

Dear Parents:

Here's the latest news from Lanier:

*Students Evacuated as a Precaution: Around 8:30 a.m. this morning, students were evacuated out of the building due to the smell of burning plastic in the girls' locker room. Firefighters responded to the scene to find that an outdoor electrical outlet next to an air handling unit on the roof of the school was filled with water, causing it to short-circuit. Once the building was deemed safe, students re-entered the building after being outside for 15-20 minutes. To keep students away from the foul smell in the girls' locker room, we did not require student to dress for physical education class for the rest of the day. Electricians are currently at Lanier and we expect the problem to be fixed this afternoon.

*Halloween Policy: For students thinking about dressing up for school next Friday (October 30th) in celebration of Halloween, please know that while we want to promote school spirit, we are a school first and don't want to create a distraction to student learning. Therefore, we believe the best place to celebrate Halloween is after school with friends. If a student does want to dress up, however, he or she may do so as long as it is in good taste, appropriate for school, and in line with student rights and responsibilities. In particular, students may not wear masks or bring props of any kind, especially fake weapons. Please remind your students that as long as they don't do anything that keeps teachers from teaching and students from learning, they should not have a problem. Thanks.

*The November PTA newsletter is posted on Lanier's homepage. The link is: <http://www.fcps.edu/LanierMS/pta/oct09.pdf>.

*Entertainment Book Sale - We have concluded our very successful Entertainment Book fundraiser. Many thanks to our families for your support! Our raffle for the big prizes will be held on Tuesday, October 27th. Also, for those students who sold 10+ books, they will get to go in the Money Machine to grab for cash during their lunch period on Tuesday, October 27th. Please note that prizes valued over \$20 (including cash grabbed in the money machine) will need to be picked up by a parent in the office.

*Ledo Pizza and Pasta Fundraiser: Please help support the Lanier Middle School PTA and leave the cooking to someone else! See fellow Lanier families and neighbors at the Fairfax Ledo Pizza and Pasta on October 26th and 27th located at 11725 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA. Lanier will receive a percentage of all revenue from both days.

*Healthy Youth Survey Coming Soon: On Tuesday, November 11th and Wednesday, November 12th, our eighth grade English teachers will be administering the 2009 Healthy Youth Survey to eligible 8th grade students. A letter about this survey was mailed home on September 15, 2009. The survey takes about 55 minutes to complete. Student responses are kept completely confidential. Please visit the following website: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/youthpdf.htm> for more information about what questions will be asked and how you can opt out your son or daughter if you so desire. If

you decide to opt-out, please return the opt-out form as soon as possible to your child's guidance counselor. Our 8th Grade ESOL Level 1 and Level 2 students will not take the survey. Also, our self-contained special education students will not take the survey. Our special education students in team-taught English 8 classes can take the survey, but there are no accommodations available to complete it. Many of these students may be exempted from taking the survey by their teachers or by parents. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Reminders:

*For your planning purposes, please be aware that Lanier will be closing school 3 hours early (at 11:55 a.m.) on Friday, November 13, 2009 and Friday, January 8, 2010 for staff development. Please know that regular bus service and lunch will be provided. Thank you for your time and assistance.

*Interim Grades: Hopefully, you have seen your child's interim grade report by now. Please know that if your child received a D, F, or I (Incomplete) grade, then he/she should be involved with some sort of Lanier intervention aimed at improving their grade. Such interventions include but are not limited to getting extra help during Pride Time, staying after school for assistance, or making up assignments during "Lunch and Learn." Please support our efforts by holding them accountable for incomplete work and communicating with teachers as needed. Thanks.

*Picture Day will be held on October 26th and 27th; pictures will take place during your child's PE class.

*After School Programs: Late buses are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 4:30 pm. Students were provided information about the many after-school activities that are available to them. Students may also log onto their Blackboard 24-7 account for more information.

In the Community:

*Budget Discussions Begin: The following is a message from Deputy Superintendent Richard Moniuszko: Reading the tea leaves regarding the FY11 budget, we're going to have to be assertive to ensure that the community is aware of the impact of another year with no increase. Dr. Dale and Leadership Team continue to work on the Superintendent's budget for FY11, and it's not a pretty picture. It's still a work in progress, but this budget will contain another round of cuts similar to those in FY10. For the second year, FCPS will participate with Fairfax County government in communicating the serious nature of our budget situation, and participate with them in community dialogues. *It's important for parents and staff to participate*, as these meetings will be the first step in communicating the impact of FY10 budget cuts, and potential harm of further cuts in FY11. Format will be similar to last year, with participants attending a staff presentation followed by focus groups where they can express their opinion.

Saturday, October 24, 10:00 a.m.

Centerville Library, Reston Library, John
Marshall Library

Thursday, October 29, 7:00 p.m.

South Lakes HS, Woodson HS

Saturday, November 14, 10:00 a.m.

Kings Park Library, Sherwood Library,
George Mason Regional Library

*The Fairfax High School Theatre department is offering a one day drama camp for grades 1-8 on the upcoming teacher workday, Tuesday, November 3rd from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The cost is \$40. All proceeds support the FHS theatre students. Please see www.fxplayers.org for full details and a registration form.

Have a good weekend,

Scott Poole, Ph.D.

Principal, Lanier Middle School