



School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

January 23, 2026

Inside This Edition:

- **FYI: Inclement Weather Policy & Updates**
- **APS Features SpEd Teacher Shakina Hardy!**
- **Rockin' Science w/Mr. Berthold!**
- **Is My Student Too Sick for School?**
- **Possible Snow Date for MPSA Student Art Featured in the School Board Gallery**
- **Art Department Needs Small Boxes**
- **Upcoming Dates**
- **Keep In Touch**
- **PTA NEWSLETTER**

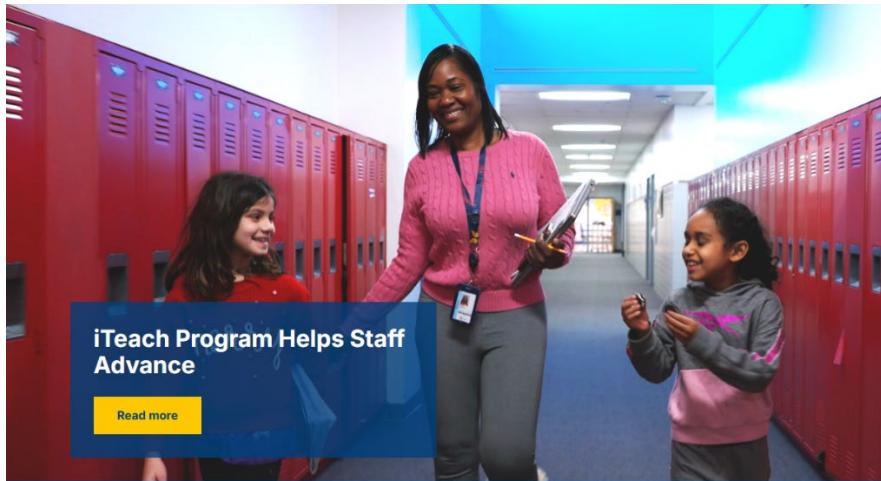
FYI: Inclement Weather Policy & Updates

The first 12 inclement weather days at the elementary level and the first 15 inclement weather days at the secondary level will be treated as traditional “snow days.” These days may occur consecutively as part of a single major event or at different times during isolated weather events. APS will revert to distance learning for days in excess of the allotted days.

How/when decisions to close are made: APS monitors the weather report carefully. They will make a decision by 6PM *IF* there is a chance the morning bus routine could be disrupted by inclement weather, otherwise a review of the weather and conditions will occur at 4:30AM with an announcement of any delays or closing sent out to families by 5AM. [School closure codes are listed here.](#) You may also check your local news for school closings. [Read more about how decisions are made here.](#)

For information about inclement weather please visit <https://www.apsva.us/health-safety/emergency-alerts/>.

APS Features SpEd Teacher Shakina Hardy!



We are proud to see that the APS district website features our very own special education teacher, [Shakina Hardy](#), on the [main splash page](#)! Ms. Hardy is part of an AETV vignette showcasing the APS iTeach program – a program that helps staff to advance in their careers.

[Click here](#) to view the video and learn about this wonderful program that has helped many APS employees become teachers.

Rockin' Science w/Mr. Berthold!



This week, all Upper Elementary Montessori (UEM) students participated in an engaging introduction to sound taught by UEM teacher **Rodney Berthold**, aligned with Virginia Grade 5 Science SOL 5.2.

Students explored key sound concepts including sound waves, vibration, compression, frequency (measured in hertz), amplitude and loudness (measured in decibels), and distortion. Mr. Berthold also connected science and mathematics by introducing the Greek mathematician Pythagoras, demonstrating how dividing a guitar string in half produces an octave, and how other divisions create a fifth and a third.

These concepts were brought vividly to life through live guitar demonstrations featuring dynamic sound riffs. The lesson concluded with a hands-on experiment led by visiting scientist **Dr. Michael Shapiro**, using tuning forks to illustrate how sound waves move through different materials, and ended with an energetic group encore of “*Wild Thing*.” It was a memorable experience that blended science, math, music, and joyful learning.

Is My Student Too Sick for School?

Is your child feeling under the weather and you are unsure of whether they should be kept home or sent in? Then we have good news for you! APS has created an infographic to help you make the right call! Pictured below! We hope you find this helpful but should you have any questions, you can reach the MPSA Public Health Nurse, Jill Ramirez jramirez@arlingtonva.us.

Is my student too sick for school?

Health Guidance for School

Go to school:

- Runny nose or just a little cough, but no other symptoms
- No fever and hasn't taken any medicine to treat fever in the past 24 hours
- Mild stomachache
- Eye irritation with or without slight watery discharge and no other symptoms

Stay home:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38 C°) or higher
- Vomiting and/or Diarrhea in the past 48 hours
- Ongoing cough AND unable to participate in school activities

Seek medical care:

- Fever of 100.4° F (38 C°) or higher and any of the following: ear pain, sore throat, rash, stomachache, headache or tooth pain
- Stomachache that is severe or student has fever, bloody or black stool or is dehydrated (tired & sleepy, dry mouth) and/or has not urinated in the past 8 hours
- Cough that is severe or student has fever or trouble breathing or child has asthma
- Eye irritation with fever, thick discharge, swelling, eye pain or eye injury
- Rash that blisters, is draining, is painful, looks like bruises and/or fever is present
- Serious illness or injury
- You are concerned and/or your student has an ongoing health concern
- ASK FOR A DOCTORS NOTE FOR SCHOOL

Notify the school if your student will be absent

Send students to school if they are generally healthy and able to participate in day-to-day activities

Contact your school nurse or your student's medical provider if you don't know whether to send your student to school or have a specific concern regarding your student's health

Arlington Public Schools

For more information: www.apsschools.org/health-safety/illness

[See this larger and in other languages here.](#)

Possible Snow Date for MPSA Student Art Featured in the School Board Gallery

Update: Should APS schools and facilities close next week due to weather, the planned MPSA viewing of the artwork will be moved to **Wednesday, February 4th** instead, from **6:00PM to 7:30PM**. All MPSA families and staff are invited.

Art Department Needs Small Boxes

If you have small boxes (e.g. cereal boxes, macaroni & cheese boxes, shoe boxes, etc...) please have your child bring them to Ms. Barbour's art room (Room 175) or to the main office. Thank you in advance!

Upcoming Dates

- Friday, January 30: **NO SCHOOL**, *Grade Preparation Day*
- Wednesday, February 11: **Early Release**, *District-wide Professional Development Day*
- Monday, February 16: **NO SCHOOL**, *Presidents Day*
- Thursday, February 19: **Class & Groups Picture Day**

Keep in Touch

- MPSA on APS: <https://montessori.apsva.us/>
- MPSA on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>
- MPSA Library on Twitter: https://twitter.com/MPSA_Library
- MPSA Science on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/MPSA_Science
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Ms. Barbour's Art Class on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/heather.barbour2018/>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>

SCROLL FOR THE PTA NEWSLETTER!

ACMPTA WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



January 23, 2026

What's Inside:

- **Annual Yearbook Cover Contest!**
- **Community Share**
- **You Can Still Join the PTA**
- **Treats for the Sweet (Teachers)**
- **Keep In Touch**

Yearbook Cover Contest!

Calling all Upper Elementary Montessori students!

We're inviting **4th and 5th** graders to participate in the yearbook cover contest. Draw, paint or sketch a piece of art for the 2025-2026 yearbook cover! The winning design will be used as the cover for the yearbook and the winning artist will receive a **free yearbook!**

Contest Rules

All entries must be submitted to Kia by **February 20th!**

Submit art on:

- 8.5" x 11" piece of white paper.
- "Portrait" format (not landscape) to fit the cover.
- Picture must fill up the entire 8.5" x 11" page.

All entries must include:

- Picture on front **must include** "Montessori Public School of Arlington" and "2025 - 26" on it.
- On back please include student name, teacher's name, email address to contact the winning student's family

Other important details:

- The picture must be an original, **hand drawn** piece of art. **NO** computer-generated graphics permitted.
- Parents and/or teachers may **NOT** assist students in the creation of the artwork.
- **Individual submissions only** - students may not work together

Any questions? E-mail info@acmpta.com.

Community Share

Below are several different opportunities the PTA is sharing for the community's interest.

Girl Scouts Camp Discovery Spring Break Camp

Camp Discovery is a fun and enriching four-day camp experience designed for elementary-aged children who are **currently not** in Girl Scouts. Campers will engage in hands-on activities, team-building exercises, and confidence-boosting challenges, all while making new friends and creating lasting memories.

Key Details:

- **Dates:** March 30 - April 2, 9 AM - 4 PM
- **Location:** Fairlington United Methodist Church (3900 King St, Alexandria, VA, 22302)
- **Cost:** **\$75** for all four days – bus transportation included! (Financial aid is available for families who need assistance.)

[**Register here**](#). Questions? Contact Isatou Manneh: imanneh@gscnc.org or (202) 274-3335

2026 Arlington First Responder Co-Ed Basketball Camp

The 2026 First Responder Co-Ed Basketball Camp at Thomas Jefferson Community Center will take place **July 13–17, 2026**, from **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** This camp is for **rising 6th – 8th** graders. This camp goes beyond skill development on the court our staff includes former college athletes, as well as first responders who are committed to mentoring youth and serving as positive role models.

Participants will receive high-level basketball instruction while also engaging in lessons focused on teamwork, leadership, accountability, and community involvement. The goal is to provide a well-rounded experience that supports both athletic growth and personal development in a positive, structured environment. Cost is **\$50**. [**Register here**](#).

**Please note the PTA does not sponsor or endorse any of the activities below.*

You Can Still Join the PTA

Families, we invite you to join the PTA and help support our school in an easy, meaningful way! PTA membership is a simple fundraiser for our school—we keep a portion of every membership fee.

Being part of the PTA strengthens family–school partnerships, gives parents a voice in advocating for children's education, health, and safety, and builds a strong community that supports students and teachers through involvement and funding. It's a direct way to support your child's learning environment, access helpful resources, and join a larger movement for educational equity at the local, state, and national levels.

Membership costs:

- \$12 for one person
- \$20 for two people in the same household

Join today and help make a difference at MPSA—together, we're stronger!

Treats for the Sweets

MPSA instructional staff must meet at least once a month for after schoolwork & collaboration meetings. The ACMPTA would like to revive the tradition where our families would provide snacks for the teachers to have during these meetings. We are looking for at least 4 families to donate snacks to the cause. *Examples of snacks: Granola bars, fruit snacks, nuts, cheese & crackers, cookies, etc. We will also be asking for fresh fruit/vegetables as well.*

Snacks can be dropped off as early as the day before to the Kia in the main office. The PTA will provide paper products.

Sign up here!

Thank you to the following families for contributing to the January 22nd staff meeting:

- **The De Leon-Murphy Family**
- **The Guerra Family**
- **The Martinez Family**

Keep In Touch

- PTA Website: <https://www.acmpta.com/>
- PTA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACMPTA>
- Private PTA Forum on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1614926128674543>
- PTA Twitter: <https://x.com/ArlCoMontessori>
- PTA Listserv: ACMPTA+subscribe@groups.io
- Montessori Caregivers Group (Parent-lead Private Forum):
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1419402838207257>