

December 2014



Soaring to New Heights!

Up Coming events for December 2014:

- 9 - Restaurant Night
- 10 - PTA meeting 7:30
am
- 10 - Interims Home
- 12-14 Five Below Fund
Raiser
- 18 - 5th Grade Winter
Chorus Concert 8:30
am & 1:30 pm
- 22 - Winter Break
Begins
- 25 - Christmas Day
- January 5, 2015 -
Classes resume



A Message from the Principal... Ms. Jennifer Rule

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday and had time to visit with family and friends. During this time I reflect on what I am most grateful for, which is working in such a wonderful community with great staff, students and parents. Potowmack Elementary is a wonderful place to be.

Thank you to all the friends and families that visited during American Education Week. We had 985 visitors during all the special events that occurred over the week. The Scholastic Book Fair, Stories Under the Stars and Donuts with Dads were a huge success. The money that was earned from the book fair helps in purchasing books for the library.

This is the time of year when parents and family members send in treats for the class. Sometimes they will do this without informing the teacher. Please understand that we have many students with allergies and we simply have to let the parent and family members know that we are sorry but we cannot pass out the treats. There are many items that are not edible if you want to bring in a special holiday treat for students.

Now that we are almost halfway through the school year please stay informed of school events that are posted within the newsletter and as well as on our webpage. It is hard to believe that it is December already, and we are coming to the close of 2014.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a very

happy holiday. May you have a wonderful holiday season and best wishes in the New Year. Please note that the winter break will begin on Monday, December 22, 2014. We will resume classes on Monday, January 5, 2015.

Regards,

Jennifer Rule

Jennifer Rule, principal
Potowmack Elementary
46465 Esterbrook Cir.
Sterling, VA 20165

Phone:
(571)434-3270

Absentee Line:
(571)434-3271

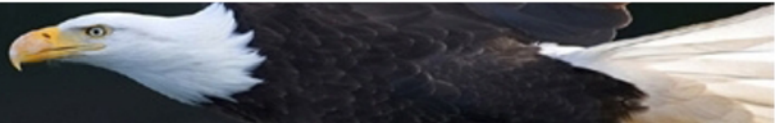
Fax:
(703)444-7526

E-mail:
Jennifer.rule@lcps.org



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Carole O'Sullivan and Carol Wood, Secretaries
Office 571-434-3270
Absence Line 571-434-3271

**Pursuit of Excellence—
Known for their strength in flight, bald eagles soar above the rest as one of the most majestic creatures in the sky. With power and balance they fly miles above the earth, catching warm air currents to lift them thousands of feet into the air. Keen vision gives the eagles the ability to see far-off challenges, soaring through each pursuit with great success. With you we soar to new heights.**



Potowmack Elementary PTA Reflections Winners

Potowmack Elementary Reflections Program 1st Place Winners Awards at the Local Level.

In the Primary Division which is Preschool - 2nd Grade:

- 1st Place Winner in the Category of Literature is Eli Wike in Ms. Kee's class
- 1st Place Winner in the Category of Visual Arts is Christopher Alvarado in Ms. Gaudens' class

In the Intermediate Division which is Grades 3 - 5:

- 1st Place Winner in the Category of Literature is Eleanor O'Connell in Mr. Gall's class
- 1st Place Winner in the Category of Visual Arts is James Butler in Ms. Thunstrom's class
- 1st Place Winner in the Category of Photography is Chase Tollefson in Ms. Donovan's class

Congratulations! Each of these 1st Place entries will now move up to be judged at the District level.

We had a total of 53 Reflections entries ... All were quite remarkable ... making it a tough job for our Judges.

Thank you to everyone who submitted an entry. Each of you will receive a Participant Ribbon in recognition of your hard work and participation in the Reflections program.

Thank you to Mrs. Angie Ignazzitto for coordinating the Reflections Programs for Potowmack Elementary. It was a great way for students to express themselves.

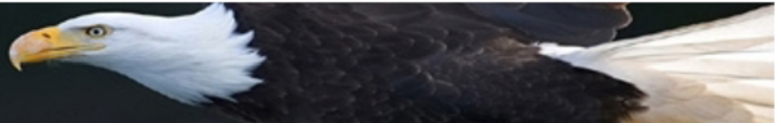
Library News - Dr. Copeland

Potowmack had an excellent book fair, thanks to the support of our wonderful school community. We did \$14,879 in total sales which is an increase of \$743.96 from the book fair last fall. We had 75 students who redeemed \$5 gift certificates from the summer reading program.

We also raised \$275 for students at Potowmack who can't afford to buy their own books and got free books from the fair. Our school library purchased \$1104.54 in books to add to our school library. We also raised \$3400 in cash profit that will be used to purchase additional new books for our school library. Thanks to the many volunteers who came in to help during the book fair. We could never have been this successful without the support of our involved parents and community members. We look forward to seeing you at our next book fair in March!

We're on the Web!

<http://cmsweb2.lcps.org/potowmack/site/default.asp>



Citizenship Awards for November

Congratulations To the following students who were recognized for outstanding citizenship for Respect, Responsibility or Effort!

Mrs. Shires

Danny Rosenfield
Cody Thongdyarath
Andrea Bell

Mrs. Mays

Maggie Nelson
Avishi Anurag
Muzzammil Aziz
Desirey Esperanza
Sebastian Gonzales
Saravia
Nazir Khan

Mrs. Carr

Matthew Hartmann
Jahla Azim
Bryan Vidal Guevara
Clarence Caparros
Adit Apte
Xaviar Peterson

Ms. Gaudens

Angie Pineda
Hector Roque
Christopher Alvarado

Mrs. Galvan

Lucy Messick
Derek Noyola
Christopher Montano

Mrs. Kee

Abbie Troncos-Garcia
Eli Wike
Alexis Yero-Gallegos

Mrs. DiCarlo

Naomi Adegbenro
Harrison Tyler
Ethan Alisasis

Mrs. McDermott

Isabella Ackerman
Moses Guo
Ariana Jannati

Mrs. Arthur

Ashlee Round
Sophia Angulo
Charisse Caparros

Miss Turman

Nawwaf Hannan
Aleesha Askari
Max Scarlett

Miss Stanford

Hallis Morris
Aakruthi Chillariga
Selina Abo Dahar

Ms. Richardson

Sophia Hawley
Sean Volz
Alex DeRose

Miss Chrisman

Khalil Abd'alim
Haylee El-Shihabi
Sabrina Regan

Mr. Charlish

Samiul Alam
Nicholas Weber
Alexandra Toporowicz

Mrs. Donovan

Chase Tollefson
Bryce Thunstrom
Austin Monahan

Mrs. Leibach

Athar Ahmad
Jacqueline Carachure
Abonza
Keegan Gregory
India Eriksen

Mrs. Thunstrom

Neha Chundru
Grant Gonzalez
Jack Rogers

Mrs. Snow

Peyton Moyer
Ellie Campbell
Alex Gonzalez

Ms. Shultz

Marin Pawlowski
Rachael Scarlett
Dylan Aranibar Vega

Miss Phillips

Seven Steele
Sofia Pinto-Ochoa
Chase Hazlett

Mrs. King-Worner

Peter Lipshultz
Morgan Duley
Nathalie Nieto-Gonzalez

Miss Murray

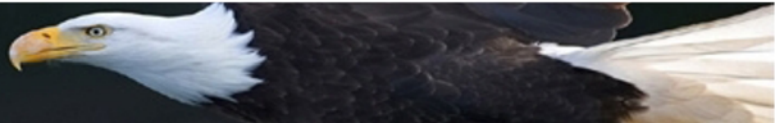
Bhavya Guduru
Kelly Lawless
Connor Gregory

Mr. Gall

Hannah Ryan
Olivia Lane
Luke McConnell

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Teaching Technology:

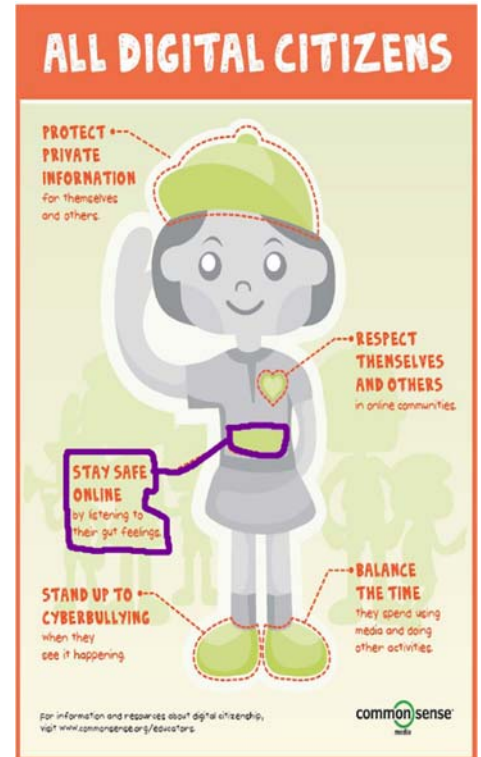
STAYING SAFE ONLINE

For December we will review how to *stay safe online*.

Holidays of all kinds are starting and approaching! Gifts are being purchased and given. And yes, many of those gifts are electronics with Internet capabilities.

Digital devices are great tools! These devices allow your child to have access to more information than you ever did when you were a child. He/She can research any topic that is of interest and learn as much as their little brains can hold! They can explore countries that would normally never be discovered, and be able to connect with family from far away! The Internet is a good thing. And, contrary to popular belief, it is a safe place. But, just like anywhere, precautions need to be made.

You wouldn't let your child go in to a room full of strangers alone without first doing some reconnaissance work. You wouldn't let him/her eat something without finding out what it is (or even if it's edible) first. You wouldn't let him/her run through a new neighborhood without first taking a walk or drive through first.



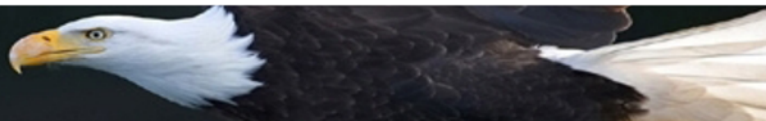
Think of the Internet like a new food or new neighborhood. As a parent, you want to be informed to be sure your child is as safe as can be. But before you allow your child to in his/her bedroom and play with the new toy (and allow you to drink your now cold coffee in peace), please take the time to set some privacy settings. Common Sense Media outlines their top privacy settings in this article:

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/privacy-and-internet-safety/what-are-the-best-privacy-settings-for-my-computer-and-smartphone>

I tell students to listen to their gut. Their gut tells them lots of things. It tells them when they're hungry - and that's one kind of feeling. It tells them when they have to go to the bathroom - and that's another kind of feeling ☺. Lastly, it helps keep them safe and make good choices. It's like when they sneak into mom's room to peek at birthday presents, and their tummy starts to feel funny.....it's the same thing. That lets them know that something is wrong. By listening to their guts, children can usually make the right choices.

We're on the Web!

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Just like teaching your child how to be a good citizen starts in your home, teaching your child how to be safe online starts in your home with a good conversation. Being safe for you and your family may look different than being safe for your neighbor and friends. But, some basic guidelines are:

- Follow your family's rules about when and where to use the Internet.
- Be polite, kind, and respectful.
- Understand a website's rules, and know how to flag other users for misbehavior.
- Recognize "red flags," including someone asking you personal questions such as your name and address.
- Never share your name, your school's name, your age, your phone number, or your email or home address with strangers.
- Never send pictures to strangers.
- Keep passwords private (except from parents).
- Never open a message from a stranger; it may contain a virus that can harm a computer.
- Immediately tell an adult if something mean or creepy happens.

To see some common questions and answers by age group, or to ask questions of your own, visit <https://www.common sense media.org/privacy-and-internet-safety>. www.Cybersmart.gov suggests you tell your children to "THINK":

T Tell your Mum or Dad if you see something online that upsets you.
Or if someone makes you feel unhappy.
You can also talk to a trusted adult, like a teacher: they can help.

H Hide your password.
Only ever share your password with your parents - never with your friends.
Someone else could go online pretending to be you and do something that could get you into trouble.

I Interesting websites can be fun.
Check with Mum or Dad if a site is okay to use before you visit.
Sometimes they can set up a list of good sites just for you.

N Name calling or being mean is not cool and could be cyberbullying.
Be nice when talking online or over the phone.
Look out for yourself and for others.

K Keep your special personal information safe.
Never give your real name, address or phone number to anyone, you don't know in the real world.
Use a nickname in chatrooms or when you play games on the computer.



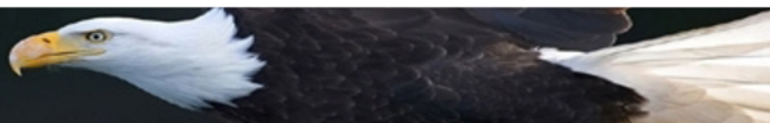
PBIS Corner

PBIS: Students earned 700 tickets in the month of November to earn a student vs. teacher football game assembly. Congrats to the teacher team purple for winning the football game. Classes that did well in the cafeteria for the month of November were able to participate in this cafeteria incentive. Miss Rupard's class was cafeteria class of the month. Mrs. Arthur's class won our classroom incentive to have Regal the Eagle visit for November. 4th Grade won our Sport wear Spirit Day.



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It is that time of year again when we need to watch out for inclement weather. Please stay tuned to local news channels in case of school closing or delays. Here is the schedule for school delay or early school closing.

1 Hour Delay

Preschool	8:50-11:50
Kindergarten a.m.	8:50-10:50
Kindergarten p.m.	11:35-2:35
First - Fifth Grade	8:50-2:35

2 Hour Delay

Preschool	9:50-12:50
Kindergarten a.m.	9:50-11:50
Kindergarten p.m.	12:35-2:35
First - Fifth Grade	9:50-2:35

1 Hour Early Closing

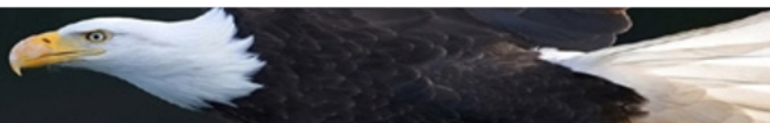
Students are dismissed at 1:35 p.m., lunch is served and all after school activities are canceled.

2 Hour Early Closing

Kindergarten a.m. class is dismissed at 10:50 a.m.

Kindergarten p.m. class is canceled

Grade 1 - 5 Dismissal is at 12:35 p.m., lunch is served early and all afternoon activities are canceled.



Potowmack Elementary School

December 2014

'Tis the season for giving. You will see in this newsletter there is still time to shop at Amazon on our school website at



[Amazon Potowmack Elementary.](#)

There were also a couple of events where our students have showed exemplary achievement in the areas of art and sports.

The PTA Board would like to extend a very Merry Christmas and a happy New year to our Potowmack family.

Rennea Butler
PTA President

PARENTS SAY . . .

Thank you so much for your donations for the no sale yard sale. With your donations, we were able to help 28 families have a great Thanksgiving.

REFLECTIONS

Angie Ignazzitto

Congratulations to the following students who won 1st place in the Reflections program. The theme this year is "The world would be a better place if . . . Reflections is an art based program where students in grades PreK-12 are recognized for their artistic effort via various categories for the given theme. More information regarding reflections can be found at [Reflections](#).

Primary Division

Christopher Alvarado Visual
Arts

Eli Wike Literature

Intermediate Division

James Butler Visual
Arts

Eleanor O'Connell Literature

Chase Tollefson Photography

AMAZON

Graciela Olivares

Did you know that Amazon gives back to schools between 4 and 6% of the total amount of your purchases? All you need to do is shop through the Amazon banner located on our PTA website at [Amazon Potowmack Elementary!](#)

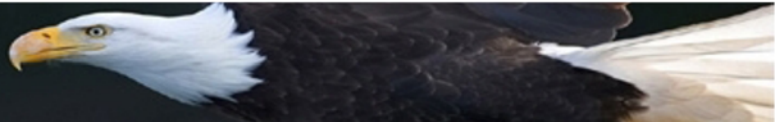
With the Christmas season almost here, it makes it convenient for shopping. Bookmark it and share it with friends and family!! Continue to support our school and your students by shopping on Amazon.com. Click here [Amazon Potowmack Elementary.](#)

GROCERY STORE CARDS

Graciela Olivares

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<http://cmsweb2.lcps.org/potowmack/site/default.asp>



Don't forget to link or relink your grocery card savings cards to Potowmack. This is FREE money for our school for all the shopping we do there anyway!!Giant: School Code 00003 Safeway:

School Code Target Red Card Holders: School Code 1487Harris Teeter: School Code 7968 If you need additional information please see our PTA website with more detailed instructions on how to sign up or relink your cards online. If you have any questions, please contact Graciela Olivares at g.lucio@att.net

GIRLS ON THE RUN

Nahed Suliman
Jenna Choe
Debbie Mansouri

Congratulaltions!! All the girls finished the 5k that was held on Sunday, November 23, 2014. They trained hard with their coaches. We are so very proud of them.

Jessica Choe
Kulsum Dewji
Mehdiya Dewji
Haylee Elshihabi
Khathryn Florescilaya
Alexandre Geokgeozian
Darya Mansouri
Daliah Minkara
Audrey Okaney

GREEN TEAM KIDS

Ines Perez

The Green Team got started with a bang! Even though it was chilly, our first meeting was a huge success. The kids went out to the court yard and did a lot of raking and cleaning. We have lots more to do but we had a lot of fun on our first day.

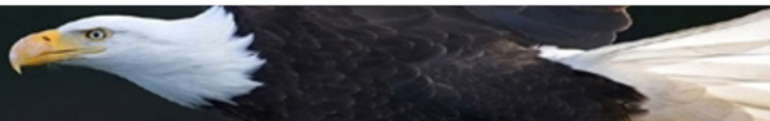
We also brain-stormed about ideas for the upcoming year. Some ideas included increasing recycling awareness, competitions to increase overall school recycling, planting in the courtyard to attract wildlife, and ideas to reduce energy consumption. We look forward to implementing some of these ideas in the coming year.



JUST FOR LAUGHS

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PTA MEMBERSHIP

Brenda Ulrich

Membership registration remains open. Your membership dues of only \$10.00 helps to pay for video conferencing, assemblies, allotments for the staff to use in their classrooms at all levels, instructional supplies like novel sets, owl pellets in fifth grade, embryology supplies for third grade, Scholastic newsletters and Time for Kids newspapers, fifth grade luncheon supplies, DARE supplies, butterfly supplies for second grade, art, music and p.e. supplies, field day, Doughnuts with Dad, PSO support, WATCH DOG supplies and hospitality events for the staff.

To join, just write your name, your child's name and teacher on paper. Put it in any envelope with either cash or a check made out to Potowmack PTA- label it Membership and send to school with your child. Dues are 10.00 for 1 parent or \$20 or both parents. Contact brendaandglenm@comcast.net with any questions.

MATH INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Angie Ignazzitto

The new PTA sponsored math incentive program which will be a fun, Internet-based, interactive program. Our plan is to have the new math incentive program up-and-running during the second semester of the current school year. You can find the Math Superstars worksheets for practice at home on our school website under the "Resources" drop

down menu and then click on "Math Superstars" to locate the worksheets for each grade level. If you have any questions, please contact Angie Ignazzitto at Angie20165@yahoo.com or (703) 431-4860.

MSAAC

Linda Smith

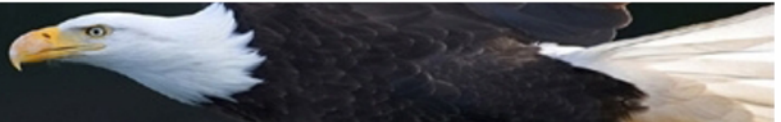
Linda Ables

LCPS has a commitment to improve our school's performance outcomes. Candid discussion about the **English Language Learner (ELL) and language diversity in the classroom**. Presenters were Tim Flynn, Dir. of Instructional Services, Teresa Vignaroli, ELL Supervisor and Shannon Caine, 3rd Grade Teacher, Sugarland Elementary.

ELL is English Language Learner, and LEP is Limited English Proficient, which represent the same population. It was concerning to find out that Loudoun's Pass Rate is above the state average for all students, EXCEPT ELL. Why is ELL struggling? The growth in the ELL population in Loudoun grew from ~4000 to ~7000 students in the past 5 years. They project another 11% growth next year. ELL Advisory Group provides academic achievement for ELL. One change for improvement is to create a central intake

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center, instead of the 87 in place now, to create consistency in evaluating this population group. ELITE: ELL Improvement Team has 2 year and 3 year objectives to remove the barriers for our growing ELL population.

Next MSAAC Meeting - Wed, Jan. 21, 2015 at 7PM. All meetings are held at the Loudoun County Public School Administration Building in the School Board Meeting Room.



SEAC
Jackie Baker
Danielle
Bischoff

The
November
presentation
was SEAC's

Annual Report To The School Board: Identification Of Needs For Students With Disabilities, presented by Jodi Folta, Chair.

Subcommittees of focus discussion at the November 5th meeting: Talk with your community about the needs of our students.

Academies of Loudoun. SEAC would like for the Academies of Loudoun to offer students with disabilities an opportunity like their peers to get hands on, direct instruction in a vocational field that matches their interest and ability. This would be offered as a two tiered program, one which offers licensure/certification and

the other provides job skills. At this time, Monroe Technology Center is limited, due to space restrictions, and competitive which makes a two tiered system unattainable. With the growth of MTC as part of the proposed Academies of Loudoun, we have an opportunity to change the landscape so that students with disabilities can work side by side with their typical peers or in a specialized vocational program. Learn more about the plans for the Academies and voice your interest in a two tiered program. Information about the Academies is available on the main LCPS.ORG web page as well as the SEAC page, www.lcps.org/seac.

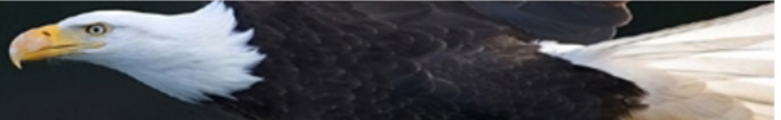
LEAP
Denise Washington
Rennea Butler

“Full-day Kindergarten: Should we have it? How would we get there?”

There was a debate about having full day kindergarten partly due to budget constraints.

To know about the history of full day kindergarten review the presentation at [Full Day Kindergarten in LCPS-Brief History and Current Status](#)

Parent advocate, Lindsay Weiss Bratten, presented why we should have full day kindergarten. The presentation can be viewed here [Why Full Day Kindergarten](#).



IN OTHER WORDS

Jen Wike

The LCPS School Board Wants Your Input

The LCPS school board is asking for parent input as they consider two items:

Elementary School Playgrounds

Should the county cover the cost of building elementary school playgrounds with the funds budgeted when a school is built, similar to high school stadiums, or should it continue to be paid for by parent-teacher organizations and private donors? The Board of Supervisors has asked the School Board to provide their feedback and the school board is interested in your opinion as they consider asking the county to ensure whether or not elementary schools are built with playgrounds. To learn more, go to this article from the Washington Post on October 24, 2014:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/loudoun-to-weigh-whether-taxpayers-or-donors-should-pay-for-playgrounds/2014/10/24/0a94ae70-5ac0-11e4-b812-38518ae74c67_story.html

The 2015-2016 School Calendar

The School Board would like input on the four calendar options for the 2015-2016 school year. **The board plans to adopt the final calendar at the Dec 2 board meeting.** The Loudoun County School Board was presented with four options for the 2015-2016 school year calendar at its Tuesday, October 28th, meeting. Two of the calendar options involve opening before Labor Day. Two

have the school year beginning after Labor Day. The calendars also feature different Winter Break schedules and different dates for the last day of school. To learn more regarding the school calendar options:

<http://www.lcps.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&DomainID=1&ModuleInstanceID=7221&ViewID=047E6BE3-6D87-4130-8424-D8E4E9ED6C2A&RenderLoc=0&FlexDataID=202729&PageID=1>

How can you provide your feedback?

You can contact:

Debbie Rose (Algonkian District Representative) at

Debbie.Rose@lcps.org

Kevin Kuesters (Broad Run District Representative) at

Kevin.Kuesters@lcps.org

Thomas Reed (At Large Representative) at Thomas.Reed@lcps.org

AND/OR the general School Board account at lcsb@lcps.org

Your voice is important and the school board wants to hear from YOU!

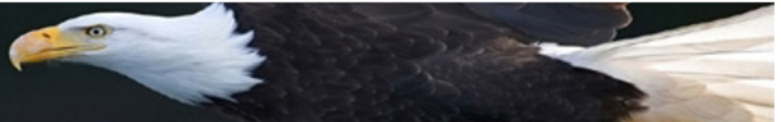
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

December 1: 2015 Outstanding Crossing Guard Nominations Open

Does your crossing guard know the name of every student on their route? Does your crossing guard get up before dawn to make sure each student has assistance to cross the street on their way to school? The Virginia Safe Routes to School program wants to celebrate

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<http://cmsweb2.lcps.org/potowmack/site/default.asp>



crossing guards who make a difference in Virginia's communities. The nomination period for Outstanding Crossing Guard of the Year 2014 will begin December 1, 2014 and run through January 23, 2015. The link to nominate your crossing guard and for more information click here [Safe Routes To School](#).

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in volunteering, the following opportunities are available. Please contact Rennea.butler@outlook.com with questions or to sign up.

Teacher Luncheon Provide a dish for the upcoming teacher's luncheon on December 11. The theme is soups and cookies.

DID YOU KNOW

Loudoun County Public Schools have an online parent resource center at [Parent Resources](#). Information include SEAC meetings, workshop schedules, community events, and much more.

David Ramadan attended a VDOT Winter Weather Briefing. Information regarding the briefing can be reviewed here [Winter Weather Briefing](#). VDOT snow removal plan can be viewed here [Snow Removal](#).

Save your General Mills box tops. You can drop them off in the school office to be converted to cash. The money goes right back into your child's school.

PTA membership is only \$10 per person. If you want to join the PTA, please send in your fee with your child to school.

Please send any ideas and suggestions to rennea.butler@outlook.com or wendylove@mac.com

There are various ways to communicate with us at school including, but not limited to ConnectEd, PIMS, and the monthly newsletter. A complete list of communication resources will be provided soon.

EVENTS

by The Assembly Team

[Reading Buddies Storytime](#) [Cascades Library](#)

Wednesday, Dec. 3, 4:30 pm

Encourage your child's love of books and reading development by pairing them with a reading buddy for one-on-one reading time. For Preschool-Grade 2.

Flights of Fancy -- Stories for Children

Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center

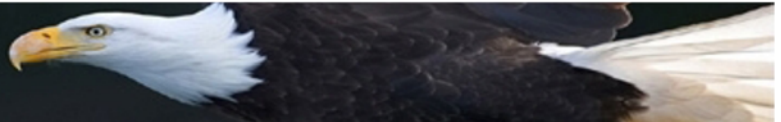
Tuesday, December 9, 2014,
11 AM – 12 PM

Hear museum staff read children's stories about aviation or space exploration; then try your hand at an activity. Today's title is *Astronaut Handbook* by Meghan McCarthy.



We're on the Web!

<http://cmsweb2.lcps.org/potowmack/site/default.asp>



***Rock City Music & Movement with**

Bach to Rock

Cascades Library

Friday, Dec. 12, 10:30 am & 11:30 am

Explore music in this interactive

class. For preschoolers

Tickets are required and may be picked

up half hour before the program.

Limit 25 per session.

(Just For Fun)

123 Math & Science: Heat

Cascades Library

Tuesday, Dec. 16, 4:00 pm

Registration required, begins Dec 2.

A class exploring math and science
concepts with hands-on activities.

For Grades 3-5.

Movie Matinee

Cascades Library

Tuesday, Dec. 23, 2:00 pm (Tuesdays,
December 23 & 30, 2:00 pm)

December 23: *Arthur Christmas* Rated
PG, 97 minutes.

December 30: *Willy Wonka and the
Chocolate Factory* Rated G, 100
minutes.

Feel free to bring your own snacks and
drinks!

For all ages.

Dec 6 Restaurant Night – Corner
Bakery

Dec 10; 7pm PTA meeting

Dec 11 – Teacher luncheon

Dec 12-14 Five Below Weekend

Dec 18 5th Grade Chorus Concert

Dec 22 – Jan 2 Winter Break

Jan 5 Classes resume