



School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

February 5, 2021

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[APS Celebrates Black History Month](#)

Throughout the month of February, APS will celebrate **Black History Month**. The focus of this year is Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the paramount role these institutions play in educating the African American community. Interest in HBCUs has piqued recently since people became aware that newly elected Vice President Kamala Harris attended Howard University, an HBCU located in Washington, DC. HBCUs serve as an incubator for the success of many African American, both famous and local to Arlington, so APS will highlight the HBCU experience during Black History Month by exploring the history and relevance of HBCUs.

Each week will have a theme related to this year's focus. This week's theme is: **The History of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)** Click [this link](#) to watch an informative video about HBCUs, view the list of HBCUs and delve more into the history and culture of HBCUs from their creation to how they stand now. For more about APS' celebration of Black History Month and to listen to a message from Superintendent Dr. Duran, visit [this page](#).

The Great Water Cooler Splash Down is ON!

The moment you are waiting for is here! On **Monday, February 8 at 1PM**, sign on to Teams to watch **Principal Genove** and our MPSA librarian, **Ms. Jopeck**, get cold water dumped on their heads by Primary Montessori teacher, **Ms. Kalkus** and Lower Elementary teacher, **Ms. Alcorn**! This is the reward for the children having read 2148 books for the Winter Break Reading Challenge.

To view the event live, click this Microsoft Teams link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ODNkMDcwODQtODQ5Yi00ZWJhLTgyYmMtMmI5MDEzMDMyNzg3%40thead.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22313708a6-b7e9-492c-ac7a-f19734f3f702%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%221f3b68a8-2df0-445c-aab8-a48f05197bea%22%2c%22IsBroadcastMeeting%22%3a%22true%7d

Art & Music Kits Distribution for LEM is this MONDAY

On **Monday, February 8**, Art & Music kits will be distributed to Lower Elementary (1st – 3rd grade) students. Pick up will be from 1-3PM at school. Parents should drive up to the building and remain in their cars. A kit will be brought to you.

Pick up will take place from Door #2 (Gym) so parents should drive up to the bus lane and wait.

Help us out!

1. Post your student's **name, grade** and **class** on the passenger-side window of your car.
2. Once you're in the bus lane, open your trunk.
3. When we've placed the kit in your car and closed your trunk, you are free to leave.

Note: *The school's office will be **closed** so the only business that day will be kit pickup.*

National School Counseling Week

This week is **National School Counseling Week 2021 (#NSCW21)**. It is a time to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week, sponsored by ASCA, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

MPSA asks you to join us in showing gratitude to our school counselor, **Ms. Diane Reeser**, for her hard work and diligence for helping our students (and staff!) get their needs met to the best of her ability. Many of your children find comfort in conversations with her and enjoy engaging with her during her "lunch bunches". **Thank you, Ms. Reeser for all you do for our community!**

 **Save the Date: MPSA's Virtual Walk for Education**



The children in our Montessori community are taught early on to care about others. We teach mindfulness and encourage kindness beginning in their first year as new 3-year-olds to Primary and throughout their time here. Their desire to help others grows larger year after year as their empathy and compassion grows. It is for this reason that Montessori has dedicated time every year to support bringing water to the children of the **Azawak**, the dry, impoverished land encompassing parts of Niger, Algeria and Mali.

The great news is there is a way for our community to continue to their philanthropy despite the pandemic! MPSA is proud to be a part of **a virtual walk** to help raise funds to support the education of the children of the Azawak. This walk's focus will be on the townships of Tatiste and Fak where the finished "**Water is Education**" borehole was completed in December, a project that our students, along with students around the world, helped to fund. With water now flowing, now we are focusing on education. The money we raise will go towards providing supplies to the schools in those regions as well as funding higher level education to ten young women.

More information will be coming soon, including how to register and participate in the virtual walk which will take place beginning on **Presidents' Day, February 15**, through **World Water Day, March 22**. Registration will be FREE, and children can participate without raising money if they choose. Keep an eye out for a School Talk with all the details in the coming weeks.

Read more about the need for educational resources for the Azawak communities [here](#).

 **Crossing Guard Appreciation and "Love the Bus" Week**

With schools still mostly closed, it doesn't mean we can't let our Crossing Guards, Bus Drivers and Transportation Services staff know how much we appreciate them and can't wait to see them again. Check out our online resources, tips and ideas for showing/sharing your love, courtesy of [APS Safe Routes to School](#) and [Arlington Transportation Partners](#). And while you're pondering the people who make our school commutes safe, think about what would improve all your Arlington travels and share your input on the County's draft [Vision Zero Action Plan](#) for transportation safety, during an online [Community Forum](#) on February 11, or by completing the feedback form ([online](#) or via mail) by February 28.

Show Your Love for Sustainability This February!

During the Week of February 8 -14th, we want you to join us and show your love for sustainability in Arlington Public Schools! Use the hashtag **#APSGreen** on social media and tell us how you show your love for nature, taking care of the Earth, and making our schools and community a healthy environment.

Ideas for How to Participate

- Share your favorite ways that you help take care of the Earth
- Take a picture of yourself with a heart symbol and tell us why you support sustainability in APS
- Tell us why being outside makes you feel so good!
- Pick your favorite animal or plant that is native to Arlington (raccoons, deer, squirrels, jackalopes) and tell us why we should love it too!
- Show us how you are enjoying nature in the winter or your favorite outdoor space
- Tell us who inspires you who is helping save the Earth
- Your favorite park or place to hang out

Upcoming Dates

- Monday, February 8 – **The Water-Cooler Event, 1PM**
- Monday, February 15 – **Presidents' Day, NO SCHOOL**
- Thursday, February 25 – **Early Release for Parent/Teacher Conferences**
- Friday, February 26 – **NO SCHOOL for Parent/Teacher Conferences**

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
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>