

What's Happening in January 2009

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Calendar

Dec 24—Jan 2

Winter Break

Jan 12-13

School Blood Drive

Jan 14

11th Grade Parent Night 7PM

Jan 15

PTSA Meeting 7PM

Jan 16-17

Chorus – Disney Dazzle

President's Message

Happy New Year! We hope you're having a nice holiday with your families. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who have helped us get through the busy fall season and now, almost to the halfway point of the school year. A huge thank you to Denise Stalnaker, Laurie Horstmann and their ACE committee for helping guidance put together the Academic Awards ceremony for 243 10th-12 graders earning a grade point average of 3.75 and higher and the honor roll donut reception for over 1,500 students, over half of the school! Congrats also to the theater students who were featured on the ABC Special, Making of a High School Drama. If anyone is interested, I have a VCR tape for those who wish to borrow it or make a copy.

This coming budget year will be difficult financially not only for Fairfax County, but also for Fairfax County Public Schools. Our Superintendent, Dr. Jack Dale, has proposed a three-tiered plan of budget cuts ranging from \$43 million to \$219 million to address school budget shortfalls for 2010. Budget cuts may lead to increased class size, reduction in programs, cuts in security staff, and clinic aides. I encourage parents to be informed and voice their concerns to our government and School Board. For more information go to http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/lobs/agency_lob_presentations.htm; and <http://www.fcps.edu/mediapub/publicat/wire.htm>

I recently submitted an editorial on behalf of Westfield High School in regard to negative media attention after recent drug arrests in our community. The editorial appeared in the Dec 4th editions of the *Centreview* and the Fairfax Times and was repeated in the December 18th edition of the *Centreview*. While I appreciate sentiments getting to print, some information was edited out. [Read the full article](#). I cannot stress the importance of parent involvement in our kids' lives: monitoring their behavior, setting consequences for broken rules (meaning more than just taking the cell phone away), requiring parental supervision at parties and getting to know their friends and their friends parents. Westfield's Student Assistance Counselor, Leslie Churn, MA, can see students for a variety of issues, not just substance abuse, and refer them to the appropriate services. Intervention is more effective if you can reach kids early. She also has access to three Spanish speaking counselors who can help. Services are confidential. Some parents have also asked about drug test wipes that were mentioned at a recent parent education seminar. Information can be obtained for purchase of the wipes at http://mistralgroupp.com/SEC_drug.asp

On a related topic, set your calendars for Thursday, March 26th, 7pm in the WHS Lecture Hall for our PTSA- and Coalition-sponsored "**Saturday Night in the Suburbs**", a free, frank and informative presentation on what teens are doing when parents aren't aware. There is also a county wide Unified Prevention Coalition Conference about prevention substance use and violence on Saturday March 28, 2009 at Luther Jackson Middle School from 9am-4pm. For more information go to www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org. Both of these programs promise to be informative.

Please see our upcoming January call for **volunteers for the school's blood drive** on January 12 and 13. Contact Suzanne Olijar at volunteerCoord@westfielddhs.org. Our BJ's fund raiser still continues for the next few days. Contact Evelyn Spain at waysmean@westfielddhs.org.

Jan 19

MLK Holiday - No School

Jan 20

Inauguration Day - No School

Jan 24

SAT Exams

Jan 26

[VA PTA Day at the General Assembly](#)

Links of Interest

- [Fairfax County Public School](#)
- [Fairfax County Council of PTAs](#)
- [Northern Virginia District PTA](#)
- [Virginia PTA](#)
- [National PTA](#)
- [US Department of Education](#)
- [Safe VA Highways](#)
- [Alliance for Virginia Students](#)
- [FCPS Family Gram](#)
- [FCPS Parent Resources](#)
- [FCPS Inclement Weather Plans](#)
- [Sign up for FCPS Keep In Touch](#)
- [Athletic Boosters](#)
- [Band Boosters](#)
- [Choral Boosters](#)
- [Guitar Boosters](#)
- [Orchestra Boosters](#)
- [Theatre Boosters](#)

Reminder

Items to be included in the Feb 2009 Bulldog Bulletin must be **submitted to newsletter@westfieldhs.org on or before Jan 23, 2009**

Your feedback is important to us. Send to newsletter@westfieldhs.org comments or suggestions to make your PTSA better

Student Directories are still available for \$10/copy. Stop by the main office to purchase one, or contact ptsa1stvp@westfieldhs.org to make alternative arrangements.

Plans are in process for a fabulous [Class of 2009 All Night Grad Party](#) (and lock in) at the ESPN Zone in Washington, DC. Things are ramping up for the primary ANGP fundraiser MULCH DAY scheduled for April 25. Donations and volunteers are needed to make this a success. We will try to post upcoming organizational dates on the PTSA website.

On behalf the PTSA and our PTSA President, Salma Ashmawi, who is on her pilgrimage overseas, we wish you a successful year, in and out of the classroom.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Campbell, WHS PTSA 1st Vice President

Tidbits

- The **Chantilly High School PTSA is sponsoring a Practice SAT** on Saturday, January 17th, 2009 from 9:00-1:00 in the Chantilly High School Cafeteria and cost is \$15.00. All Westfield students are invited to participate. There will also be a free follow-up advice session and return of scores to students and parents on Tuesday evening, January 28th. [Download registration form.](#)
- **Neighborhood Watch training.** This training is required if you wish to participate in Neighborhood Watch activities in your community. The next date will be January 21, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the small community room here at the Sully District Police Station. We hope to hold a training every other month after then. For more information contact MPO W. M. BROCK Crime Prevention Officer Sully District Station, Office: 703-814-7048.
- Jan 26, 2009 [VA PTA Day at the General Assembly](#). District Legislator's Reception 11-12PM. Parents, Teachers, & Students are encouraged to participate to advocate education at the state legislature.
- Virginia PTA is now accepting Citizenship Essays for the upcoming [2009 Essay Project Award](#) (deadline Feb 2, 2009)
- [Apply for the Virginia PTA Scholarship Award](#) (deadline Mar 2, 2009)

Parents Can Protect Children from Cyberbullying

As kids discover new ways to share information, they have unfortunately also found more ways to harm each other. According to [Common Sense Media](#), a resource to help families teach kids how to be safe and smart with today's media, cyberbullying has affected 43% of kids between the ages of 13 and 17. As holiday breaks approach and time online is likely to increase, parents can use tips from Common Sense to prevent cyberbullying or limit its damage.

[More resources are available in the online edition.](#)

ANGP News

Plans are underway for the **ANGP is a senior "lock in" at ESPN Zone** in Washington, DC, and it takes place on June 18th, immediately following the graduation. For more information, visit <http://ptsa.westfieldhs.org>.

The pricing schedule of ANGP tickets has changed!!!!. The lower ANGP ticket price of \$60 has been extended to encourage you to buy your tickets early and to help us with our budget planning! **As of February 1st, the price goes up to \$75. As of April 1, it will be \$90. On June 1st, tickets will be \$105.**

PLEASE NOTE: NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AFTER JUNE 10th. There will be no refunds!! If there is a financial hardship, please have the student contact their guidance counselor, as scholarships are available, confidential, and are based on students' special circumstances. Tickets can be purchased via the [PTSA web site via PayPal](#), at the ANGP monthly ticket table at all lunches, or by downloading a form and sending it to school with a check made out to WHS ANGP for the ticket amount. Any

questions, or to help on a committee, please contact Pam Murdoch at angp@westfieldhs.org.

Attention Students, Parents, And Especially the Class of 2009!!!!

The **Mulch Day fund raiser event** has been scheduled. The date is Saturday, April 25, 2009 in the WHS parking lot. This will be the **only opportunity for students to earn Bulldog Bucks**, the coveted way for seniors to "purchase" fabulous big ticket items/prizes for their dorm room or apartment. Volunteers are needed to do a variety of tasks- not all include lifting bags of mulch or driving a truck! Committees are now forming, but only at present to organize and plan things behind the scenes and via email. Contact Denise Stalnacker at bulldogmulch@westfieldhs.org with your questions, to be on her circulation list, and to volunteer. This is the only ANGP fundraiser, so we need this to be a success!! [Read more on how you can help.](#)

Contact Pam Murdoch at angp@westfieldhs.org if you're interested in attending or joining a committee. [Sign up to volunteer](#)

*Pam Murdoch
All Night Graduation Party 2009 Chair*

BITS Tutoring

What is BITS? A Free Tutoring Program for Students in Grades 3—12 that meets three Saturdays a month from October through May.

Time: 9: 30—11: 30 AM

Place: Westfield High School—Library

To Register: [Download forms.](#) or pick up the forms in the sub schools; return to your counselor or bring with you on your first day.

For more Information please contact one of the following:

- Your Guidance Counselor
- Pat Williams, WHS Sub-School Principal 703 488-6371
- Carol Jasper, BITS Coordinator 703 488-6363 ext 7167
- Nancy Tortorella, BITS Coordinator -703-488-6363 ext 7167

Minority Achievement News

Minority Achievement Committee Hosts Annual Holiday Celebration

The MAC enjoyed the Holiday season by hosting its annual Holiday Dinner. We were graced with the presence of many families and faculty members. Food from many different cultures was shared by all. There were door prizes and entertainment. Performances were provided by Westfield's own International Club and Step Team. The audience also enjoyed a Latino dance performance by the *Grupo Folklórico Latinoamericano*. Many joined in and danced the night away. Thanks to all who came out or contributed to the success of this festive occasion. Happy New Year to all as we enter into 2009 and the second half of the school year.

Please mark these other important dates on your calendar.

- March 11 7–9 Cafeteria: Spring Parent Coffee
- June 3 5–9 Cafeteria: End of Year MAC Barbeque

*Sincerely,
Mark Richardson, MAC Chairperson
[Minority Achievement Homepage](#)*

Reflections Committee

[2008-2009 Westfield HS PTA Reflections Winners](#) are announced. Congratulations to all who participated.

All Outstanding Interpretation award winners were forwarded to the Fairfax County Council of PTAs on Nov. 14, 2008. There they will be judged against other entries from Cluster 8. Westfield HS had 31 participants and 35 separate pieces of artwork.

Michele Ford, Reflections Chair

Volunteers Committee News

"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround

us everyday" ~ Sally Koch

Hats off to the many volunteers who assisted with the health screening in the first week of November! Kudos also to the volunteers who knocked out the Government Survey forms in just one day – a new record! FYI: In your back-to school PTA packet, if you indicated an interest in volunteering for particular activities (e.g. ACE Honor roll, 5K run, Career Center, etc), your contact information has been sent to the person in charge of that activity.

Depending when in the year the activity occurs, you may not have heard from the activity chair yet. If you want more information now – perhaps to mark your calendar – please go to the PTSA web site and click on the contact email for the activity you are interested in. The chair of the activity will receive your inquiry and get back to you. Please feel free to contact me at volunteerCoord@westfieldhs.org if you have any questions.

*Suzanne Olijar
Volunteer Coordinator*

Ways and Means Committee

BJ's has a special Membership offer just for Westfield High School PTSA Technology and Education Fundraiser

Get \$10 off the \$45 annual Inner Circle Membership fee when you join or renew. Get \$10 off the \$80 annual BJ's Rewards Membership fee when you join or renew and start earning 2% Payback on most purchases. Purchase either Membership and you will receive a second Card for an additional Household member at no additional charge, plus three EXTRA months of Membership. BJ's will donate \$5 of your Membership fee to the Westfield PTSA Technology and Education Fundraiser. **This promotion begins now through January 9, 2009.** So don't delay and join today

How to Enroll

1. Complete the BJ's membership application (*form coming soon; visit [web site](#) for updates*)
 - o Send the completed application with credit card information to [Evelyn Spain](#)
 - o Enclose completed application with a check in a sealed envelope addressed to Ways and Means and deliver to the PTSA mailbox at Westfield High School. Please make checks payable to: BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc.
2. Once you have turned into your application, you will receive a Temporary Membership Card that will allow you to immediately begin to shop at BJ's. Please enclose an email address or physical address where this card can be sent to you. If you have questions or concerns, please contact [Evelyn Spain](#). Take advantage of BJ's savings today.

Evelyn Spain, Ways and Means Chair

FCPS Newswire

FAIRFAX COUNTY WANTS YOUR INPUT ON CLOSING THE BUDGET GAP FOR FY 2010 Superintendent Jack D. Dale has presented a [three-tiered plan of budget cuts](#) (PDF format) to enable the school system to address a budget shortfall for FY 2010. Citizens can still [provide feedback](#) to the Fairfax County School Board and the Board of Supervisors [online](#). Learn more about the budget situation in a [video](#) by Superintendent Jack Dale. [Contact your current Board of Supervisors](#) to voice your concerns.

Fairfax County Health Department Clinic Room Aide Program (CRA) and School Resource Offices affected by budget cuts as well. The Fairfax County Health Department, in collaboration with the Fairfax County School System (FCPS), provides health services to FCPS students to ensure that each school-aged child (2—22 years old) has an optimal learning environment. [View CRA Fact Sheet](#). Additional informational links: [FCPS FY 2010 Budget Information](#) & [Gifted & Talented Program](#).

School Board to Discuss FCPS Grading Policies

AA summary of findings regarding FCPS grading policies is being completed this month and is scheduled for School Board discussion at its January 12 work session. FCPS and a parent advocacy group, [Fairgrade](#), have been collaborating on the research study, which examines two elements: the system's six-point grade scale and the weights awarded for grades earned in advanced courses. [Read more.](#)

Do You Have a Nominee:

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) sponsors several award programs to recognize excellence among employees. Now is the time to start thinking about potential nominees for the following award programs:

- **Support Employee of the Year:** The nominee must be a support employee with at least three years of successful full-time or part-time experience with FCPS. The deadline for nominations is February 27, 2009.
- **Outstanding First-Year Principal Award:** The nominee must have begun his or her first assignment as a principal on or after January 1, 2007. The deadline for nominations is March 13, 2009.
- Any FCPS teacher or staff member, student or former student, parent, administrator, or Fairfax County employee or citizen may nominate a candidate for an award. Nomination forms and instructions are available on the FCPS web site at www.fcps.edu/DHR/employees/awards/. For more information, call 571-423-3278.

Register Now for Winter-Spring 2009 Adult and Community Education

Classes Registration is under way for the January-April 2009 term of classes offered by the Office of Adult and Community Education (ACE). Course offerings may be viewed at www.fcps.edu/aceclasses, and most classes may be registered for online. The course catalog, ACE Classes, has been mailed to residents and is also available at Fairfax County public libraries and ACE registration centers. Take a look at the new classes coming up in 2009 and mark your calendars.

How Do I Update My Keep in Touch Account? Fairfax County Public Schools has a new vendor for the Keep in Touch (KIT) notification system, Blackboard Connect (formerly NTI, Connect-ED). Blackboard Connect is an award-winning company with years of experience with K-12 education systems, many as large as or larger than FCPS. The system will still be called Keep in Touch or KIT. To learn more about Parent View, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/fcps247.htm>. For assistance with Parent View, call 1-866-434-8880.

Community Programs

Look at what The FCPS Parent Resource Center has coming up!

View a complete list of all upcoming Workshops and Activities posted to the PRC [web site](#).

Westfield Community Coalition

Underage drinking parties can be reported anonymously to the police at 703-691-2131 where they will disperse police assistance, or 703-246-2333 for the "Shut it Down" Hotline, to report date, time, and location of an underage drinking party. To report WHS security concerns, contact Ray Clements at 703-488-6307 or Ray.Clements@fcps.edu

Under Age Tip Line 703-691-2131. Underage drinking parties can be reported anonymously to the police at this number. They will disperse police assistance.

Powerful video on seatbelts. It was produced by Montana Dept of Transportation. It is a true story. No actors." http://www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/room_to_live.shtml

Shut It Down Hotline 703-246-2333, to report date, time and location of an underage drinking party if you hear about it ahead of time.

Leslie Churn, MA, Substance Abuse Counselor for Westfield HS Contact 703-488-6308 or at Leslie.Churn@fcps.edu for a free and confidential assessment.

Ethics Day at Westfield HS (Cluster 8; Westfield HS)

Sophomores learn valuable lessons about decision-making and consequences. (5: 15 min) http://www.fcps.edu/DIT/streaming/is8_ethicsday.aspx

Parents Who Host Lose the Most (Safe and Drug Free Youth; All Clusters)

Interview with Diane Eckert, Safe and Drug Free Youth and Tim Thomas, Westfield HS. (4:26) http://www.fcps.edu/DIT/streaming/is8_int_hostlosemost.aspx

Westfield Community Coalition Coordinator: Jennifer Cooper

(jalcooper@aol.com) 703-966-8304. Contact Jennifer to be on the email list to receive free information about prevention programs and upcoming events.

Unified Prevention Coalition

The Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County Public Schools is dedicated to promoting prevention and early intervention for violence and drug use in our community. [Visit web site for resource information.](#)

Parent Guide to Personal Safety for Youth

Because of the exceptional popularity of the **KidSafe Virginia parent guides**, the Governor's Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (GOSAP) recently worked to revise, update, and combine the previous parent guides into one guide. The purpose of the new publication, Prevention Comes First: Parent Guide to Personal Safety for Youth, is to educate parents about some of the potential safety threats children may face and to assist parents in communicating with their children about personal safety.

The topics covered in the guide include: fire safety, internet safety, driving safety, bullying, gangs, inhalant abuse prevention, and underage drinking. Beginning December 1, 2007, the parent guides will be available at fire and rescue stations and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offices throughout the Commonwealth. To locate your nearest visit [DMV office](#) homepage.

Copies of the parent guide may also be downloaded from the [GOSAP Web site](#). Questions may be addressed to Jacklyn Varela, special assistant to the Secretary of Public Safety at (804) 692-2568 or by e-mail: jacklyn.varela@governor.virginia.gov

DonorsChoose.org

What if there were a simple way to provide students with the books, technology, and supplies that they need to learn?

What if people from all walks of life could connect directly with public schools, learn about specific classroom needs, and choose how to help? [DonorsChoose.org](#) makes this possible.

FCPS Donations

Donate arts equipment and music instruments through our FCPS donations web site. [Read more](#). You could make a big difference in the equipment available to schools. Donations are tax deductible.

Donation to Fairfax County Public Schools, Computers & Peripherals

Fairfax County Public Schools accepts donated computers and peripherals provided they meet acceptable specifications whether donated centrally or to a particular school. These technical standards establish the acceptable specifications for donated computers capable of connecting to the FCPS network. [Read More](#)

SIGN UP FOR GIANT BONUS Bucks

You can turn your grocery shopping into cash for Westfield through **Giant's A+ BonusBucks program**. Sign up for the program and designate Westfield High School. Go to [A+ Bonus Bucks Homepage click on A+ Bonus Bucks](#) ["designate your schools"], and provide the first three letters of your last name and your 12-digit card number (if

you already have one) with no spaces. **You must register/designate every year to make sure Westfield HS gets credit for your purchases.** To designate Westfield High School enter the **School ID number 03798**. You can designate up to three schools and your Bonus Bucks will be divided equally among them. If you don't have a Bonus Bucks card, you can pick one up at any Giant grocery store. The program runs from October 5, 2008 through April 3, 2009. Even if you have signed up in the past, you must do this each year to allow Giant to designate funds to the school of your choice.

Office Depot 5% Back to School Program

Every time parents, students, faculty, and other Westfield High School supporters make purchases at **Office Depot, the school receives 5%** of the qualifying purchases to use for free supplies. All you need to do is tell them at the cash register when checking out that you want **Westfield High School (ID #70115228) to get credit for the purchase.** They will look up the Back to Schools ID number for our school and enter it into the system at check out.

GoodSearch.com

Search the Web? **Westfield can earn a penny every time you search the Internet. GoodSearch.com** is a search engine (similar to Google) that donates half of its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it's powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results. Go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Westfield High School PTSA, Chantilly VA as the charity you want to support. Just 500 of us searching four times a day will raise about \$7300 in a year without anyone spending a dime! And, be sure to spread the word to family and friends who want to support our high school.

Watch D.O.G.S. (Dad's of Great Students)

[WATCH D.O.G.S.®](http://www.watchdogsonline.com) (Dads Of Great Students) is the safe school initiative of the National Center for Fathering that involves fathers and father figures to help create a more safe and secure learning environment in our nation's schools. A great starting point to explore ways to get more men involved in PTA.

You received this newsletter because you signed up via online membership or hand submitted membership form. You may subscribe or unsubscribe anytime by visiting <http://ptsa.westfieldhs.org/subscribe2/newsletter.php>