

LY FOCUS

GOVERNMENT AND THE FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



JUNE 7-13, 2007

For more news about the Falls Church City Public Schools visit: www.fccps.org

Chairman: Craig Cheney703-237-6931
Vice Chairman: Kathryn Chandler703-536-7564
School Board	
Rosaura Aguerrebere703-536-8638
Susan Kearney703-532-0321
Ronald Peppe II703-534-4959
Kieran Sharpe703-536-3130
Joan Wodiska703-533-1248
Superintendent: Dr. Lois Berlin703-248-5601*

* Indicates TTY 711 Accessibility

Teen Substance Use Campaign Gets City Backing

When Craig Cheney addressed the Falls Church City Council last week, he spoke on behalf of the entire school board. However, the school board chairman's words echoed those of parents throughout the city who are deeply concerned about the city's teen substance abuse problem.

"Despite our school division's efforts to deter substance use among our students, the statistics indicate that substance use and abuse among our teenagers exceeds the national average and has exceeded or hovered at the national average for years," Cheney said.

Cheney referred to the annual PRIDE survey, which measures student substance use. While the middle school results indicate use far below the national average, Cheney said the high school numbers are alarming.

"Other communities our size have experienced equally troubling survey results, but did nothing to address the problem until one or more students were killed in alcohol-related accidents or died of an overdose," Cheney said. "We don't want that to happen here."

Cheney asked the Falls Church City Council to join the school board in publicly endorsing the efforts of the city's newly-formed SAFE-CADRE Task Force. The task force is a group of community leaders, educators, parents, child advocates, court services personnel, police,

and others who are developing a multi-faceted awareness campaign to curb teen substance use. The campaign includes prevention, intervention and enforcement of existing underage drinking and substance abuse laws.

After Cheney spoke, several council members recalled incidents in the past in which Falls Church teenagers were injured in an alcohol related car accident or arrested on substance-related charges. The city council pledged to support the task force's efforts and voted to put it in writing by passing a resolution similar to one the school board passed at its April 24th meeting.

SAFE stands for Substance Abuse Free Environment. CADRE stands for Commonwealth Alliance for Drug Rehabilitation and Education.



Falls Church City School Board Chairman Craig Cheney asks the city council to publicly endorse the efforts of the newly-formed SAFE-CADRE Task Force.

Mason Odyssey Team Places 9th in World

The George Mason High School eighth-grade "Odyssey of the Mind" team captured 9th place overall in the 2007 World Finals at Michigan State University from May 24 to 26.

The Mason team was up against 38 other teams in its age division.

More than 800 teams from the United States, along with teams from Poland, Singapore, South Korea, China and Germany participated in the two-day competition in which teams from elementary school through college were asked to solve problems creatively.

The Mason team, which won the Virginia state title in April, competed in a category called "I'm Only Thinking of You." In that category, members were required to create an original humorous performance that features a team-made, self-centered character who takes advantage of others but gets caught in the act in the end. Students incorporated poetry, time travel, volcanic eruptions and a stock market crash in answering the challenge.



The 2007 George Mason "Odyssey of the Mind Team (l to r): Rachel Hassan, Mollie Breen, Victoria Pender, Daniel Fletcher, Clark Williamson, and Katie Breen. The team was coached by Lynn Fletcher.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

June

- 7** 9:00 AM Rising 2nd Graders visit TJ (TJ)
7:00 PM Band Concert (MEH)
- 8-11** Senior Exams (GM)
- 8** 2:00 PM or 4:00 PM Mason @ State Semi-Final (B Soccer)
- 9** 12:00 PM Mason @ State Final (B Soccer)
- 10** 4:00 PM George Mason Baccalaureate (GM)
- 11-15** Regular Exams (GM)
- 11** 7:30 PM GTAC Meeting (GM)
- 12** 7:30 PM School Board Meeting (City Hall)
- 13** 5:00 PM 7th Grade Moving Up Ceremony (MEH)
- 14** 5:00 PM Graduation (DAR Constitution Hall)
- 15** Last Day of School

(MD) Mt. Daniel Elementary
(TJ) Thomas Jefferson Elementary
(MEH) Mary Ellen Henderson Middle
(GM) George Mason High

Check the FCCPS Web site for more calendar information.
www.fccps.org

FCC-TV Spotlight: Education News Parents Can Use

Tune in to Falls Church Community Television (FCC-TV) to watch *Education News Parents Can Use*. Produced by the US Dept. of Education, this 1-hour program focuses on schools, learning, and the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. You can watch *Education News Parents Can Use* on FCC-TV at the following times:



- Mondays at 5:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.
- Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

FCC-TV airs on Cox Channel 12, RCN Channel 2 and Verizon Channel 35. For more information about FCC-TV, or complete schedule of community programs on FCC-TV, visit www.fccvtv.net or call 703-248-5538.



BIE Partner of the Week Debbie Wright Falls Church Parks & Recreation

School Involvement: Works with middle school students on the Falls Church Teen Council; runs middle school Midnight Madness nights and dances at the community center; presented information about summer programs to Elementary PTA; presented information about teen health programs to the Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School PTA; plans parent education programs; places teens in school-related volunteer positions; serves on the SAFE Task Force and the Gang Intervention Prevention Committee.

Why Debbie is a BIE Partner: "The community center and the schools are here to serve the same group of students. Working with teens is my specialty, and I love to help them connect with their community - even their schools - in special ways."

For more information about sharing your expertise through the BIE Partnership, visit www.fccps.org or contact Marybeth Connelly at connellym@fccps.org.



Falls Church City Public Schools Summer Day Care & Middle School Summer Activities Program 2007



For children entering grades 1-8

All families eligible

June 18th - Aug. 24th

7 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. daily

(Open to Falls Church City Residents and Non-city residents)

Register Now!!

www.fccps.org/ASAP



Mustang Scholastic Bowl Team Goes to National Contest

The state champion George Mason High School Scholastic Bowl made a strong showing at the recent NAQT (National Academic Quiz Tournaments) national high school championship tournament in Chicago. Overall, the team defeated more than 100 public and private school teams in the 160-team field to make the playoffs, and was one of only three small-school qualifiers to finish in the top 50.

In the small school competition, the Mustangs finished in third place after defeating the Alabama state champions, Brindlee Mountain, by a 300-115 margin. The other playoff matches were all close, with Mason's two losses both decided on the last question. The team was led by senior captain David Maher, and senior Matt Peppe who both placed among the top 100 individual scorers out of the almost 700 players who competed. Juniors Peter Davis and Brennan Downey also contributed to the team's impressive performance.