

FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

From the desk of Lois Berlin, Superintendent



There's something comforting about the start of spring. The budding plants and trees, and the birds' cheerful songs symbolize a hopeful new beginning and a promising future.

Over the course of this spring season, the Falls Church City School Board will chart the course for our school division for the next six years. I want to thank those of you who participated in the planning process by responding to our recent online survey. The data we received highlighted the best of the FCCPS as well as some areas that need more attention. I am particularly aware of the steps I need to take to support you. The board and I will use your feedback to identify common themes and to help draft a comprehensive plan that addresses our needs and keeps the division moving forward.

The board got its first look at all survey and focus group data during its strategic planning session this past weekend at Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School. Some of the areas the board and I made note of included staff development, communication and addressing the needs of staff and of every student.

The first step in the planning process is to craft the board's mission statement, vision statement and goals. The board made good progress on

Saturday by reviewing the mission and vision statements crafted by teacher leaders and our school division's leadership team as well as the board's current mission statement and goals. The board members will assemble at a future session to complete their work in these areas and to set division-wide priorities for the next six years. We'll keep you posted!

"When taken together, educational platforms, mission statements, and broad goals and purposes constitute a covenant of shared values that functions as the cultural center of the school – the repository of that which is held sacred by all."

-Tom Sergiovanni

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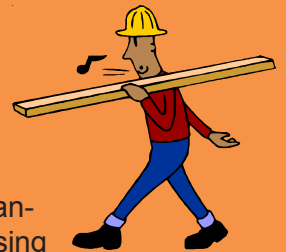
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Mount Daniel Construction Update



The Mount Daniel expansion project is progressing ahead of schedule! The walls are complete, work on the brick veneer has started, and roof construction is scheduled to begin this week.

The building addition will include four classrooms and space for specialized services.

The contractor is on schedule to finish the Mount Daniel expansion project before the 2006-2007 school year begins.



Mount Daniel Elementary School's addition is well underway, and proceeding according to schedule.

Human Resources News

THE BENEFITS COMMITTEE *is pleased to announce . . .*

FCCPS is expanding its employee benefits program to include **Voluntary Group Long-Term Care Insurance**. This benefit helps you pay for home health care, adult day care, assisted living costs and nursing facility costs. The insurance will be available for you, your spouse, your parents and your in-laws.

Look for More Information

You will receive information with a complete description of the plan and the costs. There will be two informational meetings in April in addition to the Benefits Fair on May 3. The enrollment period will be May 1 – May 19.

Calendar Adjustment Day: April 13

Reminder: Twelve-month employees have Thursday, April 13 off as a calendar adjustment day.

Did you Know?

JAMESTOWN 1507-2007

Did you know that 2007 is the 400th Anniversary of the Jamestown landing?

A big 20-month national celebration and commemoration begins in May 2006 and runs through December 2007.

Check out SOL-compatible lesson plans at www.jamestownjourneys.org. Visit www.americas400thanniversary.com for a very thorough schedule of the many national and state activities that are being planned to celebrate this historic milestone in American history.

Bob Nissen Named 2006 Support Employee of the Year

Congratulations to FCCPS Maintenance Supervisor Bob Nissen who was recently named the 2006 Support Employee of the Year.

Bob and his fellow nominees will be recognized, along with Carol Monsess, the 2006 Agnes Meyer Teacher of the Year, and all of the nominees for that award, at a reception on **Tuesday, May 9 at 5:30 p.m. at Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School**. Everyone is invited to attend.

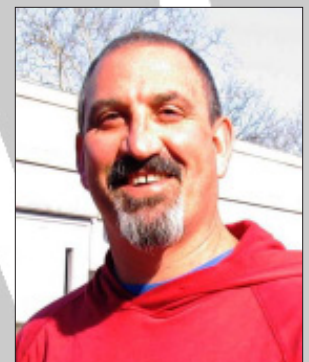


Bob Nissen, Support Employee of the Year

Support Staff Employee of the Year Nominees



Nancy Hendrickson



Bobby Kaplow



David Morales



Jose Alfredo Portillo



Diana Shaw

BIE Partnership News

Here's a math lesson you can sink your teeth into! Third grade students at TJ learned about division by cutting a tray of mouth-watering brownies from Kendall's Cakes into fractions. Teacher Jed Frei coordinated the lesson through the Business in Education Partnership.

According to Jed, "This was a great way to present an abstract concept in a very concrete and delicious way."

BIE Partners are available to share their expertise with teachers in every subject and grade level. For information contact Marybeth Connelly at connellym@fccps.org or x5691.

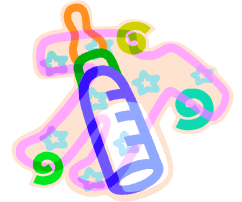
FCCPS Baby News

Congratulations to two FCCPS employees who recently became mothers, and one who is now a grandmother!

Congratulations to Mount Daniel first grade teacher **Suzanne Rowe** (right) and her husband Greg on the birth of their daughter Hailyn Nicole Rowe on March 18.



Mount Daniel Principal **Kathy Halayko** (below) recently became a first-time grandmother. Her daughter, Emily Carmody, and son-in-law, Roderick, became the proud new parents of Caroline Anne on February 12. Emily is a former FCCPS employee.



FCCPS social worker **Susan Sinclair** (left) gave birth to William Hayden Sinclair on February 4. Congratulations to Susan and her husband, Ryan.



FCCPS Travel Journal

Employee: Chris Robbins, Mount Daniel Day Care Supervisor, and first grade paraprofessional

Destination: Lakeland, Florida

Experiences: Chris and his wife, Joan, went to Lakeland Florida to visit Chris' dad who underwent a medical procedure. He says "my dad is doing fine and we had a great trip." Chris and his family found time to see many interesting things, from crocodiles to all kinds of birds, and lots of green grass! They attended a spring training baseball game between the Detroit Tigers and the New York Yankees.

Funny Coincidence: Extended Day Care Coordinator Bobby Kaplow and his family were in Lakeland at the same time on a spring training tour of Central Florida.



Minutes after Chris and his wife, Joan, took this photo with a "Gator Crossing" sign, they saw one!

Calendar of Events

Falls Church City Public Schools Employee Benefits Fair Wednesday, May 3

All employees are invited to talk to representatives from the companies that provide our employee benefits at the Falls Church City Public Schools Employee Benefits Fair on Wednesday, May 3 from 3:00 - 5:00 in the Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School Cafetorium. More details will be sent to all employees soon.

Race for Hope Sunday, May 7

School Psychologist Shelley Feuerstein invites the Falls Church Schools community to join her family at the Race for Hope on May 7. Shelley's husband is a 4-year brain tumor survivor. For more information, visit www.braintumorsociety.org, click on Join a Team and find Feuerstein's Fighters. Shelley says "It's a beautiful walk/run around Freedom Plaza and we'd love to have the company and support for this worthy cause."

Make the Message Matter: Engaging Your School Community Tuesday, July 25 & Wednesday, July 26

Learn to deal with difficult people and create strong and sustainable partners in a diverse community at the summer institute at George Mason University. Workshops will cover effective communication, building community support, and establishing relationships that support student achievement. For information visit <http://makethemessagematter.gmu.edu/>.

Falls Church Education Foundation News

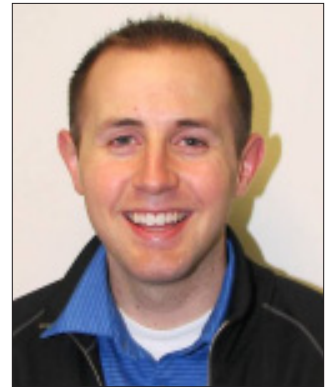
An anonymous donor's gift will help the George Mason High School Athletic Department initiate a five year sports nutrition and support program for student athletes.

Visit www.fc EDF.org for more foundation news.

Employee News and Notes

Welcome to **Seve Padilla**, the new Facilities Rental Coordinator.

Seve is assigned to the FCCPS through our contractor Aramark. He recently relocated to the DC area after Hurricane Katrina hit Mississippi State University where he was a student.



Seve Padilla, Facilities

Rental Coordinator Seve coordinates building uses and rentals. So if you have an event or need to rent space at the schools, contact Seve at PadillaS@fccps.org or 703-248-5684.

Farewell to **Lorrie Andrew-Spear**, Communications Specialist. Lorrie is leaving the FCCPS after more than three years.

She'll be working for the Communications Office in Prince William County, where she lives. Her last day at FCCPS will be Friday, April 21.



Lorrie Andrew-Spear

News to Use

ASK EAP

Q: My supervisor has referred me to the EAP, but I think I can handle my problems on my own. Should I accept if I don't think I need to go? I was not referred for violating a policy or anything else serious.

A: Accept the referral with the idea that you are more likely to resolve your problem with EAP support, even if you have an idea about how to go about it. You naturally feel capable of resolving problems on your own, but it is also natural to resist accepting professional help. Accept the free help from EAP rather than going it alone and risking the consequences of not resolving the problem.

For more information contact *Courtney Atkins-Miller* with *New Millennium EAS* at 703-863-6680.