



Taylor School Geo Bee Champion 5th Grader Devan Opper and his teacher **Ms. Lauck**



Long Branch Geo Bee Champion **Sassan Fiske** with Social Studies Lead teacher **Ms. Mitchell**



McKinley school Geo Bee Champion proudly poses with his family

Consider This....

Keeping Students Current...

With this year's presidential campaign, our students are entering our classrooms with great interest and curiosity about the candidates and their stance on issues. While election cycles naturally lend themselves to teaching about current issues, research shows that regular discussion of current events has a number of benefits.

Some of those benefits for students of studying current events are:

- ◆ The event allows for interdisciplinary connections. Current events cover a broad range of subjects and connect to all areas of the curriculum.
- ◆ They help students develop their reading comprehension, build vocabulary and language skills, and practice critical thinking, such as distinguishing between opinion and fact; evidence-based statements and empty rhetoric, and sensationalism and solid journalism.
- ◆ They help students understand the importance of people, events, and issues, and how that relates to them and can be bridge to what they are currently studying.
- ◆ They increase student interest in government, politics, national, and international issues outside of school and develop students to become more informed citizens.

These are some creative active, engaging ways to teach current events in our Strategy Spotlight our very own APS teachers share how they teach about the presidential election in their classrooms. Our students have much to gain from being encouraged to explore what is occurring in the world around them... right now. (continued on pg. 2)

Consider this...cont.

There are various ways to bring current events to the classroom that range from regular routines to one time activities. These ideas and many more are available at [The New York Times, Learning Network: 50 ways to teach with current events.](#)



They include

- ◆ Allowing students time to read the newspaper or student friendly news magazine. Whether it's during the core instructional day, homeroom, or during Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) time, carve out time and space for students to read the news. Some recommended current event publications include:
 - ◇ Time for Kids
 - ◇ Scholastic News
 - ◇ [CNN Interactive](#)



◇ [CNN Student News](#)

- ◆ Having students compare lead stories from various news sources. You can pick one

article about a divisive topic and see how various news sources write about the same subject.

- ◆ Holding a debate in your classroom on a particular topic or series of topics. Have students read various articles and use a graphic organizer to gather evidence of both sides of the argument. They can use this to develop their arguments and anticipate their opponents counter arguments.
- ◆ Analyzing photos to build visual literacy skills. Use a compelling or provocative image from the news and develop spiral questions for your students to answer. Students can also play visual detective as they answer questions that gather evidence (What do you see?), interpret that evidence (What do you think is happening and how do you know?), and making hypotheses from the evidence



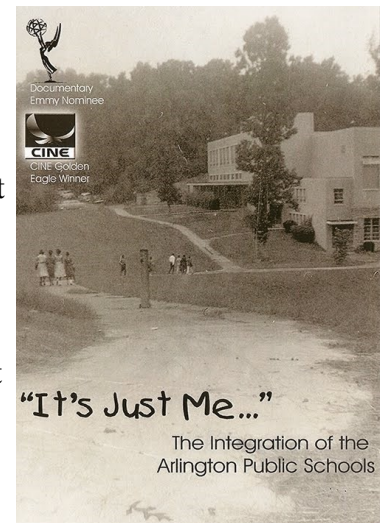
Desegregation Event

Social Studies students across the county had the opportunity to learn about the historic event at Stratford Junior High as the first school in the Commonwealth of Virginia to

desegregate after the historic Brown vs. the Board of Education Supreme Court decision. In addition to students viewing the Arlington produced video about this event titled "It's Just Me" teachers had the opportunity to teach lessons on the event.



- ◆ In grades K-3 students examined how schools before desegregation were different than schools today.
- ◆ At grades 4-5, students looked at pictures from February 2, 1959, the day of desegregation in Arlington to understand how this event was a victory over massive resistance.
- ◆ At the secondary level students had the opportunity to examine political cartoons related to desegregation and Arlington's role. Additionally, they examined the power struggle between the different levels of government as well as the involvement of individual citizens in the fight for desegregation.
- ◆ Social studies teachers incorporated the video and lessons into their daily plan or as part of a current event focus. It was a great opportunity for our APS students to learn about local heroes and their fight to achieve equality in schools.



Desegregation Event cont.

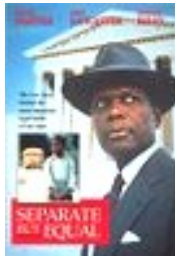
Here are some ways that teachers taught this historic event across the district.

Williamsburg introduced the anniversary of desegregation at Stratford Junior High through a segment on the Morning Announcements. Many teachers taught the Political Cartoon Lesson as well. Students discussed the message of these cartoons and processed their reactions. They then created political cartoons to celebrate the Arlington School's integration.



At **HB Woodlawn**, 9th grade English students analyzed and summarized the headlines from the front page of newspapers from Anchorage, Honolulu, Sioux Falls, and Atlanta on Feb. 2, 1959 when Virginia's integration in Arlington occurred. This sharing led into a discussion about perspective and connected back to the local image of the day Stratford integrated.

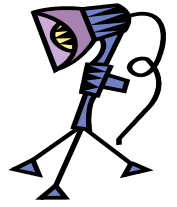
At **W-L** psychology students reviewed the famous Doll Study which demonstrated how segregated schools damaged the developing identity of the children who were forced to attend inferior schools. Students also viewed scenes from the movie *Separate But Equal*. In their debrief of the movie and study, one student asked, "If the decision came down in 1954, why did it take five years for the students to attend Stratford?" " They learned that deliberate speed" means different things to different people.



"Remember, remember always,
that all of us, and you and I especially,
are descended from immigrants and
revolutionists."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

Strategy Spotlight



Teaching the Elections

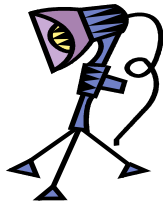
Given the heightened level of interest surrounding the current presidential campaign, we asked some of our social studies teachers how they incorporate the election and current events in general into their classrooms. Here are some ideas from elementary and secondary teachers.

Michael Palermo, US/VA Government teacher at **Yorktown**.

- ◆ Students can take one of several online quizzes available such as "ISideWith" that match political views with one of the candidates running for President.
- ◆ Teachers can show a documentary about a past presidential campaign such as "By the People: The Election of Barack Obama" or "Journeys with George" or play campaign ads (see "Living Room Candidate") and presidential debate clips to explain aspects of the election process.
- ◆ Support for eligible students to register to vote and encourage students to volunteer for the candidate they support, during the election season.
- ◆ Teachers can create learning opportunities that allow students to express the reasons behind their support for a particular candidate and listen to the viewpoints of others. In my class, I hold a caucus (similar to the Iowa caucus) in which students must stand up for their preferred candidate and convince their classmates to support him or her.
- ◆ Social Studies teachers should create ongoing opportunities to discuss current events in the classroom and make real-life connections to the content they're teaching.



Strategy Spotlight



Cont.

Rachel Payne, 7th grade US History, Economics and Civics teacher at **Thomas Jefferson**

◆ In order to get students engaged in discussions about political parties we adopted two class pets. After talking about the two main political parties we got class fish - one red, one blue. We have been monitoring the Presidential candidates and have been updating



a class election board. After the conventions this summer the fish will officially get their names!



◆ Something we noticed at Jefferson is that

the students are much more engaged when they can connect what we are learning to their lives here in Arlington. At the start of the school year students made door hangers to educate parents about the process and deadlines of registering to vote. Not only did students feel connected to their community they also covered several SOL standards.

◆ One thing to keep in mind is many of the civics standards work well together and can be taught in the same lesson. We were able to teach several standards about the role of the media together with standards about campaign finance. First, students researched policy quotes from the 2016 Presidential candidates to analyze the role of the media.



Then students were assigned an interest group or PAC - their task was to read those policy quotes and determine which candidate their group would donate money to. This second part of the lesson allowed student to analyze the role of money in elections.

◆ One thing that has worked well is utilizing popular video clips to teach the standards related to making an informed decision. Many clips from comedy shows, such as SNL, offer a great way to not only teach standards but also engage students.

Kyra Wolford 5th grade teacher at **McKinley**
One of the best and challenging assignments I ask of my students is to research and create a commercial, speech, slide show, etc. about the candidate they like least. It is not an easy task, but often opens the eyes of our students to the importance of researching and studying candidates. I share that each person who runs has both pluses and minuses and that searching these out is a valuable tool of voters. As citizens, it is our duty to do so. Students really do enjoy the process and many have asked to dress in character as they share their new found knowledge. Parents have also enjoyed the discussions that open up at home and of course, I always ask for parent permission before the process begins. It is great to think "outside the box" before checking the box on a ballot!



What's the Buzz all about?

GEOGRAPHY BEE CHAMPIONS CONGRATULATIONS!

- Abingdon** - Finnegan Brile
- ASFS** - Kiran Keane (Congratulations for qualifying to compete at the State Competition)
- ATS** - Sam Abramowicz
- Barcroft** - Anneliese Odegard
- Claremont** - Isabelle Lauritzen Zapata
- Drew** - Krishnan Shankar (Congratulations for qualifying to compete at the State Competition)
- Glebe** - Wyatt Croog
- Henry** - Carson Stadler
- Jamestown** - Jacob Bowen-Glazeroff
- Long Branch** - Sassan Fiske
- McKinley** - Oliver Meek
- Nottingham** - Grant Churchill
- Taylor** - Devan Opper
- Tuckahoe** - Martin Neisuler
- Gunston** - Michael Farmer
- Jefferson** - Edward Gimlin
- Kenmore** - Zach Petrov
- Swanson** - Jake Lanier
- Williamsburg** - Aaryan Awasthi



Barcroft finalists pose with their certificates after an exciting School Geo Bee competition



Abingdon Geography Bee Finalists



Thomas Jefferson School Champion finalists



The competition heats up at the **Drew** Geography Bee



Glebe Geography Bee Finalists



ATS Geography Bee Finalists



Nottingham Knights compete in a record breaking Geographic Bee that lasted 18 rounds!

Getting to know SOCIAL STUDIES LEAD TEACHERS

This is the first year for **Anna Maria Lechleitner** and **Marijoy Cordero** sharing the Social Studies Lead teacher position at **Carlin Springs** Elementary School. Anna Maria has been teaching for 13 years, 4 of those years have been with Arlington Public Schools. She is currently teaching Kindergarten but got bit by the Social Studies bug while teaching fourth grade at Jamestown Elementary School. There she sang and role-played to teach VA History. She loves to travel, cook, and dance with her students with www.gonoodle.com.



Marijoy has been teaching for 22 years, 14 of those years have been at Carlin Springs since the school opened in 2001. She's a looper, looping between first and second grade. She is currently teaching first grade. Learning comes ALIVE in her classroom; she really enjoys dressing up as different characters to engage her students. When she is not teaching you will find her caring for her six children.



Gus Gravot teaches world geography at **Gunston Middle School**. He served in the U.S. Marines and studied at Columbia University. Before arriving at APS, Gus taught at a military school in New Orleans. He is married and lives in Arlington. Gus enjoys travel and reading.

In the future, he hopes to retire in the tropics and go fishing each day.

This is **Christine Ray's** third year teaching at **Ashlawn** Elementary School. Christine moved to Arlington three years ago after living in New York her entire life. Christine teaches third grade at Ashlawn, and taught kindergarten and second grade when in New York. Christine received her Bachelor's degree in elementary and special education from Providence College in Rhode Island, where she was a member of the college's Swimming and Diving team, and she still remains a big Providence Friar fan to this day. She later received her master's degree in literacy education from Queens College in NY. When not at school, you can usually find Christine running the streets of Arlington County or hanging by a pool in the summertime.



This is **Jennifer Manley's** third year teaching fourth grade at **Barrett** Elementary. She loves teaching the Virginia Studies curriculum and is looking forward to taking the fourth grade to the Jamestown Settlement for the first time. Ms. Manley is currently enrolled in George Mason University's Advanced Studies in Teacher Leadership Program. This year, she loved getting to dress up as her favorite Ninja Turtle, Michelangelo (orange belt), for Barrett's Halloween Parade!



SOCIAL STUDIES OFFICE

Cathy Hix, Supervisor
Diana Jordan, Teacher Specialist
Barbara Ann Lavelle, Editing



Syphax Education Center
703.228.6140 phone
703.228.2874 fax