Dear Parents and Community Partners of James River High School,

**BACK-2-BACK STATE VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS!**

The boys’ volleyball team won its second consecutive state volleyball championship on Saturday, November 19, 2011. It was a joyous and jubilant end to a most successful season. Paul Woody, Sports Columnist for the Richmond Times-Dispatch said, “Winning always is nice. Winning and enjoying the ride is even nicer. Winning a championship and showing class and compassion in the process, well, that’s even nicer still.” I am so very proud of these student-athletes and Coach Terry Ford. We will celebrate this state championship as a school community! Go Rapids!

Please see the winter exam schedule below.

**Winter Exam Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 12</td>
<td>December 13</td>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>December 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular School Day</td>
<td>Period 3 Exam</td>
<td>Period 1 &amp; 2 Exams</td>
<td>Period 5 &amp; 7 Exams Even Day Tech</td>
<td>Period 4 &amp; 6 Exams Odd Day Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:50 Dismissal</td>
<td>11:25 Dismissal</td>
<td>11:25 Dismissal</td>
<td>11:25 Dismissal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there is no school on an even day, that exam will be postponed until Wednesday, January 4. If there is no school on an odd day, that exam will be postponed until Thursday, January 5.

The month of December is filled with the spirit of the holidays! Winter break begins on Monday, December 19, 2011, with students returning to school on Monday, January 2, 2012. Please take this time to enjoy family and friends!

Please feel free to contact me at jeff_ellick@ccpsnet.net should you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to hearing from you. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Jeff Ellick
Principal

---

Home (SWEET home) for the Holidays!
Reflections Winners

Reflections is a creative arts program sponsored by the National PTA. The theme for the 2011 program was Diversity Means… Congratulations to the over 100 participants from JRHS who had entries in the categories of literature, visual arts, and photography!

The JRHS PTA would like to congratulate the following winners. The first place entries will be forwarded on for judging at the County level and could proceed on to the State and National levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual Arts</th>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Photography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st place: Casey Plonski</td>
<td>1st place: Linda Edling</td>
<td>1st place: Hannah Hoffert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd place: Michael Couchman</td>
<td>2nd place: Jordan Word</td>
<td>2nd place: Kathia Bonilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd place: Leighton Carter</td>
<td>3rd place:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorable Mention: Georgia Adam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Honorable Mention: Christopher Cummins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Randy Early Wins R.E.B.

Exceptional education teacher Randy Early won a 2011 R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence!

The R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence serves to identify, recognize, and promote excellence in classroom teaching, which Randy does every day! Randy was recognized at the Library of Virginia on Monday, November 14. He received a $12,000.00 monetary award to explore and experience the ways in which individuals with intellectual disabilities are educated, incorporated, supported, and encouraged to demonstrate independence in various countries and cultures. Randy will travel abroad to visit communities that are part of L’Arche International. He will spend time in London, England; Kilkenny, Ireland; and Dublin, Ireland. He will also participate in state and nationwide training opportunities.

L’Arche focuses on working to support people with intellectual disabilities in order for them to take their rightful place in our communities and in our societies. As an international organization, L’Arche seeks to promote inclusion, diversity, and international solidarity and to build respectful societies founded on relationships between people of differing intellectual capacity, social origin, religion, and culture. The JRHS community is so very proud of Randy, and we look forward to hearing about his learning opportunities! Congratulations, Randy!

Jeff Ellick

Yearbook Information

Purchase the 2012 full-color yearbook—(price includes a monthly school newspaper and the literary magazine). Mail a $70.00 check made out to James River High School to the following:
3700 James River Rd., Midlothian VA 23113
or bring a check to the school office
or order online at www.yearbooks.biz. Use order number 2423 to locate James River. Personalized yearbooks must be purchased ONLINE by January 17!

Senior PDAs (DEADLINE: January 17)

- Submit electronically for the highest quality. All ads are in full color!
- Submit as a picture file (jpeg or bmp) to Kinsey Sparre, yearbook advisor, at kinsey_sparre@ccpsnet.net.
- Make checks out to James River High School.
- I include photos in a self-addressed envelope if you want them returned to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full page: 11&quot; X 9 1/4&quot;</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half Page: 5 1/2&quot; X 9 1/4&quot;</td>
<td>$225.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 Page: 2 3/4&quot; X 4 5/8&quot;</td>
<td>$175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 Page: Business card size</td>
<td>$80.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of our greatest pleasures and challenges in working with students and staff is attempting to meet their ever-changing needs. *Education Week* contained an article entitled “Teaching and Testing the Skills That Matter Most” by Harvard researcher Tony Wagner. He contends that schools are not “teaching or testing the skills that matter most for college, careers, and citizenship in the 21st century.” Wagner interviewed college teachers, college students, business executives, and officers in the armed forces; from these interviews he identified seven survival skills for students who wish to excel in college, jobs, and as community leaders. He contends that by mastering the seven skills, students will remain competitive in the global economy.

The seven skills are the following:

- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Collaborating and leading across networks
- Agility and adaptability
- Initiative and entrepreneurialism
- Effective oral and written communication
- Accessing and analyzing information
- Curiosity and imagination

The library staff recognizes these skills as essential components of their standards for the 21st century learner. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) recently revised these standards, standards which dovetail with the seven skills Wagner identified as essential to success in college and the workforce. The AASL standards strive to motivate learners to use skills, resources, and tools to do the following:

- Inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge
- Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations, and create new knowledge
- Share knowledge and participate ethically and productively as members of our democratic society
- Pursue personal and aesthetic growth

Each category above is followed by the components of skills, dispositions in action, responsibilities, and self-assessment strategies. For example, the skills listed for the second category include “continue an inquiry-based research process by applying critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, organization) to information and knowledge in order to construct new understandings, draw conclusions, and create new knowledge.” By comparing the basics of this skill to the skills detailed by Wagner, it is evident that critical thinking remains an essential key to success.

Life beyond high school graduation may not include college, but the same skills are necessary to succeed in the job market. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce looked at the right knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to add value to the entry level workforce. Their *Work Readiness Credential* lists reading with understanding as the number one skill, followed by math for decision making, oral language skills, and situational judgment.

We now live in a world bombarded with information and misinformation. In school and the work place, it is essential to develop the skills to “make sense of information gathered from diverse sources by identifying misconceptions, main and supporting ideas, conflicting information, and point of view or bias.” (AASL)

For more details on skills, dispositions, responsibilities, and self-assessment, visit the AASL website at [www.ala.org/aasl/standards](http://www.ala.org/aasl/standards) and see how you can help prepare our students for success in the 21st century learning and work environment!

Students, staff, and parents are always welcome to the library to view displays, attend programs, suggest purchases, or make use of the collection. Students are often pleasantly surprised when they make a suggestion and the purchased book is placed in their hands in a matter of days.

Just as reading enriches vocabulary, the Wednesday Word of the Week is designed to introduce new words to the JRHS students and staff. Ask your student to define November’s words—opportune, bemuse, satiate, and frenetic.

May the holidays fine you happy and relaxed, with time to enjoy and use the plenitude of resources @ your library!

Ann Reinke
Librarian
College Application Season Still in Full Swing

This is the time of year when the School Counseling Office is very busy with lots of post secondary planning and preparation. Counselors have been meeting with seniors to discuss post high school options and helping students navigate through the maze of the college application process. Many colleges and universities have regular admission deadlines set in early to mid January. Seniors, please remember that your request for a transcript must be in ten days ahead of the deadline, and a request for a school counselor recommendation or counselor portion of the application must be in at least two weeks ahead of the deadline. This means that by the time you are reading this article, any requests for transcripts or counselor input should have already been submitted for schools with a mid-January or earlier deadline. Any students applying to colleges with January 1 deadline must have their transcript request form submitted no later than December 1. The School Counseling Office is closed for the winter break, so all January transcripts must be mailed by December 16!

The School Counseling Department urges you to take inventory of your remaining college applications now so that task is not hanging over your head during the winter break. This means that you should review the applications of each of your selected schools, and, if you have not done so already, write down the deadlines on a calendar. Then plan to complete all the components of the application in a timely manner, including giving your teachers who are writing you a recommendation plenty of notice (AND a thank-you note as a follow-up).

As usual, feel free to consult with your school counselor if you have questions, need assistance, or if you just want a sounding board. Best of luck, and, with a little planning, enjoy a stress-free application process!

A Note about Reporting SAT and ACT Scores

Students’ college entrance test scores, SAT and ACT, are printed on your high school transcript; however, most colleges and universities only consider receiving scores from the testing agency as the official score report. Therefore, students must notify the College Board and/or ACT to send test scores directly to the institutions to which students are applying. This can be done by coding up to four schools of your choice when registering (included in your test fee) or by paying a fee to have the scores sent to more than four colleges. Please see your school counselor for more information and assistance.

SAT Prep Available at James River

CCPS will again be offering free SAT Prep Academies to all juniors and seniors. James River will be one of the host sites for the SAT Academy in January. Juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to register for a four-day course the week of January 17 – 20, after school from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Letters will be mailed to all juniors and seniors from Central Office with specific information regarding registration and other details. If you have questions about the SAT Academy, please contact your child’s school counselor (378-2420).

The College-Bound Student’s Tool of the Month

The Cappex College Application Checklist, part of the popular Cappex College Fit Kit, can help college-bound students keep track of colleges of interest and applications. Students can use the checklist to guide them through the application process and help ensure that their applications are complete. In addition, this FREE website can also make searching for college scholarships an easier task. Take a look today at this helpful website (www.cappex.com).

‘Primed’ for Success

In October and November, all ninth and tenth grade students participated in group guidance activities with school counselors on important information about attending post-secondary education to land the career of their choice.

We encourage parents to look through this booklet and to review some of the material with your student. Copies of these booklets appear on the School Counseling website (www.jrhs.ccpsnet.net). If you have questions about some of the information presented or how your student may benefit, then please feel free to contact your student’s school counselor.

CCPS College and Career Readiness Initiative

In an effort to complement the career development program in Chesterfield County Public Schools and to promote some relevance and excitement into our instruction with students, CCPS has launched the College and Career Readiness Initiative. The goal of this initiative is simple: to help students understand the importance of attending post-secondary education to learn a marketable skill and to land the career of their choice.

Beginning in the fall, all Chesterfield schools participated in the kick-off to this initiative known as “Chesterfield Goes to College Week.” Schools sponsored a variety of activities and events throughout the week that promoted a college-going culture. This week also led up to the annual College Fairs, held at Manchester and Thomas Dale High Schools.
As we move forward this year, the CCPS College and Career Readiness Initiative continues to take shape. On the third Wednesday of several months, each school is encouraged to participate in a series called “What’s Next? Wednesdays.” The theme for students on these days is to identify “What’s Next?” on the journey to planning for future college and career goals. Schools will again be sponsoring simple activities and events that promote awareness of post high school options.

Tutor List on CCPS Website

It’s that time again--the end of the first nine weeks has passed, and perhaps your student is in need of a tutor. In order to simplify the process of securing a tutor, we wanted to remind you that the Chesterfield County tutor list is on the Parent/Teacher Resource Center website at the following: http://mychesterfieldschools.com/wp-content/uploads/ptrc_files/PTRC_high_tutors.htm.

Parents, please refer directly to the website if you have computer access. From the website you may choose your own names. If you do not have access to the Internet, then you can either call your student's school counselor or call the Parent resource center directly (see phone number below).

The school system does not endorse the tutors on the list; however, each tutor has undergone a background check. It is the parent's responsibility to make the calls, and the fees may vary. We suggest that the parents call multiple tutors in order to make an informed decision.

In addition to the tutors on the website list, the PTRC has a short list of other tutors who did not want their name to be on the website. The center will be happy to share these names with you when you call. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call the PTRC. Contact information is as follows: Parent/Teacher Resource Center, (804) 279-7311, Fax: (804) 279-7401.

Financial Aid Workshop

Seniors and their parents are invited to attend the Financial Aid Workshop scheduled for 7:00 p.m., January 12, 2011, here at James River High School. Presenters from both higher education and GRASP (Greater Richmond Area Scholarship Program) will discuss how parents/students can access public and private funding for college. Please contact your school counselor for more information.

GRASP for Financial Aid

Mrs. Ronda Zukowsky is the Greater Richmond Area Scholarship Program (GRASP) representative for James River High School this school year. Mrs. Zukowsky will be available to meet with students and parents regarding financial aid information, assistance with forms, and specific scholarship opportunities sponsored by GRASP every Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the College and Career Center. Please call the CCC at 794-6763 for an appointment.

TAG, You’re It! (With tuition dollars, that is)

The Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) provides annual funds to Virginia residents who are full-time students at eligible nonprofit, private colleges and universities in the state. And here's the good news: Students do NOT have to pay the TAG back, demonstrate financial need, or file a financial statement! The estimated undergraduate award for last year's graduates was $2600 per year. For information on the award amount, application deadlines, and eligibility requirements, see your school counselor, contact the financial aid office of eligible schools, or visit www.virginiaprivatecolleges.org.

January SOL Testing

SOL testing will be given in January for students who may have passed the class but still need the required SOL test for verified credit. This test administration will also include transfer students in need of verified credits.

Review sessions will be held during AEP to help prepare students for these assessments. In addition, James River will be hosting one of CCPS’s SOL Academies during the week of January 17 - 20. Letters will be mailed to eligible students from Central Office, with specific information regarding registration and other details. For more questions, please contact your child’s school counselor (378-2420).

PSAT Results

Students who took the PSAT in mid-October will be receiving their test scores back in early January. School counselors will be meeting with students to review and interpret the test scores, and they will help students understand how the PSAT results can be used to prepare for the SAT: Reasoning Test. As a reminder, college-bound students should register for their first “live” SAT: Reasoning Test in the spring of their junior year. For more information or assistance, please contact your student’s school counselor.

Important Dates

Please check the school website calendar (http://jrhs.ccpsnet.net/) to learn about and/or confirm event dates.
Newsmakers

Senior Michael Couchman won an art contest held by the Virginia Opera to create an original artwork based on their current production of *Hansel and Gretel*. Michael was competing against kindergarten through college age students from across the state and will receive four free tickets to any production this season. His work will be on display at the Virginia Opera. Michael created this work as a class assignment in Kelly Bisogno's Advanced Digital Art and Graphic Design. You can also see his work around the school; he created the beautiful *Beauty and the Beast* posters for our school production in December. Congratulations, Michael!

With the largest delegation of any Chesterfield County high school, James River had nine students participate in Model County Government on October 25 and 26, 2011. Students participated in dialogue with School Board Members and the Board of Supervisors, then followed various county officials. The students representing James River High School were Megan Taylor Byrd, Chryssie Grandy, Jordan Hiegel, Destiny Kent, Ashley Linville, Jennifer Many, Roxy Ruiz, Sean Savage, and Chris Smith.

The James River Speech Team competed in the Thursday Night Talk Forensic Competition at Cosby High School on October 27, and all our Rapids placed in their category! Congratulations to the following: Sara Porzio—2nd Place, Poetry Interpretation; Colter Eastman and Travis Haysley—Humorous Duo Interpretation; Oscar Guardado—2nd Place, Impromptu; and Matt James—1st Place, Impromptu. Well done!

AP Studio Art students and teacher Laura Wright traveled to Washington, D.C., to visit the National Gallery of Art and the Hirschorn Gallery, where they saw a special exhibit of the work of Andy Warhol, as well as lots of contemporary work in the permanent collections. Many thanks to Mrs. Tracey Cooper and Mrs. Pat Plonski for driving and chaperoning.

Parents! Encourage your young artist to submit writing and artwork to the school's award-winning literary and art magazine _Etcetera_. To submit work, students should send an email to jrhs.etcetera@gmail.com with the piece attached. For more information, stop by Room 1234.

NaNoWriMo

This November, Allison Marchetti's Creative Writing students participated in National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). They took on the creatively daring feat of completing the rough draft of an entire novel in 30 days.

You can help the young novelists earn prizes, as well as support the NaNoWriMo Young Writers Program, by making a donation on their class website (www.stayclassy.org/fundraise?fcis=127220). The process is fast, easy, and secure. Any support you can provide is much appreciated; your donation will benefit a great cause!

Thanks in advance for your generosity!
Enjoy the Winter Revels!

The JRHS Performing Arts Department will present its fourth annual Winter Revels at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7, and Thursday, December 8.

The evening will feature performances from all of James River’s band, orchestra, chorus, theatre, and guitar programs—nearly 600 students taking part in holiday festivities that will culminate with the combined performance of Alfred Reed’s “Russian Christmas,” a beloved James River tradition that should not be missed.

If you’ve never seen almost a third of the entire JRHS student body assembled in one place to perform together, now’s your chance. Admission is $2, and tickets will go on sale at school during the first week of December. Tickets are sure to go fast, so get yours early and don’t miss the event that is fast becoming James River’s biggest holiday tradition.

Rose Malone, Career and Technical Education department chair, attended the National Educator Conference sponsored by Jump$tart, November 4-6, 2011, in Washington, D.C. The objectives of the conference were the following: to train, inform, support, motivate, and appreciate PreK-12 classroom educators who teach personal finance or wish to incorporate the content into the classroom; to build a network of financial literacy advocates within the education community; and to provide a platform for national Jump$tart partners to share their resources and expertise with the education community.

Have you checked your credit report recently? According to the credit reporting bureau TransUnion, 56% of Americans surveyed said they have not checked their credit report in 2011.

Get your credit report today!
www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp
www.transunion.com/
www.experian.com/
www.equifax.com/home/en_us
Mark Your Calendars
December 3 & 4—Christmas Tree Sale

Fourth Annual James River High School Baseball
Christmas Tree Sale
Free Delivery Within JRHS District!
Great Prices!
Support Your Two-Time State Champions!
Live Christmas Trees, Wreaths, and Garland!

James River High School at the Football Stadium
Saturday, December 3, from 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 4, from 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Hot chocolate, s’mores, hot dogs, and fun for kids of all ages.....

Winter Revels!
See page 7 for details.

Rapid News is produced monthly and designed with Microsoft Publisher. Submissions should be sent to Ann Reinke, newsletter editor, by the fifteenth day of each month. She may be reached by email: ann_reinke@ccpsnet.net
To receive notice of each new posting and late breaking news, please send your email address following the directions on the home page: jrhs.ccpsnet.net.