

School Talk

WEEKLY UPDATE!

September 16, 2023

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Each year, Americans observe **National Hispanic Heritage Month** from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America. The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988.

Each classroom is honoring the month through various activities. There are stories being read, influential people being discussed, and research projects being assigned with Hispanic culture at the root. Ms. Miller, our MPSA librarian, has curated a selection of books with Hispanic culture or members of society as their theme and they are available to be checked out by students and staff.

Read more about how APS is celebrating Hispanic Heritage month [here](#). The page updates weekly.

September is Attendance Awareness Month

Absences or tardies should be reported to school by calling **703-228-2037** or e-mailing montessori.attendance@apsva.us

In previous School Talks, we discussed the many important changes to attendance policies for this school year. Not just APS, but the state of Virginia is stressing the importance of good attendance and its impact on your child's success in school.

MPSA begins our school day at 9:00AM. Students are expected to be **in class and ready to learn** by that time. It is for this reason that the car rider/walker door at Door #5 on Highland Street will be closed at 8:55AM, and students who arrive at that time or after are directed to the main office where, depending on the reason, your child will be marked with an excused or unexcused tardy. A child rushing in the door at 8:58AM will not be seated, ready to learn, by 9AM. **Traffic, music/sports lessons, and oversleeping are all considered unexcused.** Late buses and doctor's appointments are considered excused.

Vacations/family travel, except in the case of a death in the family, will be enforced as unexcused. This includes visiting family, weddings, graduations, etc...If you are seeking special consideration for your family's absence, you will need to make the request in advance of the trip to the principal.

Unexcused absences of 5 or more must be addressed. Excessive unexcused absences of 5 or more – and does not need to be consecutive – will be issued a written warning and referred to the attendance administrator/designee. At the 7th -10th unexcused absence, you will be required to attend an attendance meeting with the administrator and multidisciplinary team (which includes the counselor and/or social worker). **Excessive unexcused tardies** will also be addressed by the multidisciplinary team.

Illness is an excused absence, however, if your child is absent for more than **3** consecutive days for an illness, you may be asked to provide a doctor's note. **All absences for medical/dental appointments require a doctor's note to be excused.**

[Read the attendance policy here.](#)

[Build the Habit of Good Attendance](#)

Any questions can be addressed by the Attendance admin by e-mailing her [here](#).

APS Strategic Plan Community Engagement

During the 2023-24 school year, Arlington Public Schools will work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop the 2024-30 APS Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap to guide and focus our work as a school division to provide high-quality educational opportunities that support the academic and social-emotional needs of all students. The process to develop the 2024-30 Strategic Plan will be led by APS Staff and a Steering Committee comprised of diverse group of stakeholders (students, parents, community members, teachers, administrators, and staff) and include multiple opportunities for all stakeholders to share their input and feedback throughout the process.

Below are the dates and locations of the community forums where stakeholders will be able to offer their input:

- Tuesday, **September 26**: Washington-Liberty HS
- Wednesday, **September 27**: Wakefield HS (session in **Spanish** w/English translation)
- Tuesday, **October 3**: Yorktown HS

All sessions are from 6:30PM to 8:30PM

There will also be focused surveys sent out to the e-mail addresses registered in ParentVUE. Students in secondary will receive a direct survey sent to their iPads; and staff will receive a link sent to their APS e-mail addresses.

More information on the APS Strategic Plan can be found [here](#). Any questions should be sent to engage@apsva.us.

Advanced Academics and Talent Development (Gifted) Information Sessions

Are you interested in learning more about Advanced Academic Services at APS and MPSA? If so, here are two short videos provided by **Joanna Yamashita**, MPSA's Advanced Academic Coach.

- [Advanced Academics Screening Process](#)
- [How Advanced Academic Services are Provided at APS and MPSA](#)

If you still have questions, (or just want to say hi) please attend one of the MPSA Gifted Services Q and A sessions lead by Ms. Yamashita. Please note that Ms. Yamashita will give a brief overview of the information on the videos but will not be discussing the minute details of the services. The info sessions will focus on how providing gifted services looks at MPSA and address the specific questions families may have.

- In person at MPSA on **Tuesday, October 3** in Room 127 from 9:15 to 10:15
- Online on **Tuesday, October 3** from 12:30 to 1:30 ([MS Teams Link](#))

Ms. Yamashita will also be a guest during the October PTA general meeting on October 10th at 7PM - please keep an eye on ACMPTA communications for details.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Happenings

During library class, students learned about growth mindset. Growth mindset is when students believe that they can always learn new things and that they can learn from their mistakes. They practiced identifying fixed mindsets and how to evolve their thinking to a growth mindset framework. Classes read The Dot, by Peter H. Reynolds, and identified ways the main character used a growth mindset throughout the story.



Be sure to celebrate **International Dot Day** on September 15th by reading [After the Fall](#) by Dan Santat, [The Book of Mistakes](#) by Corinna Luyken, and [The Magical Yet](#) by Angela DiTerlizzi. These books, and additional growth mindset themed books, are available in the library. [Please contact Ms. Miller](#) if you would like book suggestions.





International Day of Peace

Sing for World Peace, Thursday, Sept. 21 – 9:30-10:00 a.m.

As a member of an international Montessori community, you and your MPSA household can celebrate International Day of Peace by singing the beautifully simple song *Light a Candle for Peace*. Share your experience with our community on Twitter @MPSArlington #PeacefulMonarchs or your classroom's Seesaw page.

Why Are We Singing? By singing *Light a Candle for Peace* by Shelley Murley, we share and express a unified hope for World Peace with Montessori students around the world. Each international region has been assigned a time zone; by participating during the assigned time, our shared song will travel around the world and, eventually, resound for a full 24 hour day.

When Should MPSA Sing? Thursday, September 21, 9:30-10:00 a.m.

Find the song, *Light a Candle for Peace*, and its lyric, plus more information on the MPSA website [here](#).

You Can Still Register for UEM Music Programs!

Registration is still open for 4/5th grade instrumental and vocal ensembles – click here to sign up. Registration closes September 25, 2023: [please click here](#) to sign up! [Haga clic aquí](#) para el formulario de inscripción en español.

Mark your calendars! Instrumental lessons begin **September 18 & 19**. Students should attend even if they don't have their instruments. **Chorus Rehearsals** begin **October 2**.

Winter INFORMance: February 13, 2024 (Snowdate TBD) 10-11:00 - Performance assembly for students.

Spring Performance: June 11, 2024 at 2:15-3:15 p.m. - Performance assembly for students; and again at 7-8:00 p.m. – Performance for parents and guests.

Naloxone Training for Students and Families: Thursday, September 21, 2023

APS is partnering with the Arlington Addiction Recovery Initiative (AARI) to facilitate opioid education and Naloxone training for students and families. Those participating will:

- Learn the signs of an overdose
- Learn how to administer Naloxone/Narcan
- Receive a FREE Narcan kit

This event will be open to all APS students and families:

When: Thursday, September 21, 2023, 6:00 PM; Wakefield High School (Library)

Contact: [Dr. Kristin Devaney](#)

Upcoming Dates

- Tuesday, September 19: **VGA Testing Begins**
- Thursday, September 21 & Friday, September 22: **5th Grade Day Trips to Outdoor Lab**
- Monday, September 25: **NO SCHOOL (Yom Kippur holiday)**
- Monday, October 9: **NO SCHOOL for students (Staff reports to work)**
- Wednesday, October 11: **Picture Day (Individual Portraits)**

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/>

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ACMPTA WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



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Enrichment Session Enrollment Opens on Monday!

The ACMPTA is pleased to bring back after-school enrichment programming by Baroody Camps! On **Monday, September 18th**, online registration opens. [Click here](#) to view the offerings now, then come back on Monday through September 29th to register. We have several wonderful options for our K-5th grade students. Sessions begin October 10th and run through December 7th, from 4PM to 5PM, directly after dismissal. Offerings include:

- **Mondays:** Hip Hop Dance (K-5); LEGO Robotics (K-3)
- **Tuesdays:** Dance/Cheer/Zumba (K-5); Debate Club (3-5)
- **Wednesdays:** Chess (K-5); Pottery (K-5)
- **Thursdays:** Cooking (1-5); Magic Explorers (1-3)

Get Your MPSA Spiritwear!

You asked and ACMPTA is delivering! Families and friends of MPSA can now order spiritwear! There are many items for sale – something for everyone! Act now to take part in our **FLASH SALE** with special **discounted prices** and **FREE SHIPPING** to school! When the sale ends, all prices will go up and you will have to pay shipping to your home. Available in youth and adult sizes!

Shop now before the flash sale ends on September 27th! <https://spirithero.com/collections/montessori>



Just a few of the designs/styles offered.

[Are You Signing Up for the Marine Corp Marathon Kids Run?](#)

The **MCM Kids Run** will be held on **Saturday, October 28, 2023!** The one-mile fun run returns to the North Pentagon parking lot. This year will mark the 22nd running of the MCM Kids Run, an initiative to help promote health and fitness for future generations. Children ages 5-12 will participate in the one-mile fun run. In addition to the run, kids from across the country will enjoy music, mascots and the interactive fun and fitness festival. All participants will receive a finisher medal, participant shirt and a variety of healthy snacks. **MPSA families should sign up for the 11AM spot!** This way our children can run together!

[Learn more and register for the run here.](#)

[Volunteers Needed!](#)

Interested in Student Art? Join the PTA Reflections Team. The Reflections committee is seeking one more person to help with organizing, arranging and judging submitted works. You'll be working assisting the 2 chairpersons, not leading. If you have ever considered signing up to be a Reflections chair, this is a good way to get firsthand experience working with the competition before making the decision to take it on. If you are interested, send an e-mail to reflections@acmpta.com.

Our school picture day for individual portraits is October 11th. We will need several volunteers to assist our photographers that day. Since APS requires any volunteers working with children to be cleared and trained, it is important that those of you interested in volunteering **start the process now** if you haven't already. Information on how to do so is found in the MPSA newsletter above. A sign up will be sent out a couple weeks before the picture day, so you have time to get cleared now!

We are planning a fall festival! Want to help bring the first MPSA fall festival into fruition? Join the planning team! If you are interested in being a part of the planning committee, e-mail our Programs & Event VP, Sonali Singh, at vpprograms@acmpta.com.

Proposed PTA Budget – Vote Upcoming

The proposed 2023-2024 PTA budget was introduced on Friday, September 8, at the first PTA general meeting. In case you missed it, [it is posted here for your review](#). There will be a vote held at the next PTA meeting on October 10th by membership to accept this budget. If you have any questions or concerns, please direct them to the treasurer by e-mailing treasurer@acmpta.com.

Join the PTA or Sponsor a Staff Member

Membership is **\$12** per person, or **\$20** for 2 people. Cash and check will be accepted or sign up through our [online portal on Membership Hub](#). Signing up to be a member is also the easiest fundraising effort you could make as a portion of the dues goes into our general fund. Already have a membership? Consider sponsoring a staff member. We require staff to be a paid PTA member in order to receive a PTA grant. Help them out by purchasing them a membership!

Stay in Touch With the ACMPTA

- Our Website: <https://www.acmpta.com/>
- Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACMPTA/>
- Our Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MPSAFamilies/>
- Our Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ArlCoMontessori>
- Sign up for our Chat listserv: <https://groups.io/g/ACMPTA>