



THE PTSA NEWSLETTER

Langley High School

Dec 2011/Jan 2012

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy holidays to everyone! The main topic this month is registration for the 2012-2013 school year. It is abundantly clear that we, the Langley High Administrative Staff, have to do a better job communicating to our families about what courses are best for your students. We have had over three hundred switch requests this year. Each request is evaluated in detail on the merits, and decisions are based on information from the teacher, the student, the counselor, and the parents. The overwhelming volume of requests is distracting teachers and administrators from other very important duties and the situation cannot continue to occur in future years.

I will rectify some of the problems internally, but I will need your help to ensure that students are placed in appropriate classes at the start of the school year. Fifteen percent of the students who requested to switch out of a class were not recommended for that class by their previous teacher. That may not sound like a lot, but it's almost two course sections worth of students that have to be moved after the school year starts. The imbalance this causes in our master schedule is enormous: some students are in classes of twenty; others are in classes of thirty or more. The moves make it very difficult to provide consistent instruction from teacher to teacher.

So, how can families help? Please consider our recommendations carefully. As we are an open enrollment school, there are no achievement tests to pass in order to enroll in AP or Honors level classes, so students do not have to take our advice. However, the advice comes from people who have experience and expertise and an outstanding track record of knowing what is best for students. Also, consider that the teacher making the recommendation does not consider the student's future workload. For example, if a teacher is hesitant to recommend a student for AP English 11, he/she does not know that the student may also be considering taking three or four other AP classes. What that teacher is saying is that the student may have trouble getting a decent grade in AP English 11, even if he takes no other AP classes. Students also have to consider that recommendations from teachers imply that the student is capable of earning a "C" or above. A recommendation does not guarantee the student will get an "A" in that class.

Of course, every student is an individual. And, every family has to consider multiple factors when choosing classes for next year. We are just asking that you give more weight to our professional advice than that fifteen percent figure suggests people do.

We also acknowledge that we have to do much more to inform students about what they are getting into when they select college-level courses in high school. To that end, in January we will significantly ramp up our strategy to provide enhanced information. Parents are invited on Wednesday, January 18, at 6:30 pm, to attend our newly enhanced Curriculum Night. I think you will come away much better informed than ever before. The evening combines our AP night with a general curriculum fair where parents will be able to see honors/regular or AP/regular courses juxtaposed and defined. We will also make student panels available to you as well as our AP Coordinator, Kevin Howard, to answer any particular questions.

Further, we are planning a Curriculum Fair for students during a school day in January. Details of this program are still being developed. The idea is to give students ten to fifteen minutes to see what an actual AP class is like; to gauge the homework load; to review the textbooks; and to come away with a better idea of what they are getting into if they choose to take college-level courses.

Selecting the best courses and planning for college and our kids' futures is never a relaxing thing, is it? It is a constant, four-year stressor. So, at the risk of sounding preachy, here are a couple of points that have seemed to help families in the past: There is a college for every student no matter if they take seven AP classes, two, or none. The college admission officers evaluate your child fairly and honestly as part of a pool and are usually good judges of your student's ability to succeed at a particular school. However, if it is a struggle to convince a college that your student is right for them, that struggle does not end if he or she is accepted. Make the decisions that best suit your student at the time and allow the student enough balance in their life without causing them to spin their wheels needlessly. They should stretch to reach their potential, but not so much that they tear apart at the seams. There are many paths to achieve long-range goals and many schools that will help students get there.

Whatever you decide, we will try to be there for each and every student along the way and help him/her whenever we can.

And, just a quick note on a different topic: Please help me to boost teacher morale. Happy teachers equal happy students. And happy students are the best learners. To that end, please give teachers the benefit of the doubt if there is an issue. Too many times this year, teachers have received negative emails from parents because the parents have not understood the entire situation. Please remember that teachers are public servants and have dedicated themselves to a noble profession. Communicate with them. They are here for your students. Of course, if there is an issue that you and the teacher cannot resolve, please let the departmental administrator know, and we will facilitate the resolution.

Thank you for your attention. I sincerely hope your family has a restful break and enjoys time with one another.

Matt Ragone, 703-287-2704, Matt.Ragone@fcps.edu

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As winter approaches, we all feel the change in the air. Sandals are replaced with boots, sunglasses with ski goggles. Change has come to the PTSA as well. Recently, PTSA President Risa Sanders informed us that she would have to resign from her duties because of additional professional responsibilities. Although we are sad to lose her, we wish her the very best. We will miss her leadership, perspective, and incredible dedication to Langley. With her departure, the Executive Committee met, accepted her resignation, and voted to amend my role from President-Elect to President to serve out the remainder of her term. We are now seeking someone who would be interested in serving as President-Elect for the remainder of the year. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Our thanks go to the administration, faculty, and student volunteers for organizing the Touching Bases parent/teacher conferences on November 18. It was a wonderfully effective, efficient way to enable parents to talk with their child's teachers; three minutes really does provide ample opportunity to see how your child is doing in his/her classes. Our thanks also go to our incredible Hospitality Committee who hosted a beautiful, and much appreciated, breakfast for the staff early that morning.

If you are having trouble getting into the holiday spirit this year, I strongly encourage you to attend one (or all) of the holiday concerts here at Langley in the next couple of weeks. The band, Madrigals, orchestra, and chorus all have programs this month. It's a great way to celebrate the holidays. Speaking of student performances, our congratulations go to all students, parents, and the entire Theatre Arts department for their outstanding production of *Grease* this past month.

In keeping with the PTSA's commitment to increase communication and expand the sense of community in Saxon Country, please sign up for the PTSA e-comm messaging system, if you have not done so. This email service provides periodic updates on the happenings at Langley, including upcoming programs for students and parents, class information, announcements, and more. Think of it as parent-friendly Spark Notes for the events and activities that are part of your

child's school life. Please remember, that e-comm is different than Keep In Touch (KIT), which transmits messages to you from FCPS and the school.

Once the holidays are over, our PTSA committees will be back at work again. Please be sure to read the PTSA Committee section in this newsletter—check out what they have planned for 2012. The next PTSA meeting is Wednesday, January 11, 9:15 am, in the PTSA Conference Center (trailer #1). All PTSA members are welcome.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the PTSA committee chairs, and especially our unbelievable Executive Committee and Parliamentarians, for their patience and unending support during this transition period. Their knowledge, organization, and dedication to their committees are truly inspiring, and their willingness to share all that with me is so much appreciated.

Have a wonderful holiday season and a safe New Year.

Betsy Shomaker, PTSA President, 703-629-0428, shomaker.jb@verizon.net

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PTSA Committees

FAMILY NETWORK: This past month the committee partnered with the freshman and sophomore class parents in hosting programs on dealing with stress. Our speakers shared what Langley students are saying about stress, how they are "dealing" with their stress, and the very real risks that are involved when stress is not recognized and dealt with in an appropriate way. Strategies to recognize and reduce teen stress were offered. If you were not able to attend the program, an outline of the presentation will be posted on the PTSA website. We would like to thank Jason McBeth, Langley school psychologist; Donna Barnsley, Langley social worker; Dawn-Lee Evans, Langley alcohol/drug counselor; and William Hauda, M.D., physician at Inova, for their generous contribution of time and invaluable information. We plan to offer this program at the Junior Class Coffee in March.

On Wed, Jan 11, at 7 pm (snow date, Wed, Jan 18), McLean High School is hosting a program titled **Perils of College Drinking**. This program addresses underage and binge drinking in college; it is intended for upperclassmen and their parents. The forum includes an award-winning powerful (and graphic) documentary, "HAZE," followed by a panel discussion with representatives from the Fairfax County Police Department, parents whose children either died or were affected by the drinking and drug culture, and undergraduate and graduate students. Our committee hosted this program last year here at Langley; it is a "must-see" program.

Everyone deserves to be in a safe and healthy relationship. Parents, are you concerned about the amount of texting between teens? Teens, do you ever feel that your boyfriend/girlfriend is excessively jealous? Please join the Safe Community Coalition (in partnership with McLean, Langley and Thomas Jefferson High Schools) to address these types of questions in a program titled **What's Love Got To Do With It? Healthy Relationships and Dating**. This educational and interactive program will be held Thu, Feb 9 at 7 pm in the McLean High School auditorium. The program is for parents and high-school students. It will contain several important components: 1. "Remote Control": an interactive dating violence prevention program that explores issues, attitudes and beliefs about dating relationships and incorporates skill-building exercises designed to encourage healthy decision-making; 2. Speaker Lynne Russell: Lynne is the mother of 19-year-old Siobhan who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend in Oak Hill, Virginia, two years ago and is President of DASH—Dating Abuse Stops Here. The program will conclude with a wrap-up by local mental health experts and information/mental health resources will also be provided at the conclusion of the program. Questions? Please contact Susan Mayman at smayman@verizon.net.

*Julie Hohl, jbzho1@verizon.net
Betsy Shomaker, shomaker.jb@verizon.net*

FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

A special thank you to all of the families and individuals who contributed so generously to the Fine and Performing Arts Society this year! We collected a total of \$5,550 for FAPAS this year. Some of those funds have already been put toward enriching programs and projects at school: The orchestra has used their funds to provide a special guest conductor for the winter concert on Wed, Dec. 14, and the Theatre Arts department plans to purchase risers for the classroom. And it's never too early to think ahead—the Choral department plans to put their funds to good use in their spring concert. If you are interested in making a tax-deductible, year-end contribution, it is not too late. Forms are available in the Main Office or on the Langley PTSA website.

We hope everyone at Langley has a safe and happy holiday season. As you enjoy the music, productions, decorations, and festivities this season brings, just remember: "You gotta have art!"

*Jan Rossberg, jrossberg@verizon.net
Marie Cecil, mrcecil@mindspring.com*

MEMBERSHIP: It's not too late to join the PTSA! Please help us keep you informed (through the website, newsletter, and directory), provide quality programs and speakers, and support our hard-working staff. We are currently seeking donations for the purchase of additional Smart Boards and Sentio Systems for our classrooms.

Please remember that the PTSA is committed to spending its funds collected within the year so that **your child benefits this year**. The membership form is available at www.langleyptsa.org. Over 825 families have already joined; please consider joining them in supporting Langley!

*Jackie Cho, jcho@mcenearney.com
Sue Ann Morabito, rs4mor@verizon.net*

REFLECTIONS: This year's Reflections program winners will be honored at an upcoming school event; the date and time will be announced in school. In addition, the winning entries have progressed to the county-level judging and those results will be posted at a later date. Congratulations!

Alexandra Bechter, cfs234@gmail.com

SENIOR ETHICS FORUM: Adult volunteers needed! Thanks to the ongoing generosity of Gannett/USA Today, the Senior Ethics Forum will be held at Gannett headquarters in McLean on Wed, May 23. The Class of 2012, the PTSA, and other community organizations join Gannett in sponsoring this event in which all seniors participate. Seniors rotate through four modules where an ethical dilemma is presented, followed by small or large group discussions. We need table leaders to work with groups of eight students to facilitate small group discussion and to help students rotate through the modules. Senior parents, teachers, and school staff **cannot** serve in this capacity, so we need parents of underclassmen to serve as table leaders each year. The time commitment includes a brief evening training session on Tue, May 15, in addition to the forum at Gannett on May 23, 7:45 am - 2 pm. Please contact Susan Mayman, smayman@verizon.net, if you are willing to volunteer.

Feedback from the past eight senior classes has been overwhelmingly positive, and their constructive feedback helps to keep the forum relevant each year. We have table leaders who return year after year and truly value spending the day with Langley seniors. Don't miss the opportunity to participate in this important program!

*Donna Doll, donnaddoll@cox.net
Nancy Rau, nancycrau@cox.net*

TEACHER OF THE YEAR: Congratulations to Mac Lambert for being selected Langley's Teacher of the Year 2012! Dr. Lambert has been teaching at Langley since 2002 and is currently the Choral Director. Some of his many accomplishments include serving as an active member of the Virginia Music Educators Association as well as the Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Music Education, volunteering as President of the Virginia Chapter of the American Choral Directors' Association, and singing professionally at the Washington National Cathedral.

Representing Langley, Dr. Lambert's nomination will be submitted further for the prestigious FCPS Teacher of Year Award, and then all the nominees for Virginia, Maryland, and DC public and private schools will compete for the *Washington Post* Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award for 2012. Best wishes to Dr. Lambert on this well-deserved award!

Principal Ragone honored all of the nominees during their staff meeting in November. Besides Dr. Lambert's official nominee distinction, a number of other teachers were also nominated by students and parents for their outstanding contributions. Thanks to all the teachers at Langley for the wonderful job they do day-in and day-out! And many thanks to everyone who sent in nominations.

Aradhana Luthra, alluthra@yahoo.com

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Class News

CLASS OF 2015 (Freshmen): Our next class coffee will be Thu, Feb 2 at the home of Sandy and Greg Potteiger, 329 Sinegar Place, Great Falls.

We have a new fund-raiser! Our class will be selling green and white golf umbrellas imprinted with the Saxon emblem and the word "Saxons" along with green-and-white striped "rugby" scarves with the word "Langley" embroidered at the bottom. The golf umbrellas are \$30, and the scarves are \$35, so buy a couple to show off your Langley spirit! Please contact Kristin Bonacci at KritterT33@aol.com to pre-order or to get more information.

Freshmen Class Parents

CLASS OF 2014 (Sophomores): Happy Holidays, sophomore parents! We are trying to wrap up sales of our class tumblers and tote bags. They make great gifts for teachers and students, so please place your order now! We deliver. Totes are \$5, and tumblers are \$8.00. Email Beth Stvan, stvanatva@juno.com, to place your order.

Now is a good time of the year to dig through your photos and send any pictures of your Langley sophomore to Mary Anger, gfangers@yahoo.com. Thanks, everybody!

Sophomore Class Parents: Mary Anger, Karin Anderson, Kimberly Bolin, Kala Dubois, Shaun Simonides, Beth Stvan, Helen Vasiliadis, and Mary Welch

CLASS OF 2013 (Juniors): Parents, please join us Mon, Jan 10 at 7 pm in the auditorium for College Night. Learn about the college application process at this informative program presented by the school counselors.

Looking to volunteer? We have several opportunities for parents this spring: selling valentine candygrams at lunches the week of Feb 6-10; helping with the Junior-Senior Prom on Sat, May 19 at Westwood Country Club in Vienna; serving at the Senior Breakfast on Wed, June 13; and cleaning up after the All Night Grad Party very early in the morning on Fri, June 15. If you would like to help with any of these events and can't remember if you signed up, please email Gail Welch at gailwelch@hotmail.com, so she can add you to the list.

The second quarter Junior Class Coffee will be held Thu, Jan 12 at the home of Ann Goettman, 6612 Malta Lane, McLean. Sonya Williams, Director of Student Services, will be our speaker and will discuss the second half of junior year and answer questions. Sonya will start around 9:15 and will end at 10:30. Hope to see you there!

Junior Class Parents

CLASS OF 2012 (Seniors): There is still time to order a yearbook, but since it is past the deadline, it costs a little bit more. After Mon, Dec 12, yearbooks will only be available in June on a first-come, first-served basis. Order online at www.yearbookordercenter.com with Langley's order number of 4159, or call 866-287-3096. The yearbook now costs \$85.85.

Student Services hosted a Financial Aid Night on Dec 7. The guest speaker was Eric Stegner from the Apple Federal Credit Union. Slides from the presentation will be posted on the Student Services section of the Langley website under "Senior Class."

All college application information and envelopes were due on Dec 2 and should have already been turned in to your senior's counselor. Students should be finalizing the rest of their pieces if they are not already finished. Check the application deadline for each college, as the deadlines vary. **Many regular decision applications are due as early as Jan 1 or Jan 15.**

College representative visits are ongoing. Encourage your student to check the calendar and sign up at the Career Center or through Blackboard to meet with the various representatives who will visit during the next few weeks.

Senior fees are \$175, and it is not too late to send them in. Make checks payable to LHS Class of 2012 and mail to Debbie Volpicelli, 10523 Fox Crest Court, Great Falls, VA 22066.

Senior Class Parents

ALL NIGHT GRADUATION PARTY (ANGP): It is never too early to send in the forms and money for the All Night Grad Party which begins late in the evening of Thu, June 14 and lasts through the early morning of Fri, June 15. There was a green registration form in the back-to-school packet, and there are extra copies of the form in the Main Office. Questions? Email becciecollier@cox.net.

Beccie Collier, ANGP Chair

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Counseling Connection

COURSE REGISTRATION: Counselors will meet with students by grade level and provide an overview of what courses are available and which ones are suggested. Students will meet individually with their counselors in February and March starting with rising seniors, then rising juniors, and finally rising sophomores. During the meeting, counselors will review with the student what courses are appropriate based on the student's present grades, attendance, prior SOL scores and future expectations. Also, the Course Offering booklet will be available online for all students and parents to review. Parents and students need to review this information in order to make realistic choices. If a counselor and/or teacher indicate that a course is not recommended, it is important to view this as an educational specialist looking at the larger picture. Too many students overextend themselves by attempting honors and AP courses as a way to raise their GPA, but this seldom works because a student in a regular-level class with a "B" may actually receive a lower grade in an AP

course because of the increased rigor of the course. Look at your student's work habits, interests, extra-curricular activities, love of reading, grades this year, and time spent interacting with friends. This will probably be the same for next school year but with increasing maturity.

JUNIOR CLASS COLLEGE NIGHT: College Night for parents of juniors will be **Tue, Jan 10** at 7 pm in the auditorium. Counselors will present information to parents on important aspects of the college process—exploring colleges, testing, understanding admissions, filling out applications, etc. There will be useful information both for “first timers” as well as “veterans” who have been through the process and survived! This same information will be covered by counselors with junior students on Feb 2 and 3 during English classes. The Junior Handbook is available on the Langley website under “Student Services” by clicking on “Junior Class,” then “Class of 2013 Handbook.”

SENIOR CLASS MID-YEAR REPORTS: Senior mid-year reports will be mailed in early February to all colleges to which a student has applied. This mailing is done automatically and without charge. No forms and/or documents are needed for the mid-year reports. Please do not bring in any mid-year transcript requests forms, as an efficient process is in place with a form submitted automatically. Some colleges ask for the grades by mid-January, but our semester does not end until January 27. After this date, FCPS re-computes each student's GPA and then the reports are mailed. **CAUTION:** Remind your senior(s) to complete all tests, class work, and assignments by the due dates. Transcripts can NOT be processed with incomplete grades, and senior teachers are advised NOT to enter “Incompletes.” Late work will probably cause an incorrect, usually lower, GPA.

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Career Center

CAREER CENTER SPECIALIST: Hello, Langley community! Just a quick introduction—my name is Hannah Hurlburt, and I am the new Career Center Specialist for Langley as of Dec 1. I spent two years at West Springfield High School in the same position before moving to Langley. I am originally from Vermont and now live in Arlington, where much of my time is spent cheering on the Capitals and attempting to train my two rescue dogs, Buzz and Calle. I am happy to meet with families and students to discuss career and college planning, so please feel free to contact me to set up a time to meet. I look forward to working with you!

CURRICULUM NIGHT: The year seems like it just started, but the Student Services department is already gearing up for the 2012-2013 school year. Please make it a priority to attend the Curriculum Night on **Wed, Jan 18** so that you are well informed about the classes your children are selecting for next year. It is important that parents and students discuss the demands of classes, outside commitments, and future plans when deciding the best balance of classes for 2012-13. The key is an appropriate balance. At Curriculum Night, teachers will present information about class expectations, textbooks, types of assessments, summer and school year projects, writing samples, and the rubric used to grade assignments. Choosing classes wisely not only helps Langley staff the building with the appropriate number of teachers, but also helps your child have a stress-free start to the school year.

GAP YEAR FAIR: Gap years are becoming more and more popular in the U.S. and colleges are openly supporting these opportunities: in their acceptance letters NYU, Princeton, and Harvard invite students to consider the benefits of a gap year. If you are interested in learning more about gap year options, please consider attending the Gap Year Fair on **Wed, Jan 18** from 6:30 – 9 pm at Marshall High School, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. These fairs are designed to provide interested students and parents with a broad range of programs and the opportunity to meet with organizations focusing on education, service, and personal growth.

The fair's guest speakers are Rae Nelson and Karl Haigler. Nelson served eight years on the White House policy staff, including as Associate Director for Education Policy. She also served as Vice President and Executive Director of the Center for Workforce Preparation, a not-for-profit education and training affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—check out her website at http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0603/the_gap_year_advantage.shtml. Karl Haigler, one of the authors of *The Gap-Year Advantage*, has served as director of the Adult Literacy Initiative for the U.S. Department of Education and as special advisor to the Governor of Mississippi on literacy issues. Haigler is a nationally-recognized expert in workplace and adult literacy, having worked at the federal level on the U.S. Secretary of Education's senior staff as Director of the Adult Literacy Initiative and Director of Adult Education. In the area of education, Haigler has taught at the university, community college, and secondary school levels and was principal of a high school that, under his leadership, was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a national school of excellence. His website is http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0603/the_gap_year_advantage.shtml.

SCHOLARSHIPS: There are hundreds of scholarships posted in the Family Connection section of your student's Blackboard account each year, and many have very few applicants. Your odds of getting one are better than you think! Please see Ms. Hurlburt in the Career Center if you need help looking for scholarships – you would be amazed at how many you qualify for!

SUMMER INTERNSHIPS: Deadlines are closer than you think for summer internships. It seems early to start planning for summer, but deadlines are deadlines with some fast approaching! Why intern? Well, internships truly provide students with amazing opportunities to gain significant work experience and also to consider possible career paths or college majors. Students get to work on creating a stellar resume, learn how to ask for recommendations, experience the interview process, and gain some great research or lab skills. Oh, and these also look pretty great on a college application!

Here are a few of the opportunities available to high-school students in the DC metro area:

US Department of State
The Smithsonian Institution
NASA
Department of Defense
Georgetown University
George Mason University
J. Craig Venter Institute
National Cancer Institute

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
National Genome Research Institute
National Institute of Health
National Institute of Neurological Disorders & Stroke
Bank of America
Environmental Protection Agency
Johns Hopkins Materials Research Science & Engineering Center

Stipends are available for some of these opportunities, but all of these internships are competitive with applications being accepted as early as November and December. Make sure you look at all criteria (age, grade level, etc) and pay attention to deadlines. Good luck!

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

Thu and Fri, Jan 5 & 6 – Career Units during Saxon Time for sophomores

Tue, Jan 10 – College Night for parents of juniors

Wed, Jan 18 – Curriculum Night for parents

Wed, Jan 18 – Gap Year Fair at Marshall HS for parents and students

Wed, Jan 25 – Parent Orientation for rising freshmen

Thu, Feb 2 – Registration Process begins for rising seniors

Tue, Feb 21 – Registration Process begins for rising juniors

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Testing

ACT: As the ACT is less well known than the SAT, the following is a short explanation of the three types of ACT tests. The ACT Explore is taken freshman year, the ACT Plan is taken sophomore year, and the ACT is taken junior and/or senior year and is used for college admissions. The ACT Explore is scored 1 to 25 while the ACT Plan is scored 1 to 32 and the ACT is scored 1 to 36.

ACT EXPLORE (freshman-level practice test for the ACT): ACT Explore score reports/test booklets and informational materials were distributed in the 7th period classes Thu, Dec 8, to all freshmen who paid for the results. If you have not paid and still wish to receive the score report/test booklet, please remit a check for \$17 payable to Langley HS and turn it in to the Main Office. Check the PTSA website under Class of 2015 for a listing of all students who have paid.

ACT PLAN (sophomore-level practice test for the ACT): Registration for the ACT Plan will be Jan 18 to Feb 17 for all Langley 10th grade students, and the **test will be given on Sat, Mar 24**. The registration form will be posted on the Langley website under PTSA, Class of 2014, and should be turned in to the Main Office with a **nonrefundable** check for \$35 payable to Langley HS no later than Fri, Feb 17.

The ACT Plan contains four tests—English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science—and is designed to measure students' curriculum-related knowledge as well as the complex cognitive skills important for future education and careers. The ACT Plan is scored from 1 to 32 and normed separately for both the fall and spring semesters of the sophomore year. For more information: www.actstudent.org/plan.

PSAT SCORE INTERPRETATION WORKSHOP: There will be a score interpretation workshop for on Wed, Jan 11, from 6:30 – 8 pm in the library, sponsored by the sophomore class parents. Both parents and students in the sophomore and junior classes are welcome to attend. Score reports/test booklets will be distributed to those attending that evening. If you can't attend the workshop, the score reports/test booklets will be distributed to students in their 7th period classes on Thu, Jan 12.

FCPS pays for the score reports for all 10th graders. For juniors, only students who have paid will receive the PSAT score reports/test booklets. If you have not paid and still wish to receive the score report/test booklet, please remit a check for \$17 payable to Langley HS and turn it in to the Main Office. Check the PTSA website under Class of 2013 for a listing of all juniors who have already paid.

ACT/SAT ACCOMMODATIONS: Students who currently receive testing accommodations in the classroom MAY be eligible for accommodations on the SAT or ACT exams. There will be a **Parent Information Workshop** on this topic on Wed, Feb 15 at 7 pm (snow date Feb 22) in the Langley library. For further information on this workshop, contact Meryl Simon, Special Education Department Chair, Meryl.Simon@fcps.edu. Complete information regarding the application process and necessary documentation can be found on the respective testing websites:

<http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd/application> and <http://www.act.org/aap/disab/index.html>.

AP EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS: Students who are planning to take the May AP Exam(s) with accommodations, but who have not yet requested accommodations, need to submit an online accommodations request to the College Board as soon as possible. To begin this process, select "Submit Eligibility Form" from your SSD Online dashboard at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd/application/apply>. If documentation must be reviewed by the College Board, the complete accommodations request must be received no later than **Feb 24, 2012**. If the student has a 504 plan, documentation and the parent letter should be submitted to the student's counselor. If the student has an IEP, documentation and the parent letter should be submitted to Meryl Simon, Special Education Department Chair.

AP EXAMS (for students not enrolled in AP courses): Home-schooled students or students desiring to take an AP exam for which they are not enrolled in a corresponding FCPS course should contact Janice Dabroski, jldabroski@fcps.edu or 703-287-2922. The necessary paperwork and a non-refundable check payable to Langley HS for \$100 are due **no later than Feb 17, 2012**. Dates for specific AP exams can be found at www.CollegeBoard.com or on the Langley website.

ENGLISH WRITING SOL: The English Writing SOL exam will be given **March 5-8**. This two-part exam given over two days is required for all students enrolled in English 11 and is one of the SOLs required for a Virginia high-school diploma. AP Language and Composition students will not take the English Writing SOL, but will have their AP scores substituted for the SOL score. The first part, a multiple-choice section testing writing skills, will be given in Humanities classes on March 5 or 6. The second part, a prompted essay, will be given on Wed, March 7. **School will start at 7:20 on Wed, March 7;** there will be no PLC late opening. The make-up day for both sections will be Fri, March 9. Students who miss one part of the exam will not receive a score and will need to make up the entire exam during the October 2012 test window or the March 2013 test window.

JANUARY SOL TESTS: During the test window of Wed, Jan 3, through Wed, Jan 20, 2012, the following groups of students will have the opportunity to take a SOL test linked to an SOL course they have completed for credit and is required for graduation:

1. Transfer students
2. Students who completed SOL coursework during the summer
3. Students absent during the May 2011 SOL test window
4. Students who have previously failed SOL tests

Students in each of those categories will be contacted as to which SOL tests they are eligible to take, be provided with remediation material, and given a time and place for the test. For more information, contact Janice Dabroski, Langley Assessment Coach, 703-287-2922 or janice.dabroski@fcps.edu.

Important Reminder: Before making spring travel plans, check the Langley website for the 2012 testing calendars. College Board AP tests will be administered Mon, May 7, through Fri, May 18. The English 11 Writing SOL is scheduled for Monday, March 5 through Thursday, March 8, and the end-of-course SOL test window for this school year will be May 21-June 8. Both the AP Test calendar and the May SOL Testing Calendar are posted on the Langley website; click on "Student Services", then "Testing Information".

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Department News

NEW SCIENCE CLASSES: Langley physics teachers, Sarah Ell and Bob Foley, are excited that the two new science courses they proposed for Langley will be available next year: Astronomy and AP Physics B. More information will follow in the spring, but here's an overview of the courses:

Astronomy: Sarah Ell is interested in teaching astronomy in order to share with students some of the wonders of the universe. Since a telescope was donated to the Langley science department years ago, we hope to hold observation sessions a few nights throughout the year where students can look at the sky and learn to locate different constellations and planets. The course will cover a wide range of topics from how early civilizations studied the stars to what new experiments and discoveries are in the news today. This course will introduce students to changing technology as well as

provide applications for many concepts learned in other science and math courses. Any questions about the class can be referred to Sarah Ell, Sarah.Ell@fcps.edu.

AP Physics B: A new AP-level physics class will be offered at Langley next year. Currently, Langley offers only AP Physics C, a calculus-based class focusing on an in-depth study of mechanics. This existing class is especially suited for students who plan to major in engineering or physics. A new offering next year will be AP Physics B (or AP-B), which will require only pre-calculus as a co-requisite and is designed to expose students to a much wider range of topics in physics, including mechanics, electricity and magnetism, thermodynamics, and optics up through modern physics (subatomic physics and relativity). This broader exposure provides students with a better foundation to understand technical issues, which they will be exposed to during their lives. AP-B is also a good match for students who plan to study some kind of science in college but might not major in engineering or physics. Note that both AP Physics classes require Physics 1 as a prerequisite. Please discuss with your student the best options for him/her. Any questions about the class can be referred to Bob Foley, RMFoley@fcps.edu.

WORLD LANGUAGES:

Russian: The Russian Club had a successful meeting in November. We bought authentic Russian food and consumed it in the “Red October” trailer while discussing, in Russian, the intricacies of Russian cuisine and watching a Russian video. On Nov 14, forty-one Langley students studying Russian took part in the annual National Russian Essay Contest. The students wrote spontaneously in Russian for two hours. We have begun preparations for our annual academic home-stay exchange program with a high school in St. Petersburg, Russia, for Spring Break 2012. It will be our 21st year of doing student-exchange trips.

Spanish: If you and your student would like to host a student from Spain in September of 2012, please contact Sra. Prell via email: rprell@fcps.edu. American students will have the option to travel to Spain during Spring Break 2013. For more information, look in an upcoming newsletter.

Rebeca A. Prell, M.A., M.Ed., World Languages Department Chair

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Performing Arts

CHORUS: Langley choral students did very well at the All-District Honors Choir auditions held on Nov 5 at McLean High School. Sixty-nine students, including two alternates, were selected to participate in the 2011-2012 All-District Honors Choir to be held Feb 9-11 at Washington-Lee High School.

The Madrigals will be performing at the Kennedy Center with the Washington Chorus in their “A Candlelight Christmas” concert on Sat, Dec 17 at 4 pm and on Sun, Dec 18 at 7 pm. Tickets are available through the Kennedy Center website.

The department will present its winter concert on Tue, Dec 20 at 7:30 pm in the auditorium. This is a wonderful opportunity to see the Madrigal choir perform selections from their Renaissance Feaste program in full costume. All Langley choirs will be performing selections of holiday music, representing all the sounds of the season. All are welcome to attend, and admission is free.

ORCHESTRA: Congratulations to the musicians who were selected for the All-District Orchestra: Violin I—Iris Lim (2nd chair), Alexandra Cramer, and Grace Keffer; Violin II—Gene Kim, Kevin Tan, and Julia Hara (Alternate 1); Elizabeth Chiu (Alternate 2); Viola—Alex Quion and Audrey McNicholas (Alternate 1); Cello—Hailey Lee; Bass—Matt Cook and Alex Blankinship.

The winter orchestra concert will be held on Wed, Dec 14, 7 pm in the Langley auditorium. The concert is free, and all are welcome. In collaboration with the World Languages Department, the orchestra will present a celebration of the music, language and culture of France. Musical selections will include music by Faure, Herold, Saint-Saens and Bizet with two songs popularized by the legendary French singer, Edith Piaf, and themes from the Pixar animated film, *Ratatouille*. Senior violinist Iris Lim and senior pianist Michelle Park will each be featured performing a piece by Claude Debussy. During the concert, there will be special appearances by a mime. Members of the French Honor Society will serve as emcees speaking in both French and English, and French language teachers, Mme Houde and Mme Weiser, will recite poetry. Refreshments will be provided before the performance.

There will be a Silent Auction during the intermission of the winter concert to benefit the orchestra. Items on the block include gift certificates to C2 Education, Georgetown Learning Center, SH Kim Taekwondo, Evo Bistro, Giant Food, Fluffythoughts.com, Kazan Restaurant, McLean Cleaners, Elements of McLean, Rocco's, Starnut Gourmet, Wok n Roll, McLean Hardware, Kumon and Marvelous Market. Special items in the auction include a birdhouse from the For the Wild Birds store, a lamp from Lamps Unlimited, perfume from the Color Wheel and a tote bag from Georganne's Hallmark.

The 2011 official White House Ornament, honoring President Theodore Roosevelt, is available for \$22. To order, please contact Trish Kostelancik at 703-286-7780 or use the order form on page 14 of the November 2011 PTSA Newsletter. The Langley Orchestra Society thanks you very much for supporting our program.

THEATRE: Rehearsals for the One Acts, which will be performed on Jan 13 and 14, are underway. This year there are twelve directors, ten plays, and over fifty actors. Please congratulate our student directors: Justin Cecil, Taylor Goodson, Ashley Irvin, Alex Lichtenstein, Kevin Nejad, Brian Patterson, Ryan Poyner, Ezza Rathore, Yasmin Shahkarami, Elly Sheers, Jack Sullivan, and Hayley Wenk. Rehearsals are after school Monday through Thursday between 2:30 - 4:30 pm. Check http://www.saxonstage.com/Student_Directed_One_Act.html for each play's schedule. Students interested in tech training and working on that aspect of the One Acts are invited to attend a meeting on Wed, Dec 14, 2:30 - 2:45 pm in the Theatre Lab.

The Improv Club meets every Monday afternoon from 2:30 - 3:30 pm in the Drama Room (Room 101). Everyone is welcome.

On Jan 5, the Drama 4 students will perform the "Fifteen Minute Hamlet" for senior English students. This is a hilarious condensation by Tom Stoppard, and includes only Shakespeare's words.

Some Theatre Honor Society members are attending the Virginia State Thespian Conference on Jan 7 and 8 for two days of workshops and two plays.

The Virginia High School League district competition is at Marshall on Sat, Jan 21. Our Theatre Arts students will perform their contest piece on Fri, Jan 20.

Theatre Arts students will perform a Children's Theatre play at the National Performing Arts Festival in Disney World in Orlando on Feb 24 through 27 and will participate in seminars with performers and technicians who work in the parks plus getting to visit Harry Potter World at Universal Studios!

For all of the latest news in Theatre Arts, check our website: www.saxonstage.com. Have a wonderful winter break!
Phylliss Jaffe, Theatre Arts Director, pjaffe@fcps.edu

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Winter Sports News

BASKETBALL—BOYS: The Langley boys opened their season 1-1 in the Chip Lozinak Tip Off Tournament at Potomac High School. The Saxons hosted Woodson on Fri, Dec 9 and begin district play at home against Thomas Jefferson on Tue, Dec 13. Please come and support the Saxons and don't forget to purchase your greenhouse t-shirts.

BASKETBALL—GIRLS: The varsity basketball team opened the season Dec 1 participating in the West Springfield Tip-Off Tournament. The freshman, JV and varsity teams will have their home openers on Fri, Dec 16 against South Lakes. Next, all three teams will take on Westfield at home on Tue, Dec 20. Varsity will finish out the month at the Pohanka Classic, Dec 27 - 29 at Chantilly. We look forward to seeing you at the games!

GYMNASTICS: The team has grown from last year's group of 5 girls to a team of 16! The team is full of talented and spirited gymnasts. It is led by returning members and captains, Gina Li and Julia Hara. The following meets are scheduled for December and January:

Thu, Dec 8 at Stone Bridge

Wed, Jan 4 at Oakton

Thu, Dec 15 at Langley

Thu, Jan 12 at South Lakes

Thu, Dec 22 at South Lakes

Wed, Jan 25 at Herndon

The team is very excited to host a home meet on Thu, Dec 15 as a way to showcase the return of the gymnastics program to Langley. Hope to see you there. Check out the website for team members and watch our progress.

Coaches Danny Kallick and Lacey Jacobsen

INDOOR TRACK: Good luck to the team, as they head into their first competitions of the season this weekend. Some members will travel to Christopher Newport University to compete in the two-day Winter Frolic Invitational. Other members will compete against Lake Braddock and Wakefield at TJ Middle School in Arlington. Head Coach Joshua Culver is excited about another large team this season with many strong freshmen and talented returners. For additional team news and schedule information, please go to www.langleysports.org. Go, Saxons!

SWIM & DIVE: The boys and girls teams started the season on Dec 2 defeating McLean: the boys 208-101, and the girls 169-146. At this first meet of the season, the Saxons won 14 of 24 events and achieved 10 regional qualifying times and 1 state qualifying time. The swimmers and divers hoped to continue their winning ways when they faced Marshall on Dec 9 at Spring Hill; future meets are against Fairfax on Fri, Dec 16 at Audrey Moore; and Stone Bridge on Sat, Dec 17 at Claude Moore. After winter break, the Saxons face Madison on Fri, Jan 6; South Lakes on Fri, Jan 13; and our final dual meet will be against Thomas Jefferson on Fri, Jan 20. The District Championships are scheduled for Jan 27 and 28. Please support your Saxon swimmers and divers, and visit the team's website at www.langleysports.org for all related information and results.

WRESTLING: The team begins the season defending its eleventh straight Liberty District Championship. The Saxons return several strong wrestlers as well as some new, up-and-coming faces for this season. Senior Jay Ives leads the way along with seniors Matt Sahn, Leland Jenkins and Austin Miller. The Saxons began competition on Dec 2 at the Ray Oliver Tournament in Maryland and will be traveling to New York Dec 9 and 10. Senior night will be Wed, Jan 4 against Madison; on Sat, Jan 14 Langley will host Fairfax, Thomas Jefferson, and South Lakes in a tripleheader of dual meets. Also, the Saxons will be hosting the Liberty District Championships on Feb 3 and 4.

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Spring Sports Outlook

CREW: Langley Crew will hold an organizational meeting on Wed, Feb 1, 7 - 9 pm in the cafeteria. This is a mandatory meeting for rowers, coaches and parents. It is also open to anyone interested in joining crew. If your student was involved in a winter sport and is looking ahead to spring—this is a good meeting to attend.

The team is currently doing winter conditioning in the Science Hall after school. You can stop by and talk to coaches and rowers if you are interested in participating.

And special congratulations to Katie McGrath, senior, on her rowing scholarship to the University of Louisville. Katie will join their crew team as a coxswain when she begins her freshman year.

Other questions about crew? For more information, please visit our website at www.langleycrow.com, or contact one of our co-presidents: Bill Talamantes, bill_talamantes@uhc.com, 703-400-8441; or Debbie Baucom, blacklabfam@aol.com, 703-869-1167.

PHYSICAL: If you're planning on trying out for a spring sport, please make sure that your Virginia High School League or VHSL physical form (rev 3/11) is turned in **BEFORE** tryouts begin on Mon, Feb 20. Don't delay! If the form is not complete, you will **not** be able to tryout until it is completed.

CONCUSSION PROGRAM: The concussion program is newly mandated and is required to be completed by the student-athlete and one parent in order for the student to tryout. Visit www.fcps.edu/sports to complete the program.

CHECKLIST FOR SPRING SPORTS TRYOUTS:

- **VHSL FORM** rev 3/11 available under "Files & Links" at www.langleysports.org.
- **PHYSICAL** dated after May 1, 2011.
- **SIGNATURES** of both athlete and 1 parent.
- **PART III** completed and signed by the doctor.
- **INSURANCE** information filled out completely.
- **COPY** of VHSL form for your records.
- **CONCUSSION PROGRAM** completed by student-athlete and one parent.
- **EMERGENCY CARE FORM** completed and put in coach's mailbox.
- Questions—call the Activities Office, 703-287-2750.

Visit www.langleysports.org for up-to-date information and Saxon news! Go, Saxons!

NEW SPORTS HOTLINE NUMBER: 703-287-2787

 @langlesports.org.

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Announcements

FASHION SHOW TRYOUTS: Walk This Way to the Langley Fashion Show Tryouts to be held on Tue, Jan 10 at 2:30 pm in the auditorium for girls and guys in grades 9 – 11. The criteria used to select models include having a great smile, poise and enthusiasm! For more information, contact Maureen Marsh, Tryout Committee Chair, maureenamarsh@gmail.com, or Mrs. Poythress, tmpoyhtress@fcps.edu, in Room 105.

PTA RALLY AT THE CAPITAL: On Mon, Jan 23, advocate with your legislators and participate in the Rally at the Capital in Richmond with other education groups. Associated with this "PTA Lobbying Day," there will be Advocacy Training (a prep day) in Richmond on Sun, Jan 22. Many people travel to Richmond early on Monday morning and come back the same day. The day starts off in the auditorium of the General Assembly's office building with a briefing by the chairwoman of the Virginia State PTA's Legislative Committee and the distribution of handouts. Additionally, the FCCPTA will have a conference room on the third floor of the office building for people from Fairfax County Public Schools to meet with the numerous delegates and senators, who represent the various parts of Fairfax County. Tim Thompson, tctthompson@msn.com or 703-757-6145, will be available to assist people in finding legislators' names and numbers in order to schedule independent meetings with either delegates and/or senators.

SAXON SCOPE: Be on the lookout for *The Saxon Scope*, Langley's monthly newsmagazine! The *Scope* also has a nationally recognized website, www.saxonscope.com, which is updated daily with news, photos, and videos. It's a great way to stay informed with everything that's happening at Langley!

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February Newsletter Deadline:
Tuesday, January 24, 2012
(to cover dates 1/30/12 through 3/4/12)

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines:
February 28, 2012—March/April combined issue
April 17, 2012—May issue
May 22, 2012—June issue

Editors:
Mary Ann Kennedy, 703-442-0299, rose.ken@verizon.net
Colette Worm, 832-729-6484, majorworm@hotmail.com

Newsletter Calendar:
Susan Etherton, 703-893-0545, sretherton@aol.com



Langley's "Buy the Yard" Turf Campaign www.langleyturf.org

Thank you to all of our Saxon families who have contributed toward a new turf field for Langley High School's stadium! We still have many more yards to sell to complete this capital improvement for our school. Your donation is 100% tax-deductible! This is a one school year campaign with installation to be done this coming summer.

How can you help?

*Buy yards of turf at \$100/yard. Families purchasing 10 or more yards will have their name permanently engraved on the Donor Wall at the stadium entrance. Individual student names with graduation years may also be listed when purchasing 25 yards. Great graduation gift! Everyone will be receiving a campaign letter in the mail, or you may also contribute at www.langleyturf.org!

*Attend the Riverbend Party with Silent Auction, March 24!

*Contribute items to the Silent Auction. Drop us a line at info@langleyturf.org.

*Join us January 12, 7:00 pm, for an organizational meeting for the Silent Auction. RSVP to Leslie Anderson at lkaleslie@aol.com. Cocktails and appetizers provided!

*Have a business? Our new scoreboard will be installed in time for spring sports this year. It will have a digital screen for your company logo/advertisement. See our website for all of the details under the *Corporate* tab!

*Spread the word! **Let's Turf Langley!**

Check *Turf Updates* at www.langleyturf.org.

There you will find many of your questions answered, and, if not, let us know!

Leslie Anderson, Sarah Kearney, Mary Jane Novak
Co-Chairs, Langley High School Turf Campaign
info@langleyturf.org

Calendar for Langley PTSA and Activities 12/14/11–2/29/12

Dates and times are subject to change.

Please check the Langley website for the most recent updates and details about the events.

December 2011

14 Wed **Second Quarter Interims to Students**
Orchestra Winter Concert & Silent Auction

7 pm, Auditorium

20 Tue **Choral Winter Concert**

7:30 pm, Auditorium

21 Wed **Winter Assembly**

22 Thu **Last Day of School before Winter Break**

23 Fri **First Day of Winter Break**
(through Jan 2)

January 2012

2 Mon **New Year's Day Holiday**
(no school)

3 Tue **School Resumes**

10 Mon **Fashion Show Tryouts**

2:30 - 5 pm, Auditorium

College Night for Junior Parents,

7 pm, Auditorium

11 Wed **PTSA Meeting**

9:15 am, PTSA Conference Center

PSAT Workshop for Sophomore and Junior Parents and Students,

6:30 – 8 pm, Library

Perils of College Drinking program,

7 pm, McLean HS Auditorium

(snow date Jan 18)

12 Thu **Junior Parent Coffee,**

Goettman home, 9:15 am

13 Fri **One Act Performance**

TBA, Auditorium (also Jan 14)

16 Mon **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday** (no school)

18 Wed **Curriculum Night,** 6:30 pm, Auditorium (snow date Jan 26)

Gap Year Fair, 6:30 – 9 pm,

Marshall HS

24 Tue **Newsletter Deadline**

Choral Pyramid Concert

7 pm, Auditorium

25 Wed **Principal's Coffee**

9:15 - 10:30 am, Auditorium

Rising Freshman Parent

Orientation, 7 pm, Auditorium
(snow date Jan 26)

27 Fri **Second Grading Period Ends**

30 Mon **Student Holiday/Teacher Workday**
(also Tue, Jan 31)

February 2012

1 Wed **Third Grading Period Begins**
Crew Organizational Meeting,
7 - 9 pm, Library

2 Thu **Freshman Parent Coffee,**

9:15 am, Potteiger home

Science Fair, 3 pm, Cafeteria

(snow date Feb 9)

4 Sat **Battle of the Bands,**

7 pm, Old Firehouse Teen Center

6 Mon **Second quarter report cards to students**

Rising Senior 2012-2013 Course

Registration begins (thru Feb 17)

8 Wed **PTSA Meeting,**

9:15 am, PTSA Conference Center

9 Thu **Touching Bases: Walk-in**

Parent/Teacher Conferences,

7:30 - 9:30 am,

Cafeteria & Main Gym

Three-hour Delayed Opening for Students;

Classes begin at 10:20 am

What's Love Got To Do With It?

Healthy Relationships & Dating,

7 pm, McLean HS Auditorium

11 Sat **ACT at LHS**

Fashion Show, 7 pm, Auditorium

15 Wed **ACT/SAT Accommodations**

Parent Information Workshop,

7 pm, Library (snow date Feb 22)

20 Mon **President's Day Holiday**

(no school)

Spring Sports Tryouts begin

21 Tue **Rising Junior 2012-2013 Course**
Registration begins

(through Mar 2)

23 Thu **Band Pyramid Concert,**

7 pm, Auditorium

28 Tue **Orchestra Concert,**

7 pm, Auditorium

29 Wed **Principal's Coffee,**

9:15 am, Auditorium