



FANS

News & Notes

February 2007

Abingdon Third Graders Score Above 97% in All Areas

For the second year in a row, Abingdon Elementary School students scored in the superior range on Virginia's standardized tests called Standards of Learning (SOL). Last year's results were even better than the previous year with third graders scoring **97.1% in English, 97.6% in Math, 97.4% in History, and 97.5% in Science**. The previous school year (2004/05), third graders scored 95.3% in English, 97.8% in Math, 97.9% in History, and 93.3% in Science. These scores are THE official standardized tests and are used to measure benchmarks for the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. Abingdon has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two years in a row.

Abingdon's Real-World, Hands-On Focus

As many of you know, in addition to the core subjects taught at all public Arlington elementary schools, Abingdon offers three extra classes which help reinforce the basic academic subjects. These classes, Architecture, Communications, and Science Lab are made possible by the elimination of almost all early-release Wednesdays. Abingdon children attend five full days of school and therefore gain almost three weeks of instruction time.

Architecture teacher, David McDavitt, presented his class and student projects at the January PTA meeting. McDavitt, who has been at the school for 13 years, created this class as part of Abingdon's Project G.I.F.T. (Gaining Instruction, Fostering Talents). His course provides an **authentic context for math and social studies** and children love it. At the meeting, K-5 children presented their projects and showed off their in-depth knowledge of the historical and cultural aspects of structures they crafted including mosques, the Washington monument, Native American tee-pees, Stone Age villages, and early American forts.

PTA Meeting: Open to General Public – Tuesday, Feb. 27

At this month's PTA meeting, Abingdon's Librarian Kristy Nienstedt and Special Education Lead Teacher Andrew Wojciechowski ("Wojo") will introduce parents and teachers to Abingdon's morning news show, Cardinal News Network (CNN 49). Produced by upper grade students, the show is broadcast throughout the building every morning via closed circuit television. Come watch a show, meet some of the student announcer "stars," and tour the CNN 49 studio.

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. – Guest speakers

7:30 – 8:00 p.m. – PTA business meeting with updates from our Principal, the teacher liaisons, and event organizers.

As always, free child care is provided by the Extended Day staff and paid for by the PTA.

How Not to Pick a School

An article appeared recently in the Washington Post written by an Alexandria parent, who talks about the value of not overlooking local public elementary schools, even when "everyone else" seems to be making other choices. To check it out, visit the Articles page of the FANS website:

<http://mysite.verizon.net/vzeq42w6/fans/articles.html>

Did you know ... that past editions of the FANS newsletter are available on the FANS website? Visit the Newsletter page: <http://mysite.verizon.net/vzeq42w6/fans/newsletter.html>

Orientations at Abingdon

February marks the beginning of the official kindergarten registration period in Arlington. Abingdon will be holding three orientations (see schedule below) for parents interested in an introduction to Abingdon's kindergarten and an overview of the school's curriculum. Orientations are held in the school library and begin with a slide show presentation by Principal Joanne Uyeda about the school and its special programs, followed by a question and answer session. Information about how to register and registration packets will be provided. Parents will also hear from a member of the **Abingdon PTA** as well as **kindergarten teachers**, who will wrap the sessions up by leading **tours** of the school, including the kindergarten classrooms.

Orientations (meet in the school library)

Tuesday, February 27	9:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.
Thursday, March 8	12:45 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.
Thursday, April 12	11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

To set up a private appointment with Ms. Uyeda, parents may call the school office at 703-228-6650.

Coming Up: Air and Space Night

On the evening of March 12, Abingdon 4th and 5th graders will take a special field trip to the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum. Abingdon's science teacher, Anne Sywilok (affectionately nicknamed the "**Queen of Science**"), arranges this evening event every year and even wears her NASA flight suit! The museum's head scientist gives a presentation on topics like how asteroids are formed, and children get to see an IMAX movie at this fun and educational event.

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