



Fairfax High School PTSA News

Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax, VA 22030 (703) 219-2200 <http://www.fcps.edu/FairfaxHS/>



School Calendar

September

- 4 New Student/Parent Orientation – 9 am
- 7 Labor Day
- 8 First day of school
- 12 Band Tag Day
- 12 ACT at Fairfax
- 16 Senior Student/Parent Night – 7 pm
- 17 Unite & Excite - 5 pm
- 17 Football (vs. Stuart) - 7:30PM
- 17 & 21 Theatre Parent Safety Mtg – 7 pm
- 21 Principal's forum/PTSA meeting - 7 pm
- 21 Henry V auditions
- 23 Back to School Night – 7 pm
- 26 Choral Unity Picnic
- 26 Herndon Showcase of Bands
- 28-29 Little Shop of Horrors auditions
- 30 Pathway Information Night

October

- 2 Homecoming Parade / Tailgate – 4 pm
- 3 Homecoming Dance – 7 pm
- 7 Freshman Parent Night – 7 pm
- 9 Interim Grades sent home with students
- 10 SAT at Fairfax
- 13 Theatre Boosters Meeting – 7 pm
- 14 PSAT and early dismissal for students
- 14 Academy Back to School
- 15-16 Cap & Gown orders in gov't classes
- 19 PTSA Meeting – 7 pm
- 28 Music Department Masquerade Concert
- 30 End of 1st quarter



**FHS PTSA is proud to
welcome our new
principal,
Dave Goldfarb**

Look for his message in our next
newsletter!

A Message from Acting Principal Gloria Allen

As the summer vacation is winding down, the administrative staff is busy preparing for the welcoming of students and staff to the 2009-2010 school year. This summer has been a busy time for staff. We hosted summer school this year for the first time in over 20 years with over 100 students attending to earn credit recovery. This program was one of many summer programs hosted by Fairfax High School. We also hosted Theater Booster Drama Camp and the Fairfax Community Theatre Production, Chris Cooley Football Camp, girls and boys basketball camps, Fairfax High School Football camp, three different cheerleading clinics, fashion camp, city recreation teen center, band camp, and of course our AP and Pre-AP Boot camp with over 300 students participating.

We received SOL data and AP data for the spring of 2009 and were ecstatic with the results. We made AYP again and our Students with Disabilities had the second highest SOL scores in the County. We were second to

Thomas Jefferson! Our other great academic accomplishments were:

- SOL test performance was up or held steady on EVERY SOL test.
- Over the last two years, we increased the number of AP tests by 60% AND in this last year increased the percent of students scoring a 3 or better on the tests from 55% to 63%. This year, the number of students enrolled in AP tests has increased an additional 5%.
- Our Rewards and Remediation program reduced the number of students in ALL classes with Fs by 8% and decreased the number of students with Fs in SOL classes by 17%.
- School climate continued to improve with a 17% reduction in student suspensions last year.

I am very excited about the addition of 15 new teachers and support staff to Fairfax High School this year. They are pleased to be joining an outstanding faculty and staff. They bring an array of talent and experience to Fairfax High School which will enrich our efforts to accomplish each of our goals.

Finally, I have enjoyed my experience as interim principal at Fairfax and I have worked to make the transition as smooth as possible. The new principal, Mr. Dave Goldfarb took the helm on Monday, August 24. You will receive more information about times when you will be able to meet and welcome him to Fairfax High School.

I look forward to working with you and your children this fall.

Gloria Allen
Sub-School IV Principal

Message from PTSA President

Hello everyone! My name is Clai Jorgensen, and I am the president of your PTSA. It is my goal that the PTSA will help keep you informed and involved in the Fairfax High School community. Many studies have proven that students whose parents are involved at the high school level do better academically, socially and in athletic endeavors. We hope you'll join us in helping our children succeed at all levels.

The PTSA is the communication link between the school and parents. In high school the PTSA is not about fundraising! The various sports and clubs raise their own funds through booster clubs. That frees up the PTSA to concentrate its energy on other issues.

Last year the PTSA had a huge volunteer group working to support teachers, staff and students. Some of the activities that the PTSA supported were recognition events celebrating students' academic successes and appreciation events for teachers and staff. The PTSA volunteers also helped out with Rebel Roundup, proctored AP exams, held the All Night Graduation Party for the Class of 2009, helped with vision screening for 10th graders, shelved library books and assisted the staff in the Career Center, Student Services and Main Office. Some of us also baked a lot! We look forward to having you join us in some capacity this year.

The PTSA operates on a yearly budget of about \$20,000. We spend only what we make, and most of our revenue comes from membership dues. You will soon be receiving a mailing from the school with information about how you can become a member of the PTSA. Please take the first step toward supporting your PTSA by having each adult in your family sign up.

The PTSA has regular meetings, open to all, on the third Monday of each month. Our first meeting will be on Monday, September 21, in

conjunction with Mr. Goldfarb's parent forum. It will begin at 7 pm in the Fairfax High School MultiPurpose Room. I encourage all of you to come and join in the conversation with Mr. Goldfarb. Because each PTSA meeting is attended by the Principal and at least two teachers, it is a great place to hear about upcoming events at school and to get questions answered. Everyone has questions! Those of us on the PTSA Board are here to help you find answers to those questions. Mark your calendar and plan to attend our first meeting.

As well as the PTSA newsletter, PTSA information is also available on the NEW! PTSA website www.fhsptsa.org which will be linked to the FHS website <http://www.fcps.edu/FairfaxHS/> very soon.

Please contact me at claij@cox.net or 703-830-8699 if you have any questions about our PTSA. I will be happy to hear from you!

Clai Jorgensen, PTSA President



PTSA Meeting Dates

(Mondays 7 pm)

September 21 – first meeting (MultiPurposeRoom)

October 19 (Career Center)
November 16 (Library)
December 14 Holiday Dinner
(time and place TBD)
January 25 (Library)
February 22 (Library)
March 15 (Library)
April 19 (Library)
May 17 (Career Center)
June 14 – End of Year Dinner
(time and place TBD)

Rebel Roundup

Rebel Roundup is a parent/teacher event that is held twice each year at FHS - once in the fall and once in the spring. It can best be described as “mini parent/teacher conferences,” as parents have the opportunity to engage in 2-3 minute conversations with their child's teachers. It is a great way to discuss your son's or daughter's academic achievement.

This year's first Rebel Roundup will be held on **Wednesday, November 11** from 7:30 am to 9:20 am. On these days students will have a late school start and bus schedules will be changed accordingly. More information will be distributed as the time gets closer to the event. Mark your calendar in advance for the March 16, 2010, Rebel Roundup too.

Diane Mortiere

Career Center

The Career Center is a resource center designed to help students with all aspects of career decision-making. Students will find information relating to both occupational and educational opportunities after high school. They are encouraged to use these resources:

- catalogs and info file from 800+ colleges
- military, study abroad, summer program opportunities
- SAT, ACT, TOEFL registration
- Financial aid applications
- Library materials related to occupational information and work skills
- The Job Bank- a listing of part-time jobs open to local teens

Our goal is to equip students with the skills they need to make informed decisions about their future. Visitors are always welcome!

Student Services

We hope to see many of you at our events this year. In the past we have been able to send mailings out to remind families about programs, however, in an effort to cut back on mailings, we are sending you a “save the date” for the year. If you have any questions about the events listed below, please check the FHS website or contact your student’s school counselor..

Programs for All FHS Families

September 4, 9:00 am -New Student/Parent Orientation- for all students and parents new to FHS this year.
September 23, 7 pm- Back to School Night

November 11-Rebel Round Up, Late Opening for Students
November 17, 9:10 am- Academic Recognition Ceremony
January 7, 7 pm- PSAT Parent Interpretation Night
February 3, 6:30 pm-Curriculum Night

Programs for 9th Grade Families

October 7, 7 pm- Freshman Parent Night (Parents only)

Programs for 10th Grade Families

March 11, 7 pm- Sophomore College Planning Night (all grade levels are welcome to attend)
March 16- Rebel Round-Up, Late Opening for Students

Programs for 11th Grade Families

January 28, 7 pm- College Planning Night (all grade levels are welcome to attend)
February 23, 7 pm- ROTC/ Military Night (Madison High School)

Programs for 12th Grade Families

September 16, 7 pm- Senior Student and Parent Night
September 30, 7 pm- Pathway Information Session
November 19, 7 pm- Financial Aid Night (all grade levels are welcome)
June 1, 8:20 am- Senior Awards Assembly
June 18, 12 pm- Graduation

Marcy Miller, Dir. of Student Services





Library News

Welcome to the Fairfax High School Library. Our beautiful new library is located on the second floor of the school, at the top of the stairway in the main foyer.

It is our mission to support your student's curriculum needs and recreational reading interests, and encourage them to be lifelong learners. As well as books, e-books, and periodicals, FCPS and the state of Virginia provide the schools with online databases, and the FHS library is adding additional online resources. Students have access to these when in school, and anywhere they connect to the Internet. Outside of school they will need login id and passwords. These will be available on the FHS 24/7 Blackboard site by clicking on *Library*. Parents may also have access to Blackboard by signing up for their own account. Back to School Night will have a table where you may register for an account.

We look forward to an exciting year working with your family. I hope you will encourage your student to come to the library, and check out all the possibilities at the top of the stairs.

Ann Voss, Librarian

HOW FAR SHOULD A PARENT GO?

As far as you have to because teenagers today have a minefield of risky behaviors to navigate—DRUGS, DRINKING, TOBACCO, SEX--with powerful influences like peer pressure and mixed messages from pop culture, and technologies such as the Internet. **Fortunately, there's one influence in your teenager's life that trumps them all. YOU! So take action!**

Let them know just where you stand on risk-taking and its consequences. Spell things out, because it's the contract you and your teen will be living by. Set clear rules for safety and guidance. That's right, getting them to agree to the rules and understand the consequences gives them more responsibility and every teen wants that.

Yes, do keep close tabs on your teens. Know where they are and who they're spending time with. Cell phones make it easier than ever to just "check in." It's not saying you don't trust your teen, it's saying you care. Get on the Internet, too. Familiarize yourself with the kind of content they might be exposed to.

Above all else, one of the most powerful things you can do for your teenager is to set a good example when it comes to drug, tobacco and alcohol use. Respect them, be honest with them, be clear with them and they'll do the same. Everyone wins!

Reprinted from Parents: The Anti-Drug
If you have concerns about your teenager's use of alcohol or other drugs your Student Assistance Program is here to support you. Contact Claudia Lane at (703) 219-2374 or claudia.lane@fcps.edu. All information is confidential.

Unite and Excite

Please plan to attend the Fairfax HS event. Unite and Excite on September 17, prior to the first home football game. The event is a fun community-oriented welcome back experience that will include food vendors, club activities and spirit wear for sale.

Several vendors will be available with food and drinks to purchase. Bring the family and have dinner here, then go to the game! Unite and Excite begins at 5 pm in the Field House parking lot. Great fun for all!

Shelly Modes

FHS Varsity Dance Team

The FHS Varsity Dancers are off to a busy start for the 2009-2010 school year! We have a new Head Coach, Ms. Sarah Bayne, five new dancers, and eight returning dancers! We have FIVE Seniors on the team this year, including one of our Captains, Chrystina Herring. Her co-captain is Junior, Arenn Martin.

Our season started out with a trip to UDA Dance Camp at the University of Virginia, where the team earned a Superior Trophy, and an invitation to compete at Nationals in Orlando in February. The team also conducted a Dance Workshop in Fairfax on Saturday, August 22, and the children who participated will have the opportunity to dance in our opening performance at the scrimmage between FHS and Lake Braddock on August 28!

The Fairfax Rebel Dancers can't wait to take the field again this year at our first regular season game against Stuart on September 17! Don't Miss It! **Go Rebels!**

Laura May



Academic Boosters

The Academic Boosters extend a warm welcome to both returning and new families. We hope you had a great summer.

Our committee is already hard at work planning for the upcoming year. For those of you who are first-time parents of a high school student, you may be unfamiliar with us. We are a PTSA committee dedicated to academic excellence at Fairfax High School. We reach out to *all* students and encourage them to participate at their highest level. Our projects and events include quarterly honor roll publication, the Academic Recognition and Lettering Ceremony, Valedictorian gifts, breakfasts honoring students who have made academic strides, Summa Cum Laude luncheon, and perfect attendance awards and gifts.

The Academic Boosters need your support. We reach out to **hundreds** of FHS students which requires both time and money. Could you please help us by volunteering for our events and/or making a donation to our committee? Please look for our flyer in your student's 'first day' packets. You may also contact us via the e-mail addresses listed below. Here's to a great year!

Shelly Bechert, shellybechert@verizon.net
Susan Kuck, sjkuck@msn.com

FX Players Continue to Shine

At the end of last school year, Fairfax High School was one of 5 schools in VA, MD and DC nominated for “Best Musical” by the Critics and Awards Program (Cappies), and garnered nominations in 6 additional categories.

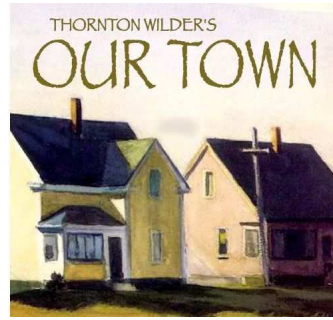
How can the FHS Theatre department top its performance on the Kennedy Center stage at the June Cappies Gala? With its “Season of Consequences” productions for 2009-2010, of course!

Our first main stage production, Little Shop of Horrors (Dec 3-6), features a giant man eating plant, his hapless handler, Seymour, Seymour’s dim love interest Audrey, her evil dentist boyfriend, and the doo-wop singers on Skid Row. Auditions (Sept 28-29) are open to all FHS students.



In the Spring, we'll be presenting the sizzling musical Chicago April 30-May 8. He had it coming, but will Roxy Hart get away with murder? Auditions (Feb 25-26) are also open to all FHS students.

The Production Class Theatre Arts 2-4 students will perform in three Pulitzer Prize winning shows in the Black Box: Our Town (Nov 4-5), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (March 17-29), and Wit (June 9-11).



Our VHSL One Act competition piece, Henry V, will preview in the Black Box Jan 15 before being presented at the competition at Marshall High School Jan 30. Auditions (Sept 21) are open to students enrolled in FHS theatre classes.

You can help support our talented actors and technicians by joining the FHS Theatre Boosters, coming out to our terrific shows, and spreading the word about our upcoming fundraiser, the one day drama camp for K-8th graders on the Nov 3 teachers' work day. See our web site www.fxplayers.org for more information.

Save the Dates:

- Sept 17, 21 - New Parent Theatre Safety & Involvement Orientations 7:00-8:30 p.m. in F111
- Sept 19 & 26 - Student Tech Training 12-3 p.m. in the Auditorium
- Sept 21 - Henry V auditions 2:15-3:30 in F111
- Sept 23 - 1st FX Players' Meeting 2:15-3 PM in Black Box
- Sept 28-29 - "Little Shop of Horrors" auditions 2:45-4:00 in the Auditorium
- Oct 13- FHS Theatre Boosters Meeting 7:00 p.m. in F111
- Nov 3 - One Day Drama Camp for K-8th Graders

Jody Gundrum
FHS Theatre Boosters Publicity Chair

Fairfax Academy News

Academy Orientation: Fairfax Academy held its Orientation for students and parents on Wednesday, August 26 at 7:30 pm. Faculty and staff answered questions regarding attendance procedures, parking issues and services provided for Academy students, then students spent time visiting their teachers and classrooms.

PLEASE NOTE: If you were unable to attend the Academy's Orientation program and have questions or scheduling issues, please call the Academy Office at (703) 219-2226. Also – Please remind your student to bring the signed Opening Packet forms to class the first day!

A Busy Summer! Many Fairfax Academy teachers continued their work with students over the summer; others were busy traveling and one was recognized for his Academy accomplishments:

- Randy Jacobson, Professional Photography Studio teacher, was honored at the recent FCPS Leadership Conference as a finalist for the Spillane Leadership Award. This is a prestigious FCPS award based on “Keeping the Main Thing, the Main Thing” --- Congratulations Randy!
- Andrea Heininge taught Dance at the FCPS Summer Institute for the Arts and Roxanne Kaylor taught Computer Graphics at the FCPS Tech Adventure camp for middle school students.
- Mike Replogle (director) and Chris Johnston (musical director) led a successful inaugural production of “Children of Eden” for the Fairfax City Theatre Company. Chris also taught at the theatre company's affiliated summer camp program.

- Leah Liao, the Academy's Chinese teacher, traveled to China as a participant in a teacher exchange program.
- Song Johnston, Heike Harrup and Dave Saunders were among the hosts for a group of teenage students from Guro, South Korea. The students visited northern Virginia and Fairfax Academy for 10 days, taking English language classes taught by Mrs. Harrup and participating in a variety of planned extracurricular activities.

New 3D Animation Software! The Academy's Professional Graphics Studio class will be among the first in the country to be teaching 3D Modeling & Animation with a complete Motion Capture device. This cutting edge technology will allow students to learn and practice the skills animators use in developing gaming characters and animated films. Area professionals from gaming and digital media companies are assisting with the installation and training on this software and will be visiting the class regularly for mentoring and support. There are still a few seats available in this class for the 2009-2010 school year -- See your counselor for details!
Gwen Plummer

Chorus News

The Fairfax Choral Department is delighted to welcome our new director, Luke Frels. Chorus family and friends are invited TO come meet Mr. Frels and hear about the coming year at the **Choral Unity Picnic** on Saturday, September 26. More details will be sent home with students.

Don't-miss performances:
Masquerade Concert – October 28th.
Cabaret Night – November 7th

Band News

The 2009 Marching Rebels kicked off their season with our annual band camp on August 17th and have been working hard on our new show, "Heros, Gods and Mythical Creatures."

Please join us for our first show at the home football opener on September 17th!

Other performances and competitions:

Sept. 26 - Herndon Showcase of Bands

Oct. 2 - Homecoming Parade and Game

Oct. 17 - Oakton Classic

Oct. 24 - JMU Parade of Champions

Oct. 31 - VBODA Regional

Nov. 6 - Final Game/Senior Night

FHS band will be conducting our annual Tag Day on Saturday, September 12th.

Your Tag Day support is critical to supporting our FHS Bands, so please be on the lookout for band members as they visit your neighborhood that day!

The Marching Rebels have another new addition to the team this year beyond new faces. We have acquired a "band truck" to haul uniforms, instruments, and other equipment to competitions. This will be a big help as we will no longer have to rent a truck every time we go out and with our own "Fairfax" truck we will gain visibility as well. Several businesses have helped to make the truck possible by donating supplies and services in exchange for advertising space on the truck.



So far the band has spent \$0 to get the truck up and running. We are still looking for some additional "cash" donation sponsors to give \$250-\$1,000 per year in exchange for advertising space on the truck. If anyone is interested in this please contact John Jordan at jjordan6@cox.net. Please join the Marching Rebels in offering a huge thank you to the following companies:

Chantilly Steering & Suspension
Arties Auto Electric
Fairfax Auto Parts
Tipco Technologies
M&M Collision
Bubba's East Coast Rods and Customs
FASTSIGNS of Fairfax
Weber Tire
Alban Tire

In addition, the Marching Rebels as well as the FHS Band Boosters would like to thank Chick-fil-A restaurant for donating dinner to all the members of the band during one night of band camp. The meals were greatly appreciated by all

*Meghan Benson, Band Director
Diane Smith, Band Boosters
Clare Talbert, Band Boosters*

CLASS OF 2010



Congratulations on being SENIORS!! This year will be an exciting time for you, with lots of memorable events including GRADUATION! To help with the cost of some of these events every year the members of the senior class are asked to pay a small fee, more commonly known as "Senior Dues". This year the cost of the Senior Dues is \$25.00 if paid by December 31, 2009. January 1, 2010 dues will increase to \$35.00 if paid by April 30, 2010. After that the senior dues will be \$40.00. **PAY EARLY!!!!**

It's your final year at Fairfax High School so make sure you get your SENIOR CLASS T-SHIRT featuring the name of every member of the senior class! The cost of the t-shirt this year will be \$10; **HOWEVER, if senior dues are paid by September 18, 2009 there will be no charge for your T-shirt.** T-shirts can be picked up on Wednesday, September 23rd after school in the Commons.

To help make this process as smooth as possible the senior dues will be collected during all lunches during the second week of school, September 14 – 18. Checks can be made payable to Fairfax High School.

Good luck this year.

*Gloria Allen, Senior Class Administrator
Tricia Colclaser, Senior Class Sponsor
Tammy Hawthorne, Senior Class Sponsor
Julia Varanavage, Senior Class Sponsor*

Do you want to Party???

Parents, teachers, advisors and the whole Fairfax community are beginning to plan THE PARTY OF THE YEAR in your honor. To celebrate all of your hard work, amazing accomplishments, mature and responsible behavior AND the fact that YOU ARE GRADUATING... FHS will be hosting a Party Not-To-Be-Missed! The excitement of the *All Night Graduation Party* is something you will remember all of your lives. There will be food, games, entertainment, music, casino, prizes and much, much MORE!

June 18, 2010 - GRADUATION DAY!!!
Party Time: 11:00 pm - 5:00 am
Place: Fairfax High School

Every school in the State of Virginia participates in *All Night Grad* sanctioned celebrations. The motivating factor behind *All Night Grad* is to provide our graduating seniors a safe, fun place to spend celebrate with their fellow students and friends. Since *All Night Grad's* inception, no teen in the State of Virginia has been involved in a traffic fatality on graduation night! *All Night Grad* is a no-alcohol, no-drugs, parent and volunteer chaperoned event that takes place here at FHS the evening of graduation and lasts all night.

If you'd like to help out with the *All Night Graduation Party*, contact Becky Andrewes at andrewes@verizon.net or call (703) 815-7204. The *All Night Graduation* Committee will be hosting numerous exciting events to help raise money in support of the extravaganza and will be seeking your help to make these activities a success.

Please contact Kim Newman at newmanka@aol.com or (703) 818-1429 with questions or concerns. Thanks!

Many thanks to donors to the 2009 All-Night Grad Party

General Donations:

Sarah Rawls
Ernest Meier
Jerry Meier
The Blue Iguana Restaurant
Fairfax City Auto Dealers,
Swart, Lalande & Assoc.
Providence ES PTA
Fairfax City Firefighters
Cardinal Management Group
Virginia State Delegates
Sensi Enterprises
Interservice Club, Fairfax City
Fair City Mall
Close Up Foundation
Comstock Homeowners
Willow Springs PTA
City of Fairfax School Board
Ability Potentials
Friends of Fairfax, Inc.
Fairfax Ferns Garden Club
Country Club Hills
St. Leo's
King of Kings Lutheran Church
Ron & Lois Papetti
Robert Higginbotham
Fairfax Choral Patrons
FHS Athletic Boosters
FHS PTSA
Doris Garlock
American Legion, Fairfax

Prize Donations:

Artie's Restaurant
Pot Belly Restaurant
Regal Entertainment
Fairfax Raquet Club
Meineke Car Care
Ability Potentials
Jeffery Ackerman, DDS
Massanutten Resort
Kate March
DC United

Kings Dominion
Dulles Town Center
Waters & Wise, PLLC
Liberty Mountain
PF Chang's
Cheesecake Factory
Gleason Family
Ski Liberty
Jeremy Owens
Nora Derrick
Jean Monroe
Alliance Micro – Missy Edwards
Julie Baumgardner
Susan & Brad Rawls

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Fairfax High's Automotive Technology program will again be in business to service parent, staff and student cars for the 2009-2010 school year. This has been a very successful program as students in the program do all the work under the watchful eye of Less Steger, the automotive instructor. We do 30-, 60-, and 100,000 mile check-ups, complete brake jobs, tune-ups, oil changes and used car check-outs.

We also are part of the Student Auto Sales, a County-run used car dealership. We accept cars, watercraft and motorcycles for a 100% IRS donation. Vehicles are donated to our program in which students do a 12-point checklist to find out what shape the vehicle is in. At that point they do the work required to get the vehicle in shape to pass both the state inspection as well as the emission test. These vehicles are then sold and 70% of the profits are returned back into the program so that we are able to purchase the most up-to-date equipment. To donate a vehicle or to get one worked on, call the Auto Shop at (703) 591-8589 or e-mail less.steger@fcps.edu.

Earn Money For Fairfax High School - Register Your Grocery Cards

Did you know that Fairfax High School is registered to earn money back at 3 local grocery stores; Bloom, Giant, and Safeway? FHS can benefit greatly every time you go food shopping. It costs you nothing, but will add up to money that can be put directly back into your child's education! Simply register your Bloom Breeze, Giant Bonus Bucks, and/or Safeway cards at the store's customer service counter or register online with the links below. Together we can make a difference!



BLOOM – Sign up for the new Bloom - Breeze Rewards Card at Guest Services inside any Bloom store. Our high school code is #01053. Alternatively, sign up online at www.ShopBloom.com.



GIANT – Each time you shop using your Giant Bonus Card, our school will earn A+ BonusBucks which convert into cash at the end of the school. *Please remember that if you designated FHS last year, you will need to re-designate FHS this year.* To do on web: Log on to www.GiantFood.com. Click on **Our Stores** and go to **A+ Register your card**. Fill in the two blanks with the first three letters of your last name and your Giant Card number. Last year we only raised \$559 from this program due to late registrations. The program runs from October 3rd to April 2nd.



SAFEWAY - Safeway Club Card contributes up to 3% of your purchases to our school. Register your Safeway Card - go to www.escrip.com/ Fairfax High School ID 2145176. You can also designate purchases made with other cards to benefit FHS. Sept. 2008 to May 2009 earnings for FHS were \$1,751.

Office Depot also offers a percentage back to Fairfax High School if you mention the school when you make your purchase.

Business Department & FBLA News

Welcome back students and parents! The Business & Information Technology Department has been busy over the Spring and Summer preparing for three new class offerings and for a great new year with our Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter.

Business & Information Technology is offering three new classes this school year: Advanced Programming, Business Law, and Business Management. The Business faculty is excited to introduce these classes and is looking forward to a successful year in these and our other existing classes.

Our Future Business Leaders of America chapter will be recruiting new members as school starts and all students currently enrolled in a Business & Information Technology class are encouraged to join. FBLA offers incredible leadership,

community service, competitions, and career exploration opportunities to members. We will have speakers on business careers, exciting trips to New York and Nashville, and fantastic community service opportunities. Please urge your son or daughter to get involved with FBLA this year!

*Mark Campbell
Business & Information Technology*

REFLECTIONS ON CHINA

*By Richard Brennan,
World History teacher*

Debby Petite and I participated in a 28-day Fulbright Hayes sponsored trip to China from June 29th through July 26th. Along with 13 other teachers and educators from Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky and Texas, we visited Beijing, Chengdu and Xian.

Besides the fantastic tourist opportunities to visit the Great Wall, Forbidden City, Summer Palace, Ming Tombs, Terra Cotta Warriors, Panda Breeding Center, etc., we met with selected Chinese teachers, Ministry of Education officials and university and high school students during our visit. I hope to incorporate a number of my photos into PowerPoint presentations in the coming year teaching Pre-AP World History I and II. I also hope to be able to begin discussions with members of the Fairfax High School community, administrators, staff and students to discuss the possibility of future student and teacher exchanges with China.

I was struck by two observations in China that I did not expect. The first was how cosmopolitan the cities we visited were. The changes in architecture over the past 10-15 years have been staggering. Mile after mile

of skyscrapers, metros and malls have been built, and the traditional on-story hutong living arrangements are becoming a rarity. The other observation is the overwhelming use of the English language along with Chinese. English is everywhere and western advertisements are as flashy in Chinese cities as they are in Las Vegas. There is a China Daily newspaper in English and a TV News Station is dedicated to English.

China requires 9 years of education from grade 1 through 9. Grades 10, 11 and 12 in High School are attended only by students who pass an exam in grade 9. Those who do not pass, begin work or go to vocational schools. Starting with grade 1, all Chinese students must take a foreign language for at least 9 years and up to Grade 12 if they are in High School. There are three languages offered: English, Japanese and Russian.

Over 90% of all Chinese students choose English. For this reason, the need for qualified English language teachers is enormous. The Chinese Ministry of Education will provide free air tickets, free room and a monthly stipend for college graduates in the U.S. to come to China to assist as English language teachers. One high-level Chinese Ministry of Education official told us that China's goal by the year 2020 is to become the largest English speaking country in the world. Think about this. If over 400 million Chinese speak English to a basic fluent degree, China will have tremendous clout in English language books, maps, and other printed materials.

Because China educates so many students, there are many differences I noticed. The average Chinese class is close to 90 students. With this number, most teachers lecture and very little critical thinking skills are developed. There is also a great difference between urban and rural Chinese

schools. Rural children are at a big disadvantage in terms of physical facilities, qualified teachers and course selection.

There is tremendous emphasis on the College Entrance Exam. A Chinese student does not apply to a university or college. Rather, the university or college look at the exam scores and then "invite" the best students into their institutions. So getting into a first-tier college means that one's life is pretty well set. Being chosen for a secondary school tier may lead to a much more difficult life. So there is unbelievable stress for Chinese students.

The school year in China goes from early September to the second week of July. Then students have six weeks off. The average Chinese student begins school at 7:30 am and stays at school until 5 or 6 pm. Not all this time is class. Students begin their day by studying for 45 minutes before the first class and they end their day by group or individual study.

I have a lot more to tell. I'll try to contribute additional thoughts in future PSTA publications. If any of you have specific questions for me, send me an e-mail at Richard.Brennan@fcps.edu

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Career Center	-2204
Clinic	-2210
Student Services	-2218

Newsletter Submission Guidelines

This PTSA newsletter is a monthly publication. Deadline for the next newsletter is September 10 (usually the 2nd Thursday of each month).

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