



THE HAWKS NEST

November 2020

VALLEY RIDGE ACADEMY

Letter from our Principal

VRA Families,

I would like to invite everyone to join us (virtually speaking) for the Annual PTO VRA DanceFit Challenge (formerly the Hawk Fun Run). A virtual Pep Rally will kick things off on November 10th. Students will then receive information regarding how to create their Fun Run account and start getting pledges! This is an exciting event and all proceeds go directly back to benefitting VRA!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the VRA Pizza! Pizza! Fundraiser to benefit our school's PBIS program. This inventive and delicious fundraiser has raised over \$1,400 for PBIS. This money goes directly to students in the form of grade level and schoolwide rewards, Hawk Store items, and other initiatives used to recognize and reward students making positive behavior choices. All orders will be delivered to the school the week of November 16th (more information will come when we get the specific details) and will need to be picked up after school on the date they are delivered.

Congratulations to Mr. Burk and the VRA Jazz, Symphonic and Beginning Bands for their outdoor performances on Friday, October 30th. Mr. Burk's band classes set up outside in the PE pavilion to perform a selection of music for various socially distanced classes, as well as any students lucky enough to be at recess during those times! It was a wonderful treat on a beautiful fall Friday.

As we begin the 2nd quarter of the school year and move swiftly towards the winter holidays, I would like to remind all parents to please keep in contact with your child's teacher



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Letter from our Principal (cont.)

regarding his/her progress. Utilizing HAC is also an effective way to track the progress of your students' academic performance. Our teachers are ready and willing to discuss your child's progress, if needed.

Go Hawks!

Sandra McMandon

Staff Appreciation

Halloween came and with it, a lovely surprise for all VRA Teachers and Staff. Thank you to our PTO and our wonderful parent community for the spooky boxes of delicious goodies!



Thank you for all you Do!

Character Counts! Celebrations

K-8 classrooms/homerooms celebrated Character Counts! on Thursday, October 29th. One student from each class was nominated for demonstrating the pillar of **RESPONSIBILITY**.

Do what you are supposed to do • Plan ahead • Be diligent • Persevere • Do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act • Be accountable for your words, actions and attitudes • Set a good example for others • Choose a positive attitude • Make healthy choices

Each nominee received a certificate, VRA magnet, and a bag full of fun rewards!

We applaud our kids of character!

Kindergarten –

Aaron Sosnowski, Everett McGuire, William Frye, Juliette Phillips, Brolin Woods, Ellamae Kulp, and Sadie Simoneau.

First grade –

Cali Meunier, Maleeah Meddings, Annie Balger, Beckett Nover, Molly Shelley, Logan Muldowney, and Jocelyn Shelhamer.

Second grade -

Lilly Hart, Alexis Mooney, Mia Postell, Charlotte Polito, Claire Lang, Chanel Inman, Haddie Patrick, and Lily Davidson.

Third grade –

Maggie Gilbert, Leah Noren, Nolan Muenier, Samuel Herstone, Kinsley Clark, Emma Krause, and Rosalia Ioannou.

Fourth grade –

Blake Muldowney, Sarah Dresback, Casper Kuczkowski, Henry Ronsman, Julian Ammons, Krupa Augustin, and Abigail McPherson.

Fifth grade –

Bridget Walker, Abigail Wheeler, Deeksha Hariharan, Sierra Lavalley, Harper Louk, Troy McLeod, and Izzy Hill.

Middle School –

Gabriela Guevara, Summer Schmutz, Sophia Biscardi, Caroline Camp, Carrie Wachala, Marissa Holgrimson, Allie Foster, Kash Kolbow, Emery Brown, CJ Anunciacion, Emma Nordness, Karissa Nieves, Aliya Medure, Emma Dresback, Karissa Nieves, Cole Bishop, Petra Dankworth, Keira Davidson, and Valentino Moore.



VRA celebrates the pillar of **CITIZENSHIP** during the month of November.

VRA Students of Character

We are proud of you!



VRA Students of Character

Well done Hawks!



National Junior Honor Society

The following 27 students were selected as new members of the National Junior Honor Society. An induction ceremony will be held at a later date. Congratulations to these students who have academic standards as well as the desire to give back to their community.



Madison Adair, Erin Barte, Alec Becker, Aannah Bertram, Sayan Bhattacharya, Srija Bhattacharya, Jaedon Fiesta, Charlotte Garcia, Bianca Garg, Gabriela Guevara, Eric Herbst, Samantha Ingenito, Sanjana Kamalraji, Matthew Ostrander, Malana Patel, Dylan Rhoad, Tyler Rohrer, Kleo Rrodastani, Morgan Shreve, Pablo Solis, Sam Thornton, Bailey Tokarek, Raquel Vega, Kara Yeaton, Emma Nordness, Jaden Price, and Kaitlin Wells.

VRA Students of Character



VRA DanceFit Challenge

The VRA DanceFit Challenge (formerly the Hawk Fun Run) sponsored by the PTO is quickly approaching. It will take place on November 20th. We will kick things off with a virtual Pep Rally on November 10th. Students will be bringing information home soon on how the community can get involved in this exciting event where proceeds go directly back to school improvements!



Face Masks

Parents/Caregivers,

Please remind students coming into school to always wear a mask.

A useful tip is to *put 5 masks in your students' backpacks on Sunday night* or Monday morning, so they are prepared and remember their masks for the week.



Upon dismissal, students can *take their masks off when they are OFF school property.*

Valley Ridge Reader

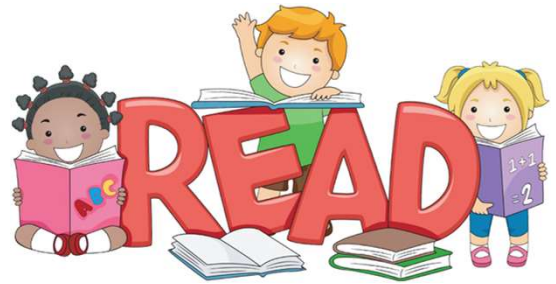
VRA Parents and Caregivers,

We invite you to explore the wonderful monthly publication from our Media Center,

THE VALLEY RIDGE READER

Follow the link to discover the November issue:

[https://www.smore.com/njt2w.](https://www.smore.com/njt2w)



Valley Ridge Academy Thanksgiving Meal Baskets

It's that time of year again to give thanks! Any families interested in receiving a Thanksgiving basket, please call or e-mail Mrs. Schoolfield by **November 9th, 2020** to RSVP.

We are also making a list, and checking it twice, of families in need of assistance over the holidays. If you would like to be on this list, please e-mail or call Mrs. Schoolfield and more information will be provided at a later date.

Phone: 904-547-4111

E-mail: diana.schoolfield@stjohns.k12.fl.us



Guidance Lessons

Mrs. Dail (K-4 school counselor) completed the Safety Matters Human Trafficking/Abuse Prevention lessons with 4th grade and will be visiting Kinder and 1st grade classrooms to do so before the winter break.

Distance Learners will receive this information in the spring upon their return to Brick and Mortar.

Currently, Mrs. Dail is enjoying going into the Kindergarten classrooms – “Puppy” has joined her so he can learn about the “Rules for Listening” from the students and the power of “Self-Talk”.



Ms. MacNaught (5-8 school counselor) has begun going into the 8th grade U.S. History and Career Development classrooms to talk with students about their interests and how that relates to High School courses and Careers.

Students have started to work on MyCareerShines.com to compete an Interest Inventor and a Confidence Skills Assessment.

Students have also been developing 4-year High School Plans based on their interests.

For more information about the Career Development mandate and the different programs being used please visit:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/guidance/8th-grade-career-exploration/>

Ms. MacNaught will also be going into the 5th grade classrooms in November to present the Safety Matters Abuse Prevention lessons.

A Big Thank You to the VRA PTO!

Our wonderful PTO decorated our school for **Red Ribbon Week**.

We appreciate them for all that they do to support our school!



Health Education at VRA

For Parents and Caregivers Interested in Learning More About Childhood Mental Health

As a parent or caregiver, you want the best for your children or other dependents. You may be concerned or have questions about certain behaviors they exhibit and how to ensure they get help. The US Department of Health and Human Services has information to help parents know what to do. Visit:

<https://www.mentalhealth.gov/talk/parents-caregivers>
for more information.

St Johns County Mental Health and Wellness Portal

The Wellness portal is full of Educational and Community Resources for every type of need. Please visit this comprehensive and valuable resource at:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/mental-health/>

Meeting the Substance Abuse Prevention Education at VRA

Red Ribbon Week was the perfect time for our teachers to facilitate a developmentally appropriate lesson to meet the Substance Abuse Prevention mandate. School Board Rule – Chapter 4.00 – The Curriculum 4.02(13) states that “Students at all appropriate levels will be given instruction regarding the harmful effects of alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse.” This is achieved through lesson integrated into the curriculum, activities during Red Ribbon Week, and collaboration with community agencies. Students at the middle school level will also have components of the 5-hour Mental Health presentation that address drug and tobacco prevention.

Parents are encouraged to visit the SJCS Student Drug & Tobacco Prevention Education and Resources page for more information on how to keep our youth drug-free –

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/sdfs/parent2/>

Florida State Board of Education rules related to health education topics for K-5 and Middle School students

Please visit:

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/mental-health/instruction/elementary/>

and/or

<https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/mental-health/instruction/middle-school/>

for information on the different mandated health education topics K-5 student need to receive each year.



Stress Management for Caregivers



THE ESE PARENT ADVISORY,
ST JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

WELCOMES

SANDRA REBEOR, PSY.D., M.S.H.S.

FOR A DISCUSSION ON:

**STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR
PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS
OF STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES**

Goal: To understand the difference between distress and eustress, common stressors associated with being a caregiver, and the impacts on health and well-being. In addition, effective stress management to help caregivers and their student with disabilities will be shared.

Follow link to [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

or dial [+1 904-420-0831](#) Conference ID: 895 587 77#

ESE PARENT
ADVISORY

ST JOHNS COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

EXCEPTIONAL
STUDENT
EDUCATION

SANDRA REBEOR,
PSY.D., M.S.H.S.

NOVEMBER 10, 2020

This meeting will
be held via
Microsoft Teams
platform

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

FDLRS Parent Webinar Series



The FDLRS Network receives its priorities from the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services and works in collaboration with districts and families to best provide quality programs and services at the local level in an effort to reach the indicators in BEESS Strategic Plan supporting the success of ALL learners.

FDLRS also supports Florida's Goals of: Higher Student Achievement, Skilled Workforce and Economic Development, Seamless Articulation and Maximum Access and Quality Efficient Services.

FDLRS Administration Staff

Support Personnel: Wendy Beasley and Ashley Futch

Coordinators: Sara Gaines, Shannon McCosker, Susan Saunders, Kim Seth and Tracy Umpenhour

Administrator: Mary Ann Ahearn

WEBSITE: www.fdlrs.org and www.fl-pda.org

Fridays with FDLRS **A Parent Webinar Series**

The FDLRS Administration Project and Associate Centers Network are proud to offer a **series of parent webinars** to take place virtually over the 2020-2021 school year.

- August 21st – Keeping Your Kids Safe on the Web
- September 18th – Understanding ESE: An Overview
- October 16th – Accommodations
- November 20th – Basic Behavior Principles for Success
- December 18th – Social Skills: Teaching Replacement Behaviors
- January 15th – Components of a Quality IEP
- February 19th – Transition for Secondary
- March 19th – Technology Tools for Beginners
- April 16th – How Understanding Learning Styles Helps When Parenting
- May 21st – Resources for Parents and Families

These topics have been selected in response to requests for information, needs assessment results and priority areas identified from the ESE Parent Survey conducted by the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS).

The **90-minute webinars** are conducted during lunch hours, from **11:30AM – 1:00PM EST** on a designated Friday for parents/family/professionals. All sessions will be recorded and posted on the www.fdlrs.org website for access at your convenience at a later date.

These webinars are **free of charge and open to all parents/families/professionals of working with children with disabilities or those with unique learning needs**. We ask that you register at least 2 weeks prior to the event. The URL will be sent to you in an email the day prior to the webinar. **Registration for all webinars is located at:**

<http://www.fdlrs.org/free-parent-webinars-fridays-fdlrs>

You may register for one or all the webinars at your earliest convenience.

We look forward to “seeing” you soon! If you have any questions please email ahearnm@nefec.org or call 386-312-2265.