Dear Parents,

As a new school year begins, we invite our students and families to join us for an exciting year of learning. The faculty and staff of Island Creek Elementary are committed to showcase best practices in instruction as we develop a focus that we have termed, “Literacy Is For Everyone (L.I.F.E.)” Our goal is to increase the literacy skills of all our students. We will achieve this as our teachers and staff demonstrate exemplary teaching strategies supporting and guiding our students to develop their reading and writing skills. This is a significant multi year professional development commitment by our staff.

This summer a team of teachers met to define our instructional needs, identify objectives and a plan of action, time line and assessment indicators. This week a team of two educators worked with grade level teachers, observing, sharing skills, providing information and feedback. You might have heard your child talk about an Australian lady who came into their class to teach a reading comprehension lesson. Let me introduce our mentors to you:

Faye Bolton is an internationally recognized educator from Australia. She is a language consultant specializing in the reading and writing skills of elementary age learners and recently coauthored, Spelling K - 8 Planning and Teaching. She travels throughout Australia, Canada and the United States consulting, presenting papers, workshops, and demonstrating in classrooms.

Aida Montero is a former teacher, assistant principal, principal and curriculum director in New York. Over the years she has worked closely with some of the most respected names among educators and authors specializing in the teaching of reading and writing. She works in collaboration with Faye Bolton extending skills to teachers and students.

Ms. Bolton and Ms. Montero will continue to mentor our staff as we learn new and better ways of teaching reading and writing throughout this school year. Our first target is to increase reading comprehension skills among all readers. As we refine our skills we will be sharing ways you can help your child at home as we want to be your L.I.F.E. line!

We are grateful for the generous support from the Island Creek PTA, along with a Cluster 5 initiative grant which made this professional development opportunity possible. It is important that you know that your support of PTA activities and fundraisers has a direct impact on the education of our students. Thanks for your support… it makes a difference.

As we embrace this emphasis on literacy skills, be assured we continue our passion in building a strong foundation of character at Island Creek. "Crocs Creed” is our positive behavior recognition program (make sure you ask your child how many croc stocks they have earned!) Respect, responsibility, cooperation, safety and kindness are our valued character qualities and form the core to support students to make good decisions and be available for learning.

Thank you for being our partner in education.

Susan Z. Owner
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**FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**

**CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION / SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK**

**RED RIBBON WEEK**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

November 3rd - Fall Picture Re-take Day  
November 6 & 7 - Student Holidays  
November 14-17 6th Gr. Challenger Field Trips  
November 22 - Early Dismissal  
November 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday
Wes Vaughan is a new 6th grade teacher to Island Creek. Mr. Vaughan is originally from Shenandoah, Virginia. This year marks Mr. Vaughan’s 5th year in Fairfax County Public Schools, previously student teaching at Hybla Valley Elementary & Hollin Meadows Elementary and teaching at Lane Elementary and McNair Elementary. Mr. Vaughan is a graduate of James Madison University with a degree in Sociology/Social Work/Middle Grades Education. Mr. Vaughan coaches cheer in his free time at Fairfax High School.

Mr. Chad Scott teaches physical education at Island Creek four days a week and one day at Wakefield Forest Elementary in Fairfax. Mr. Scott is originally from Warsaw, Ohio, a rural community in the eastern part of the state and considered a part of Appalachia. Mr. Scott holds a Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology from Ohio State University and completed his teacher training at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. Mr. Scott enjoys participating in sports and hanging out with friends and family. He also has an interest in music and plays the saxophone in a band back home, and chimes at Franconia United Methodist Church.
6th Grade Immunization Update

A booster dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine is required for all students entering the 6th grade, if at least five years have passed since the last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine. The Fairfax County Health Department has scheduled clinics to administer these vaccines at no charge. More information is available at: http://www.fcps.edu/news/vaccine.htm.

The Director of Immunization, VDOH, has agreed because of time constraints that entering sixth graders who have not obtained the Tdap immunization can be enrolled conditionally for 90 days. After the 90 days of conditional enrollment, the students must be excluded from school if they have not obtained the Tdap vaccine. This conditional enrollment is only for the 2006-07 school year.

SCHOOL LUNCH TRIVIA

Are school breakfasts and lunches nutritious?
Recent Government Accounting Office (GAO) reports state “school meals are healthy and children who eat school meals consume more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and dairy items than children who do not eat schools meals.” Research has shown lunches from home include a sandwich and three times more snack foods. This combination contains more carbohydrates, fat, and sugar. Milk was included in 87% of the school lunches and only 7% of lunches from home. School lunches sometimes get falsely accused of contributing to the childhood obesity issue but the research is evidence that school lunch plays a major role in keeping our children healthy.

Are school lunches high in fat, sodium and calories?
FCPS meals are planned by Registered Dietitians and according to federal regulations provide 1/3 of the students’ Recommended Dietary Allowances and contain no more than 30 percent calories from fat and 10 percent calories from saturated fat averaged over the week. This information is printed on the parent monthly menu. Food items such as chicken nuggets and pizza served in our schools are specified to contain limited amounts of fat and sodium. The nutrient content is different than those sold in local fast food restaurants. To reflect the new MyPyramid for Kids – Eat Right, Exercise, Have Fun recommendation whole wheat sandwich rolls, pizza crust, breakfast cereals, cinnamon roll and pasta have been added to the menus.
Nutrient analysis for all menus is posted in school dining rooms and available on the web site at http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food_at_school/nutrifax.pdf.

How do I put money on my child’s lunch account?
Parents are encouraged to open meal accounts for their children. To open an account, write a check to Island Creek Food and Nutrition Services and bring the check or cash to the food service manager’s office. Parents who want their checks for meals only should write “MEALS ONLY” on their check.

How do parents know when their child’s lunch account is running low?
Food service managers have been instructed to notify students when their lunch account has a three-day balance. The individual school determines what friendly method of notification will be used … hand stamp, sticker or note. These will be given to the student each day and hopefully will be carried home. The parent can always contact the food service manager to request the current account balance.

What happens if a student forgets his/her lunch money?
Meals are available to students who pay cash or are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. Federal regulations prohibit lunch charges. However, elementary schools have procedures in place to ensure students do not go without lunch. The procedures determined by the school principal may include PTA lunch accounts; peanut butter sandwich, cheese sandwich or cereal and milk. The school office not the food service manager is responsible for the collection of lunch charges. Check to see what procedure is available in your child’s school.
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
Reading Bingo

Over 100 students successfully completed the “Reading Bingo” summer reading and writing program. A small incentive was sent home for those students who completed the program. Island Creek is a school of readers and writers!! Congratulations to everyone who read and wrote this summer!!

Library Catalog

You can access the Island Creek library catalog from home:

Volunteers Welcome!

If you are interested in helping in the library, please contact Jill Woodall at

Library books should be returned to school the morning of the day each class has library.

Library Staff:
Jill Woodall, Librarian
Debi Poole, Library Asst.

UPCOMING EVENTS:
- Children’s Book Week, November
- Scholastic Book Fair, November
- VA Readers Choice
- 6th Grade Book Club

DID YOU KNOW?

Book Total: 17,119+
Video Total: 411+
13 computers
Daily News Show
Video Streaming by Unitedstreaming
Good manners, good grades linked

When children use good manners at school, it makes it easier for everyone to learn. Schools spend some time teaching about behavior, but children learn most about it at home. Here are some ways you can help:

- **Discuss the Golden Rule:** “Treat others as you would want them to treat you.” Help your child experience what this means. If he says something unkind, for example, say, “How would you feel if someone said that to you?”

- **Use helpful words.** Encourage your child to use words instead of actions to express his feelings. For example, “I’m angry that you cut ahead of me in line. Please go behind me.”

- **Share.** Your child can practice sharing with his family and friends. Set a good example by sharing yourself: “This sandwich is great! Would you like half of it?”

- **Be honest.** Everyone makes mistakes. Admit it when you’re wrong and encourage your child to do the same. You’ll both learn from mistakes—and sometimes find humor in them. An apology and a laugh can make everyone feel better.

Ask questions after reading aloud

Some of the best reading experiences take place after you’ve closed the book. Once you’ve finished a read-aloud time, it helps to:

- **Ask** your child to sum up the material. Have her start at the beginning and tell the story in her own words.

- **Think** about different points of view. For example, how would “Little Red Riding Hood” be different if it were told from the wolf’s perspective?


- **Consider** a new ending. How else could the story have ended? Retell it that way.

- **Make** connections to real life. Has your child ever felt like the main character? When and why?

- **Imagine** being a character. Who would it be? Would you change that person’s actions?


Correct behavior calmly

Out of anger or frustration, sometimes parents criticize children. “What’s wrong with you?” “You’re such a baby.”

These words don’t improve behavior, though. They destroy children’s confidence and motivation. They actually make behavior worse.

Instead of saying, “You’re lazy,” for example, say, “Homework needs to be a priority. I know you can do it. Let’s make a homework schedule.”

Then, when your child tries hard, make sure you compliment her. Watch her feelings—and her performance—soar.


Make writing practice fun

Your child might not respond well to, “Let’s practice writing!” But how about, “Want to make Grandma a birthday card?”

Combining drawing and writing can make a difference. Let your child decorate the front of a card and write a note inside. Stamp, address and mail it together, too.


Be patient with fear of the dark

Fear of the dark can keep children awake at night—and make them tired the next day. If your child is afraid of the dark, talk about his fears. Put him at ease. Allow a little light and gradually work toward a dark room.
How hard should upper elementary grades be?

Q. My daughter is in fourth grade. She has always done pretty well in school, but this year she struggles with homework and staying organized. Is this normal as kids get older?

A: It's a good idea to talk with her teacher, just to make sure she doesn't have any big concerns. But fourth grade is a transitional time. In the early grades, most work is simple and clear cut (learning spelling words, solving math problems, etc.). In fourth grade, students may take on new kinds of responsibilities, such as long-term assignments.

When you talk with the teacher, ask about expectations. How much should your child study each night? Does she need to plan for lengthy projects? Should you review basic skills with her? How much should you help?

Also encourage good school habits. Have your child write down assignments. She should study at the same time, in the same place, every day. She may want to tackle the hardest assignments first and get them out of the way. As she finishes tasks, she can check them off proudly. Help her find logical spots to keep school supplies.

Finally, make sure your child still enjoys learning. Look for classes she'll like, such as creative writing or music. If she stays curious, challenging subjects will be easier.

Are you promoting responsibility?

When children do chores at home, they learn about responsibility, and that helps them at school. Answer the following questions yes or no to see if you're encouraging this.

1. Do you give your child daily jobs, such as putting laundry in the hamper?
2. Do you ask your child to keep his backpack in a regular spot each day?
3. Do you teach your child new skills, such as how to set the table?
4. Do you compliment your child's efforts to pitch in?

5. Do you set a good example by taking care of your own household duties?

How did you do? Each yes shows that you are teaching your child responsibility. For each no answer, consider using that idea from the quiz to change your answer to yes.

Building Character

Encourage your children to participate in giving

Giving to charity is a way to teach about helping others. But where should your family's money or volunteer time go? Consider involving your kids in making the decision. You can:

- Have each family member choose a cause.
- Research the charities online.
- Compare them to your family's values.
- Decide which group (or groups) to support.

Building Math Skills

Popcorn can make math fun

Most kids love popcorn. And popping it can build math skills. Here's how: Have your child estimate how many kernels of popped popcorn it takes to fill his favorite popcorn bowl. Count (and eat) to check his answer!

Helping Children Learn

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Los buenos modales, las buenas calificaciones se vinculan

Cuando los niños usan buenos modales en la escuela, eso hace que aprender se le facilite a todo el mundo. Las escuelas dedican tiempo enseñando sobre comportamiento, pero los niños aprenden más de esto en el hogar. Aquí tiene algunas formas como puede ayudar:

- **Hable de la Regla de Oro:** “Trata a los demás como tú quisieras que ellos te trataran a ti.” Ayude a su niño a experimentar lo que esto significa. Por ejemplo, si su niño dice algo poco amable, diga: “¿Cómo te sentirías si alguien te dijera eso a ti?”

- **Use palabras útiles.** Aliente a su niño a usar palabras en lugar de acciones para expresar sus sentimientos. Por ejemplo, “Me enfada que me metas delante de mí en la fila. Por favor, ponte detrás de mí.”

- **Comparta.** Su niño puede practicar cómo compartir con su familia y amigos. Dé un buen ejemplo compartiendo usted mismo. “¡Este emparedado está delicioso! ¡Te gustaría la mitad de ell?”

- **Sea honesto.** Todo el mundo comete errores. Admita cuando esté equivocado y aliente a su niño a hacer lo mismo. Ambos aprenderán de los errores—y algunas veces les encontrarán gracia. Una disculpa y una risa puede hacer que todo el mundo se sienta mejor.

**Haga preguntas después de leer en voz alta**

Algunas de las mejores experiencias de lectura ocurren después de que se ha cerrado el libro. Una vez de haber terminado un tiempo de leer en voz alta, será útil:

- **Pedirle** a su niño que resuma el material leído. Haga que comience por el principio y que relate el cuento con sus propias palabras.

- **Pensar** en diferentes puntos de vista. Por ejemplo, ¿cuán diferente sería el cuento de “Caperucita Roja” si fuera relatado desde la perspectiva del lobo?

- **Hablar** de las opiniones. ¿Qué le gustó a su niño? ¿Qué no le gustó? ¿Por qué? ¿Puede incluso retar a su niño a escribir una reseña del libro.

- **Pensar** en un final nuevo. ¿De qué otro modo podría haber terminado el cuento? Relátele de esa manera.

- **Hacer** conexiones con la vida real. ¿Alguna vez ha sentido su niño como el personaje principal?

- **Imaginarse** ser un personaje. ¿Quién sería? ¿Cambiaría usted las acciones de esa persona?

**LA DISCIPLINA**

Corrija el comportamiento sin perder la calma

Ya sea porque se sienten enojados o frustrados, los padres a veces critican a los niños. “¿Qué te pasa?” “Eres como un bebé.”

Sin embargo, estas palabras no mejoran el comportamiento. Destruyen la seguridad y la motivación de los niños. Realmente empeoran el comportamiento.


Después, cuando vea que su niño se esfuerza, felicítele. Observe cómo sus sentimientos—y su desempeño—florece.


**Haga divertida la escritura**

Su niño podría no responder bien a, “¿Práctiquemos la escritura!” Pero qué le parece, “¿Quiere hacerle a una tarjeta de cumpleaños a la Abuela?” El hecho de combinar el dibujo y la escritura puede marcar una diferencia. Deje que su niño decore la portada de una tarjeta y que escriba una nota adentro, Juntos pónganle estampillas y la dirección, y envíenla por correo, también.


**LA AVENTURA**

Sea paciente con el miedo a la oscuridad

El miedo a la oscuridad puede mantener despertando a los niños en la noche—y hacer que se sientan cansados el día siguiente. Si su niño le tiene miedo a la oscuridad, plátequen de sus temores. Tranquilícelo. Permíta que haya un poco de luz y gradualmente acostúmbrelo a estar en una habitación oscura.
¿Cuán difíciles deben ser los grados superiores de primaria?

P: Mi hijo está en cuarto grado. Siempre le ha ido bastante bien en la escuela, pero este año le cuesta trabajo hacer la tarea y mantenerse organizado. ¿Es esto normal cuando crecen los niños?

R: Es una buena idea hablar con la maestra; sólo para asegurarse de que ella no tenga inquietudes de importancia. Pero el cuarto grado es un período transitorio. En los primeros grados, la mayor parte del trabajo es simple y bien definido (aprender a deletrear palabras, resolver problemas de matemáticas, etc.). En cuarto grado, los alumnos pueden asumir nuevas clases de responsabilidades, tales como los trabajos a largo plazo.

Cuando hable con la maestra, prepárale sobre expectativas. ¿Cuánto debe estudiar su niña cada noche? ¿Necesita hacer planes para los proyectos largos? Debe usted repasar las destrezas básicas con ella? ¿Cuánta ayuda debe brindar?

Asimismo, fomenta los buenos hábitos escolares. Haga que su niña tome nota de los trabajos. Debe estudiar a la misma hora, en el mismo lugar, todos los días. Tal vez quiera abordar los trabajos más difíciles primero y hacerlos a un lado. Conserve viva terminando los trabajos, puede irlos marcando con órgano. Ayúdela a encontrar lugares lógicos para guardar los artículos escolares.

Finalmente, asegúrese que su niña todavía disfruta el aprendizaje. Busque clases que le gusten, tales como escritura creativa o música. Si continúa siendo curiosa, los temas desafiantes se le facilitarán.

¿Está fomentando la responsabilidad?

Cuando los niños hacen tareas domésticas en la casa, aprenden lo que es responsabilidad, y eso les sirve de ayuda en la escuela. Conteste las siguientes preguntas con sí o no para ver si está fomentando esto.

1. ¿le asigna a su niño trabajos cotidianos, como poner la ropa sucia en el cesto de la ropa?
2. ¿le pide a su niño que guarde su mochila en un lugar habitual todos los días?
3. ¿le enseña a su niño destrezas nuevas, tal como poner la mesa?
4. ¿esfuerza los esfuerzos que hace su niño para ayudar?
5. ¿da usted un buen ejemplo ocupándose de sus propias obligaciones domésticas?

¿Cómo le fue? Cada respuesta de sí muestra que le está enseñando responsabilidad a su niño. Para cada respuesta de no, considere usar esta idea del cuestionario para cambiar su respuesta a sí.

La responsabilidad no se puede importar. Se desarrolla desde adentro, es alimentada y dirigida por los valores que se absorben en el hogar.

Kathy Wagner

Fomenta la caridad en casa

Dar a la benevolencia es una forma de enseñar a los niños a ayudar a los demás. Pero, ¿cómo? Es importante que el dinero de la familia o el tiempo de voluntario se invierta en los niños en la toma de la decisión. Usted puede:

- Hacer que cada miembro de la familia coja una tarea.
- Investigar las instituciones de benevolencia en línea.
- Compararlas con los valores de su familia.
- Decidir a cuál grupo (o grupos) apoyar.

Invente un día festivo para toda la familia

Usted no tiene que esperar hasta que el calendario le diga que hay un día festivo. ¿Por qué no celebre algo por su propia cuenta? Invente un día festivo (como “Día de la Comida Favorita”) o busque nuevos días festivos en la biblioteca.

Cualquier día festivo que escoge, piense en cómo lo reconocerá su familia. ¿Intercambiarán tarjetas? ¿Decorarán la casa? ¿Jugarán juegos? ¿Se vestirán elegantemente?

Planee el día festivo con anticipación. Anótelo en el calendario. Haga que su niño se involucre en los preparativos. (Después saquen los globos y las banderolas y diviértanse mucho)


DESTECEZAS MATEMÁTICAS

Haga divertidas las matemáticas

A la mayoría de los niños les encanta las palomitas de maíz. Y hacerlas estalla para ayudar a desarrollar destrezas matemáticas. Aquí tiene cómo. Haga que su niño calcule cuántos granos de maíz está lleno de tal vez los palomitas de maíz favorito, ¡cuántos (y coman) para probar su respuesta!

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Ayudando a los Niños a Aprender®

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FCPS Parent Information Nights Scheduled for October

An overview of the continuum of gifted and talented services, screening, testing and identification procedures, and timelines.

Pick the date and location that works for you:

**October 17, 2006 • 7:30 PM**
**Oakton High School**
2900 Sutton Road
Vienna, VA 22181
Vietnamese translator will be available.

**October 25, 2006 • 7:30 PM**
**West Potomac High School**
6500 Quander Road
Alexandria, VA 22307
Spanish translator will be available.

**October 30, 2006 • 7:30 PM**
**Langley High School**
6520 Georgetown Pike
McLean, VA 22101
Korean translator will be available.

Meetings are open to the public. No registration is required.
What I hope to learn this year.....

How to make potions
How to read
How to be a good art teacher
How to be good
How to be a better student
How to make two's
How to be a teacher
How to write
How to be a better person
More music
How to write fast
About dinosaurs and science
Everything
To read
To count
To count to 423
To tell time
To read about magic

These items were compiled from Ms. Grewis' and Ms. Krentz's first grade student writing samples