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Mantua PTA Alert News May 22, 2012



A Note from Mrs. Fernandez Regarding Student Placements For 2012-13 School Year

This is the year of change for Mantua Elementary! We have seven staff retiring this year, and seven more staff members moving on to new adventures. This summer will be a very busy one for me as we welcome a new Assistant Principal, hire staff and prepare for the new school year. Over the years, I have been extremely flexible in receiving letters from parents for classroom placement throughout the entire summer, which puts a huge burden on the administration in completing class placements. I would like to move to a new plan that many other schools use. If you want to share information about your child you will need to use this form, which is electronically attached, and for those receiving a paper version, the form is on the last page of the Alert News. This form will also be available at our Mantua Elementary website <http://www.fcps.edu/MantuaES/>. When you go into our website you will be able to fill out this form electronically and send it to JanMarie.Fernandez@fcps.edu. You may also drop the form off in the front office.

Just a reminder, it is not helpful to state the desire to have a specific teacher. Ironically, over the years, I have noted that parents do not always pick the best match for their own children. They do not have the benefit of actually knowing the different teachers' personalities and teaching styles, as I do. I work many days to thoughtfully complete class placements. Parent requests for specific teachers can often throw off the dynamics of this process and cause a classroom to be filled with too many students with similar needs.

Please, do not feel that it is critical for you to fill out one of these forms. The teachers fill out cards at the end of the school year on all of their students. I use this information as well to determine class placements. However, if you do feel the need

to share information, please remember that I must have this form dropped off in the main office or sent to me by June 30.

Many Thanks,
Jan-Marie Fernandez
Principal

NO EARLY RELEASE this Friday, May 25

Please note that unlike in previous years, this Friday before Memorial Day (May 25) **WILL BE A FULL DAY OF SCHOOL**. Students will be dismissed at the normal time - 3:45 p.m.

Fairfax County Police to Inspect Child Safety Seats at Kiss & Ride

Police officers will be at Kiss & Ride the morning of May 30, to help ensure child safety seats are installed properly. They will NOT be giving out tickets, however officers will be pulling parents out of line if their car doesn't have a seat installed correctly in order to show them how to secure it. Expect it to take longer to drop children off that morning as they will be checking every car that comes through the line.

PTA's Executive Board to be Voted on June 12

At its next meeting, the PTA will be voting on its executive board for the 2012-13 school year. The following are on the slate for the PTA executive board: President, Lesley Kowalski; VP1 Programs, Teresa LeMair; VP2 Membership, Shannon Murphy; VP2 Fundraising, Jennifer Epley; Treasurer, Carolyn Stephan; Secretary, Julie Middleton.

Teacher Appreciation Lunch a Huge Success

This year's teacher appreciation lunch was huge success thanks to all of the wonderful parents of Mantua. Because of your amazing generosity EVERY SINGLE TEACHER left the luncheon with a gift card in their hand and a smile on their face! This has never happened before and it was truly appreciated by the staff. There was an abundance of delicious delicacies from around the world. Thank you to ALL the parents for setting up, cleaning up and for their generous donations. A special thank you to Debra Hunter and Preethi Mareddy for sticking it out to the very end.

Field Day Volunteers Needed

Mantua's annual field days are June 5, for grades K-2, June 6, for grades 3-4, and June 7, for grades 5-6. We need volunteers to help walk the classes through the stations, keep the teams working together, make sure everyone understands the directions, demonstrates good sportsmanship and has a lot of FUN! The morning shift is from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, and the afternoon shift is 12:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. The following classes still need volunteers to help: Elgert, Ariail, Morrison, Kneeland, Graap, Kaplan, Wilson M., and Allison. If you're able to volunteer, contact Teresa LeMair, at teresalemair@aol.com, with the following information: your name, the class and AM or PM shift.

PTA Art Reflections Wrap Up

PTA Art Reflections artwork, award certificates, Cluster 3 final ribbons, and ribbons for all Mantua participants will be returned in teacher's mailboxes this week. We had 20 entries from Mantua in literature, visual arts, photography, and film categories. Nine of those entries won awards at the Cluster 3 level, and two students went on to have their entries judged at the District level. The students worked very hard on their entries, so teachers, parents, and other students please recognize their talents! Congratulations to all who participated in this year's program. The 2012-2013 PTA Art Reflections theme will be "The Magic of a Moment."

Mantua's PTA to Receive National PTA Award at June Meeting

The June PTA meeting will be June 12, at 7 p.m. (it was originally scheduled for June 14). A representative from the National PTA will be on hand to present Mantua's PTA with the Phoebe Hearst Family Engagement award. Come to the meeting and see as our school is recognized for having among the best family engagement programs nationwide. Pizza will be served.

Don't Miss Mantua's Farewell to Ms. Thompson

Mantua students, staff, families, alumni, and community are invited to a bon voyage BBQ on June 8, from 5 to 7 p.m. to honor our beloved Assistant Principal Cheryl Thompson, who is retiring after 35 years of dedication to Fairfax County Public Schools - 21 of them at Mantua. There will be hot dogs and hamburgers, ice cream, and music. Volunteers are needed to make this a success. Sign up to help [HERE](#).

Third Grade "Did You Know" Performance DVD's Available

Order forms will go home in the Tuesday Folders this week for DVD's of the 3rd grade's performance of "Did You Know." If you would like to order a DVD, please return the order form with a check for \$10 per DVD to the PTA box by Tuesday, June 5. Contact Teresa LeMair at teresalemair@aol.com with questions.

Volunteers Needed for Fifth Grade's Medieval Times Festival

Mantua's 5th grade will celebrate medieval times on Thursday, June 14. Volunteers are needed to help students with crafts and games, serve lunch, etc. Please sign up to help [HERE](#). Contact Teresa LeMair at teresalemair@aol.com, or Meri Farling at merifarling@hotmail.com with questions.

End of Year Events

May

- 24: Spring Strings Concerts
- 25: Regular School Day - No Early Dismissal
- 28: Memorial Day Holiday

June

- 4: 6th Grade Musical (Secret Garden)
- 5-7: Field Days
- 8: Spirit Day - wear your sunglasses
- 8: Cheryl Thompson Celebration, 5 to 7 p.m.
- 13: 5th Grade Play (Magic School Bus)
- 14: 5th Grade Medieval Day
- 14: 6th Grade Award Ceremony Rehearsal
- 14: Patrol/GMM Picnic at Eakin Park
- 15: 6th Grade Awards Ceremony/Party
- 15: Last Day of School/Final Report Cards sent home

SOL Testing Schedule

May

- 22: SOL Grade 4 - Math
- 23: SOL Grade 5 - Math/Advanced Math Take Grade 6 SOL Test
- 24: SOL Grade 6 - Math/Advanced Math Take Grade 7 SOL Test
- 25: SOL Grade 3 - Science
- 29: SOL Grade 4 - Virginia Studies
- 30: SOL Grade 5 - Science

June

1: SOL Grade 3 - Math

Note: There are no scheduled SOL makeup days. Every effort will be made to test students who miss their scheduled testing days. However, all tests must be completed by June 1.

Important Upcoming Events

Monday, May 28: Memorial Day, School Closed

Tuesday-Thursday, June 5, 6 & 7: Field Days

Friday, June 8: Farewell to Ms. Thompson BBQ, 5-7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 12: PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.

Information from FCPS Regarding This Year's Math SOL Tests

New mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) were adopted by Virginia in 2009, implemented during the 2011-12 school year, and assessed for the first time this spring. Initial data indicates that changes in the state's new mathematics SOL assessments are resulting in lower pass rates for students across the state.

Questions on the new SOL tests reflect increased rigor to more closely assess student's critical thinking and problem solving skills. Many concepts are now being taught at an earlier grade level than in previous years. For example, some topics previously taught in 5th grade are now taught in 4th grade. For students taking the test online, the new assessments include technology-enhanced questions. Simpler multiple-choice questions have been replaced by problems that require students to apply multiple strategies to solve prior to deciding on an answer.

Lower test scores are common when new standards and assessments are introduced, and we are confident scores will rebound as students and teachers become more familiar with the changes. Over the long term, these changes will have a positive impact on student achievement by raising expectations for all.

Since the beginning of the school year, our teachers have been preparing our students for the more rigorous tests. Parents can view narrated demonstrations of the new test items, online SOL practice tests, and grade level content reviews to

help their children prepare for the tests by visiting <http://www.fcps.edu/is/news/mathsol.shtml>. Parents are reminded that students test better when they are prepared physically and emotionally. FCPS' Family and School Partnerships share these tips for test takers from The Parent Institute: don't stay up late, get plenty of rest during test weeks, and eat healthy meals to keep mind and body nourished.

Alert News Contributions

Send items via email to alertnews@mantuapta.org.

Submissions MUST be received by the Friday before distribution in order to be included.

如果您需要一份中文的曼图亚小学校园新闻周刊，请联系雷晓春女士。电话：703-425-1097

电子信箱：sabrina.lei@yahoo.com

한국어로 번역된 뉴스를 받아보시기 원하시는분은 크리스티씨께 연락주세요. 전화 703-865-8065, 이메일 choichristie@yahoo.com.

Nêu quý vị muốn nhận tin tức "the Alert News" được dịch ra tiếng Việt, xin liên lạc sonha60@hotmail.com

Si desea recibir una copia de esta informacion en Espanol, porfavor llame Gabriella Numbela a 703-573-6375 or e-mail a ganumbela@hotmail.com.

For more information, please visit our website:

www.MantuaPTA.org

Sincerely, Mantua Elementary School PTA

