Dear Parents,

It is a source of pride that Island Creek was once again recognized as a “Fully Accredited” elementary school by the Virginia Department of Education. This rating is awarded to schools that meet or exceed all standards set forth in the Virginia established Standards of Accreditation. Maintaining this status is one of the focuses as we write our annual School Improvement Plan.

As we develop this plan, we first clarify the vision, mission and core values of our school. At Island Creek our vision reflects a commitment to prepare all students for the world of the future, by giving them a broad spectrum of opportunities which promote life long learning of the arts, literacy and technology. We have defined the following as our mission:

“Island Creek Elementary School inspires students to lead ethical lives, demonstrate responsible citizenship and meet high academic standards.”

The purpose of our school plan is to define, the “what, why, and how” we will achieve continuous improvement. Our goal areas are determined from reflective analysis of student performance indicators. Data from sources such as Standards of Learning (SOL) tests provide us information we use to assess our strengths and areas of need. Evidence from this analysis led our school improvement plan committee to identify that school wide consistent practice of researched based instructional strategies would be the focus of our current plan. Careful definition of how we will measure our effectiveness is the final and critical component of the process.

In the end, the effectiveness of our School Improvement Plan rests with those who will implement it. This team includes our most valuable resources; our students, teachers and families. Parents are an important part of both the development and implementation of our plan. To learn more about the school plan process, or to be a part of the review committee, please email (susan.owner@fcps.edu) or give me a call at 571-642-6300. We welcome your participation.

Thank you for being our partner in education.

Susan Z Owner
Principal
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR
December 1 - PTA Craft & Gift Show
December 3 - Barnes & Noble Shopping Event
December 4 - 4th Gr. Field Trip to Kennedy Ctr.
December 4th - PTA Meeting
December 11 - Club Photo Day
December 24-January 1 - Winter Vacation
Meet Tracy Tashima - Parent Liaison

As your new Parent Liaison, I want to take a moment to introduce myself and let you know that I am available to you in a variety of ways.

A bit about myself... A native New Yorker, we moved to the area two years ago so that my husband, Keith, could pursue a career in environmental law at the Department of Justice. I have three children, two of which are students here! Alison is in Kindergarten and Isabel is in second grade. Ethan is our little guy and goes to nursery school. As an undergraduate student I pursued interests in anthropology and traveled throughout the Middle East to research my thesis project on Palestinian women. After graduating, I “fell” into teaching with the help of my Mom - whom many of you know as either Isabel’s grandmother or Aida Montero. I taught in Brooklyn, New York for thirteen years and received my Masters degree in Early Childhood Education. After a few years of being a “stay at home Mom,” I am very happy to find myself here, at Island Creek, as your Parent Liaison.

Our Partnership... As the Parent Liaison, I am available to facilitate communication with families, coordinate workshops, encourage parent involvement and provide information and resources to parents. In addition, my background also makes me available to help you in ways directly related to your classroom. I am in the building on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9:30-12:00. I can be reached via email at: tracy.tashima@fcps.edu.

I am looking forward to a fantastic year!

SPECIAL HONORS

Mark Moran ~ School Based Technology Specialist

Mark recently earned a ”Best Practices Award” from the FCPS Office of Community Relations for his work on the Island Creek Website. This is a highly competitive honor; and we are all proud of him!

Check out the Island Creek website that he authors at:

www.fcps.edu/IslandCreekes
Check-it Out at the Library

Book Fair Blizzard: Chill Out with a Good Book

The Scholastic Book Fair is coming to a close. Family Night was Monday, October 29th. It was great to see families sharing their love of books. The funds raised from the book fair will support the library program. Last year’s funds bought a wireless Smart Board and data projector for the library. Students love learning using this hands-on, interactive tool.

October Library Happenings

It has been a busy and fun time in the library this month:

♦ All the 6th grade classes, in a special project, learned about primary and secondary sources while using images from the Library of Congress. Each class created 8 coffee-table styles books on Native Americans. They did a great job!

♦ All 5th grade classes are visiting the library to review reference resources in preparation for the Global Awareness & Technology Research Project to be completed in the Spring. Island Creek was selected to be a pilot school for this FCPS initiative.

♦ First grade classes used a Venn Diagram on a Smart Board to compare and contrast stories read in library. Comparing and contrasting is a strategy that helps student’s reading comprehension.

♦ Kindergartners learned about predictions using a “prediction can”. Making predictions is one of several strategies that helps students’ reading comprehension.

Stay tuned for library happenings in other grades next month.

Thank you to everyone who visited and helped at the fifth annual ICES Book Fair. It was a success because of you!

6th Grade Book Club

The third meeting of the 6th Grade Book Club will be November 15th at 7:30AM in the library. The title of the book we are reading is The Trial by Jennifer Bryant. New members are encouraged to attend.

You can access the Island Creek library catalog from home: http://libcat.fcps.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi/x/00/57/49?user_id=429WEB

Library Staff:
Jill Woodall, Librarian
Debi Poole, Library Assistant
Counselor’s Corner
Respect

Respect is the character quality for the month of October. Respect is defined as appreciating and recognizing the value of each person. We demonstrate our respect for others primarily through our actions, attitudes and tone of voice.

EVERYDAY OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN RESPECT

School-age children are very aware of other children’s actions and are capable of understanding the idea that everyone is entitled to rights, opinions, feelings, and likes and dislikes.

- Show with your words and actions that you value your child’s interests, ideas, thoughts and feelings.
- Help your child understand appropriate respectful behavior in all kinds of real-life situations – in the classroom, at a sporting event, grocery store, or at family celebrations.
- Encourage your child to be a good thoughtful listener when a lively discussion is under way and to take turns in expressing his/her opinion.
- Role-play with your child as everyday problems arise at school, with friendships, and the like. Help your child develop respectful ways to speak his/her mind and learn the difference between friendly debate and hurtful verbal attacks.
- Talk with your child about respectful and disrespectful behavior toward teachers, coaches, referees, and so on, and set clear expectations for respectful interactions.
- Learn about other cultures, traditions and teach your child tolerance and respect for cultural differences.
- Take your child to plays, concerts, art museums, and ethnic restaurants to experience diverse tastes, interests and feelings.
- Praise your child’s small efforts to show respect; show disapproval and disappointment for disrespect.
- Let your child know that you have rights and needs, too.
- Look for opportunities to talk about the fact that everyone has different likes and dislikes.

Be a good role model: Show respect in your everyday interactions with others even when you must disagree, disagree respectfully.

Your partners in character education,

Virginia Hulke
Steff Shelesky
School Counselors

In honor of Veteran’s Day

Please Join us in creating a banner of peace

Students, visitors and staff are invited to join in creating our “Banner of Peace”.

Monday, November 12, 2007
9am-12:30pm

Students, staff, and visitors will have the opportunity to create an artistic statement of peace. We will begin on the sidewalk at the front entrance and work our way around the whole school.

Greet someone new today, look into their eyes, smile, say hello, shake their hand... LET THE PEACE BEGIN!
GET CONNECTED

With FCPS “Parent View”

“Parent View” gives parents their own account on FCPS 24/7 Learning (also known as Blackboard). The advantage of this account is that if you have more than one child in Fairfax County Public Schools, you can access all of their courses with just one login. The second advantage of these accounts is that you can update your emergency care information on-line. Obtaining an account is a two step process. First you must login to http://fcps.blackboard.com. The login is newuser and the password is parentreg. Fill out the online prompts. At the end of the process, print or write down your unique registration key. (The information that you enter must be exactly the same as the information used when you registered your child.) Secondly you must bring the unique registration key to the school office. (ON NOVEMBER 5th and 6th ICES WILL BE REGISTERING USERS FROM 7:30am-4pm) Please bring a photo ID so that your account can be verified. This process only takes a couple of minutes. You will then receive your username and your password will be e-mailed to you. You only need to go through this process one time. “Keep in Touch” is another FCPS initiative that will help keep you informed. When you register, you sign up for just the information you wish to receive. You can list up to two e-mail addresses in each Keep in Touch profile. Island Creek is able to send emergency messages through this service. In addition you will be notified of school closing etc. The link to sign up for this service is on the Island Creek home page (www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes) and on the home page of Fairfax County Public Schools (www.fcps.edu). Please feel free to call the school if you have any questions.

You’re Invited

What: Math Night for PARENTS
When: Wednesday, November 14th from 6:30-8:00pm
Where: Island Creek Elementary Cafeteria

This event will feature family friendly math games, supporting POS/SOL objectives. Parents will CREATE math games to take home and practice with family members. Preschool through sixth grade parents are invited to participate in this great demonstration of the fun of mathematics.

Life Planning Tools
Looking Ahead
Experience and Explore Your Child’s Future Options for Children with Disabilities

When: Saturday, November 17, 2007 - 9:00-2:30pm
Where: Luther Jackson Middle School
3020 Gallows Rd., Falls Church, VA

- “Twelve Things You Can Do to Plan for Your Child’s Future Today”
- “Overview of the Virginia Medicaid Waiver System”
- “Eat in Our Seats—an Interactive Lunch Experience”
- “What about Jobs and Why Should I Care When My Child is Still in School?”

Register online at: http://www.acps.k12.va.us/prc/events.php or call Anne Lipnick at 703-706-4552

Fairfax County Therapeutic Recreation staff will provide the respite care.
Strategies That Work at Home

Steps for Book Discussions with Independent Readers

1. Before Reading
   - Choose one comprehension strategy to discuss.
   - Tell your child to use two or three “post it” notes to mark areas of the text where he/she used the strategy. He/She may want to jot his/her thoughts on the “post it” notes.

2. During Reading
   - Your child should read silently for thirty minutes, using the “post it” notes to mark places for your follow up discussion.

3. After Reading
   - Use one of the questions/prompts provided with the comprehension strategies to open a short discussion about the book.

Making Connections

*Linking the story to something you know or have experienced*

- Tell me about a part of the story that reminds you of you.
- Tell me about a part of the story that reminds you of another story.
- Tell me about a part that reminds you of the world.

Questioning

*Digging deeper to keep yourself engaged*

- Show me a part of the text where you had a question.
- Tell me what you were wondering about as you read this part.
- Show me where you asked, “Huh?” How did you clear up your confusion?
Visualizing

*Painting a picture or running the movie in your mind*

- Show me a place in the text where you made a picture in your mind.
- What specific language helped you use your senses within your visualization?
- How did the features (pictures and captions, tables, charts) help you? (nonfiction text)

Inferring

*Revealing the meaning beyond the print*

- Tell me what you think will happen next in the text. Why?
- Show me a place where you used what you already know and what the author told you to get a clearer picture of what is happening in the story.
- Show me a word that was new to you, or that you thought was used in an interesting way. What do you think that word means in this story?

Determining Importance

*Cutting away the less important details to think about big ideas*

- What is this piece mostly about? (nonfiction)
- Tell me about some important ideas that struck you. (nonfiction)
- Are there any important themes you noticed? (fiction, biography)
- What do you think is most important about the story? (fiction: characters, setting, problem, events, and solution)

Synthesizing

*Considering information from different places to create a new idea*

- Tell me what happened in just a few sentences.
- Show me a place in the story where your thinking changed. Explain how your thinking changed.
- Do you have any new ideas or information?
For Information about the ICES GT/TTT Program check:
ICES Blackboard site for Joy Neyland, GTS
Joy Neyland, GT Resource Specialist
571-642-6307 or joy.neyland@fcps.edu
GIANT FOOD A+ BONUSBUCKS

Please remember, if you designated a school last year, **you must re-designate your school this year**. From October -April, every time you shop with your BonusCard, you’ll be helping your school earn cash.

To access Giant food online, go to: www.giantfood.com/bonuscard_aplus_pin.cfm

Our School Number is: **04519**
This year Island Creek Elementary will be having a Yearbook Cover contest.

If you are interested in entering this year's cover contest, please submit your entry on 8 1/2 X 11 Unlined paper. Your drawing should be aligned vertically on the page. No pencil please—we need color!! Turn your entry into the office no later than November 2nd. GOOD LUCK!

Note: Entries submitted on lined paper, drawn in pencil or submitted on incorrectly sized paper will be disqualified.

Grand Prize—Your design will be on the front cover of the Yearbook.

1st-2nd Place Winners—Your design will be on the back cover.

TIPS:

- Use your imagination
- Be Creative
- Use lots of color
- Have Fun!!!