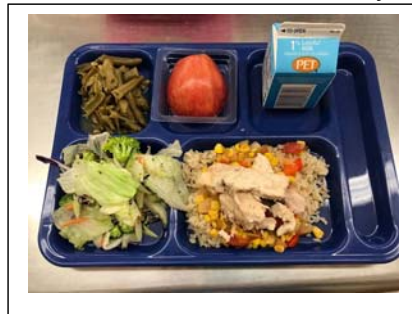


RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY SCHOOLS PANTHER PRIDE NEWSLETTER

DR. GARY BLAIR, INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

School Lunch Menu Makeover Commit to Be Fit Grant objectives met!

With the end of the Commit to Be Fit (C2BF) grant program fast approaching, Food Service Director, Stacey Whitt, and Nutritionist, Mandi Grove, reported successfully meeting the grant objectives of introducing at least ten new menu items to the cafeteria menu at both schools. Thanks to the dedication of cafeteria managers, Karen McCracken and Julie Banks, and their motivated and hard-working staff, the shift from the typical frozen, heat-and-serve meals to fresh fruit and veggie infused, freshly prepped and cooked meals was a huge hit!



The process from concept to consumption was especially exciting, as it involved students each step of the way. Before introducing new items, students participated in taste tests, surveys, nutrition workshops, and contests to help determine which nutritious items should be offered. Behind the scenes, cafeteria staff learned new prepping methods and worked together to creatively manage the time necessary to put together these types of freshly prepared meals. New menu items offered, thanks to the open communication of our food



service department and nutritionist, combined with student input and participation, were: bagels and cream cheese, fruit and yogurt parfait, cinnamon fruit nachos, fresh fruit every day (replacing sugary fruit cups), roasted broccoli, sweet and sour chicken bowl, chicken penne, chicken stir fry and brown rice, grilled chicken Caesar bowl, southwest veggie bowl, spicy tuna patties, and taco soup. So, at the conclusion of the

Enrichment Opportunity: Headwaters Spring After- School Program

The Headwaters After-School Enrichment Program at RCES will begin on April 4th and run through May 11th this spring. The program will meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:20 to 5:30 PM, with no meeting the Thursday of Spring Break (April 13). This year, our family at Headwaters has arranged a wonderful series of enrichment courses, designed to inspire students to find interests beyond the curriculum. This spring's offerings include, No Bake Cooking, giving students the chance to play with food through basic cooking techniques and recipes that do not require heat; Fun and Games, a free play lab experience in which students cooperatively lead the way through board games, Legos, and more; Let's Move, a fitness-focused course; Let's Make Art, an arts and crafts class with projects using skills in drawing, painting, mixed media, and print; and Golf Club, a golf lesson club open to grades 5-12 which will meet at the Schoolhouse Nine Hole Golf Course in Sperryville. All classes are limited in size and are offered to students on a first come, first served basis. To register, visit: http://images.pcmac.org/SiSFiles/Schools/VA/Rappahannock/Elementary/Uploads/Forms/Headwaters_After-School_Enrollment_Form.pdf

program, C2BF was successful in introducing 12 new items, instead of 10! Every school meal offered also met the USDA nutritional standards which regulate that all school lunches must provide protein, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and milk while limiting fat, calories, and sodium.

In honor of this cafeteria lunch menu makeover, National School Breakfast week, and National Nutrition month, March was packed with fun-filled, health and wellness activities and challenges. For National School Breakfast week (March 6-10), students were challenged to start their day with a nutritious breakfast. Students enjoyed new menu items unveiled that week, including cinnamon fruit nachos, yogurt parfaits, bagels, and wraps, while playing nutrition games to win prizes. The daily health tip on the morning announcements also emphasized the connection between eating breakfast, academic performance, and overall health.



Special Education Autism Awareness Month

RCPS is proud to join with others across our nation in celebrating April as “Autism Awareness Month”. The Autism Society launched a “nationwide effort to promote autism awareness, inclusion and self-determination for all to assure that each person with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is provided the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life” almost a quarter of a century ago.* Both RCES and RCHS will be conducting activities to develop students’ awareness of autism over the course of the month. In addition, RCPS will be displaying the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon throughout the division in support of our ASD population. As noted by the Autism Society: The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. Autism prevalence is now one in every 68 children in America. Show your support for people with autism by wearing the Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon – as a pin on your shirt, a magnet on your car, a badge on your blog, or even your Facebook profile picture – and educate folks on the potential of people with autism! * Please join us as we recognize our students and families who overcome the challenges of this difficult disability on a daily basis.



*Autism Society: <http://www.autism-society.org/get-involved/national-autism-awareness-month/>



ES students also participated in a schoolwide poster contest illustrating the importance of eating healthy. Posters were creative, unique, and showcased the knowledge students have acquired about the benefits of eating healthy. Top finalists won Fitbits for

their extraordinary efforts. Congratulations to Reilly Lee Waggener Talley and Audrey Willard who won the contest for lower elementary and upper elementary. All posters now adorn the prominent cafeteria display board for all students to enjoy.



RCPS is so proud of the efforts made possible through our C2BF grant project. A new grant proposal has been submitted to the PATH Foundation to continue the project for five more years.



RCES Recognizes Read Across America

A Seuss-tacular celebration

RCES celebrated Read Across America February 27th through March 3rd with a series of Dr. Seuss themed events and activities for all students. Students and staff kicked off the week by wearing their “crazy socks” to school on Monday. You could feel the excitement when students arrived on Monday morning and were surprised by all the decorations displayed around the school. Thanks to the work of Reading Interventionist, Katherine Todd, and



combined efforts by the PTO, fun reading initiatives took place all week-long. Each day started with quotes by the famous Dr. Seuss with trivia questions to be answered for prizes. Students were able to participate in spirit days that were tied to Dr. Seuss books, such as crazy sock day, wacky Wednesday, and pink and green day. The excitement continued on Wednesday as the school continued to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday with a D.E.A.R (Drop Everything And Read) event. At 2:00 all students and staff stopped to read for 20 minutes. The week ended with Dean Allen, who is known as The Wizard of Reading, performing an entertaining assembly for the students and staff. Mr. Allen brought many of the famous Dr. Seuss stories to life. The enjoyment of reading was appreciated by all.

March was Music in our Schools Month!

March was Music in our Schools Month. In celebration, music was played over the intercom school wide in the morning with facts about the composers during announcements. In the classroom, many grades are writing songs using xylophones and recorders. First grade students performed a patriotic concert on March, 23rd in the gymnasium which enhanced work they had done on several beautiful patriotic art projects. Second through seventh graders are currently writing reviews of the musical they are watching in class. Check out the hallway near the music room for examples of students' work. Please visit Mrs. Dippert's website for fun musical games and YouTube choir songs: <https://sites.google.com/a/rappahannockschools.us/rces-music/>





RCHS FLEX Fair

Students share Service Learning Projects

Throughout the 2016-17 school year Rappahannock County High School has featured a fifth block, a Flex block, two to three days a week. The Flex block had a twofold purpose this year: to provide a time during the school day for students needing academic assistance to get small group tutoring, and to provide a time during the school day for students to develop community service learning projects.

This past week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, March 27 through 29, the service learning Flex groups displayed the fruits of their labors for their peers and RCHS staff members to view. The classes were divided into three groups and each group had a day to display their projects in science fair form to their Flex class peers. RCHS administrators and central office employees acted as judges, rating the projects according to a rubric that had been previously developed and shared with students.



The results were amazing. Some of the projects quite literally brought tears to the judges' eyes and many others were simply astonishing in their scope and impact. Projects ranged from tightly focused community service, which focused on providing needed services to elderly county residents, to more far reaching efforts, such as collecting and delivering supplies to West Virginia flood victims, to a much broader net such as Legos for Africa, fund raising for St. Jude's children's hospital, or crafting pens for our troops around the world.

One requirement of the Flex projects was that students had to write a reflection, stating their thoughts about the project after its end. Reading the reflections brought out the true value of this community service learning effort as student after student recounted how their lives were improved by the act of doing things for others.

Flex classes will continue on a smaller scale for the balance of this academic year, with more students going into SOL tutoring groups, some students continuing to wrap up their community service projects, and some simply using the time to stay caught up on their school work as the school year winds to a close. Plans are in the works for next year's Flex schedule, with administrators and teachers working together to continue to improve this latest offering for our students. But more importantly, and as the finished products and reflections evidenced, RCHS students have discovered the value and benefit of community service, a discovery that will hopefully enable our lifelong learners to be lifelong believers in the value of giving back to the community they call home.

Upcoming Events and Announcements

- ❖ April 3: PTO meeting RCES 6:30 PM
- ❖ April 4-7: Kindergarten Registration
- ❖ April 8: Prom
- ❖ April 11: RCES progress reports go home
- ❖ April 12-17: Spring Break
- ❖ April 29-30: Spring Musical, *School of Rock*
- ❖ May 7: Senior Banquet
- ❖ May 13-16: Senior Trip
- ❖ May 19: Last day of school
- ❖ May 21: Baccalaureate
- ❖ May 26: Graduation

Commit to Be Fit final check-ins are being held!

Use this link to schedule an appointment:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090A48A8A828>

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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.