



The Jargon



Educating Students For A Changing World

Mark Your Calendar

September 13 Back-to-School Night, 6:30 p.m.
 September 16 PTA Ice Cream Social, 6:00 p.m.
 September 22 .. Summer Reading, Lunch on the Lawn

September 23 Picture Day
 September 26 Early Release, 12:35 p.m.
 September 26 .. PTA Meeting, new families, 6:30 p.m.
 Returning families, 7:00 p.m.

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Dear George Mason Family,

Our school year is off to a great start! It is truly an exciting week as our students return to school with the promise that a new school year holds.

Throughout the year in *The Jargon* we will be highlighting school focus areas for the year to build greater understanding. This year ACPS is implementing a revised K-12 curriculum. Implementation of the revised curriculum will be a year long focus at George Mason. You will begin to see evidence of this as you walk our halls, visit classrooms and talk to your children. We encourage you to begin those conversations next week by asking your child, "What is your essential question in math?"

Why a revised curriculum? To ensure our students are prepared as citizens responsible for moving our democracy forward while meeting the ever changing demands of the 21st century economy and workplace, which requires greater thinking skills than ever before. These thinking skills can best be explained through the term of academic rigor from the International Center for Leadership in Education. "Academic rigor refers to learning in which students demonstrate a thorough, in-depth mastery of challenging tasks to develop cognitive skills through reflective thought, analysis, problem solving, evaluation, or creativity. It is the quality of thinking, not the quantity, that defines academic rigor, and rigorous learning can occur at any school grade and in any subject." The curriculum will increase the rigor of student learning and create more student centered classrooms while shifting the curriculum from what is taught, to what is learned.

We are thrilled to contribute to each and every student's growth and to know that the journey begins in every classroom every day at George Mason!

Best regards,

Kevin West



Fall Fundraiser

In your child's Thursday folder, you'll find the Lavender's sales catalog. This is a great opportunity for family, friends and neighbors to support George Mason. The school keeps 50% of all paper and gift sales. The more we sell the better! Let people who live out of town know they can purchase online at www.lavenders.com. The school code is 110066. Deadline to order is 9/30, and delivery will be before Thanksgiving! All funds raised through this program will be applied to the PTA general funds. Contact Sara Rich at sarabarich@gmail.com or (703) 299-6564 with questions.



Principal's Email List

If you would like to be included in Kevin West's parent email list, please email him at Kevin.west@acps.k12.va.us. If you were on the list last year, please do not send an email.



Electronic Newsletter



Would you like to help us become even more greener by reading *The Jargon* online instead of receiving a paper copy? If you are interested, please email Sandra Torres at storres@acps.k12.va.us. Thanks in advance!

The Jargon will go home the first and third Thursdays of the month with the youngest child in your family.

EARLY RELEASE
September 26, 12:35 p.m.

The School Directory is Coming!

Please look in future Thursday folders for the School Directory Information Request sheet! The PTA publishes a free directory each school year of all children, by class. But we need YOUR permission to include your address & phone number in the directory for EACH of your children. This free directory is available only to George Mason families and staff, and is sent home with your child in late September or early October.

Why is it important? Parents use the directory to contact classmates for playdates, birthdays, arranging carpools for sports, as well as to contact parents about special events and early school closings. If your information isn't in the directory, you and your child cannot be contacted by fellow parents. So please be sure to send in the information request sheet as soon as you see it in the Thursday folder.

Didn't we already fill out contact information cards?

Yes, that information is the basis for the directory, so hopefully the information on your request sheet is current. However, since the school directory is compiled by the PTA as a special service to our parents, we need your permission to include your information in our directory.

What do we need to do? Please look over the information request sheet, make any necessary corrections, and sign. PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY! The sheet also has a section authorizing us to include your child in the school yearbook (distributed in June), so please be sure to complete BOTH sections. While you do have the option to "opt out" of both the directory & the yearbook, we sure hope you don't! Please return the completed information request sheet in the Thursday folder back to your child's teacher promptly.

Please note that the directory has space for only ONE phone number per household, so please make sure the phone number listed is the best one for contacting your family. We can include separate emails for each parent, so please be sure to list each parent's email.

Remember: We cannot include you in the directory if you don't return the information request sheet!

If you have any questions, please contact Merrill Biesada at [703-931-0599](tel:703-931-0599) or mbiesada@aol.com

VISION STATEMENT

Alexandria City Public Schools will set the international standard for educational excellence, where all students achieve their potential and actively contribute to our local and global communities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Alexandria City Public Schools will provide the environment, resources, and commitment to ensure that each and every student succeeds – academically, emotionally, physically and socially.

The Alexandria City School Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, status as a parent, or pregnancy in its programs and activities. Please direct all inquiries regarding ACPS non-discrimination policies to the Executive Director of Human Resources, 2000 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria, Va. 22311, 703-824-6946.

P.E. News

THE HEALTHY KIDS FUN RUN is coming! If you are new to George Mason, ask around...it's a GREAT event! Orange registration forms will go home in Thursday folders during the first 2 weeks of school. If you cannot find your registration form, ask Ms. Westcott or Ms. McMurdy for an extra form. We would love to have as many students as possible participate in this event!

What: A one-mile fun run event for children (ages 5-12)

When: Saturday, October 29th

Time: To be announced.

Where: Pentagon North Parking Lot

Transportation: You can metro to the Pentagon and take a shuttle to the North Parking Lot.

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, September 21. Turn in to the PTA or PE teachers.

Cost: \$7. Contact Christy Finn (ccfinn@gmail.com), Ms. Westcott, or Ms. McMurdy if you need financial assistance.

Why: To get exercise, to have fun, and to show school spirit! You can also show off your running skills for the teachers and parents who attend the event. As a bonus, if we have enough people participate, we can win funding for P.E. equipment! We have won 3rd place because we had so many people participate!

Grocery Store Fundraising Programs

George Mason is once again participating in the Giant A+ Bonus Bucks, Safeway eScrip, and Harris Teeter's TIE (Together in Education) programs. All three programs provide cash to schools to purchase equipment.

All families must register or renew to participate in these programs. You can register for any of these programs at any Giant, Safeway or Harris Teeter store, as well as, go online to the following web sites or call:

Harris Teeter: www.harristeeter.com (Community Tab-school code 6659)



Giant: www.giantfood.com/aplus (school code 02237) 877-275-2758



Safeway: www.escrip.com (school code 6534270, group name: Mason Elementary) 800-700-5655



If you do not want to register on your own, feel free to return the form that's in your child's Thursday folder and Sandra Torres will enter your information so GM gets credit on your purchases.