



# School Talk

## WEEKLY UPDATE!

September 9, 2023

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### VGA Testing Information for Grades 3-5

Beginning in 2021-22, the Virginia General Assembly enacted new testing requirements for all students in grades 3-8. The legislation calls for the administration of a fall and mid-year assessment and a spring assessment (SOL) in grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics to measure growth.

These assessments will serve as a baseline and not be considered “high stakes” tests. **The Growth Assessments** will not report a performance level showing whether a student “passed or failed” the assessment. Instead, the data will report how the student performed on each of the items included on the test.

Please note:

The **Fall 2023 Growth Assessments** will primarily measure reading and mathematics content from the student’s **previous grade level**. For example, students enrolled in grade 5 mathematics in fall 2023 will take growth assessments based on grade 4 mathematics content.

This is a change from the **Fall 2022 Growth Assessments** where students were assessed on reading and mathematics content primarily from their **current grade level** - content they had not yet been taught.

The change in content measured by the **Fall 2023 Growth Assessments** is intended to ensure that teachers, parents, and students receive feedback on how well a student has mastered content that may be needed for success in the coming school year and to identify areas where a student may need additional support.

These online tests will be administered at your child’s home school using a secure connection. Students receiving instruction virtually are required to participate as are students being served in contract services and those receiving homebound services.

Our testing schedule at MPSA will be as follows:

**MPSA Growth Assessment Testing Calendar September-October 2023**

| Monday                          | Tuesday            | Wednesday          | Thursday            | Friday              |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 11                              | 12                 | 13                 | 14                  | 15                  |
| 18                              | 19<br>VGA Gr 3 ELA | 20<br>VGA Gr 3 ELA | 21<br>VGA Gr 4 ELA  | 22<br>VGA Gr 4 ELA  |
| 25<br>Yom Kippur -<br>No School | 26<br>VGA Gr 5 ELA | 27<br>VGA Gr 5 ELA | 28<br>VGA Gr 3 Math | 29<br>VGA Gr 3 Math |
| 2<br>VGA Gr 4 Math              | 3<br>VGA Gr 4 Math | 4<br>VGA Gr 5 Math | 5<br>VGA Gr 5 Math  | 6<br>VGA Make-Ups   |

Students must bring their iPads **fully charged each day**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your student’s teacher.

**[Want to Chaperone on Field Trips? Help in Classrooms? Fill Out the Volunteer Form!](#)**

If you are interested in volunteering in a Montessori classroom or for MPSA/PTA activities both on and off campus, or being a chaperone for any field trips, you will need to complete the **Volunteer Application form**. You will be required to upload a legal and current drivers’ license, state ID or military ID and must complete a 30-minute virtual training about sexual misconduct. You will be screened against the sex offender registry as well. [To apply click here](#). (La aplicación en español [está aquí](#).)

This year, **any applications that have been assigned training that isn’t completed within 30 days** will be deleted and you will need to reapply.

All clearances are good for **three years** and across all of APS, regardless of which school you were originally registered at. If you are unsure of whether you are still clear or have any questions, e-mail [Kia Haynes](#) in the main office.

*\*You do not have to be an approved volunteer to attend classroom celebrations, school programming or events.\**

**Chaperones who are driving children:** If you are a chaperone who will be driving students on a field trip, you will need to have completed the volunteer process, and provide to the coordinator a copy of your current license and proof of automobile insurance. You will also be required to fill out an APS driving chaperone form. **APS employees:** You cannot drive students other than your own child, regardless of having parent permission to do so, for school activities since being a representative of APS holds the district liable should an accident occur.

### **Music Programs at MPSA: Sign Up & How to Obtain an Instrument**

#### **For 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students ONLY**

If your child is interested in expanding their musical knowledge, now is the time to sign up for next year's music programs! Music provides an outlet for creativity and expression, boost academic performance, teach valuable life skills, and is a source of joy and community building. These are the music programs we offer here at MPSA:

- **Band:** Woodwind, brass and percussion instruments
- **Orchestra:** Strings (violins, violas, cellos, and upright double basses)
- **Choir:** Vocal music

Students may choose choir and/or **ONE** of either band or orchestra. If your child signed up at the end of the last school year, we have them recorded. However, feel free to fill this out again if unsure.

If your child is a rising 4th grader or 5th grader - [please click here](#) to sign up! [Haga clic aquí](#) para el formulario de inscripción en español.

#### **How to Obtain an Instrument**

There are four basic ways to obtain an instrument (assuming you don't have one already.)

1. **Rent one from a local music store.** Many students use Foxes Music Co. in Falls Church [www.foxesmusic.com](http://www.foxesmusic.com) or Music and Arts who have stores in Alexandria and McLean. Here is a link to Music and Arts rental page:  
[https://www.musicarts.com/rentals?source=LPPC1H5C&gclid=CjwKCAjw6eWnBhAKEiwADpnw9jzOLTMl6kPeySSFZDFf1-WSptjJ7xaOBpBQsph\\_WZRcVExNPYm8fxoC7SIQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.musicarts.com/rentals?source=LPPC1H5C&gclid=CjwKCAjw6eWnBhAKEiwADpnw9jzOLTMl6kPeySSFZDFf1-WSptjJ7xaOBpBQsph_WZRcVExNPYm8fxoC7SIQAvD_BwE)

2. **Rent an instrument from APS.** Our instruments must be offered first to families who may not be able to afford to rent from a store. For students whose families qualify for reduced lunch the cost is only \$25 for the year. Any instruments still available after student in financial need have been served will be rented to any other family at a cost of \$100 for the year. To request a school instrument please fill out

the Rental Agreement in this link <https://forms.gle/gbXGChR9s97hXUfv7> and send a check for the appropriate rental fee made out to **Montessori Public School of Arlington**

**3. Purchase your own instrument.** This is not recommended for students this age as they may need to experiment and experience a few different instruments before one clicks with them. Also, please check with your child’s music teacher before buying anything. There are many brands of instrument out there that look like a great deal, but they end up being very poor quality and will be frustrating for your child to learn on. Students with poor quality instruments usually end up renting a quality instrument later in the year after their own falls apart.

**4. Use an instrument that someone in your family or friend group offers to loan/give you.** This is absolutely fine as long as the instrument is a quality instrument, and it is in good repair. Beware that even good quality instruments that have been sitting in someone’s basement or attic may need significant work done to it to be played.

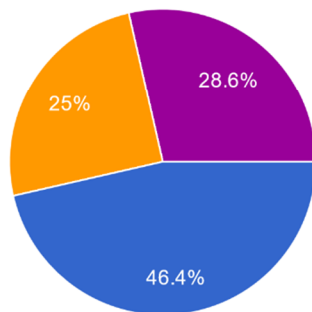
Students should aim to have their instruments by September 25<sup>th</sup> – the latest by October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### 5th Grade Outdoor Lab Survey Results

The survey was closed Saturday morning, 9/9/2023. The field trip will be 2 separate day trips.

Yellow in the chart represents those who wanted the overnight; blue represents those who wanted the two day trips. Purple represents those who were fine with either, so 100% of their votes were applied to BOTH categories out of fairness. The field trip will be on Thursday, September 21 and Friday, September 22, departing school at 9:30AM, returning by 3PM.

I would prefer the field trip to the Outdoor Lab be... Preferiría que la excursión al laboratorio al aire libre fuera...  
28 responses



- ...2 day trips, from 9AM to 2:30PM each day. (Cost is \$0)
- ...2 excursiones de un día, de 9:00 a 14:30 horas cada día. (El costo es \$0)
- ...an overnight field trip, from Thursday, Sept 21 through Friday, Sept 22. (Cost is \$0)
- ...una excursión nocturna, desde el jueves 21 de septiembre hasta el viernes 22 de septiembre. (El costo es \$0)
- ...I'm fine with either.
- ...Estoy bien con cualquiera de las dos.

### Upcoming Dates

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

### 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/>

**\*\*SCROLL DOWN FOR THE PTA NEWSLETTER\*\***

# ACMPTA WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



## What's Inside?

- You Asked for It! MPSA Spiritwear is Now on Sale!
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### You Asked for It! MPSA Spiritwear is Now on Sale!

You asked and the ACMPTA is delivering! Families and friends of MPSA can now order spiritwear! There are many items for sale – definitely 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 27<sup>th</sup>! <https://spirithero.com/collections/montessori>



*Just a few of the designs/styles offered.*

### A Great First PTA Meeting (Popsicles on the Playground)

Thank you to all the families who came out for our Popsicles on the Playground/General PTA meeting yesterday! It was hot but we hope the delicious popsicles helped to cool you off! Our PTA leadership enjoyed meeting and greeting all families, welcoming both old and new to MPSA and the start of a great school year. We hope you are all as excited about all the upcoming plans as we are! Save the date: the next PTA general meeting will be **October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7PM**. More details and agenda to come closer to the date.



*From L-R: Secretary Trinh Lieu, VP Outreach Jenn Gonzaga, Treasurer Katie Lilja, President Jamey Borell, VP Programs Sonali Singh, and volunteer Sylvia Nabors.*

### 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:treasurer@acmpta.com).

### Stay Tuned – Upcoming PTA Activities

The ACMPTA is working on bringing several activities into fruition soon. Two key ones to note:

**The Fall Festival & Dance:** What a way to ring in the harvest season and the changing of the seasons! Plans are coming together to create an unforgettable event! If you are interested in being a part of the planning committee, e-mail our Programs & Event VP, Sonali Singh, at [vpprograms@acmpta.com](mailto:vpprograms@acmpta.com).

**The “No Stuff” Fundraiser:** One thing we have not had to do in several years is ask students to sell fundraising items. No chocolates, no pies, no wrapping paper! This has been due to the success of our “No Stuff” fundraiser, an armchair effort where we ask our families to make a one time monetary donation to our general fund. If we meet our fundraising goal during this fundraiser, we won’t need to ask our students to help supplement our budget by selling “stuff”. As you begin planning out your holiday charity giving, won’t you please consider including the ACMPTA.

### Picture Day Volunteers Needed

Our school picture day for individual portraits is October 11<sup>th</sup>. 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!

### Reflections Art Competition is Underway

The **2023-2024** theme for the PTA Reflections Contest has been announced. It is ***"I am Hopeful Because..."***

Reflections is a national competition organized annually by the National PTA to encourage arts in education. This competition is open to kids in grades Pre-K through 12 and entries are encouraged from all children across six different categories:

- *Dance Choreography*
- *Film*
- *Literature*
- *Music*
- *Photography*
- *Visual Arts*
- *Special Artist (Category for our students with special needs that is hosted by the Arlington Special Education PTA (SEPTA). Their works will be submitted with the Arlington Special Education PTA (SEPTA).*

More information on how to enter will come when we return to school, however, we encourage your young artists to begin working on their entries now! The ACMPTA **deadline** for all works to be submitted for our students at MPSA will be **Wednesday, October 18, 2023**, by the end of the school day.

Read more about the Reflections Contest on the National PTA website [here](#).

For questions specific to the ACMPTA's participation, please e-mail [reflections@acmpta.com](mailto:reflections@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>