



A Look Into Lexington City Schools

A Division Newsletter from the Superintendent-April 2024

HAPPY SPRING!

We have had a very busy semester and time is truly flying by! It is hard to believe that we have just under 20 days left in this school year. As you will see by the feature articles in this newsletter, we have so many incredible learning opportunities, family engagement events, and celebrations to showcase in our schools. We are incredibly proud of our students, teachers, and faculty for their creativity and hard work that goes into each and every school day.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank our families, community partners, and volunteers for your engagement in and support of our Lexington City Schools. We are indeed blessed to have great schools where students are thriving and growing as learners and citizens, and we could not do it without your help.

The last month of the school year is a busy one, with end-of-year assessments, field days, field trips, and celebration events to wrap up the school year. It is an exciting time for everyone, and we look forward to recognizing our students' achievements and celebrating our shared successes as we look to summer and preparing for the 2024-2025 school year. THANK YOU for being part of our LCS community!

Best,
Rebecca Walters
Division Superintendent



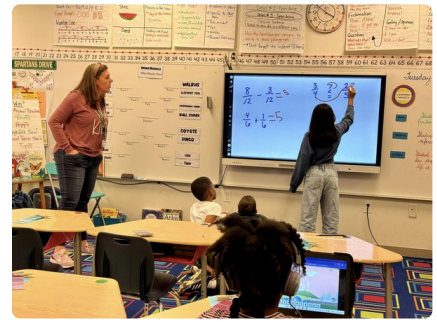
Waddell Families Visit Music Classes

Waddell Elementary School families were invited to join their students for a music class last month as part of celebrating music in our schools. Thank you to all of our families who were able to visit, and thank you to Mrs. Rader for welcoming our families into music class!



LCS Celebrate Our Multilingual Learners

Over 10% of students at HWES and 8% of our students at LDMS are considered "multilingual learners" and 12 languages are spoken by students in our schools. English Language teachers, Rachel Braun and Amelia Ditzel, have worked collaboratively with our teachers this year to celebrate our students who speak multiple languages. In this picture, several of our multilingual learners are reading a story in Spanish to first grade students at Waddell.



LCS Students Participate in All-In Tutoring Programs

Many students at LDMS and HWES have participated in All-In tutoring programs this year during or after school as part of the state's All-In high intensity tutoring initiative. Students have engaged with the state-adopted online tutoring programs Zearn math and Lexia Literacy with direct support from teachers at the schools.



MAY 6-10 IS NATIONAL TEACHER AND STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK

Every student deserves educators who are caring, committed, and have the resources they need to help every student succeed. We invite you to celebrate and share with us just how appreciated our teachers, staff, and administrators are. Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week is a chance for students, parents, and community members to show appreciation for how much our teachers and staff mean to our students and our Lexington community! #thankateacher

LDMS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CELEBRATE LEARNING WITH ACADEMIC SHOWCASE

Students at LDMS invited their families to an "Academic Showcase" event to celebrate learning and achievement across content areas. Students and teachers selected projects, assignments, and activities to showcase during an open house event at the school in February. Some of the projects and assignments included genetic



snowmen, arcade games created with simple machines, poetry collections, coding activities, ceramics projects, and foreign language projects.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

As you know, strong school attendance is extremely important for our students and for our schools. Students need to be in school to learn and engage with each other. While we have seen some improvements in attendance this year, we still have room to grow, and we need help from everyone to meet our goals.

Regular and on-time student attendance allows your student to get the most out of the school experience. The elementary school day begins at 8:00AM, and the middle school school day begins at 8:15AM. As a reminder, a doctor's note or court note is required after a student accumulates 15 absences. A student is considered "chronically absent" when they are absent 10% of the school year (missing 17 days). Our schools' state accreditation is tied to chronic absenteeism, and we are required by the State to follow up regularly with families regarding any school attendance concerns. If you have any questions about attendance requirements, please reach out to your child's principal or to Jason White, Director of Operations and Student Services. THANK YOU for your support!



LEXINGTON CITY SCHOOLS CELEBRATES SOLAR ECLIPSE ON APRIL 8

Thanks to a generous gift of eclipse glasses from Dr. Helen Fure, students and staff at Lexington City Schools were able to safely view the solar eclipse on Monday, April 8th. Students were released from school thirty minutes early on April 8th to allow students to join their family members to view to eclipse at home or remain on campus for viewing during the peak viewing times that afternoon. Students also learned about the eclipse as part of

classroom learning activities.

WADDELL FIFTH GRADERS VISIT LYLURN DOWNING TO LEARN ABOUT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Each spring, fifth graders from HWES visit LDMS to learn about middle school course offerings, extracurricular activities, and see the school. Dr. Abbott Keese, principal, along with Sarah Leonard, school counselor, and Laura Joyner, teacher, shared information with students about course options for sixth grade. Eighth grade National Junior Honor Society members led tours of the school and then hosted a Q&A with students. Parents and students also visited the school that evening for a parent information session.



LDMS BAND EARNS RATING OF EXCELLENT AT KINGS DOMINION FESTIVAL OF MUSIC COMPETITION

On Saturday, April 20th, the Lylburn Downing Middle School band along with other bands and choral programs from schools across Virginia competed in the 2024 Festival of Music. The band earned a rating of "Excellent" in the competition. Students and chaperones enjoyed a fun-filled day in the



park before traveling back to Lexington. Congratulations to all of our musicians and to Karen Doyle, LDMS band director, on great day!



LDMS and MRMS JOIN TOGETHER FOR FIRST MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCCER TEAM

Over 40 middle school students from Lylburn Downing and Maury River joined together this spring to form the area's first middle school soccer team. The team has played several boys' and girls' games as well as several co-ed games with two home games played at Brewbaker Field. A special thank you to LDMS principal, Dr. Abbott Keese, for working to make this idea a reality with support from RARO. Thanks also to our coaches, Gavin Fox and Sarah Hagenbuch, along with several volunteer coaches who helped to make this a great season so far!



Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids' VEGGIE BRIGADE Program Returns to LCS

The Veggie Brigade program sponsored by Live Healthy Rockbridge Kids returned to our schools this spring. Sixth graders at LDMS tasted several fruits and vegetables, including cactus, red grapefruit, mango, and celery, during an activity as part of the teacher advisory period. Fifth graders at HWES will participate in Veggie Brigade later this spring. Students completed a survey rating each tasted food item, and parents were invited to complete an at-home survey, as well. A HUGE thank you to Jennifer Palmer for working with our schools to bring this program to our students!



HWES Teacher, Michelle Dittman, Wins First Ever "Masked Singer" Contest

Congratulations to HWES fourth grade teacher, Michelle Dittman, for winning the school's first "Masked Singer" competition last month as part of Music In Our Schools Month. Several teachers and staff members competed anonymously with vocal recordings played as part of the students' music classes during the month. Students voted on their favorites, and Mrs. Dittman was eventually named the winner. Thank you to HWES music teacher, Angie Rader, for all of the great events celebrating music in our schools during the month of March.



LDMS NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN SERVICE ACTIVITIES

NJHS 7th and 8th graders from Lylburn Downing Middle School planted trees in the area and helped to "spruce up" the downtown Lexington area as part of a service project for NJHS. Thank you to sponsor, Anna Swenty, for looking for opportunities for our students to give back to our community!

WADDELL K-2 STUDENTS CREATE A COLLABORATIVE CASTLE DURING ART

Students in grades K-2 at Waddell read the book, Boxitects by Kim Smith where the main character, Meg, loves to create things out of boxes. In the story, Meg learns the importance of collaboration, working together, and kindness. Inspired by the book, K-2 art students in Hannah Straub's discussed what collaboration looks like, sounds like, and feels like. Students collaboratively created an amazing castle with boxes and other recycled items. They also wrote a story to tell the castle's story. Congratulations to our wonderful artists and to Mrs. Straub on this amazing project!



Waddell Celebrates Learning with Interactive Family Math Night

Students and families at Waddell Elementary School celebrated learning with an interactive family math night last month. Teachers created interactive learning stations for students and family members to explore during the evening event. Activities included fraction basketball, circuit exploration, origami, math games with dice, Skittles math, coding with robots, pizza problem solving, and much more!

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lexington City Schools is currently seeking applicants for SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS. We are also seeking applicants to fill the following positions for the 2024-2025 school year: Early Childhood Special Education Teacher at HWES; Elementary Teacher; and part-time shuttle bus driver. If you or someone you know may be interested in any of these openings, please visit our school website to apply.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 30** - LDMS Spring Concert 7:15PM
- May 6-10** - Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week
- May 7** - School Board meeting 5:30PM at SBO
- May 8** - School Nurse Day - Thank you, Nurse Jewell and Nurse Campbell!
- May 9-10** - LDMS 8th Grade Retreat to Young Life Camp
- May 15** - HWES Field Day for Grades K, 1, 4
- May 16** - HWES Field Day for Grades 2, 3, 5



May 18 - National Speech Language Pathologist Day - Thank you, Mrs. Hamilton!

May 22 - HWES Fifth Grade Farewell 12:00PM ; LDMS Graduation 5:30PM

May 23 - Last Day of School ; Early Release Day for Students

May 24 - Teacher Workday

May 27 - OFFICES CLOSED for Memorial Day holiday

June 4 - School Board meeting 5:30PM at SBO



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Rebecca Walters

Rebecca is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters