Dear Spring Hill Parents:

A warm holiday greeting to you all! Do you recall that it seemed like just a few weeks ago that we had a fantastic beginning to the school year? We blinked, and already the winter holiday is almost upon us. However, from my perspective by working with your children and our teachers at Spring Hill on a daily basis it has given me an excellent opportunity to pause and observe what can only be described as a wonderful year, to date.

The hard work, collaboration, mirth and kindness we see displayed by your child(ren) each day, is truly special. Watching the students go about their school day by saying please and thank you, by kindly taking turns, by keeping their voices down in the hallway so as to not disturb others who are working and by giving so generously of their time to others, is truly what this season of the year stands for. You as parents and especially your child(ren) are to be commended for it.

Continued on pg 2
To celebrate the good cheer of our students, we as a Spring Hill School staff, will again this year perform our staff sing-a-long. On Friday, December 19th the staff will begin singing to the students at 8 AM in the cafeteria and continue until about 8:35ish. Ms. Rudd will lead us in song and Mrs. Harwood will “tickle the ivories” and our cast of altos, sopranos, baritones and basses will captivate the students with all our favorite winter classics. Children of course will be encouraged to sing along. And, if you are in school that morning, drop in and get into the spirit.

On behalf of the entire Spring Hill School staff, we wish you a wonderful holiday season and trust that you will have a relaxing and safe holiday. Don’t forget, the Spring Hill Office will be closed from December 22nd through January 2nd. School will resume on Monday, January 5th.

See you next year!

Roger Vanderhye

Roger Vanderhye, Principal

This school newsletter will be issued every Wednesday during the school year on our website, under “News and Events.” You will receive an email link to the newsletter if we have your current email address.

Deadline for submissions are Mondays by Noon. Email nelda.hirji@fcps.edu

Please include Panther Press in the subject.
See Inside this Issue:

- **Page 1-2:** Principal Letter, Winter Holidays, Matching playdates notes
- **Page 2:** Holiday Visitors, Food Orders/Class Parties
- **Page 3:** Calendar, Kiss & Ride, Lost & Found
- **Page 4:** Colonial Day Photos
- **Page 5-6:** PTO Appropriations Vote
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### Calendar

#### Time Out of School

Please schedule your family vacations during FCPS designated holidays / breaks, which you can see at this link: [http://www.fcps.edu/cal.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/cal.shtml)

Be aware that missing school for extended periods of time negatively impacts your child and your child's teacher.

#### Week of December 15:
- **Monday, December 12:** 1st GR Gingerbread House making, Lg Pod/Wet & Dry
- **Thursday, December 18:** SCA Spirit Day, PJ / Holiday Day
- **Friday, December 19:** Staff holiday sing-a-long, Cafeteria, 8-8:40 am
  - 2 hr Early Release

#### Winter Break: December 22-January 2

#### Week of January 12:
- **Wednesday, January 14:** PTO Meeting, Lg Pod, 9:15 am
- **Thursday January 15:** Clubs, Candids and Panoramic Photos, Lg Pod, 9am-All day
  - Fun Fair Meeting, 9:15, Cafeteria
  - 5th & 6th GR Orchestra Concert, Gym, 7 pm

#### Week of January 19:
- **Monday, January 19:** MLK Day Holiday, No School
- **Saturday, January 24:** Family Skate Night, Reston Skate Quest, 6-9 pm

#### Week of January 26:
- **Thursday, January 29:** 2 hr Early Release
- **Friday, January 30 & Monday, February 2:** No School, Student Holidays


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**Kiss and Ride During Inclement Weather**

Many students who normally ride the bus or walk, are driven to school when it is raining or snowing. This causes a very long delay with kiss and ride. Please be patient as our staff is working as quickly as possible to accommodate all of the students. If students are late due to kiss and ride they are counted as tardy. As always the best option for getting children to and from school is the school bus.

Thank you all for your patience and support.

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**Lost and Found Please Check**

Please check the cafeteria for lost lunch boxes, coats and jackets. During the holiday, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.
The fourth grade celebrated Colonial Day on Friday, December 12th. The children dressed in colonial clothing, participated in traditional crafts and activities, and performed period songs and dances for their friends and family. A wonderful time was had by all.
APPROPRIATIONS VOTES NEEDED FROM PTO MEMBERS
Please vote via email by January 9, 2015

A huge thank you to everyone who donated to our PTO fundraisers this fall! Because of your generosity, the PTO is able to appropriate funds back to Spring Hill to meet the needs of our staff and students.

PUTTING DELAYED WALKING TRAIL FUNDING TO USE TODAY
Last year, the PTO approved money to build a walking trail behind the school. The school was later made aware that local proffer money may be available to construct a much higher quality track instead. With that knowledge, the school decided to put the trail project on hold, pending the outcome of the proffer request. As of Tuesday, December 16th, we still have not heard whether a full-fledged track has been approved by Fairfax County through the proffer system. Given the uncertainty around the track decision, in November the PTO Executive Board requested and received a refund from FCPS of the funds appropriated for the trail last fall in order to put those funds to use as soon as possible. The Board felt that should the proffer fall through, membership can revisit the trail idea at a later time. Appropriations reflect the current needs of the school.

RECOMMENDED APPROPRIATIONS SPENDING
The PTO Appropriations Committee met with Roger Vanderhye on Tuesday, December 9th to review a list of requests submitted for appropriations. The following requests were approved by the Appropriations Committee and are recommended to be voted on by the PTO general membership:

1. 65 laptop computers to be used by the 6th grade ($39,000) – This purchase, along with existing machines, will allow each 6th grader to have a dedicated laptop. Providing our older students with individual laptops allows for more thorough research to be done during school hours AND frees up valuable Computer Lab time for younger students, who require both sturdier desktop computers and more direct instruction on computer use.
2. New and replacement games for the Critical Thinking Room, formerly Strategies Lab ($4,000) --Our new AART teacher found many games with missing or broken parts that need replacing.
3. Five Incubators for chick hatching for 2nd grade ($913.77) -- The 2nd grade teachers report that the current incubator systems and humidity kits (below) are failing due to age, resulting in a large number of unhatched chicks.
4. Five humidity kits for chick hatching for 2nd grade ($688.77)
5. One 14” Tubano drum ($265.63) -- The music teachers would like students to have more turns with instruments during General Music class.
6. One 12” Tubano drum with storage bag ($234.59)
7. Two 10” Tubano drums with storage bags ($417.22)
8. Four sets of bean bags for rhythm ($72.95)
9. Four sets of six 36" ribbon wands ($111.78)
10. Four sets of rhythm sticks ($107.30)

Total Appropriation request amount: $45,812.01

PLEASE VOTE BY JANUARY 9
We ask PTO members to please review the recommended list of appropriations requests above and submit your votes via email to the PTO President, Amy Prewett, no later than Friday, January 9th. This timing should allow all purchases to be made and put to use early on in the 3rd Quarter.

According to our Bylaws (found on the PTO website at www.springhillPTO.org), Appropriations requests must be approved by membership through a meeting or a ballot. The Executive Board has determined that the Panther Press newsletter will serve as a ballot.

Members either vote YES on the entire slate or NO. Per PTO Bylaws, a non-vote is counted as a "yes" vote. Amy’s contact information is acprewett@yahoo.com. Thank you for your generosity and consideration!
NEW! Spring Hill Bids For Kids Online Auction
The Spring Hill Bids for Kids online auction will take place in late February/early March of 2015. This will be our main spring fundraiser to raise money for items such as laptop computers, SmartBoards and other needs for the school. We are currently looking for donations such as restaurant gift cards, vacation home time, or other services such as landscaping or interior design. Please contact Stephanie Short (skleger@gmail.com) to help.

Plan Ahead for 2015
Our next PTO Meeting will be Wednesday, January 14th at 9:15am in the Cafeteria. Our speakers will be Arlene Randall, Principal of Cooper Middle School, and Fred Amico, Assistant Principal at Langley High School. Come find out what’s going on in our education pyramid and what’s coming in the spring for the PTO!

On Friday, January 16th at 9:15am, there will be a planning meeting for Fun Fair committee members in the cafeteria. See you there!

Save the Date! Skate Night Is Back!
When: Saturday, January 24th ~ Where: Skate Quest in Reston ~ Time: 6:10-8pm

Tickets will be sold before school in the lobby January 20-23rd. $10 per skater (includes skate rental). Cash or checks payable to Spring Hill PTO accepted. More details coming soon.

Green Initiatives Yogurt Container Drive
Do you love yogurt and tend to buy them in the large containers?? Then we need your help!! The Green Initiatives Committee is seeking the collection of LARGE yogurt containers (32oz/2lb) to hold used up pens/mechanical pencils and glue sticks. We have received approval from Terracycle to turn these otherwise landfill-doomed items into $$$ CASH $$$ for our school! Our goal is to have at least two yogurt containers per classroom to hold each of these items. Containers can be turned in (clean, of course) to a designated box in the Cafeteria. Questions? Please contact Yashi Verma (a_vegemite@yahoo.com), Nancy Bao (nihao100@hotmail.com) or Kristin Mears (kamears@hotmail.co.uk).

Coffee Pod Donations for Teachers
The PTO purchased a Keurig coffee machine to keep in the Teachers' Lounge and would LOVE donations of coffee pods both regular and decaf so the teachers can treat themselves every day. Donations can be left in the teachers' lounge. Questions? Contact Lynne at evangelineemanuel1014@gmail.com.

Thank You!
Each week there are so many volunteers that take time to make our school a little better. Many thanks to:

- Rania Razek and Amy Prewett for doing Bus Notes on Friday
- Lynne Emanuel, Maile Ramzi, Miriam Smith, and Sue Cardenas for putting together the fabulous annual chili lunch for teachers and staff!
- Thanks to all the parents who helped put on Colonial Day for the 4th grade!
SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY THIS HOLIDAY BREAK?

Don’t run out of things to talk about! Tell them all about Bids for Kids.

Tell your cousins, neighbors, and college roommates about Bids for Kids when you see them at holiday parties over the winter break!

Anyone can donate and anyone can bid. Join us online in February and let us know now if you have donations of goods, services, cash, or more.

Spring Hill Bids For Kids

Seeking donations and future bidders

Our online auction is replacing traditional silent auction baskets at Fun Fair, our annual school carnival.

Support the PTO, get a potential write off on your taxes, while advertising to our community!

Please RSVP ASAP if you are able to donate anything:

Stephanie Short
skloger@gmail.com

or

Paula Mosby
paula-mosby@live.com
Are You Prepared? Make Plans Now!

Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing Plans
Make Arrangements Now in Case of an Unforeseen Schedule Change

Due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, it may be necessary to close schools for the entire day, to open schools two hours late, or to close two hours early. The procedures used in school closings are detailed below. Keep this information in a convenient location for future reference.

Parents are urged to make arrangements now for the care of their children when schedule changes are made (and to provide for the rare situation when it is necessary to close an individual school because of a power failure or other circumstances). Children should know where to go or what to do if a parent will not be or is not home.

FCPS has several schedules set up to deal with inclement weather. These are put into effect when conditions threaten the safety of children and FCPS staff who are walking, driving, or riding buses to schools. These schedules are:

(1) Keep schools closed. (2) Open two hours late. (3) Close two hours early.

As soon as a decision is made to implement one of these changes, we post the information on:

- FCPS cable Channel 21
- www.fcps.edu.
- Facebook and Twitter.
- Email notifications will be made through our Keep in Touch (KIT) system.
- Called in to local radio and television stations.

We try to make a decision by 4:30 a.m. when schools will be closed all day or will open two hours late. This gives us 30 minutes so that the public announcement can be posted and reach all media outlets by 5:00 a.m. On some occasions, it is not possible to make these time frames as weather can change unexpectedly. On some other occasions, the school system has been able to make a scheduling decision the day before so that parents, staff members, and students know what will happen the following day. This usually happens when precipitation is already on the ground and the temperatures are such that the precipitation on the ground is frozen or will refreeze.

For more information, go to http://www.fcps.edu/news/weather.shtml