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DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Dr. Asia R. Jones, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Clark Bowers, Director, Student Services
John Lody, Director, Diagnostic and Prevention Services
Dr. Patricia D. Nelson, Director, Special Education

LCPS Links

https://www.facebook.com/LCPSofficial/timeline/
https://twitter.com/LCPSOfficial
https://vimeo.com/lcpstv

Committed to “EDUCATING THE WHOLE CHILD” and to ensuring a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment for all students.
Greetings!

On Wednesday, June 2nd we celebrated our “Everyday Heroes” at the Annual SEAC Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Special Education Awards. It was very evident to me, as the ceremony proceeded and many were recognized, that all around us are ordinary people doing extraordinary things and it is bringing out the inner hero in all of us. In so many ways, this year has been challenging not only for students but for educators and families as well. The global pandemic has evoked extraordinary efforts by schools to develop and train on innovative and creative teaching, and the use of multiple technologies to improve access for our students. Consequently, this has allowed educators to facilitate opportunities for active engagement and to realize positive outcomes for students with disabilities. Parents and families became our educational partners and we became stronger and better together. We sincerely thank you for your flexibility and willingness to take on this role as we worked together to support all students.

As a county, we faced unprecedented challenges amid the global pandemic and created a much-needed sense of connection by supporting each other, as Dr. Zeigler has stated with “grace for the unknown”. Our community drew closer by demonstrating our commitment to each other by showing care and compassion for one another. I am truly inspired by the dedication and resiliency demonstrated daily by our community and the positive impact it has made on our students and each other. I want to take this moment to recognize and shine a light on each one of you who were already doing extraordinary work and I honor you as our Everyday Hero. The Everyday Hero is within each and every one of us, and is expressed by simple, ordinary actions. Heroes do simple acts; of kindness, of courage, and of love. Heroes achieve goals, regardless of the challenges they face. No matter what role you play in the LCPS community, we are grateful for the dedication and commitment that you have shown each other, the students, your school and this division.

As the school-year ends and we look forward to Summer and the opportunity for rest and relaxation, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of you for being our everyday heroes...because what you do each and every day matters.

Dr. Patricia Nelson
Director of Special Education
Special Education Supervisor, Tammy Davis and Assistive Technology Specialist, Chris Bugaj were invited to participate in the newly formed Assistive Technology Network Advisory Council. The Virginia Department of Education’s Assistive Technology Network is composed of specialists from the regional Training and Technical Assistance Centers (T/TAC) and AIM-VA who specialize in the identification and implementation of assistive technology devices and services in Virginia public schools. The purpose of the AT Advisory Council is to share the work of the AT Network with relevant stakeholders within schools and with other agency and community partners to increase communication, identify common AT needs, and create networks of professionals. To learn more about VATS, please click here.

LCPS Career & Transition is excited to share that our Community and Schools Together (CAST) Salamander site was awarded a Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Special Education Award for the 2020-2021 school year. Our team is very lucky to have such amazing staff supporting our students through their journeys toward independent living. When our students exit these programs, they have a resume full of job skills and experiences.
May is **Better Hearing and Speech Month**! Throughout the month educators everywhere highlight practices that work to improve communication abilities to help give everyone a voice! One way to practice using your voice is to use it to type. Voice typing is a feature built into Google Docs. Users can go to Tools > Voice Typing to activate this feature. A microphone icon will appear. The user can then speak aloud, and the text will appear on screen at the place of the cursor.

For those using a Chromebook, users can add text to text boxes in Google Slides using their voice by enabling dictation in the Accessibility Settings. Users go to the Settings application, select Advanced and then Accessibility. They then select Manage accessibility features and scroll to the Keyboard and text input section. There, they toggle on Enable dictation (speak to type). A microphone will appear in the bottom right corner of the screen. Users can place their cursor in the text box where they’d like the text to appear and select the microphone icon to activate the voice dictation function. Users then compose the text with their voice.

Using one’s voice to compose text can provide users with another option for self-expression without needing to rely on typing or handwriting proficiency. Inviting learners to communicate in the way they prefer builds confidence, fosters agency, and gives everyone the opportunity to have a voice so they can make meaningful contributions to the world.
The Farmwell Station Middle School deans and counselors were ecstatic when they learned that LCPS would be returning to Hybrid instruction in March, and immediately went to work recruiting their most vulnerable students to partake in the return to in-person learning. They met with their interdisciplinary teams to identify which students who may be unlikely to return, would benefit most from the return to school and how best to reach out to their families. The deans and counselors emailed and called many families, and even made home visits when necessary. They employed the help of the Parent Liaison and the translation services. The result of their efforts was tremendous! The vast majority of those contacted not only returned to school two days a week, but improved in their attendance, participation and work completion. Now, all those same students are attending school in-person four days a week, and they are continuing to thrive!

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports and Counseling Office:

Supporting Families

On May 19, 2021, families attended the 11th session of The Family Room focused on Safe and Supportive Learning Environments at Home, Part 2. The session titled, “Raising Kids is Hard: Learn Strategies for Supporting Behavior, Mental Wellness and Positive Relationships at Home,” engaged families and caregivers in learning how to use behavioral strategies and social emotional skills to increase positive interactions and predictability at home. Growing up has its own set of challenges, for both the child and the adult. Strategies were shared to help navigate these challenges through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Social Emotional Learning, and School Counseling. The session helped participants with understanding the brain and emotions, provide tips on discipline, structure and routines, explore various ways to apply SEL skills at home, and give steps for creating cool down spaces at home.

The Family Room is supported through the Family and Community Engagement Office.
Exploring SEL for Deeper Learning

On May 3, 2021, elementary social-emotional learning (SEL) leads joined together for their 3rd and final lead meeting of the school year. Over 200 teachers engaged in learning related to SEL and academic integration. Instructional Facilitators, Michelle Armentrout and Laura Rahn, collaborated with the SEL Specialist, Lindsay Orme and SEL Consulting Teacher, Devon Becker, to provide opportunities during this session for teachers to explore the role of SEL in deeper learning.

Teachers viewed resources and participated in group discussion, exploring how SEL can empower students and strengthen project-based learning (PBL), personalized learning (PL), and performance assessments (PA). Through the process of identifying connections between SEL and PBL, PL, and PA, teachers discovered ways to intentionally apply a SEL lens when planning for deeper learning.

Following the lead meeting session, teachers were invited to share their feedback. Participating teachers reported high levels of preparedness with beginning to integrate SEL into planning for deeper learning. In addition to feedback on the learning, teachers also shared SEL highlights for the year. When asked, “What has been your favorite thing about SEL this year?,” teacher responses included building connections between students and staff, observing more empathy and kindness among students, students applying SEL skills in situations throughout the day and at home, and improvements in problem-solving skills. Through SEL this year, our leads have observed strong, connected class communities and students applying SEL skills for managing emotions, solving problems and building students ownership.

SPECIALIZED READING

We are excited to announce that LCPS has been accepted into a second cohort of LETRS Volume 1, provided through VDOE. This school year, VDOE provided funding for 10 LCPS teachers to complete LETRS Volume 1. This volume consists of four units that cover: theoretical models from reading science; phonology, basic and advanced phonics; screening and educational diagnostic assessment. Jenny Douglas, Specialized Instructional Facilitators of Reading, Certified LETRS Trainer and LCPS Dyslexia Advisor, led the group consisting of Reading Specialists and ELA Instructional Facilitators through the module in a series of asynchronous and synchronous sessions held in the evenings.
LETRS addresses four critical outcomes for effective literacy instruction: understanding the science of reading, converting research to practice, enhancing teacher effectiveness, and transforming instruction. By understanding the “why” behind science and evidence-based research, educators can effectively know how to aid students in learning to read. LETRS professional learning is relevant and applicable and designed to be the cornerstone of a multi-year, systemic literacy improvement initiative. Throughout LETRS, Bridge to Practice opportunities allow teachers to apply evidence-based concepts and best practices to daily classroom instruction. We are currently in the phase of determining the logistics of participation in the Fall 2021 cohort and more updates will be coming!

**SPOTLIGHT ON PARK VIEW HIGH SCHOOL PEER**

This Sources of Strength website was made by PVH peer leaders this year and it was launched during a recent advisory lesson. What a wonderful resource for the PVH Community!

https://818209.wixsite.com/website

**SPOTLIGHT ON STERLING MIDDLE SCHOOL**

To ensure that our walls spoke to our core values, many of our teachers volunteered to decorate a bulletin board under one of the four categories topics: Diversity, Equity, Positivity, and Instruction. Even though the turnaround time was quick, with our teachers entering the building only 2 short days prior to our students, they stepped up to the call. Links were distributed and votes requested to determine which boards best represented the core values. Please check out the boards via the links below!

- Diversity: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1uHRGIR4Nqre7dIyAu_kBJ1ZzHDHE_39HIBjVeilYhT0/edit?usp=sharing
- Equity: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1P-XGSbPKXBo9cuVwCNBEupr3iSckk-221TwFSf8rg/edit?usp=sharing
- Positivity: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1K9479Otv7abIos45cbQ9jGgu-ZoAbUyQjWYySrVEfLA/edit?usp=sharing
- Instruction: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11Upi8Bqa5CxCoLdVccprUkKCwmpvE9kZOkERLk8uyKI/edit?usp=sharing
On School Nurses Day, May 12th, Jeannie Kloman, Student Health Services Supervisor and Kelly Thomas, Student Health Services Specialist, were presented with a G.R.I.T. award from the Virginia Association of School Nurses for showing Grace, Resilience, and Inspiration Throughout the pandemic.

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Proclamation of G.R.I.T.

Whereas, the Virginia Association of School Nurses wishes to recognize Virginia school nurses who demonstrated

Grace, Resilience, and Inspiration Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021, and beyond; and

Whereas, VASN's G.R.I.T. Award is a small token of the huge role Virginia school nurses play in the lives of their students every single day,

Therefore, let it be known that

Kelly Thomas

is recognized by Virginia Association of School Nurses on

May 12, 2021

as a school nurse with true G.R.I.T.!

Keep up the good work, keep fighting every day to mitigate the coronavirus, and continue to equitably make our schools a safe environment for all students to be healthy and ready to learn. Congratulations and thank you for your loyal service!

Gina Bellamy, MSA, BSN, RN, NCSN
VASN President

Angela M. Moore, MBA, BSN, RN, NCSN, CDDN
VASN President-Elect
A MESSAGE from the ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

The final days of the school year always bring a range of emotions. This year has been especially challenging with the pandemic and unrest related to a host of concerns. Despite the many uncertainties, distractions, and challenges, we have worked tirelessly to support our students, families, and fellow employees. Although exhausted, we have weathered the pandemic together and continue to find innovative ways to grow ourselves and others. I am proud of the strategic prevention and intervention that I’ve witnessed the Pupil Services team provide within the remote and in-person platforms. I am encouraged by the excitement and celebrations of the little things we once took for granted. I am encouraged by the accomplishments of our students and 2021 graduates. I remain encouraged and look forward to welcoming new team members that will join us for the 2021-2022 school year. Please take time to enjoy your family, friends, and self this summer. Be safe, be strong, be well.

Asia R. Jones, Ed.D.

UPCOMING EVENTS


The Department of Pupil Services wishes you a relaxing, well-deserved Summer break. We look forward with excitement to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year and welcome the opportunity to work with our new Superintendent, Dr. Scott A. Ziegler, as we strive to empower all students to make meaningful contributions to the world. Welcome Dr. Ziegler!