizing*, June 23; *Curriculum Based Assessment-Implications for Instruction*, June 23; *Using Assessment to Make Decisions about Supplemental Reading Instruction*, June 24; *Teachers as Readers*, June 28; and *3 Steps to More Powerful Writing*, June 29.
- The secondary team will be participating in the Paraprofessional Institute in August by presenting sessions on behavior management, instructional accommodations, and modifying instructional materials.
- Members of the Professional Development and Support Services team met with a representative of Northern Virginia Community College to discuss the development of a cohort for paraeducators. This cohort will offer the necessary coursework for an associate degree, satisfying the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act by supporting paraeducators in becoming highly qualified.
- Two Thomas Jefferson High School students will be working with ITS staff members this summer to develop graphics to be used in curriculum materials for students with special needs. These materials will be available to Fairfax County Public Schools staff members on the ITS Intranet site and distributed by ITS case managers to appropriate classrooms in the fall.

### Other News

- The Parent Resource Center (PRC) is collaborating with Project Hope, the Virginia Education Program for Homeless Children and Youth, to provide a workshop for the directors of homeless shelters in the Northern Virginia area. The PRC will present *Understanding Special Education*, to assist directors in helping their clients access special education services when needed for their children. The presentation will be June 3, 2004, 9:00 a.m. to noon at the South County Government Center.
- Six itinerant adapted PE teachers participated in the launch of the "*I Can Do It, You Can Do It*" initiative on May 26 in Washington. The Department of Health and Human Services and the President's Council on Physical Fitness jointly sponsor this project. It

stresses the importance of physical activity and fitness for children and youth with disabilities.

- Speech and language services is pleased to announce the hiring of two new bilingual speech and language clinicians for the upcoming 2004—05 school year. We are pleased to welcome Marcela Quinchavil-Johnson, a native of Chile, who has recently received her master's in speech and language pathology from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and Damrys Rivera, currently a bilingual speech and language clinician with the Fitchburg (MA) school system. Their bilingual/bicultural skills will be of great value to students from the Hispanic community.

### Special

- Twelve Fairfax County Public Schools Employees will receive *Education Leadership Awards* from The Arc\* of Northern Virginia this year at their June 17<sup>th</sup> awards ceremony. Arc and Riggs Bank jointly present these awards to educators who best use the guiding principles of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to help students with special needs in the classroom. This year's winners include:

June Behrmann	Teacher, Vienna Elementary School
Lynn Dodge	Teacher, Cooper Middle School
Stacia Engler	Teacher, Oak View Elementary School
Deborah Foreman	Pyramid Resource Specialist
Pamela Hewitt	Teacher, Cooper Middle School
Amy Magill	Teacher, Cooper Middle School
Cathleen McArdle	Teacher, Career and Transition Services
Patricia Orr	Inclusive School Resource Teacher, Glen Forest ES
Melissa Park	Teacher, Little Run Elementary School
Julia Trieber	Teacher, Oak View Elementary School
Lindsay Trout	Teacher, South Lakes High School
Candace Willkens	Principal, Bush Hill Center

\*(The Arc is the national organization of and for people with mental retardation and related developmental disabilities and their families. Visit [www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org) for more information.)

- The following businesses received the annual Career and Transition Services Business Advisory Council Outstanding Employer awards:

Bertucci's Restaurant	Tim Moynihan
Brenner's Bakery	Harry Sherman
Crystal City Gateway Marriott	Lonnell Moore
Fairfax Co. Park Authority	Ken Garlem
Hyatt Dulles	Dede Rutherford
Integrated Tech. Services	Dunn Loring ITS staff
Learning in Retirement Institute	Jennifer Maloney
Magic Skillet	Elsie Plues
METROCALL	Luis Lee
MicroCenter	Richard Wedge
National Wildlife Federation	Eileen Broderick
Outback Steakhouse	Steve Spurlock

- ***The Good High Schools: Describing and Validating Results for Students with Disabilities*** project, funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, presented Centreville High School with an award banner on June 8, 2004. Dr. Farling, Pat Addison, Joyce Suydam, and other special education staff joined the ceremony to congratulate Centreville High School. A team from The Good High Schools project visited Centreville High School numerous times as part of the evaluation process. The goal of the project is to “unpack” how high-performing diverse schools support the academic and social success of all its students, including students with disabilities. Centreville High School was nominated by Mrs. Donna Martinez, a parent of a student who wrote:

*It is with great honor and delight that I nominate Centreville High School of Fairfax County Public Schools in Clifton, VA as a Good School, but in truth it is an excellent school! I am the parent of a sophomore with Downs syndrome attending Centreville High School because, naturally, it is his base/home school. He and other students with disabilities are included in many general education courses, and all students are definitely accessing the general education curriculum meeting the mandate and expectations of IDEA and the high standards set by the outstanding staff.*