

RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY SCHOOLS PANTHER PRIDE NEWSLETTER

DR. GARY BLAIR, INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Meet Dr. Gary Blair

RCPS HR Director Becomes Interim Superintendent

On Tuesday, February 21st, the Rappahannock County School Board appointed current Human Resources (HR) Director, Dr. Gary Blair, as Interim Superintendent following the resignation of Dr. Donna Matthews. Dr. Blair has 40 years of educational experiences under his belt, including serving as superintendent of schools in two other counties, building administrator at the elementary, middle, and secondary level, and central office assistant superintendent. As the current HR Director of RCPS, he already has experience with Rappahannock faculty and staff, as well as local procedures for hiring and recruiting staff, issuing contracts, overseeing grievance procedures and due process, and budget implications. Already, in his first few days as interim, he has met with executive staff to establish his expectations for leadership moving forward, as well as processes for immediate enhancement. He also met with teachers to gather information about the current perception of division needs. Dr. Blair is dedicated to maintaining the high standards RCPS demands in its instructional program, and looks forward to working with the school and community in this capacity. RCPS thanks Dr. Blair for taking on this very important position during this time of transition.

If you would like to give input regarding the hiring of a new superintendent, please visit our website (www.rappahannockschoools.us), and click the Superintendent Survey link on the main page.



Enrichment Opportunity: Writing Contest

Virginia students in grades 6-12 are invited to honor outstanding women in Virginia history by participating in Encyclopedia Virginia and the Library of Virginia's *Virginia Women in History* student writing contest. Four winning essays will be chosen, two from students in grades 6-8, and two from students in grades 9-12. Prizes include a Kindle Fire for each student winner and \$250 for each winner's school. Deadline for submissions is Friday, March 10, 2017. For contest rules and other information, please visit

<http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/vawomen/2017/essay.htm>. For more information about the Virginia Women in History Program or Writing Contest, please contact the Library of Virginia education team, by email at education@lva.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 692-3999; or Betsy Barton, Specialist for History and Social Science, Office of Humanities and Early Childhood, by email at Betsy.Barton@doe.virginia.gov or by telephone at (804) 225-3454.



RCES Book Fair Fun

Students left as “Happy Campers”

This week RCES hosted its second Scholastic Book Fair of the 2016-2017 school year. There were oodles of new titles to peruse, as well as multitudes of cherished titles that our students adore and look for during their visit to the fair.

The theme of the Book Fair was “Happy Camper,” so the library was decorated to the hilt with an outdoorsy, camping motif, complete with a mini marshmallow guessing game for all of the students to play when they visited with their classes.



On Family Night, the fair remained open until 6:30 PM, and students were able to participate in a book scavenger hunt together with their families. Each day, the fair had amazing parent volunteers to assist Mrs. Amy Wayland and Ms. Thomas. Once again, the RCES Scholastic Book Fair was a huge success! Reading for pleasure, inside and outside of school, has a real and long-lasting benefit. Thank you for encouraging the love of reading with your children at home.

Commit to Be Fit Kids Cooking Class

Over the weekend, Mandi Grove and Jacqui Lowe-Barton hosted Commit to be Fit’s (C2BF) first kid’s cooking class! RCES students sharpened their culinary skills as they learned about recipe reading and how to chop, measure, mix, and cook ingredients. Students worked together to make apple crisp and personalized omelets with freshly chopped vegetables. Afterwards, students enjoyed their delicious creations and even served extra apple crisp to their parents. The importance of kitchen safety was demonstrated and practiced throughout the class, along with a team effort of cleaning up. Meanwhile next door, parents and C2BF members joined Holly Jenkins, Wellness Integration Specialist, for an energizing circuit workout class. Commit to be Fit looks forward to hosting future family events to encourage healthy living in our Rappahannock community.



Special Education Disability Spotlight: Speech-Language Impairment

The ability to communicate is something we often take for granted; yet, it is the cornerstone of the learning process. Being able to understand information that is presented as well as express our understanding of that information is essential to successful educational performance as well as self-efficacy. Speech-Language Impairment is one of the major disability categories that is considered when a student is displaying academic difficulty. Indicators that a student may have a delay in this area include difficulty pronouncing words, fluency issues, such as stuttering, vocal quality concerns, such as hoarseness, limited vocabulary, and difficulty understanding language or concepts. RCPS is fortunate to have Nancy Jenkins as our full-time Speech Language Pathologist, as well as her capable Speech Assistant, Kristen Frazier. These ladies serve identified students in grades Pre-K through 12 who require speech-language instruction either as a primary/secondary disability or as a related service. Speech support ranges from individual to small group instruction in a self-contained setting to inclusive assistance in the general education classroom. As part of our on-going Child Find efforts, speech screenings are available free of charge for students who may be at-risk for a delay or who demonstrate indicators of concern. For additional information on how you may schedule a language screening for your child, please contact Carol Johnson at 227-0023 or cjohnson@rappahannockschoools.us.



RCHS Reality Fair

Students get a taste of real life

On Wednesday, February 15, the 8th graders at RCHS immersed themselves into the world of real life with the 2017 Reality Fair. A joint venture between the RCHS Guidance Department and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, the program plunges students into the world that adults face every day. In the process students learn valuable life skills and develop decision making processes that will serve them well as they begin to make economic choices in the real world.

The Reality Fair featured community volunteers manning twelve tables in the gym, each offering everything from medical and dental insurance to groceries to housing to transportation. The first stop is the Crystal Ball table, where 4-H leader, Jenny Kapsa, assigns students their “career” and subsequent income level. From there, the decision making began, and the students quickly realized the cost of the everyday items that most have taken for granted. The busiest table by far was the supplemental income table, as students learn fast that multiple jobs are required in order to finance the lifestyle they prefer. And along with the life lessons, hopefully students walked away with a renewed appreciation for community service as they spent their time interacting with the community volunteers who help each year to make this event the success that it is.



Upcoming Events and Announcements

- ❖ February 27-March 3: Read Across America Week
- ❖ March 2: Early Dismissal for Students 12:30 PM
- ❖ March 2: Parent Teacher Conferences
- ❖ March 3: Read Across America Assembly RCES 6:30 PM
- ❖ March 6: Winter Sports Awards Celebration
- ❖ March 9: End of 3rd Quarter
- ❖ March 17: Powderpuff Volleyball at RCHS
- ❖ March 21-24: RCHS Spring Writing SOL
- ❖ March 21: Report Cards Go Home
- ❖ March 24: RCHS Band Coffee House RCES Old Gym
- ❖ April 4-7: Kindergarten Registration
- ❖ April 8: Prom
- ❖ April 29-30: Spring Musical, *School of Rock*
- ❖ May 7: Senior Banquet
- ❖ May 13-16: Senior Trip
- ❖ May 21: Baccalaureate
- ❖ May 26: Graduation

Survey for Biweekly or Monthly Newsletter – We are considering moving to a biweekly or monthly newsletter. Which would you prefer?

Click the link to take our survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JDWJ9NV>

For upcoming athletic events visit the RCPS Sports Page:

<http://rappahannockcountyhs.schoolteams.com/>

RCPS Vision Statement:

To empower every student to reach his or her full potential.