

# The Division Digest

A newsletter from the Office of the Superintendent



*Building relationships  
one student at a time.*

## Superintendent's Message

Dear Staff,

Spring break is finally here and we all deserve some rest and relaxation. Take time to enjoy the spectacular colors and gorgeous flowers of the season during your break. Everyone has been hard at work teaching and instructing our students as we prepare for the upcoming SOL tests, which will commence in May. The break will be needed before we buckle down for the home stretch of the school year.

Thank you for your support, calls, e-mails, letters, attendance, and voice at School Board and Board of Supervisors meetings during this budget season. The Board of Supervisors will hold a Public Hearing on May 2 at 6:00 p.m. at the CVCC satellite to hear comments about the proposed tax increase of 1.5 cents for the next year. At some point after that, the Board of Supervisors will approve a county budget. We cannot issue contracts for employees for 2011-12 until we have local funding approved and appropriated.

Our School Board will be touring all of the schools prior to our next meeting on Thursday, April 28. You will see us out and about at the schools seeing all of the wonderful learning happening in our division. The Board will also tour the ACHS FFA Land Lab to see the livestock. Our tour will begin at 10:30 a.m. and our School Board meeting begins at 3:30 p.m. As always, you are welcome and encouraged to attend our School Board meetings.

I noticed a great poster at one of our schools this week, which read, "*The expert in anything was once a beginner.*" I believe that each of us is an expert in an area that we embrace and love. Perhaps for you, it is math, history or basketball; for others, it might be gardening, crochet or reading. It is our responsibility to teach our students to desire to be an expert in an area that they love and enjoy. Our students and our children learn from us at school and in our daily lives as we work and go about our routines of life.

Thank you for giving our students the gift of wanting to learn more each day – to become lifelong learners. That is how we all move along from "beginners" to becoming "experts" in an area. I find that I am far from an expert in any area and learn at least one new thing per day. I love to read and have so much more to learn in this lifetime.

I wish you a fabulous spring break and a super month of learning in May.

Dorinda G. Grasty, Ed. D.  
Division Superintendent

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April is  
Autism Awareness  
Month.

### School Board Meetings:

- Regular Business Meeting and Public Hearing to Receive Comments Regarding Public/Private Education Facilities Infrastructure Act (PPEA) Proposals for APS Thursday, April 28, 3:30 p.m.
- Interim School Board Meeting Thursday, May 12, 5:50 p.m.
- Regular Business Meeting Thursday, May 26, 5:30 p.m.
- Regular Business Meeting Thursday, June 16, 5:30 p.m.
- Close Out Meeting Wednesday, June 29, 8:00 a.m.

## Cafeteria Corner

Niki Kempton



Appomattox County Public Schools will be hosting the Department of Education School Nutrition Program Spring Regional meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> for Region Eight School Nutrition Program school districts. Region Eight districts include Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte,

Cumberland, Greenville, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward counties. This meeting will include information on the necessary changes facing the food service department due to the 2010 Reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act, including the potential for mandatory meal price increases and levels of training required for school food service personnel. The reauthorization brought change to all aspects of school foods service in order to better serve our students. Better nutrition helps promote better learning!

## ACHS Sports

Ron Carter, Athletic Director

The spring sports season is moving rapidly with most non-district contests being completed. District competition began last week and our teams are setting their sights on a Dogwood District championship. Regular season games will conclude the third week in May with region tournament play beginning the following week. Come support our ACHS athletes!



## ACHS School News

Dolly Cooter, Guidance

Appomattox County High School is proud to announce we have been approved as an official National Testing Site for the CollegeBoard SAT. Our first test administration will be held on Saturday, May 7, 2011. The deadline for registration was April 8, 2011. The late registration window for the May testing is April 9-22, 2011. Also, if any ACHS student is registered in May at another site and wants to be moved to ACHS, please notify Mrs. Cooter @ 352-7146 or [dwcooter@appomattox.k12.va.us](mailto:dwcooter@appomattox.k12.va.us)

The high school will host a second SAT administration on Saturday, November 12, 2011. Students should register online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or see their school counselor for a paper application. Appomattox County High School's **test center code** number is 47131. The **high school code** for Appomattox students is 47008. Fee waivers are available for qualified students. Students should check with CollegeBoard for registration deadlines and fees.

## ACHS - Easter Baskets

Renee Wingfield, Teacher



The Nutrition & Wellness Class took what they have learned about nutrition and recycling to create Easter baskets for several APS students. The baskets were handmade out of recycled materials and filled with healthy snacks. They worked in small groups to accomplish the tasks after planning what should be included in the baskets. The old crayons recycled into spring shapes were adorable.

Raiders Rock!



## School News

$$6 \times 6 = 36$$

$$36 - 12 = 24$$

### 24 + 0 = 24 Tournament at AES!

The Magical number at AES during the month of March was 24! Students looked at numbers on a card and tried to be the first to judge correctly the combination of numbers that totals 24...now that requires higher level thinking—and many minutes of practice! Congratulations to the following 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders who represented their classes in the tournament:

Trey Smith, Raekwon Curry, Jaden Fitch, Hunter Franklin, Jacob Johnson, Taylar Hunt, Abby Ranson, Chris Caudill, Jackson Cheatham, Chris Richardson, Colby Mullins, Josey Walton, Braden Drinkard, Summer Natour, Ian Watson, Serenity Tucker, Kourtney Moseley, Cody Mewborn, Rakeem Wright, Samir Williams, Noah Buckbee, Maddy Anderson, Christian Hoff, Cameron Duncan, Arianna Davin, Ryan Sayre, Ryan Jackson, Bryan Tappen, Timotheus Slaughter, Mackenzie Bennett, Hayley Kidd, William Huffman, D.J. Mayberry, Kayla Croner, Everette Phelps, Logan Marquis, LaPatience Pollard, Mary Baldwin, Melody Nash, Alexis Reid, Samantha Shirey, Skylar Wilhoit, Carleigh Kirby, Chris O'Neill, Blake Johnson, Daniel Poole, Cessar Rubio, Ashton Ferguson.

We look forward to our tournament next year as we improve through consistent practice for this magical math tournament at AES!

### Gang Awareness Training

On Tuesday, April 12, 2011 ACHS hosted a division wide gang awareness presentation that took place in the auditorium.

The presentation was conducted by the Lynchburg City Police Department's "Gang Unit". Detective Kevin Poindexter was the lead presenter and provided detailed information on criminal street gangs based in the city of Lynchburg and surrounding counties. This presentation provided information on the number of identified street gangs in the city of Lynchburg and insight as to how they operate. The topics ranged from how the gang is structured, what it takes to become a member, how members communicate with each other and rival gangs, signs and symbols associated with gang affiliation, the types of criminal acts being committed by these gang members and how it relates to the school setting.



### Important Dates

April 18-22	Spring Break
April 28	Regular School Board meeting, 3:30 p.m. & Tour of Schools, 10:30 a.m.
May 7	SAT Testing ACHS
May 21	ACHS Prom
May 30	Memorial Day, Holiday for Students and Staff
June 7	Last Day of School & ACHS Graduation, 7:00 p.m. @ Vines Center
June 8	Teacher Workday
June 9 and 10	Curriculum Summit @ AES 8:30 - 3:30
June 22	Region 8 Math Workshop- Nottoway High School, Time TBA

## Remedial and Special Education

Beth Haught, Supervisor

Update on Summer School 2011: Applicants for summer school teachers, teacher assistants, substitutes, and coordinators were requested earlier this spring and many applications were received. **There is still a need for a high school science teacher and a middle school math teacher.** If you are interested in one of these positions and did not apply earlier, please let me know as soon as possible. Applications will be taken until these two positions are filled. Dates will be 7/11-7/29 with hours being 8:00 am-12:00 pm daily. This year AMS and ACHS students will be housed at AMS, with APS and AES students at AES. For those who have applied for positions, prospective staff names will be presented to the School Board at the 4/14 meeting and notification of approval will be sent out as soon as possible after that date. Again, there is still an opportunity available for a science teacher and math teacher, so let me know if you are interested. There are also positions available for substitutes. If you are interested in being added to the substitute list, please let me know. Have a wonderful, relaxing Spring Break!



### Congratulations!! March Employees of the Month



APS - Rhoda Allen

AES - Melanie Ranson

AMS - Elizabeth Duncan

ACHS - Donald Routt

## Curriculum and Instruction

Annette Bennett, Director

### Moving From the 3 R's to the 4 C's A Journey into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom

Most veteran teachers remember the day when the focus of education was facetiously referred to as the 3 Rs; “**Reading, Riting and Rithmatic**”. As our world continues to change so drastically, especially in the areas affected by technology, so has our challenge to re-focus in the American classroom. The 3 r's have changed into the 4 c's; Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical thinking.



Our division is responding to that challenge through the **A. 21 Project**. The goals of the A.21 Project are:

- 1) To change classroom experiences for students through inquiry based learning experiences.
- 2) To empower teachers to create lessons that are

focused on state standards and grounded by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills of collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking.

The teachers involved in the A. 21 Project are beginning to plan lessons they will use in their classrooms this spring. Thank you to the following teachers for volunteering to begin this critical work in our division:

Allison Maxwell, Amanda Wodke, Mary Marshall, Bonnie Swanson, Renee Wingfield, Ceil Fahrman, Stacy White, Crystal Wilhoit, Thomas Allen, Cindy Martin, Vickie Davis, Felicia Pickrel, Jackie Johnson, Jill McDonough, Dana Hamlett, Janet Barricks, and Lindsey Mihalik

## School News

### AES NEWS

#### AES Extracurricular Clubs' Family Showcase Night a Success!

On Monday, March 28, over 250 parents and students filled the AES Gymnasium to participate in the After-School Family Showcase Night. This was the culminating event for after school extracurricular clubs sponsored by the AES Student Council Association (SCA), which is led by Mr. Jason Wells and Mrs. Katie McCann.

The after-school clubs began Monday, January 24. Each club met for a total of eight Mondays from 3:30-4:30. Students involved were in one class for 8 weeks. Students were able to explore areas that included creative writing, k'nex, scrapbooking, construction, crafts, rockets, 4-H, art in math, science fair, sports and cross-stitching. This spring was the first time that this type of after school club meeting has taken place at AES.

During the family showcase night on March 28, students talked about their learning experiences while participating in the clubs. A slideshow movie was also presented to highlight each club and the students involved. Special recognition was given to all the club leaders for donating their time and talents with the AES students.

On behalf of the AES SCA, we would like to thank the following club leaders and volunteers: Katie McCann- Creative Writing, Jason Wells- K'Nex, Debbie Hix- Scrapbooking, Fred Krushwitz- Construction for Boys, Margaret Krushwitz- Girl's Crafts, Bruce Jones- Rocket

Engineering, Bonnie Tillotson- Fun in 4-H, Karen Cyrus- Art in Math, Melanie Ranson- Science Fair, Katie Driskill- All-Star Sports, and Debbie Carson- Cross Stitching. A special thanks to ALL the AES teachers who volunteered to help out a club leader. Without your support and willingness to donate your time, our SCA after-school clubs would not have been such a SUCCESS!

If you would like to volunteer or lead a club during the next club rotation, please contact Katie McCann at [kdmcann@appomattox.k12.va.us](mailto:kdmcann@appomattox.k12.va.us) or Jason Wells at [jwells@appomattox.k12.va.us](mailto:jwells@appomattox.k12.va.us). We'd love to have you join this great student enrichment opportunity!



#### ACHS - FFA Shows Well With Swine

In early March, FFA members Tyler Archer, Michael Williamson, and Tyler Wallen traveled to the Virginia Tech Campus in Blacksburg, VA to participate in the Virginia Tech Youth Swine Education Day. While at the conference, FFA members heard from University professors, experienced farm managers, and a nationally acclaimed livestock show judge. Students also participated in a Stockmen's Judging contest. Participants were asked to evaluate live market hogs and identify retail pork meat products, swine breeds, common industry feeds, livestock handling equipment, and tools.

The event was capped off with a training session in pork quality. Archer, Williamson, and Wallen left being fully certified in the National Pork Quality Assurance Plus Program. The students learned a tremendous amount about the swine industry, enjoyed the event and hope to return next year.



FFA Members **Tyler Archer, Tyler Wallen, and Michael Williamson** visit the Virginia Tech Swine Center while they attend the Virginia Tech Youth Swine Education Day in Blacksburg.

#### AMS - 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip

On Monday, April 11, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students from Appomattox Middle School visited the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia. Students were separated into groups, taken on a tour of the memorial, and educated about D-Day. This was a great opportunity for the students to begin reviewing for the upcoming Standards of Learning test by revisiting the information from World War II. The students participated by asking thoughtful questions and recalling information they had learned in class. After the tour of the memorial, students and teachers enjoyed a long lunch break at Liberty Lake Park. Thank you to everyone who made this trip possible. We had a wonderful time.





## Technology

**Brette Arbogast, Director of Technology and CTE**

### County Internet

We have negotiated an increase in bandwidth on our internet access. Starting in July, we will increase our internet from 20mb to 50mb while reducing our monthly costs. This increase in bandwidth, will allow staff and students more bandwidth, which will allow us to open up the internet filtering for things such as streaming media, etc.

### E-mail Usage

The technology department would like to remind everyone that the e-mail usage is strictly for school related activities. Many people still have messages at the end of their e-mail that may be related to religious or political views, which are unauthorized and must be removed. We all must be aware that all e-mail is the property of Appomattox County Public Schools. We must be sensitive that certain footers may offend others that may not have our religious or political views.

### School Dude Ticket System

We would like to thank all of you for using the work order ticket system. I have instructed the technology department to only complete work orders that are submitted through the ticket system. E-mails and phone calls do not allow our staff to follow up and evaluate potential problem areas; the only exceptions will be Benchmark and SOL related problems. If your computer does not work, please have a co-worker submit a work order for you. We thank you for using this system.

## Business and Operations

**Steve Edwards, Director**

As everyone is aware, the Appomattox County Board of Supervisors has been meeting to discuss the county budgets for FY-12, including the schools. It has become apparent that the school's request of \$5,005,272.75 will not be fully funded. More likely, we will receive the \$4,106,731 that represents a full match required to offer the matching incentive programs lost in this year's budget.

My work over the last several weeks has been to find ways to offset the nearly \$900,000 shortfall the anticipated local funding means for us. Our primary goal is to offer the absolute best education to the students we serve, while protecting as best we can our employees financially.

There are still many unknowns, including health insurance cost increases. The School Board's desire has been to keep our employees "whole" when it comes to health insurance premiums and our budget does include an anticipated 15% increase in health care premiums. We, along with County Administrator Aileen Ferguson, have been meeting with our insurance advisors as recently as April 11<sup>th</sup>, to find ways to keep any increases under control. At this point, we anticipate bidding out our health insurance to find out what other options might be available to us. I will keep you posted as I learn more.

As always, I encourage you to contact me should you have any budget or other business related questions. I will do my best to get you an explanation. I also encourage you to continue to be involved in the process. You and the parents of our students are our best advocates!

## Transportation

**Matt Lair, Supervisor**

People often ask about the mileage and age of our buses, as well as what kind of fuel mileage the buses get.

We capture the mileage on July 1 of every year and then capture it again on June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. 135,000 miles is the benchmark where most transportation groups start looking at the bus and take it off of the road as a regular daily bus. As of July 1, 2010 I had six buses that were well above the 135,000 mile mark with the highest mileage being 179,459. For the 2009-2010 school year our buses averaged 11,345 miles. If you subtract this figure from 135,000 miles, you will get 123,655 miles. Based on the average mileage figure, we have six more buses that will go over the 135,000 mile mark by the end of the school year. Based on this information, we currently have 12 buses that are over the 135,000 miles.

The oldest bus that we use on the road daily is a 1995 model. We have a 1994 that is a sub bus. 2011 minus 1994 equals 17 years old. How many people keep a personal vehicle for 17 years with 179,459 miles?

For the 2009-2010 school year our fleet of buses averaged 8.89 mpg. Most of these older buses averaged below 7.5 mpg, with the lowest averaging 6.48 mpg. Newer buses get better fuel mileage. Some of the newer buses are getting between 9.5 to 10.50 mpg.



**Human Resources**  
**Bruce McMillan, Director**

Here is the **tentative** employee work schedule for 2011 – 2012. The full calendar will be available shortly.

Day	Date	Description
Friday	July 1	1st contract day for 12 month employees
Monday	July 4	Independence Day - Holiday
Monday	July 25	11 month classified staff - 1st day
Monday	Aug 1	11 month teachers - 1st day
Monday	Aug 8	10 month secretaries - 1st day
Monday	Aug 8	NEW 10 month teachers - 1st day
Thursday	Aug 11	Returning 10 month teachers - 1st day
Thursday	Aug 18	Convocation & Staff Dev - Required for ALL employees
Monday	Aug 22	1st day of classes
Monday	Sept 5	Labor Day - Holiday
Monday	Oct 31	Parent Conferences (8:00 to 3:30)
Friday	Nov 11	Veteran's Day - Holiday
Thur & Fri	Nov 24 & 25	Thanksgiving - Holiday
Monday through Monday	Dec 19 & Jan 2	Winter Break - 12 month employees may work or take vacation/personal days on Dec 19 & 20
Monday	Jan 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - Holiday
Tues & Wed	Jan 17 & 18	Teacher Work Days (8:00 to 3:30)
Monday	Feb 20	President's Day - Holiday
Monday	Mar 26	Teacher Workday (8:00 to 3:30)
Tuesday	Mar 27	Parent Conferences (8:00 to 3:30)
Mon - Fri	Apr 9 - 13	Spring Break - 12 month employees may work or take vacation/personal days on 4/11 & 4/12
Wed & Thur	Apr 11 & 12	
Monday	May 28	Memorial Day - Holiday
Wednesday	June 6	Tentative last day of class for students
Friday	June 8	Tentative last day for 10 month teachers
Mon - Wed	June 11, 12, 13	Curriculum Dev days - only specific teachers
Friday	June 8	Tentative last day for 10 month secretaries
Friday	June 22	Tentative last day for 11 month teachers
Friday	June 22	Tentative last day for 11 month classified
Friday	June 29	Last day for all 12 month employees

**Attention:**

The  
**2010/11**  
**Employee**  
**Recognition**  
**Banquet**  
 will be held  
 Tuesday, May 31st  
 at the  
**Appomattox**  
**Community Center**

We will be sending out invitations after Spring Break.



- A. Instructional Assistants and Interpreters** - 182 day contract.  
 (August workdays will be Wednesday the 17th for Regis and Thursday the 18th for Convocation)
- B. Bus Drivers** - 184 day contract (180 student days + 2 days in Aug + 2 days of training as assigned. August workdays will be Mon Aug 15 and Thursday the 18th for Convocation)
- C. Food Service Staff** - 182 day contract (180 student days + 2 additional days as assigned by Niki)
- D. School Nurses** - 183 day contract