



# School Talk

## WEEKLY UPDATE!

April 30, 2021

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This is a reminder to the members of our community to be mindful of all traffic rules and speed limits when driving to school to drop off or pick up your children. The concern for the children's safety does not only begin on school grounds – we ask that everyone be mindful of all children and families as they walk to and from school as well. Thank you for your cooperation.

### [Next Week is Teacher Appreciation Week](#)

*“Appreciation can make a day, even change a life.” – Margaret Cousins*

Next Monday marks the beginning of National Teacher Appreciation Week! I would like to write a special thank you to MPSA's wonderful teachers and staff.

Thank you so much for all the hard work you do for our students. I am continually impressed with the amount of time and energy you put in to ensure their success here at MPSA. Over the past year you have pushed yourselves to learn new and innovative ways to teach our students, encouraging them to make great strides while simultaneously offering them support as they learn in this unconventional environment. This will be a year to remember for us all, and your flexibility and perseverance will be something that stands out in my memory of these times.

Families, I ask you to join with me as we spend the next week showing appreciation to our staff for all that they have done and continue to do. A handwritten note or an e-mail would be amazing – gratitude does not have to be expensive; it only needs to be sincere.

Thank you, MPSA staff from the bottom of my heart. You are most definitely an important key to our success!

Sincerely,

**Catharina Genove, Principal**

*\*A reminder that teacher gifts cannot equal more than \$100 total for the school year from each family.*

### **Please Fill Out the Parent Survey ASAP**

The deadline to fill out the family survey about next year's instructional choice for your child is Monday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. You can find this survey in **ParentVUE** under "Child Info". ***It is very important that everyone fill out this survey so we can plan for the school year.***

The survey asks 3 questions:

- Will you choose **virtual** or **in-person** learning for your child?\*
- **Transportation** choice
- Will you be enrolling in **Extended Day**

For more information and to see some FAQs regarding this survey, click [here](#).

**\*Parents – There is NO Montessori virtual option for the upcoming school year.** **All** our Montessori teachers are returning to the building to teach in person. If you choose the virtual option, your child will participate in the **countywide virtual program**. **We will hold your child's spot for one school year if you choose to do virtual**, however, we will offer you opportunity to return to in person, should you desire, before the end of the school year.

### **SOL Testing at MPSA**

The Virginia **Standards of Learning (SOL)** testing dates will be sent out soon. The testing will begin on May 17<sup>th</sup> and continue through early June. SOL testing for our virtual students will take place on Mondays, and you will be provided bus transportation if you qualify. That information will be available in ParentVue closer to the testing date.

All SOL testing must happen in person so there is no virtual option. To read more about the SOL's, please click [here](#). On that page you will also find the links to opt your child out of taking the SOL tests should you choose.

### **Our Upcoming Visit to the Naya Village**

**MAY 4**, the date of our synchronous visit to **Naya Village** is quickly approaching! During this live but virtual visit, generations of artists will take MPSA Monarchs under their wings. **Mamoni Chitrakar** and her family will engage our MPSA family in the long-lived, West Bengal artistic tradition of visual and musical storytelling known as **patachitra**.

Click [here](#) for a snapshot of the Chitrakars, Naya Village and Chitrataru, the artistic collective.

Click [here](#) to learn about Mamoni's first visit to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, DC.

Click [here](#) to learn more about West Bengal Patachitra.

### ***More ways to connect***

- **Become a Junior Folklorist.** Our trip to West Bengal was preceded by a visit from Smithsonian folklorist Betty Belanus. Dr. Belanus introduced us to the life and work of Naya Village residents through the eyes of a professional folklorist traveling to and through the village. During this time, students were tasked to step into a folklorist's shoes by practicing a folklorist's process of discovery:
  1. LOOK: pay attention to what you see
  2. LISTEN: pay attention to information and sounds you hear
  3. NOTE: document discoveries with words, symbols or pictures
  4. QUESTION: document your wonderings in preparation for further research.
    - What are the 3 questions your Junior Folklorists will bring to May 4's Naya visit?
- **Hunt and gather.** Patuas (painters) use natural dyes to create the [colors](#) seen in patachitra. Take a walk through a garden, grocery store or kitchen looking for non-toxic and non-allergenic botanicals you can mix to recreate the colors in patachitra. Suggestions: dandelions, spinach/kale, coffee grounds, tea bags, turmeric root, beets, raspberries. Keep these items handy as they may be used again May 4 with the artisans.
- **Say thank you.** Tangibly support Naya Village life and work. Find details on [Montessori Public School of Arlington Caregiver Community](#) Facebook page.
- **Zoom!** May 4's visit will be accessible via MS Teams. HOWEVER, for greater interactivity and less lag, we suggest that virtual students connect via Zoom. Please note that Zoom is inaccessible on APS-issued student iPad. To use Zoom students will need to connect through a family members account and on a non-APS issued device. Zoom and Teams links will be shared the morning of May 3.
- Contact [Ms. Shakespeare](#) if you have questions related to these events.

### **Preventative Education Lessons in May**

Arlington County Public School's mission is to ensure all students learn and thrive in a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment. To assist your child in making the most positive life choices as they transition to middle school, our 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders will receive **a lesson prevention education**, which includes peer pressure, refusal skills, and information on how to avoid high risk behaviors such as substance use. Our school substance abuse counselor, Jenny Sexton, will be offering this prevention-based lesson, in coordination with a School Resource Officer with ACPD. These lessons will align with the Health and PE Standards of Learning (SOLs). The lessons will be facilitated during the time they a regularly scheduled to meet with our counselor, Ms. Reeser, on May 20-21, 2021.

If you have any questions about the prevention curriculum, implementation, or facilitation of the lessons, please contact Jenny Sexton, APS Substance Abuse Counselor, at [jennifer.sexton@apsva.us](mailto:jennifer.sexton@apsva.us).

### Upcoming Dates

- Monday, May 3: **Survey for 2021-2022 Instructional Choice Closes**
- May 17: **SOL Testing Window opens**
- May 18: **Instrumental Music Recruiting Meeting, 7PM** (More info TBA)

### 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](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/>