



FALLS CHURCH CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INSIDE TRACK

DECEMBER 2007

FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Why a New Electronic Media Policy?

Lois Berlin, Superintendent



A few weeks ago, all staff members were asked to sign an acceptable use agreement pertaining to the school division's new electronic media policy and regulation. Since then, some staff members have asked why the policy and regulation needed to be changed. Allow me to explain.

It's been ten years since the technology policy was reviewed and updated. Clearly, our technological capabilities have expanded exponentially since 1997, and this year's review and revisions were sparked by new state regulations, including those dealing with Internet safety.

Our former policy was actually more restrictive than the one we have now, stating that school division computers were to be used "for educational purposes in support of the school division's mission." This past summer, the school board took a close look at that language and recognized that in today's world, it is reasonable to allow limited personal use of school division electronic media, so long as it is not used for personal or commercial profit, that the personal use takes place on the employee's own time – such as a lunch break or outside of contract hours – and that the personal use is in accordance with the other provisions of the electronic media policy and regulation.

Although the policy and regulation were vetted by the school board, legal counsel, the leadership team and the technology committee, additional staff members have recently raised questions about the clarity of the personal use provision in the new regulation. I appreciate their input and have asked our legal counsel to revise the language. Because the new language will clarify rather than change the intent of the regulation, employees who have already signed an agreement form will not be required to sign a new form, but may do so if they choose. All employees will receive the revised regulation as soon as it is available.

While the miscommunication is regrettable, I hope everyone recognizes that the intention was pure. The board wants a policy that outlines electronic media expectations for staff and students, but that also provides some flexibility for staff where personal use is concerned.

Agnes Meyer Award

It's time to submit nominations for the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award. The Washington Post Company Educational Foundation presents the annual award to one teacher in each area school system. The winner will be recognized at a reception and will receive a \$3000 cash award from the *Post*.

Anyone may nominate a FCCPS teacher. Additional information, criteria and nomination forms are available online at www.fccps.org/amot/. Completed nomination packets are due in the FCCPS central office by January 18, 2008.



2007 Agnes Meyer
Outstanding Teacher
Denise O'Neil.



"No one who achieves success does so without the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude."

- Alfred North Whitehead

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Kudos to Our Amazing Team



Mt. Daniel Occupational Therapist Aurora Stelz was appointed by Governor Tim Kaine to a four-year term to the Virginia Advisory Board on Occupational Therapy. The Board, which meets three times per year, works to serve the public interest by ensuring that standards of care are met by practitioners. It also updates regulations regarding OT practice.



Congratulations to TJ principal Trudy Taylor who received the *Washington Post* Distinguished Educational Leadership Award. Publisher Bo Jones (l.) and Washington Post Co. chairman Eugene Meyer presented the award at a reception on November 27th.



GMHS teacher Holly Herrington (r. shown with Renata Carvalho) is on track to compete in the Boston Marathon. She qualified with her 3:40 time in the Philadelphia Marathon, maintaining a blistering pace of 8 minutes, 23 seconds a mile!

National Board Certification Awarded

Congratulations to the following teachers who earned National Board Certification.

Linda Gantz, GMHS
Nathan Greiner, TJ
Kathleen Johnson, MEH

Mary Kelly, TJ
Lisa Mueller, MEH
Sarah Shaw, MEH
Jeremy Shumpert, GMHS
Andrea Stoeckl, MD
Gwen Villarreal, MEH

FCCPS Travelogue

Employee: Bob Snee, GMHS Principal

Destination: Number 3 High School in Nanning, Guang Xi Province, South of China



This 1955 graduate of No. 3 High School spoke for several minutes with Snee after the school's 110th Anniversary Gala. Moments later the two exchanged lapel pins.

Purpose of Trip:

1. To attend and speak at the 110th anniversary celebration of the school's founding.
2. To establish a link between GMHS and No. 3 High School that will promote communication between students and teachers and possibly open up opportunities for exchanges of students and teachers similar to those we have with schools in France and Chile.
3. To participate in an international symposium on Modern School Culture with about 165 school principals from Asia, Africa and Europe

Favorite Experiences:

"The anniversary celebration was quite memorable as it featured many student performances and speeches honoring retired teachers and principals of the

school." Snee said. "The symposium was culturally exciting as I was the only 'Unitedstatesian' participant."

Must See Sites:

Number 3 High School and The Green City of Nanning!



As Nanning City and Education Bureau officials looked on, Snee and No. 3 High School Principal, Ms. Fang, signed a declaration of friendship between their two schools. The goal of the document is to establish avenues of communication between students and faculty of the two schools.



John Brett, FCCPS Webmaster, received an Award of Excellence from the Chesapeake Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association for the new division homepage design, www.fccps.org.



Student Assistance Fund Accepting Donations and Referrals

Many families in Falls Church are unable to afford a holiday celebration. Throughout the year, the Family Assistance Fund, established through Falls Church City Public Schools, collects donations to assist our neediest families. Most funds provide holiday and back-to-school gifts to approved families with at least one school-age student.

If you know of a family that could benefit from assistance or would like to make a personal donation to the Family Assistance Fund, contact school social worker Susan Sinclair at sinclair@fccps.org. Send donations to the Central Office. Checks should be made payable to "Falls Church Schools Administrative Fund" with a notation at the bottom designating the Family Assistance Fund.

Reach Out to Military Families this Holiday

Holidays can be tough times, especially when a family member in the military is deployed.

If not overseas, military personnel may still be stationed far from home, making it difficult to join loved ones for the holidays.

The National Military Family Association at www.nmfa.org offers programs to support military families. For a list of great ideas to help military families, visit (www.familyfirst.net/famlife/military.asp).

To send a greeting or message to someone in the military (any branch of service), anywhere in the world, go to: (<http://anyserVICEmember.navy.mil>).

Source: U.S. Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Staff Changes at TJ and Mt. Daniel

There is one new teacher in our schools. Several people at TJ have shifted positions.



Dorothy McIntire is a new ESOL teacher. She will be dividing her time between TJ and Mt. Daniel. Welcome!



TJ daycare employee Annette Folks knows the ins and outs of the playground. Now, the 10-year veteran puts that expertise to use as playground aide.



Ann Cox has been TJ's permanent sub. Starting this month, she is a paraprofessional working with third grade students.



Barbara Logan served as Emily Reuhs' fourth grade long-term sub during maternity leave. She will take over the TJ permanent substitute position.



Celebrity Sightings

Recently Willie Nelson was seen posing with TJ principal's secretary Barbara Cooper. The two of them walked arm in arm down the streets of Nashville. Could this be the beginning of something? Watch out, wife #4! He might be after her money!



Do you think Willie Nelson (l.) warned Barbara Cooper (r.) "Mammas Don't Let your Babies Grow up to Be Cowboys?"



MEH students did a double-take when they thought Richard Pryor was teaching Mr. Dippold's seventh grade social studies class during Spirit Week.

Community Calendar

FIRSTFriday

December 7th, 6:30 p.m.
Art & Frame of Falls Church
111 Park Ave.
Events include a car show, artists speaking about "How Art Happens," and the GMHS Chorus from 6:30-7:00 p.m. Brass Quintet. Visit www.firstfridayoffallschurch.com.

Children's Holiday Shoppe

Dec. 8th, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Cherry Hill Farmhouse
Volunteers will help children select and wrap inexpensive holiday gifts in the decorated farmhouse.

Library of Congress Workshops and Tours

Learn about the treasures of the Library of Congress at workshops and tours in 2008. Teachers who participate in a 10-hour workshop and implement two mini-learning experiences in their classroom, will be eligible to receive 15 recertification points and an LCD projector and speaker to share with another FCCPS participant.

Falls Church Chamber of Commerce Holiday Party

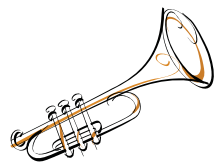
December 11th, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Sunrise Senior Living
330 N. Washington St.
GMHS Sax Quartet will perform.

UVA Northern Virginia Center Information Night

December 12th, 5:00-7:30 p.m.
Learn how UVA's education, business, IT and engineering programs can benefit you. For information visit web-nv.scps.

Africana, Jan 30th, Feb. 1st
Civil War Mar 26th & 28th

Sessions are 8:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Madison Building, Library of Congress. For registration information, contact Jeanne Seabridge at seabridgej@fccps.org.



Local Treasure

Did you know that Falls Church dates its founding to 1699 because of "Big Chimneys?"

Named for its two large brick chimneys, it is believed to have been the first permanent structure built on land within the current boundaries of Falls Church. "1699" was inscribed on a stone placed in one chimney.

It was probably built by a pioneer-squatter because of the ideal location near a well-traveled colonial road. (That road became the even-more-well-traveled Route 7.)

Today you can find a rebuilt footprint of the cabin at Big Chimneys Park, which is just west of the intersection of Annandale Rd. and South Maple Ave.