Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

Here’s the latest news from Lanier:

**Budget News:**

The FCPS budget situation is at a critical phase, and I encourage you to be an active participant before decisions are made that will impact the future of FCPS is a fundamental way. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will be meeting over the next few days in closed session to set the real estate tax rate for the next fiscal year. The largest percentage of money available to Fairfax County and FCPS comes from real estate taxes. The County Executive has proposed that the rate not be increased over the current level of $1.085 per $100 of assessed value. This will bring an actual increase of revenue to the county due to increased assessments. Despite this, the budget, as proposed by the County Executive, only provides a 2% increase in the transfer to the schools system as opposed to the 5.7% request by FCPS. In addition, the County is proposing that the school system only receive approximately 26% of the actual revenue increase of $148 million.

Residents of Fairfax County may contact their district supervisor to voice their input. Supervisor names and email addresses can be located here: [http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/about-the-board-of-supervisors.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/about-the-board-of-supervisors.htm).

**March 11- FCPS Budget Information Meeting and Its Effect on the City of Fairfax Schools:** On March 11th at 7:00pm in the Fairfax High School Library, the City School Board will be hosting a meeting to inform the community about the Fairfax County Public Schools budget. As you all know, the City Schools are highly dependent on FCPS and the services they provide us through our School Services Agreement (SSA). Consequently, it is vital that we be informed about their budget process and potential outcomes as it does affect not only our services, but also the required amount we pay annually for those services. Kristen Michael, Budget Director for FCPS, has graciously agreed to come and provide information to any and all that come on the 11th.

**UPDATE From the Counseling Office Re: Rising 9th GRADE COURSE SELECTION FORMS:** The due dates for high school forms published last week were the dates the forms are due to the high schools. The counseling department at Lanier has set an earlier deadline for each school (1 week from the presentation date) to account for the time needed for counselors to meet with students and to complete the academic advising process. Please work with your child’s counselor if you need additional time to complete the form or if you have additional questions.

Lanier’s Office of School Counseling will be collecting the course selection for students going to Woodson, Oakton and Chantilly high schools.

Course selection sheets for those going to Fairfax High School will be submitted the student’s 8th grade Science teacher.

Due Dates are as follows:

- **Woodson HS:** Forms submitted to the designated drop-off box in the Lanier MS Office of School Counseling by **Friday, February 28 (forms were due February 21)**

- **Fairfax HS:** Forms submitted to the student’s 8th grade science teacher by **Friday, March 7 (new date)**

- **Oakton HS:** Forms submitted to the designated drop-off box in the Lanier MS Office of School Counseling by **Monday, March 17 (new date)**

- **Chantilly HS:** Forms should be submitted to the designated drop-off box in the Lanier MS Office
Lanier Hosts Skype Session with Captain Charles Parks: On February 26, 2014, a group of 7th grade science students had the opportunity to Skype with Captain Charles Parks of Tangier Island, VA. Captain Parks is a waterman and lifelong resident of Tangier Island that now works for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). Students queried him regarding the history of Tangier Island and his experiences and observations regarding the ecological changes which tie in directly with seventh grade classes in Investigations in Environmental Science and US History, as well as the focus of Lanier’s Eco-Club. Science Teacher Yannos Misitzis and I met Captain Charles last summer while taking part in a CBF seminar for educators.

Spelling Bee Winner: Congratulations to David Orvedahl, who will be competing in the regional bee in March. Congratulations also to Megan Anderson our runner-up!

Admission Into the National Junior Honor Society: The Sidney Lanier Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society promotes recognition for students who reflect outstanding accomplishments in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship, and service.

This week, eligible candidates, 7th or 8th grade students who have met the first requirement for admission by maintaining a minimum GPA of 3.55 for the first two quarters of the 2013-14 school year, received a new member application via email in their FCPS Google accounts (@fcpsschools.net). In addition, returning members have received a pinning ceremony application via their FCPS Google accounts (@fcpschools.net) if they have maintained a GPA of 3.55 or higher for the first two quarters of the 2013-14 school year.

If students have technical difficulties accessing their FCPS Google Accounts, they may visit Ms. Charmona Whitfield – School Based Technology Specialist, in Room 153 during Pride Time next week (Monday through Thursday) with a pass from their Pride Time teacher.

Applications must be submitted no later than Monday, March 3, 2014 at 3:30 PM. Acceptance letters into NJHS will also be sent out via email through that same account, and confirmation must be returned by Monday, March 10, 2014. New members will be asked to pay a one-time new member and pinning fee of $20* due by Monday, March 10, 2014.

Current 7th grade students will be inducted on Thursday, March 27, 2014, at 6:00 PM (transportation required) with a mandatory practice on Wednesday, March 26, 2014, after school from 3-4:30 PM (late bus transportation provided). According to organizational guidelines, students must attend the Induction Ceremony in order to be a member. In addition, the Lanier chapter of NJHS requires all students must meet the advertised deadlines for each step of the process. Meeting deadlines is part of the obligation of being a member of the National Junior Honor Society.

The 8th grade Pinning Ceremony and Induction of newly qualified 8th graders will take place on Thursday, April 3, 2014, at 6:00 PM (transportation required) with a mandatory practice on Wednesday, April 2, 2014, after school from 3-4:30 PM (late bus transportation provided). Family members are welcome to attend the induction ceremony and reception afterward with light refreshments provided.

Any parent or faculty member that is willing to assist with the ceremony or reception, please email Sean Cammaerts at sgcammaerts@fcps.edu or Elizabeth Eby at eaeby@fcps.edu. Your support is much appreciated.

**Please email or call Mr. Cammaerts at sgcammaerts@fcps.edu or 703-934-2448 if alternative financial arrangements need to be made.

PTA NEWS:
March PTA Meeting: On March 19th, at 7 pm, the PTA will host a guest speaker, Jon Almquist, ATC. Mr. Almquist is a concussion specialist with INOVA. Are you aware that most concussions occur without loss of consciousness? He will speak on “Important Facts about Childhood and Teenage Concussions.”

As always, should you have any questions, please email me at andrea.e.schauer@gmail.com

In the Community:

George Mason University's Volgenau School of Engineering: STEM Saturday workshops for middle and high school students begin Saturday, March 1st. For more information please go to http://stem.volgenau.gmu.edu/current.html. Parents interested in enrolling their children may email Kamaljeet Sanghera, Executive Director STEM Outreach at ksangher@gmu.edu or call 703-362-2474 (cell)

Have a good weekend,

Scott Poole
Principal