Letter from the Principal

As fall turns in to winter, please be sure students are dressed appropriately for the cold days when school is in session. Students often go out for recess, PE, or other classroom activities; and need to be prepared to “battle the elements”. Students are encouraged to wear or bring a jacket every day as well as wear warm clothes, such as pants/tights and long sleeves. If you need assistance obtaining a jacket for your child, please contact our parent liaison, Susan Smith, at email: susan.r.smith@lcps.org.

Thank you for visiting with us during American Education Week. Our hallways were filled with parents, grandparents, and other visitors throughout the week; and we received several commendations from our guests. We had almost 700 visitors throughout the week! Again, thank you for being a part of such a special week!

At this time of year, it is hard not to think about the possibility of school closings and delays; and we are really hoping to get some SNOW this year! Please look over the Inclement Weather information posted on the LCPS website (and on page 2 in this newsletter). There is a Quick Link from our Algonkian website. The latest information about school closings and delays can always be found at: www.lcps.org. Please make sure your child knows how to get home in the event of an early closing!

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a winter break filled with family fun! Remember, one of the best gifts you can give your child is the gift of reading. Make some time to read with your child this break!

Best Wishes,
Jennifer

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**Events Calendar**

**December 2013**

1. Toys for Tots collection begins
2. Rising 6th Grade RBMS Instrument Test Drive
3. Student to Student ~ 7:30 a.m.
4. PTA SweetFrog Spirit Night ~ 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.
6. Newsletters online
10. Student to Student ~ 7:30 a.m.
11. Interims Send Home
11. Authors’ Night (4th Grade) ~ 6:30 p.m.
13. Toys for Tots collection last day
17. Student to Student ~ 7:30 a.m.
18. 5th Grade Musical ~ 1:15 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.
20. Geography Bee ~ 9:00 a.m.
23-Jan 1 Winter Break – school closed (Classes resume January 2)

*Happy New Year 2014!!*

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**Assistance Notice**

If, due to a disability, you need assistance to enable you to participate meaningfully in any of our school programs, please contact Ms. Karen Shields, Assistant Principal at 571-434-3240 at least five working days prior to the activity.

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**Happy Holidays!**

**Winter Break**

December 23 – January 1

(Classes resume on Thursday, January 2)
Inclement Weather Information

When the Loudoun County Public Schools experiences inclement weather conditions, the safety of our students and staff is the most important consideration.

In the event that weather or other reasons require either closing or delaying the opening of school before buses start on their routes, announcements will be made over the radio and TV stations listed below by 6:00 a.m. These stations are notified by direct calls and should be the primary stations that are monitored.

When conditions require school closings or early dismissal of students, announcements will be given to the following radio and TV stations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RADIO</th>
<th>TV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WMAL 630 AM</td>
<td>WRC TV 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTOP 1500 AM and 103.5 FM</td>
<td>FOX TV 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINC 92.5 FM</td>
<td>WJLA TV 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMRE 1550 AM</td>
<td>WUSA TV 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If severe weather strikes while students are in school, a decision to close school for the remainder of the day may be made. Activating the transportation system due to inclement weather takes time. See two hour early closing information: [http://www.lcps.org/page/14#TwoHourEarly](http://www.lcps.org/page/14#TwoHourEarly). In the event of a delayed opening, please stay tuned to the radio/TV stations in case some change in the weather causes schools to be closed for the day.

All after-school activities requiring school bus transportation are canceled. Other school activities not requiring transportation service are at the discretion of the school principal. Please check the district website: [http://www.lcps.org/page/14](http://www.lcps.org/page/14), or your school’s web site: [http://www.lcps.org/Algonkian](http://www.lcps.org/Algonkian), for specific information.

What can parents do to help their students and schools prepare?

1. Contact your childcare facility, if necessary, to find out what their procedures are for inclement weather.
2. Review the information you have listed as emergency contacts and make sure that the numbers are updated.
3. Make plans ahead of time and communicate them with your children so they understand what to expect during an early school dismissal due to inclement weather.
4. Understand that school closings are for the safety of children throughout the district. While the condition of your neighborhood streets may be fine, other areas of the district may be experiencing harsher weather.

School Improvement Plan

School Improvement Plan (SIP) has been developed for Algonkian Elementary by staff, parents, and the community. Annually, we review and revise our plan based on the data we receive. Our School Improvement Plan is available on our school website: [http://www.lcps.org/Page/40302](http://www.lcps.org/Page/40302) and in our school office.

We continue to have a School Improvement Plan Steering Committee. If you are interested in participating on this committee or participating in the development of monitoring the School Improvement Plan, please contact Principal Jennifer Steeprow at 571-434-3240.

**Please note that children should not be dropped off to school any earlier than 7:30 a.m. as there is no adult supervision provided prior to that time. Thank you for your cooperation!!**
Parent Liaison
Ms. Susan R. Smith

The Algonkian Equity Committee will have an Open Meeting on January 16, 2014 at 2:50 p.m. here at the school. We welcome all parents/guardians. If you would like to attend, please contact either Theresa Ryan or myself at 571-434-3240. If you are unable to attend and would like to submit questions, comments or suggestions, please either send in a note or email me at: susan.r.smith@lcps.org.

I know I sound like a broken record (I am showing my age by using that term!) but please remember to check the LOST & FOUND over the next couple of weeks. We have some lovely jackets and hoodies, and all items not picked up before Winter Break will be donated to the local thrift store in January.

Just a quick reminder -- Food Service Applications can be submitted throughout the school year. Applications are in the front office or contact me and I will send one home in the child’s backpack.

The Holiday Season is upon us and we spend time sharing and giving with our families and friends. What better to way demonstrate to our families the act of giving than to give our time to local charities? In November’s school newsletter, I shared several that could always use volunteers: LINK, Interfaith Relief, and the Holiday Coalition.

I came across a new opportunity a few months ago that is linked with Interfaith Relief in Leesburg. The name of the charity is Loudoun Pet Pantry. You can donate pet food supplies at various locations throughout the county. Please visit: www.loudoun.gov/petpantry or www.humaneloudoun.org for donation locations and information on suggested donation items.

If you are interested in giving to a charity outside of our immediate area, visit: www.charitynavigator.org to research a variety of organizations nationally or internationally.

Last but not least, don’t forget to check the carousel at the school’s foyer for resources that I mention in my section of the school newsletters. If you are having trouble locating a resource or need additional information on anything I have mentioned, please contact me through email or at the school.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Authors’ Night Returns!!

Algonkian will be hosting one Authors’ Night per month for each grade level. This means more students can participate. The criterion is still the same. Each teacher will invite 10 students to read stories that have been written in the classroom and have gone through the writing process. Students will be given an invitation the Friday before and an RSVP needs to be given to the classroom teacher by the following Monday. A practice session will be held either the day before or the day of the scheduled Authors’ Night.

On the night of the scheduled event, students are to arrive no earlier than 6:15 p.m. It will begin promptly at 6:30 p.m. Family and friends go to the Activity Room (gym) and participating students go to the stage. Semi-formal attire is required. Students may not wear jeans, sweats or shorts.

We will continue the second Authors’ Night for this school year with our fourth graders on Wednesday, December 11. The dates for all other grades will be announced in the monthly school newsletters.

If you have any questions, contact Mrs. Mayobre at: tmayobre@lcps.org.

Algonkian Counseling
Ms. Theresa Ryan

Counselors Help Students Reach Their Potential!

Algonkian Guidance Advisory Council -- The advisory council will be composed of school and community members and is tasked with making recommendations regarding student and community needs and advising the school counseling staff as it strives to meet these needs. The advisory council will meet once more this year on March 24 at 3:00 p.m. in Ms. Ryan’s office. Please email Ms. Ryan at: Theresa.Ryan@lcps.org if you are interested in joining this committee!

National School Counseling Week is coming up February 3-7! -- So what does an elementary school counselor do exactly? Answers: http://www.lcps.org/page/40404

School Counseling Master Schedule for 2013/2014 School Year -- http://www.lcps.org/Page/75634
Currently In Guidance

2nd thru 5th grades – Connecting with music! We are connecting the music lesson “The One” to our county wide bullying prevention curriculum Stop, Walk, Talk and discussing the importance of standing up for others when we are a bystander (standing by, a witness) to meanness. We talked about how “one” person can truly make a difference. The difference can be in a positive or negative way, and it’s amazing how just one person can be the one to make a difference! When friends help out, 57 percent of the time bullying stops in 10 seconds! (Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig, Social Development, 2001) During Part 2 of this guidance lesson, students will write about how they might be the one to make a difference in someone else’s life and about one person who has made a difference in their lives.

Kindergarten thru 1st grades – We are discussing cause & effect using the book “The WORST Day of My Life EVER”, by Julie Cook. At home you may want to review with children that a cause is why an event happens. The effect is an event that happens because of a cause. For example, slamming the door might cause a loud noise. Name a cause and have children identify an effect and vice versa. What can cause you to wake up late? What is the effect of walking in the rain?

GUIDANCE GROUPS – Our 1st round guidance groups are in full swing! Some groups will begin later in the school year. As always, please let Ms. Ryan know if there are any special considerations or concerns that need attention individually or if your child may need to be added to a currently running group.

TOYS FOR TOTS Community Outreach ~ December 1-13

Giving to Toys for Tots is a great family conversation starter to encourage empathy for others! Last day to contribute Toys is Friday, December 13. See on page 14 in this newsletter for the Toys for Tots flyer!

PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) at Algonkian ~ What’s your SUPER power? We PuRRR!

PBIS – Home Connections! Have you noticed that your child is excited about golden tickets?! Here are some suggestions on how to positively increase good behavior at home:

#1 – Most Important! Be consistent! If you say “no” and give a reason, then don’t give in and purchase the item if further begging ensues. This only tells the child that you have a breaking point and to keep trying. If you’ve said “no” and given a reason, then you should not say “no” again nor give another reason. When your child accepts your answer and your reason, make sure to praise them! It is also very important that both parents and all caregivers are consistent.

#2 – Try this at home! Give your child $5 or whatever limit you want to set. Tell your child he or she may ask for something but he or she will have to be able to purchase it with the money that you have set aside for extras. If your child wants a certain cereal, then he or she will have to pay for it. Suddenly, your child will likely become very choosy about what he or she purchases.

#3 – Want to do more?! Create a budget box. Great timing right before the holidays! Give each child envelopes and label them for things they often like to ask for. Here are a few examples: Pizza, Movies, Videos, Fast Food, and Gas Money). Each month put in a certain amount of money in each envelope. If children want to order pizza, they have to check the budget box and pay for it from the appropriate envelope. This encouraged children to consider every purchase and weigh the options. You won’t have to say “no” when asked about purchases. All you have to say is “check your envelope.” Children will quickly realize that decisions regarding the whole month were more important than living for the moment. This also encourages children to think before they act, and great practice for when they become independent young adults. This method is superior to ranting and raving about money which is an abstract idea to children. This makes the concept of money and savings more concrete and understandable! If they want something, your children will learn to save from one month to next to make major purchases.

#4 – Lots of Positive Praise! Don’t forget that the key to PBIS is POSITIVES! More attention when children are doing what you want them to do! Less attention when children are not!

Visit our Algonkian PBIS webpages at: http://lcps.org/domain/13641 for more information on PBIS!
**CHESS CLUB**

**NO MEETING IN DECEMBER!**

Visit our Chess Club webpage: [http://www.lcps.org/page/40419](http://www.lcps.org/page/40419) for more information!

Here is a direct link to our online Chess Club Permission Slip: [http://www.lcps.org/page/40421](http://www.lcps.org/page/40421)

*Please remember students need a NEW permission slip for EVERY club!*

We always need parent volunteers to help with our monthly after-school Chess Club meetings. Basic chess skills are helpful, but not necessary!

**QUESTIONS?**

Contact Ms. Ryan at: 571-434-3240 or email: theresa.ryan@lcps.org

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**ALGONKIAN EQUITY COMMITTEE**

The Equity Committee is here to serve our Bobcat family by ensuring that our instruction and interaction with students, staff, and families is equitable. We monitor activities, programs, and projects to make sure they are relevant, diverse, and support and represent all of our students and staff here at Algonkian Elementary School.

The Committee welcomes parental/guardian participation and if you have an interest in attending an open meeting or have questions, concerns or comments, please contact either Theresa Ryan, Counselor (theresa.ryan@lcps.org) or Susan Smith, Parent Liaison (susan.r.smith@lcps.org) at 571-434-3240. The Open Meeting is scheduled for: Thursday, January 16 at 2:50 p.m. at Algonkian Elementary.

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**Reading**

*Ms. Kristi Peace*

Winter is arriving quickly and it is a great time to stay home and get creative with your families! December 27 is Make a Cut Out Snowflake Day. Celebrate by making paper snowflakes and looking for some of these great books at your local library:

- [Ezra Jack Keats' *The Snowy Day*](#)
- [Cynthia Rylant's *Snow*](#)
- [Seymour Simon's *Snowflake Bentley*](#)
- [Uri Shulevitz' *Snow*](#)

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**Lines from the Library**

*Mrs. Chrissie Devinney & Mrs. Becky Wetzel*

As we enter into the busy holiday season, please take some time to read with your children. Plan one less event and spend that time snuggled up with the kids and read. Time spent with your children will be the memories they cherish as they get older.

If you need a few minutes to yourself, send the kids to one of these websites, all selected as Best Websites for 2013 by the American Association of School Librarians:

- **Wonderopolis** ~ [http://wonderopolis.org/](http://wonderopolis.org/) has a “wonder of the day” each day, where kids can explore things they wonder about, past wonders are easily explored, or just enjoy the new wonder each day.
- **Digital Public Library of America** ~ [http://dp.la](http://dp.la) a wonderful collection of photographs, maps, sounds, manuscripts, books, and more.
- **Seriously Amazing** ~ [http://seriouslyamazing.si.edu](http://seriouslyamazing.si.edu) brought to you by the Smithsonian this website explores some of the amazing items in the Smithsonian’s collection.
- **Garbology** ~ [http://www.naturebridge.org/garbology.php](http://www.naturebridge.org/garbology.php) answers the question “where should my waste go?”
Math

Ms. Emily Dubnowski
Mathematics Resource Teacher

What can I do to help my child get the most out of math? ~ Helping your child succeed in math is not much different from helping your child with anything else. Here’s what parents and other family members say about helping their children with math:

Be positive about math…

- "My daughter is growing up with a 'can do' attitude towards math. Her skills are more advanced than mine, and I let her know I'm proud of her."
- "Maybe you weren't good at math, but your kid doesn't have to know that. Have a good attitude and he will, too."
- "I enjoy sitting down with my child and struggling through a problem together. Sometimes it's hard work, but every chance I get, I tell her how important it is."
- "When I was young, I thought only nerds could do math. Man, was I wrong. Now I realize that anyone can do math, and everyone needs it. It's where the jobs are."

Communicate with your child…

- "It may be only a few minutes a day, but I'll sit down with my child and ask him what math he's working on. Sometimes by explaining it to me, it becomes clearer to him."
- "I've learned to listen more than I talk. Listening to my child talk about her math problems is a challenge, but it's another way to show I care."
- "I try to work math into our everyday conversation at home. Since I work in industry, I know how important it is for kids to know math in today's world."
- "From talking with my daughter, I've begun to see math in an entirely new way. She likes taking the lead, and I'm sure that teaching me helps reinforce what she's learned."

Respect the way your child learn…

- "Don't start 'twenty questions' the minute your kid walks in the door. Think how you feel when you first get home. Just like you, he probably needs to take a break."
- "Recognize that she has her own work habits, and they're probably different from yours. You can give her a tidy desk in a quiet setting, but she may prefer her headphones and an unmade bed."
- "For my child, doing well in math means doing his very best, not necessarily getting an 'A.' I love to see his excitement when he cracks a problem and knows it's right."

As always, I'm here to help you with your math needs. Happy Holidays to you!
Responsive Instruction (RI) [continued from page 6]

It’s the most wonderful time of the year! It is time for class parties, and grade level activities, performances and such. Many of us are great shutterbugs and take many pictures to celebrate and commemorate these special days. (Many are the times I wish I had taken more pictures of my boys when they were in elementary school so that I had more to work with for scrapbooking.) In this day and age many of us are quick to post these images of our darlings on social media sites. Please keep in mind that other parents may be more protective of their children’s presence in the digital media world. Please do not post pictures of the whole class or other students without express permission from parents to post pictures of other students. We at Algonkian respect parent permissions and adhere to the media release forms. We will not post pictures of students on our website without consent on the media release form.

**** We are actively starting to collect images of our current 5th graders from their early years here at Algonkian for the end of the year slide show. Please send in or e-mail Mrs. Burkett ONE image of your child from an earlier grade level (K – 3): pauline.burkett@lcps.org ****

Thank you and have a happy holiday!
S.T.E.M. LABS

This year students are learning about science through the S.T.E.M. process. This means that they are learning through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics combined. Each grade level is given two lab days in a particular month. The first lab day is for researching a topic through science investigation centers. The second lab day deals with engineering and how the engineering process works. In October, fourth grade students researched about watersheds and then engineered a filter system that could clean dirty river water. The watershed video performed by the fourth grade teachers can be seen on the Algonkian Fourth Grade website. In November, fifth grade students researched about oceans and then engineered a boat to enter in the First Algonkian Cup competition. A video showing fifth graders engaged in these activities will be posted on the Fifth Grade website the second week of December.

Please check with your child’s teacher to see when the grade level will be participating. In order for these labs to be successful, parent volunteers are needed and some supplies might be requested. We’d like to thank the parents who have already participated in these labs. They all did a fabulous job running the centers and being a part of this up and coming learning process.

If you have any questions and would like to volunteer, please contact Tracy Mayobre at: Tracy.Mayobre@lcps.org.

¡Hola, padres! FLES students in 4th and 5th grades are busily learning new material for the quarter. In fourth grade, the students are learning about animals, their names, their colors, and how to state their favorites and their preferences. In 5th grade, the students are learning about sports and hobbies, and about how to tell time in Spanish. In the coming weeks, the students will work on an in-class oral assessment. This will involve filling in a script and delivering the script, using their best Spanish pronunciation.

If your younger children in grades 1-3 participate in the Hola Español Club, thanks so much for bringing your child bright and early at 7:00 a.m. We have learned the calendar and colors this past month, and have just completed a craft featuring a pavo (turkey), whose plumas (feathers) are of different colores (colors), telling the things we are thankful for this holiday season.

Thinking about Quality Toys ~ As the holidays approach, you may be gathering wish lists and choosing gifts. Some things to consider when purchasing toys and games for your child are the level of challenge, sturdy and attractive construction, and the degree of engagement it will offer.

Let’s evaluate what makes a good toy in relation to our SEARCH thinking keys:

PERCEIVING: The toy or game should be colorful, well made, and incorporate pleasing shapes, sounds, and textures. It should not overwhelm the child, either by size, sound, or degree of difficulty. Toys and games should be fun!
Physical Education
Mr. Joe Terango & Mr. Dan Craig

Greetings again from the PE department! Skills are being fine-tuned and students are taking off with some of the new ideas and games that have been introduced to them. The ABL (Algonkian Basketball League) is rapidly approaching and we are pleased with the progress that has been shown in our basketball skills unit. The teams will soon be formed and the games will be underway after winter break. Sign up forms should have been returned by November 26 for fourth and fifth graders. Thanks for a great month!

Grades 1, 2, 3:
- Completed scooter introduction. (Increasing coordination, aerobic and anaerobic strength)
- Completed Ball skills (manipulation of ball) rolling, dribbling, passing, catching.

Grades 4, 5:
- Completed scooter introduction. (Increasing coordination, aerobic and anaerobic strength)
- Continued preparation for ABL

CURRENTLY AND IN THE NEAR FUTURE:
Grades 1, 2, 3:
- Currently progressing through ball skills (shooting, passing, movement coordination incorporating ball skills)
- Introduce long jump rope skills
- Bowling Skills

Grades 4, 5:
- Basic and fundamental rules of basketball
- Further preparation for the ABL
- Bowling Skills

Happy Holidays!

Music
Ms. Alicia Smith

We’re all Super Heroes in Music!!

What’s happening at Algonkian:
5th Grade Musical ~ December ‘Round the World
Wednesday, December 18
1:15 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.

5th Grade students are diligently working on preparing their musical. They have been learning songs, memorizing lines, and perfecting movements in order to have a fantastic show. Please make sure to mark your calendars so that you do not miss this fantastic show!! During the rest of the month, students

SEARCH [continued from page 8]

REASONING: Toys should not offer answers, but should challenge your child to think. Solving mysteries, devising strategies of play, and outwitting opponents engages your child’s intellect and helps build his/her attention span.

CONNECTING: Patterning activities, puzzles to solve, and blocks with which to build help your child to develop physical dexterity and mental connections. This type of thinking supports math skills, classification skills, and spatial reasoning. Gear the level of challenge to your child’s age and ability.

EVALUATING: Both the games themselves, and the process of playing games, help your child develop skill at making decisions. Choosing a strategy of play, deciding to test one solution, rather than another, to solve a problem, or designing imaginative dramas all require the child to evaluate what they know, and to decide how to proceed.

CREATIVITY: The toy should stimulate your child’s imagination; provoke questions, or present problems to solve that demand quality thinking. It should appeal to your child’s talents and interests. Toys that can be played with in many ways tend to have staying power. There are so many wonderful games and toys available today. I have come to respect the selection committees for the Mensa Select Toy Awards, Oppenheim Toy Awards, and Parent Choice Awards. Seeing their stickers on a new toy or game, I will usually stop to look at and evaluate the toy. They have guided me to some of the games I keep at hand, at home to play with my grandkids or for the Mensa Select Toy Awards, Oppenheim Toy Awards, and Parent Choice Awards. Seeing their stickers on a new toy or game, I will usually stop to look at and evaluate the toy. They have guided me to some of the games I keep at hand, at home to play with my grandkids and here at school, such as Rush Hour, Blokus, SET, BLINK! and Qwirkle. I have added some wonderful problem solving games: Penguins on Ice, Prince and Dragon or Cat and Mouse Go Getter games, Safari or Pirates Hide and Seek, Camouflage, and Anti-Virus from the Smart Games company. Some other fun games to watch for are the “Spot It” games, which rely on perceiving thinking, and “Tell Tales”, which develops sequencing and creative storytelling, from the Blue Orange game company.

A new family game, and the time spent together playing it, can really help make the holidays merrier for all!

Art
Ms. Caryn Michael

This Month in the Creative World of Art ~ Hello Again from Ms. Michael! The students in art are making fantastic masterpieces inspired by many amazing cultures, artists, movements, and stories. Here is a synopsis of what each grade has created in art at the end of October and

[continue to page 10]
Algonkian School Cafeteria News

Parents/Guardians of Algonkian students! Starting in November we will be offering snacks to purchase in the morning for students to eat during "snack time" in class!

If you would like your child to purchase a snack, please let them know when they arrive to school in the morning to go straight to the cafeteria before heading to class.

They will still be allowed to purchase a cookie at lunch but the snacks listed below will not be available during lunch times (ONLY can be purchased in the mornings during breakfast).

**SNACKS:** We will be offering fruit (apple slices, whole apple or banana) at $0.75 each and Quaker Snack Kids mix (tiny twist pretzels, bite-size nacho cheese doriotos, white cheddar cheese flavored popcorn, and cheetos brand flavored snack) at $0.60 per snack mix.

**Please note the snack mix does contain wheat and milk ingredients.**

Art [continued from page 9]

November:

**OCTOBER**

**First and Second Grade: Nocturnal Shadow Animal**
1st & 2nd grade artists read "Yeti, Turn Out the Light" by: Greg Long and Chris Edmundson and "Whoos There: A Shadow Book" by: Heather Zschock. Then we learned about artists that use shadows to make art, and about nocturnal animals and their habitats. The 1st and 2nd grade artists then used what they learned to create their own nocturnal shadow animal.

**Third and Fourth Grade: X-Ray Hand Drawings**
3rd & 4th grade student artists learned about the discovery and history of the X-Ray and how the artist Shok Oner uses X-Ray’s as inspiration for his artwork. The 3rd and 4th grade artists then drew an anatomically correct skeletal hand drawing of their own hand.

**Fifth Grade: Creature Notebooks**
5th grade student artists learned about the artists Mateo Dineen, Paride Bertolin, and Chris McMahon who create original creature designs in their artwork. The 5th grade artists then were able to become Mad Scientists and create their own original creature design notebook containing three original creature designs. Student artists then connected our lesson to the artistic career of Graphic Design and created an unique title page and cover for their notebook.

**NOVEMBER**

**First and Second Grade: Fall Animal Puppets**
1st and 2nd grade artists read "Ballons Over Broadway" by Melissa Sweet and learned about the creation of the American tradition of the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Music [continued from page 9]

will be singing some holiday songs and learning about “The Nutcracker” ballet by Tchaikovsky.

**Fourth grade** will be experiencing syncopation and taking a look at different time signatures this month. We will also be learning about “The Nutcracker” ballet by Tchaikovsky and isolating a few specific songs from the suite. If time permits, we will also do a winter activity with the song “Sleigh Ride” by Leroy Andersons.

**Third grade** students will be reviewing the rhythms that we have been learning about during the month of November. From there we will move on to talking about dynamics and an ostinato. I will be introducing them to Tchaikovsky and “The Nutcracker” ballet. We will also start talking about and listening to our musical, “Mighty Minds”, which will take place in March.

Our **second grade** students will be learning about tempos and rhythms in the beginning of the month. From there we will talk about and experience playing broken borduns. I will be introducing them to Tchaikovsky and “The Nutcracker” ballet. From here, we will begin to look at the four non-pitched percussion groups and the different sounds that each instrument produces. We will also be singing a few holiday songs and doing some fun holiday activities!

**First grade** students will be looking at the melodic rhythm of a song and deciding if rhythm patterns are similar or different. We will then experience accompanied and unaccompanied music and learn to play a simple bordun along with a song. Students will then experience the difference between smooth and jerky musical phrases. If time, I will briefly introduce the students to “The Nutcracker” ballet by Tchaikovsky. We will also be singing a few holiday songs and doing some fun holiday activities.
The 1st and 2nd grade artists then learned about the artist and puppeteer Tony Sarg who created the idea and technology for the balloons in the parade. The artists then learned about Indonesian Rod Puppets and fall animals native to America and used this knowledge to design and assemble their own Fall Animal Puppet.

**Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade: Origami Turkey Floats**

3rd, 4th and 5th grade artists also read “Ballons Over Broadway” by Melissa Sweet and learned about the creation of the American tradition of the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, and about the artist and puppeter Tony Sarg who created the idea and technology for the balloons in the parade. 3rd – 5th grade artists learned about the ancient Japanese Art of Origami and then created their own symmetrically designed origami turkey. They then learned about the history of floats and attached button wheels to their turkey to make it into a float.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Superintendent Assesses Initial Budget Scenarios

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) Superintendent Edgar B. Hatrick III has offered his assessment of preliminary funding projections for the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget calculated by Loudoun County staff at the direction of the Board of Supervisors. Hatrick told the School Board that, based on preliminary projections, either scenario being considered by the Board of Supervisors will result in fiscal challenges not previously seen by LCPS.

In the most favorable preliminary scenario (an equalized tax rate plus estimated additional state revenue and a reduced carryover in unspent school funds from Fiscal Year 2014, LCPS would see $6.6 million in additional revenue against a projected $75.8 million increase in expenditures. This would result in a funding gap of $69.2 million.

In the other preliminary scenario (an equalized tax rate reduced by 2 cents) plus estimated additional state revenue and reduced carryover funds, LCPS would see $4.6 million less than current funding against a $75.8 million increase in expenditures. This results in a gap of $80.4 million.

Hatrick based the amount of increased expenditures on the following factors:

- Enrollment projections for the 2014-15 school year, which would be covered by the FY15 budget, show an increase of 2,375 students or 3.4 percent. At the current cost per pupil (CPP) $11,638, adjusted for economies of scale, LCPS will need $20.1 million in additional funds to maintain current service levels. This does not include salary increases—only the cost of enrollment growth.
- Virginia’s Standards of Quality (SOQ) requires a variety of support positions for new schools. SOQ support positions include principals, guidance counselors, secretaries, librarians and assistant principals. Custodians and other support staff also are required by new schools. In addition, there are costs of utilities and insurance. For the 2014-15 school year, LCPS is slated to open Cardinal Ridge Elementary, Trailside Middle School and Rock Ridge High School at a total additional cost of $6.7 million.
- Virginia Retirement System (VRS) rates, governed by statute, were released last week and calculate to a non-negotiable increase of $11 million.
- Healthcare costs and other employee benefit programs also are expected to increase 6.5 percent for a total of $8.1 million.
- LCPS teachers and other staff have not had a merit/step increase in five years. Additionally, there are inequities between the LCPS teaching and administrative salary schedules and those of surrounding districts, such as Fairfax. This makes it difficult for Loudoun to compete for new teachers and staff and retain experienced employees. A study last year by the Evergreen Group stated $54 million would be needed to address these disparities. A more modest revamping of the salary schedules to address the inequities is expected to cost $29.9 million.

Either scenario considered by the Board of Supervisors will result in severe fiscal challenges. A summary of the projected revenue and expenditures are provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Equalized Tax Rate</th>
<th>Equalized Tax Rate less 2 cents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Increase/Decrease</td>
<td>$6.6 million</td>
<td>-$4.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure Increase</td>
<td>$75.8 million</td>
<td>$75.8 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAP</td>
<td>$69.2 million</td>
<td>$80.4 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[continue to page 13]
The projected expenditure increase totals $75.8 million and is summarized in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure Increases</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Enrollment</td>
<td>$20.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Schools</td>
<td>$6.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher/Employee Compensation</td>
<td>$29.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Retirement System</td>
<td>$11.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>$8.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$75.8 million</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that LCPS has done considerable belt-tightening during the past few years so that it is now one of the most efficient schools divisions in the Metropolitan Washington Area despite its rapid growth.

- The LCPS cost per pupil (CPP) at $11,638 is next to lowest when compared to its Virginia neighbors. (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Prince William).
- The LCPS percentage of school-based employees is the highest at 93.1 percent compared to those same Virginia school divisions.
- During the past five years, LCPS enrollment has increased by 13,850 students or almost 25 percent.
- During the past five years, the School Operating Budget has increased only 11.6 percent.

11/18/13/wbb
You Are Invited!

December 1st - December 13th

All Algonkian students, families, & staff are invited to participate in this year's winter community outreach!

MARINE CORPS RESERVE

TOYS FOR TOTS

Collection Boxes for NEW UNWRAPPED TOYS will be located in the front lobby from December 1st - December 13th

The objectives of Toys for Tots are to help needy children throughout the United States; to play an active role in the development of one of our nation's most valuable natural resources - our children; to unite all members of local communities in a common cause for three months each year during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign; and to contribute to better communities in the future.

To find out more about Toys 4 Tots go to http://www.toysfortots.org/

Sponsored by Ms. Ryan & our student Mentors
(571) 434-3240
Theresa.Ryan@lcps.org
WELCOME TO RIVER BEND BAND AND STRINGS!

RISING 6TH GRADE
INSTRUMENTAL “TEST DRIVE” ORIENTATIONS

RIVER BEND MIDDLE SCHOOL
Mr. John Mills, Band
Mr. Kendrey Trammell, Strings

Which instrument is right for your child??

You and your rising 6th grader are invited to attend our beginning band and strings “Instrument Test Drive” nights at River Bend Middle School! Students must attend one of these events in order to register for a band or strings class. We will begin at 6:00 PM with a brief orientation meeting.

Please plan to visit River Bend on the evening that corresponds with your elementary school.

Monday, December 2: Algonkian ES
Tuesday, December 10: Potowmack ES
Monday, December 16: Countryside ES
Tuesday, January 7: Sterling ES & Horizon ES + LAST CALL
The "Last Call" date is for anyone who was not able to make their school's date.

Test Drive Orientations will run from 6:00 – 8:00 PM

If you cannot make it to your school’s night, feel free to come to a different one!

Can’t make it to ANY of the Test Drive nights?? CONTACT US!

Questions? Feel free to contact Mr. Mills john.mills@lcps.org
or Mr. Trammell kendrey.trammell@lcps.org
School Food Service

Free and Reduced Price Meal applications are available ALL YEAR

Anytime there is a change in employment status or wages, a new application may be filled out and sent to Food Services for approval. Please note that a social security number is not required for approval. This process is a year-long process not just at the beginning of the year.

Please feel free to call the Food Services Office with any questions at 571-252-1010 or visit website: http://www.lcps.org/Page/73936.

Parents Make the Difference

December 2013

Parents Make the Difference newsletters are posted on the LCPS website:

http://www.lcps.org/page/1597

Parent Resource Center

December 2013 Events & Winter Schedule

http://www.lcps.org/Page/76179

December 2013 Breakfast & Lunch School Menu

http://www.lcps.org/Page/68454

Loudoun County Guide to Services…

COMMUNITY SERVICES
- Family Services (daycare referrals) 703-777-0353
- Childcare/Preschool 703-777-0353
- Elementary Age Programs 703-737-8042
- Youth After School (Middle School) 703-737-8042
- Youth Shelter 703-771-5300

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES
- Financial Assistance 703-777-0353
- Emergency Housing 703-777-0353
- Transitional Housing Shelter 703-777-0353
- Loudoun Cares 703-669-4636
- Loudoun Interfaith Relief 703-777-5911
- LINK 703-437-1776
- Career Support Services 703-777-0353

HEALTHCARE SERVICES 703-777-0234
- Loudoun Community Free Clinic 703-779-5416
- Dental Care 703-771-5831
- Nutrition Services 703-777-0239
- Mental Health Centers
  Eastern Loudoun 571-258-3026
  Leesburg 703-771-5100
- FAMIS (Family Access to Medical Insurance Security) 703-777-0353 or toll free 866-873-2647