

# GT Parent Newsletter

Rappahannock County Schools

9/25/2015

## *GT Students Cracking the Code!*

Students working from SCRATCH

This month, the Third Thursday GT Challenge time brought students an opportunity to learn about SCRATCH, a free online computer programming

a platform to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively—all very important 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. GT Students at RCPS will

“Today knowledge has power. It controls access to opportunity and advancement.” ~*Peter Drucker*

learning community where students can create their own stories, games, and animations while learning something about the basics of computer programming and coding. SCRATCH is the project of the Lifelong Kindergarten Group at the MIT Media Lab. The goal of the project is to allow students

have a chance at the next GT Third Thursday Challenge time to create individual accounts in order to design projects of their own. Our hope is that, through this medium, our gifted students will have another fun, creative, and challenging outlet for expressing their individual technical talents.

## *Updates from the VCGEA Conference*

Great Ideas from Surrounding Counties

I had the great pleasure of attending the Virginia Council for Gifted Education Administrators in Charlottesville last Friday. The meeting covers VA Department of Education updates each year, as well as

## *In-Class Challenges*

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Students in grades 2 through 7 will be exploring problem solving as individuals and teams in a monthly challenge. In teams, students participate in the Continental Math League which allows for deliberations on solving difficult and higher-order thinking mathematics problems. Also, students participate in the Word Masters Challenge. Word Masters allows for students to understand complex vocabulary and then apply the vocabulary in the context of analogous relationships. Great SAT preparation! We will also again be using NewzBrain in various grade levels as a way to explore and enrich world understanding as well as direct interested students toward joining the RCHS Quizbowl Team.

provides an opportunity to network with other gifted education administrators from across the state. Of particular interest to me this year was the "Great Ideas" seminar in which surrounding counties were afforded time to speak to the group about programs they had implemented with great success. One idea that seemed very pertinent to RCPS was the mapping out recommended courses for gifted students in a brochure format. This was done right next door in Culpeper County and was very well received by parents. The brochure

mapped out recommended courses depending upon interests of students, connecting each academic plan with a career pathway. I found this to be quite clever, and something that is very doable here in Rappahannock, especially with the implementation of our new program, Naviance. Naviance is a guidance program that assesses and stores aptitude data and connects students with academic and career pathways based on student interests, RCPS program of studies, and aptitude. The program also connects college programs to student progress

as well as allows a family connection for parents. We are just now rolling out the program. Much more information will be sent home once we get further into the implementation. This program will be used for setting up student academic and career plans as well as sending in college applications, applying for scholarships, and accessing transcripts. The program will be used in grades 6-12.

### *Important Events/Dates*

(Please also check the RCPS Website and Calendar for more!!!)

- MVGS Chili Cook-off and Trivia Contest Fundraiser: Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:00-9:30
- SAT Prep Courses in RCHS RM 2: 3:30-4:30 PM: Math is Mondays and Wednesdays, Critical Reading and Writing is Tuesdays and Thursdays. They will run from now until 10/1 in preparation for the 10/3 SAT offered at RCHS.
- October is the month for rising juniors and seniors to decide whether or not to apply to Summer Residential Governor's School programs.
- College Trip to Mary Washington: October 8, 2015
- Week of October 12<sup>th</sup> is National School Lunch Week

Want to see something featured? Send your feedback to:

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