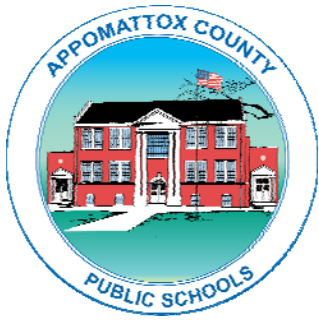


The Division Digest

A Newsletter from the Office of the Superintendent



*Building A Community
Of Learners*

Superintendent's Message

Dear Staff,

The glorious golds and ruby reds of fall surround us as the season changes. The crisp morning air signals the heralding of holidays and spending more time by the fireside as temperatures drop. We are in our tenth week of the 2011-12 school year and look forward to parent teacher conferences on October 31.

Schools are busy with many wonderful activities as you can see from this edition. Students and staff are hard at work in our Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Working collaboratively in a collective effort to meet the needs of each student is critical in our PLCs. The collaborative team is the driving force to create continuous improvement.

When our PLC teams set and share goals to work on that are applicable in our own classrooms, we build collective capacity and positively impact our students' achievement. Common planning is a time to clarify what we want students to learn, to jointly plan instruction, to track student progress through common assessments, and to address problems with a plan of action.

PLC teamwork is not a quick task as it takes trust between members and seeks to build the collective capacity of the entire team. Sharing individual successes is the easy part of being a team member, but sharing individual challenges and difficulties is the stepping-out-on-the-limb part of PLCs. PLC collaborative teams require trust, commitment, and a desire to problem solve together and support each other.

We cannot achieve our quest of educating our 2,200 students in isolation. Our duty requires that we work together for our children to enable them to be highly academically successful. It is not enough to co-labor, but we must collaborate on the right work, the work that we have agreed upon in our PLCs.

Thank you for being part of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) team in ACPS. From those who transport, feed, and coach to those who teach, counsel, nurse, discipline, and clean up after our students, thank you for working together. Our students need our collective commitment and desire to succeed. As this quote tells us, we become powerful as we work as a team:

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean." (Ryunosuke Satoro)

Sincerely,

Dorinda G. Grasty, Ed. D.
Division Superintendent

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November School Board Meetings:

November 10 – 5:30 p.m. Interim Meeting - SBO

November 21 – 5:30 p.m. Regular Meeting - SBO

Human Resources

Bruce McMillan, Director

Recertification Reminder – Anyone whose license expires in June of 2012 should be working toward getting the 180 recertification points. I sent a detailed email and attachment a few weeks ago to anyone who, according to our records, is due for license renewal this June (2012). Don't forget the Technology Requirement. Once you have met all requirements, you can start meeting with your principal in January. Please email me if you have questions. For those who renew in June 2013 (or even 2014), it's not too early to get started!! Best not to wait until the last minute if you can avoid it.

Health and Dental Insurance – If anyone has questions about their health insurance or dental insurance, please contact PCHP or Delta Dental directly by using the toll free numbers on the back of your cards. Please, also, feel free to contact Tracy Johnson if you have questions related to your insurance.

Teacher Evaluation Update – On April 28, 2011, the Board of Education approved the revised documents, *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers* and the *Virginia Standards for the Professional Practice of Teachers*. The guidelines and standards will become effective on July 1, 2012. Therefore, all school divisions in the state are now required to create new teacher evaluation documents to match the new standards. These new evaluation forms must be implemented for the 2012 – 2013 school year. Please click on the link below to view the entire Supts. Memo which provides more details -

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2011/136-11.shtml

VDOE is providing significant "guidance" related to the process and forms. As we find out more, we will pass it along.

Business

Steve Edwards, Director of Business and Operations

APS Construction Notes: The renovation/addition process at Appomattox Primary School is moving along on schedule, despite the recent rains. By the time this article is published, the under slab utility work and slab work for the classroom, multi-purpose room, and admin/guidance wings will be complete with load-bearing wall construction under way. This is great news as the contractor hopes to have these areas under roof before the harsh winter weather arrives. The even better news is that the project is presently at or under budget in all phases.

ACHS Concourse Roof: We found ourselves with some remaining federal stimulus dollars that had to be spent on capital improvements before the end of September and were able to complete a much needed re-roofing of the concourse roof at the high school. The roof that was replaced was the original roof from the 1974 construction, and one of the last two portions to be re-roofed since that time.

Budget Process: This year, the state legislature begins a new biennium budget process that will go on well into April. This means we will NOT know a final budget until late April, at the earliest. The complete budget timeline for the government's process is below. Internally, we will be working on numerous budget projections and will adjust those as time passes and the information coming out of Richmond changes.

The current budget picture presents a slightly positive revenue picture than in recent years from the state, but more bleak numbers from the federal government, and numerous pressing demands for that revenue including VRS repayments.

We are putting together our schedule of public hearings on the budget for ACPS and will keep you posted as we learn more. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to email or call me.

The budget process timeline is:

November – December	Governor and Cabinet Review
December 19 th	Governor's Proposed Budget Sent to Virginia Senate
January	Budget Bills Sent to Money Committees
February	Senate & House Produce Separate Budget Bills
March	Conference Committee Reports Bill(s)/General Assembly Approves
April	Governor Signs/Vetoes or Returns to General Assembly with Amendments – six weeks after General Assembly Approval

Cafeteria Corner

Niki Kempton, Food Service Coordinator

Appomattox Recycles!!! Recycling at each school location is collected on Wednesdays. Anything, from regular paper, colored paper, construction paper, magazines, to flat cardboard is accepted. The only thing we are asked to keep separate is corrugated cardboard. If you would like a gray collection bin in your classroom/office, please email nakempton@appomattox.k12.va.us.

Cafeteria News - What items would you like to see on the menu in our cafeterias this winter? Comfort Foods? Soups? Homemade Pizza? Seafood?

We will be releasing a division wide survey in mid-November for students and staff to choose the yummiest items they would like to see on the menu for December. We will then create a December menu from the items with the highest number of votes. It's your choice!

AMS News

Advanced English

Advanced eighth grade English students had a unique opportunity to gain insight into the realities behind George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. After reading the novel, students conducted research on the key historical characters portrayed in the story. Links between the novel and the rise of



communism in Russia were noted, particularly as it impacted European and American history.

Jim and Liz Baker, who recently moved to the area after being long-term residents of Kiev, Ukraine, visited Appomattox Middle School to further enhance the students' exploration of the novel and history. Drawing on their first-hand experience of life in a post-Soviet society, they introduced students to the catastrophic results of the Stalin regime. Students also learned about aspects of the culture that was once known as the Bread Basket of the Soviet Union. Students sampled *blinis* (Russian pancakes), examined Soviet propaganda posters, watched a short video about the *holodomor* (forced famine) of 1933, deciphered Soviet news headlines, explored artifacts of everyday peasant farm life, and wrote their names in the Cyrillic alphabet (Russian alphabet). Their presentation brought to life the period of history that inspired the writing of this novel.

Red Ribbon Week

During the last week of October, AMS is celebrating Red Ribbon Week--a time that brings millions of people together to raise awareness of drug and alcohol prevention. AMS rallied and wore red ribbons, symbolizing a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. Each day of the week was celebrated with a different theme:

- Monday: Red Ribbons distributed and pledge cards signed
- Tuesday: Crazy Sock Day - symbolizing the socking away of drugs
- Wednesday: Wear Red Day - homerooms with the highest percent of participation won prizes
- Thursday: Too Cool Day - students wore sunglasses to symbolize they are too cool for drugs
- Friday: Team Up Against Drugs Day - students wore Raider or other sports jerseys



APS News

Book Donation

The United Daughters of the Confederacy, Appomattox Chapter, recently donated books pertaining to the Civil War to each ACPS Library. Pictured here are Ms. Judy Johnson, APS Librarian, and Peyton Garrett, APS kindergartner, accepting the book donated to the Appomattox Primary School Library. Our thanks to The United Daughters of the Confederacy Appomattox Chapter.



Online Art Museum

Appomattox Primary School has joined Artsonia, the largest online student art museum. Parents give permission to the art teacher and Artsonia to include their student's artwork in the school's online gallery. Student safety is protected and parents can approve comments to be posted to the child's artwork. Families and friends can be sent online invitations to view student artwork and parents get emails when new student work is posted. At APS, we have almost 500 artists and 1500 works online so far this school year. The students are so excited to have their art online and to share with family and friends. Please visit Appomattox Primary at Artsonia.com to see our amazing art.



Construction at APS is Well Underway!

Please take the opportunity to see the buildings going up little by little. The students and staff are very excited about the progress and look forward to the new facility.

APS Future Gym



Transportation

Matt Lair, Supervisor

Making Daylight Savings Time Safe for Kids

As autumn turns toward winter, we know the days are growing shorter. When we change our clocks from Daylight Savings Time back to Standard Time at 2:00 a.m. on November 6, 2011, it will be dark even earlier. But what we may not realize is this also means more children will be traveling to and from school in the dark, which puts them at greater risk of injuries from traffic crashes. Over half of all fatal pedestrian crashes and over one fourth of fatal bicycle crashes involving school age children (ages 5 through 18) occur in low light or dark conditions.

There are many things you can do to help your students, or the kids in your neighborhood, get to school each morning and reach home safely at the end of the day. First, you can help them learn and practice this important safety rule: *Be Seen To Be Safe*. Let kids know that during the day and at dawn and dusk, they should wear bright or fluorescent clothing. These colors (day-glo green, hot pink, or construction worker orange) amplify light and help the wearer stand out in a crowd. However, at night, these colors appear to be black, so kids should carry a flashlight and/or wear retro-reflective gear that reflects light back to its source so motorists can see them. A motorist will quickly detect a child walking with a lit flashlight, or riding a bike with an attached headlight and flashing taillight. When combined with retro-reflective gear or strips of retro-reflective tape on their jacket, shoes, cap, helmet, or backpack, a child's odds of being seen are greatly improved. The sooner motorists are alerted to something - like a child - moving up ahead, the sooner they can react.

Second, you can help kids remember to "stop, look left-right-left, and listen" before stepping off the curb, even where there is a traffic signal.

Third, you can remind kids to avoid "jaywalking" and crossing from between parked vehicles. Crosswalks are safer and more visible, especially after dark.

Motorists can also help by paying special attention to safe driving

Curriculum and Instruction

Annette Bennett, Director

K- 12 Literacy Committee Focus for 2011-12

The K-12 Literacy Committee has met to determine its focus areas for the school year. Based on teacher input and SOL results, the committee has decided to focus on three areas: Grammar Instruction, Vocabulary Strategies, and Domain Scoring training for all Writing teachers.

To generate and accomplish these goals, each committee member volunteered to serve on a subcommittee for one of these three areas:

Grammar	Vocabulary	Writing
Crystal Allie	Heather Thompson	Janet Jackson
Brenda Peck	Susan Williams	Julie Bloomfield
Lara Peterson	Alison Paulette	Katie McCann
Judy Johnson	Charlotte Land	Kelly Hall
Kim Gregory		

If you have ideas or input, please see one of the committee members in your school. Thanks to these teachers for the work they will be doing for our division this year.

rules in low-light conditions. You must be alert if you are on the road after dark. Watch carefully for children who may be walking or riding their bikes. Always drive at a safe speed, especially on unlit or winding roads or when using low beams. Never pass a stopped school bus with its stop arm extended and red lights flashing.

To help increase your ability to see at night, be sure to take off your sunglasses at dusk. Wipe off your headlights regularly, and keep your windshield clean, both inside and out. Adjust the rearview mirror to the "night" setting to avoid headlight glare. If you need to use your high beams on an unlit road, be sure to turn them off when another car approaches.

Remedial and Special Education

Beth Haught, Director

Annual Title 1 / Special Education Parent Meeting

On October 17 at 7:00 pm, several parents and students joined 14 teachers at the Annual Title 1/ Special Education Parent Meeting held at AES. Special Education and Title 1 Reading teachers presented information about their individual programs to the enthusiastic group. Take-home materials were provided for parents following a brief question and answer period and parents were encouraged to contact teachers throughout the year for additional information.

Special Education / Remedial Education / Title 1 Advisory Committee Meeting

The initial meeting for the 2011-12 Special Ed/Remedial Ed/Title 1 Advisory Committee was held Wednesday, October 26 at the School Board Office. This committee meets four times per year and is made up of parents, community members, and staff who are interested in improving educational services for special education and remedial students in our division. Topics including transition needs, Special Education and Title 1 regulations, Special Olympics, staffing needs, and mentoring opportunities were discussed. Committee meetings are open to the public and any interested parties are invited to attend.

Sports

Brad Harper, Athletic Director

Congratulations to Jake Perkins and the Appomattox County Raiders Golf Team

Jake Perkins was crowned the VHSL Group A State Individual Golf Champion during the two day tournament October 10th and 11th in Harrisonburg. Jake's two day total was 9 under par for a total of 131. He is the first golf state champion in Appomattox County High School history. Jake also won the Region B Golfer of the Year by shooting the low round of the Region B Tournament that was held at Falling River Country Club on October 3rd.

The Raider Golf Team claimed the Region B Tournament Championship and finished 4th in the VHSL Group A State Tournament. The members of the team included: Jake Perkins, Tyler Carrico, Graham Comeau, Zach Perkins, Chandler Harvey, and Dylan Slayton. Way to go Raiders!

Appomattox Scholastic Sports Hall of Fame 2011

Appomattox County High School is proud to announce the 2011 Appomattox Scholastic Sports Hall of Fame inductees: **Rebecca Almond, Ed Cawthorne, Sam Ferguson, Melanie Hudson Glover, G. H. Jamerson, Raschad Kelso, David Read, and Terry Woods.**

These individuals will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at halftime of the varsity football game on October 28th, 2011. The game begins at 7 pm, with a reception for the inductees, their families, and all current Hall of Fame members taking place in the ACHS cafeteria at 6 p.m.

Just a quick reminder, if you ordered an athletic pass for the 2011-12 school year you can pick your pass up at the gate of any home athletic event at ACHS. If you are interested in ordering a pass please come by or call the main office at 434 352-7146.

The Appomattox County High School Athletic Department is currently selling Raider athletic apparel and stadium blankets. If you are interested, please pick up an order form at any home athletic contest or from the high school office. Orders must be placed by November 8th.

The Raider Athletic Department is also offering a wide variety of sponsorship opportunities for the 2011-12 school year and beyond. If you know of any business that would like to help support Raider Athletics, please call Brad Harper at 434 352-7146.

Winter sports begin on November 7, 2011. If you are interested in trying out for a winter activity you must have a completed physical on file. Please contact Brad Harper, Assistant Principal/AD if you have any questions.

2nd Annual AES Watch D.O.G.S. Kick-off a SUCCESS!

On Tuesday, September 27 more than 160 dads, grandpas, uncles, positive male role models and students filled the AES cafeteria! After a delicious pizza dinner the positive male role models were introduced to the Watch D.O.G.S program. Watch D.O.G.S. stands for **D**ads **O**f **G**reat **S**tudents. The program's mission is to increase the male presence in the public schools to offer support, security, and success.

A special thanks to all the dads and positive male role models who attended this event. Additionally, without the help of the following people, the event would have not been such a success: Katie McCann, Brandy Wells, Beth Jamerson, Leigh Ann & Brandon Gregory, Brenda Johnson, Karen Cyrus, Debbie Hix, Tom Yarber, Elizabeth Duncan, Rebecca Deike, AES Custodial Staff, AES Cafeteria Staff, Bob Williams, Bob Poole, Jennifer Carson, Matt Meers, and Little Caesars! Your support for this event was greatly appreciated!

School News

AES NEWS

Cave Art at Appomattox Elementary School!!!

By: Karen Therkildsen and Lauren Scott

There are certain units in art that take a life of their own and just GROW! Cave art is one of them. We decided to make this a 3rd-5th grade theme. Displaying children's work is so important to us so this had to be BIG! How were we going to achieve this? Recreating a cave similar to the Lascaux Caves in France filled with all the student's work, of course! We wanted them to fully understand the importance of those early cave paintings as the first ever examples of art in history.

We first began by looking at actual prints of paintings from Lascaux taking a 3D virtual tour and looking at the subject matter chosen by the cave people. After that, the students couldn't wait to start drawing and painting their own images of animals. They began by taking brown paper and crumbling it to create a rough rock like texture. After discussing the paintings from the Cave of Lascaux, students discovered that pictures are more than pretty colors and representations of things we recognize: students began to understand that art is a way of communicating beliefs and ideas.

We discussed how cave men made art supplies and tools and lived off the land. Students used earth toned paint and chalk to bring their animals to life!

With all the kids' paintings, a large cave was created covering the walls in a classroom. Upon completion, all of the classes used flashlights and took a tour through the cave. The students had a GREAT time looking for their work and talking about the cave they helped to create!!!!



School News

ACHS NEWS



FFA Members Trained in FAMACHA

In an effort to continue providing an educated agricultural workforce, several FFA members were recently certified in FAMACHA parasite management training. Dr. Joe Tritschler, Virginia State University's Sheep and Goat Specialist, spoke to the FFA members about parasite management in sheep and goats. He discussed the importance of rotating anthelmintic control measures in order to reduce parasite resistance. Each student checked sheep and goats for anemia using the FAMACHA training method. The FAMACHA nematode monitoring system was developed in South Africa. Each of the students in Ed McCann's Small Animal Care course were certified: Justin Harnett, Dustin Woodall, Kesha'an Wesley, Tyler Price, Blake Stanley, Brandon Stanley, Michael Keeling, Tyler Archer, Devin Carter and William Horton.



Aim High For Success

ACHS students in *Project Graduation* were challenged by Mr. Gardner and Ms. Jones to think about their personal goals for the upcoming year. Using colorful balloons, they proudly released their goals of success into the air. As they watched the balloons travel in different directions, they were reminded that they must continue to aim HIGH for success, in and outside of the classroom!



Appomattox County Education Foundation Scholarship Program

The Appomattox County Education Foundation, Inc. was established in 1988 by local officials and businessmen in the community for the sole purpose of providing college scholarships to deserving graduates of Appomattox County High School. During the past 22 years 63 scholarships totaling \$31,500.00 have been awarded to ACHS graduates. Employees of Appomattox County Public Schools have generously contributed to this scholarship fund through payroll deduction since the foundation was established. Payroll deduction can be processed at a minimum monthly contribution of \$1.00 and forms are available by contacting Mitzi Letterman at mletterman@appomattox.k12.va.us

"We are assuming collective responsibility for your learning, Kenny, not ganging up on you."

Public Comment Invited on 2012-2013 School Budget

The Appomattox County School Board will hold a public comment session on Monday, November 21, 2011 at 5:30 PM in the School Administration Building. The purpose of the session will be to solicit comments from the public prior to development of the 2012-2013 school budget.

Individuals and organizations with suggestions for the 2012-2013 school budget are encouraged to speak at the meeting. It is not necessary for speakers to request placement on the agenda for this portion of the School Board meeting.

This initial meeting will allow the School Board to hear suggestions prior to development of the school budget. The budget development time line calls for the School Board to hold a public hearing on the School Board Budget at its February 2012 meeting. The specific date for that meeting will be set when the Board adopts its 2012 calendar in January.

For further information, contact the superintendent at 434-352-8251.

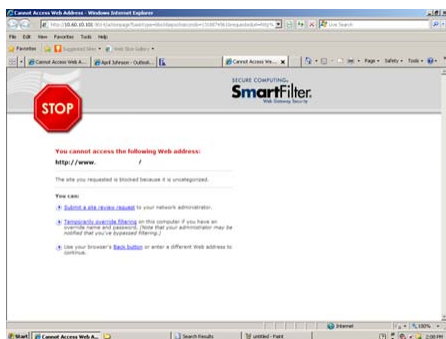
* Upcoming Important Dates *

October 31	Parent/Teacher Conference Day
November 11	Veteran's Day – Student/Staff Holiday
November 14 - 18	American Education Week
November 23	Early Dismissal 1:00
November 24-25	Thanksgiving Holiday
December 16	Last Day Before Winter Break
December 19 - Jan 2	Winter Break

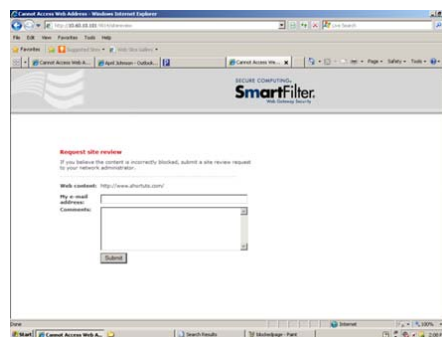
Technology
Brette Arbogast, Director

Blocked Pages

A blocked page looks like this:



Submit site for review:



When you reach a blocked page (left image above) that needs to be reviewed and unblocked, click the first blue link on the blocked page that reads “Submit a site review request.” That will bring up the “Request site review screen” (right image above) where you should type your email address in the first box and a comment in the comment box (not required) and click Submit. This sends an email to the Technology Department with the exact link you would like reviewed and unblocked. When the site has been reviewed and a decision has been made, you will receive an email from the Technology Department regarding the site.

If you click a link and the screen displays all white, that's not actually a blocked page. It could be a page that is experiencing issues, is old and not functional, etc. Blocked pages always have the red STOP sign on them. Pages like <http://www.facebook.com> are blocked at the division level for everyone and those pages display differently.

BAND INSTRUMENTS NEEDED FOR OUR STUDENTS

By Bryan Allgood

In today's economy, many individuals are faced with the inevitable hardship of living in a recession. As Band Director of Appomattox County Schools, I see these hardships every day in the eyes of certain students who come to me with a sad face saying, “I really want to be in band but mom and dad can't afford an expensive instrument. What can you do?” The unfortunate reality is that I cannot do a lot without the help of our local community. The wonderful administration and Band Boosters in Appomattox County Schools suggested we ask the community to donate old instruments. If anyone in the community has an old instrument lying in their attic or basement, not being used, please donate it to the Appomattox County Schools Band Program. Feel free to drop the instrument off in the office of Appomattox Middle or High School, or contact me at smallgood@appomattox.k12.va.us.



Primary School Construction Update



New Main Entrance



Admin. & Clinic/Guidance Wings



Slab Preparation for New Classrooms

Construction continues to move along well even with the rains that occurred during the month of October. The construction is on schedule for the connection of the new additions in June of 2012. The students, parents, staff, and faculty appear to have settled in to the routine of having construction going around throughout their day and carrying on their normal activities day.

The first picture to the left is the structural steel that will support the new primary entrance in to the school. This will provide enhanced security as all visitors to the school must come through this entrance and are clearly visible to the administrative area. Access into the building from this main entrance will only be allowed once a visitor has been cleared through the Administrative Office.

A canopy will cover the students from their exit of the building to the parental drop-off/pick-up area. This will be a significant improvement over the previous arrangement where the parents had to come inside the building to pick-up students at the end of the day.

The second picture shows the walls of the administrative wing (to the left of the main entrance) and the wing to the right of the main entrance which will house the clinic, guidance, restrooms, and the teacher workroom.

The third picture shows the foundation slab being prepared for the classroom addition. The plumbing and electrical piping under the slab is in place and by the time of this writing, the slab should be in place.

Bids have been received for Phase 4 of the project and the project overall is under budget. The PPEA Committee will be considering a number of the finish materials available that were in the Phase 4 bid package on October 27th. Once the Committee finalizes its selections, a financial report will be provided to the Committee.

Congratulations!! Employees of the Month October 2011

APS - Valerie York, Jennifer Mott

AES - Dana Hamlett

AMS - Michael Sullivan

ACHS - Tori Rothgeb

(September) Jay Ranson was omitted last month.