

# MCS-AA School News

October 2013

## October is Bullying Prevention Month

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### Looking Ahead

Tarbiya theme for October is sharing and self-control.

- Oct 8-PLC (early dismissal @ 1:00)
- Oct 11-Mini Hajj (dismissal at 12:00)  
BBQ from 12:00-1:30
- Oct 14-16 Eid-al-Adha holiday
- Oct 17-Faculty-Staff meeting @3:30PM
- Oct. 23-31 Red Ribbon Week
- Oct 25-Eid-al-Ghadeer after salaah
- Oct. 31- End of first quarter

### MCS-AA Adopts the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

- What:** Common Core State Standards—The CCSS are a set of consistent, high-quality academic goals in English/language (ELA) and mathematics.
- Why:** The standards define the knowledge and skills all students should master by the end of each grade level in order to graduate from high school fully prepared to enter college and the workforce. The CCSS raise the bar for student achievement and will help us build a world-class education system.
- When:** Starting with academic year 2013-14, we began directing our teaching toward the standards that help us focus on student learning.
- Where:** More information is available from the school office (ask for [the Top 10 Things Parents Need to Know about the Common Core State Standards](#), and visit >> <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/ccss/>)



In line with our emphasis on the Common Core State Standards, MCS-AA focuses on BIG ideas that help students understand key concepts for their grade levels and subjects. Each Wednesday, a class presents their BIG idea in assembly. Announcements are made each Thursday for the next class to present. *Parents are welcome to join us when their student is up for a presentation. Continued on page 4. . .*

### MCS-AA establishes a delegation for the Model Arab League

For the first time, Alim Academy will have a delegation to the Model Arab League (MAL) under the leadership of faculty advisors, Br. Ali Ahsani and Ms. Emily Yeater, inshaAllah.

Program material says: Participants learn about the politics and history of the Arab world and the arts of diplomacy and public speech. MAL helps prepare students to be knowledgeable, well-trained, and effective citizens as well as civic and public affairs leaders. The Models provide primarily American but also Arab and other international students with opportunities to develop valuable leadership skills. Participants learn firsthand what it is like to put themselves in the shoes of real-life Arab diplomats and other foreign affairs practitioners. In the process, the students come to realize unavoidably and inevitably how different these international relations realities are in comparison to what they previously thought and assumed to be true based on what they had read and “learned” or not read, “not learned” and therefore not known before.

**REMINDER: Please pick up your children on Oct. 8 at 1:00**



## Top 10 things parents need to know about the CCSS

- #1 The goal of the CCSS is college and workforce readiness for all students.
- #2 States led the effort to develop the CCSS, not the federal government.
- #3 The CCSS are not a curriculum and do not tell teachers how to teach.
- #4 Better standards call for better assessments.
- #5 The CCSS focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- #6 The CCSS create consistent learning goals for all students regardless of where they live or go to school.
- #7 The CCSS are aligned to college and workplace expectations.
- #8 The CCSS are benchmarked against academic standards from the world's top-performing countries.
- #9 The CCSS call for changes in learning for English-language arts and mathematics.
- #10 The CCSS delve deeper into core concepts.

More information is available from the school office (ask for [the Top 10 Things Parents Need to Know about the Common Core State Standards](#), and visit >> <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/ccss/>



Above: (R-L: 2012-13 PTO President Mina Tafazzoli gives financial gift to Dr. Ali)

## PTO gift of \$2006 used to enrich classrooms

Thanks to a generous gift from the PTO, our classrooms are continuing to improve.

So far, we have used funds to decorate the English classroom and to purchase two Epson projectors and two Toshiba laptop computers that are placed on carts for use on each floor.

Of the remaining funds, we plan to purchase two additional projectors and at least two document cameras to support our emphasis of integrating technology into our instruction and a kidney table for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom.

Note: We still need additional projectors so that we can have one in each classroom.

Jazakallahu khairan, PTO!



## Students and staff enjoy fitness activities before starting classes

"I want to use our assemblies to protect our iman and our bodies," says Principal Dr. Althia F. Ali. "We begin each day reciting Surah Al-Fatiha and duas for memorization, knowledge, and manners, followed by a short khutbah from one of our sheiks. These practices are very important for all of us.

"I want to do more to make the most use of our time together as a school community," Dr. Ali continued. "We added fitness activities twice a week at the suggestion of Coach Basil Abdul-Khabir. When he made the suggestion, the idea immediately resonated with me because I want to teach our students good habits, and exercise is important. Now we enjoy a few minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays to remind ourselves how important it is to take care of the gift that Allah (swt) has given to us with a light morning workout. Coach Basil is sensitive to gender concerns, and he gets us warmed up for a day of teaching and learning, and I love it! Some of the teachers and I work out right along with the students, and it's made a difference for me. InshaAllah, it does the same for the others."

### Tarbiya Calendar

Tarbiya is the process of developing individuals to exemplify Islamic teachings in their daily lives and to empower them to be the best they can be. Each month, we have two themes that bring Tarbiya to life for students in all grades. Teachers integrate the monthly themes into their lesson planning and give students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts as they study in the classroom and beyond.

January: Caring and Patience	July: Citizenship and Loyalty
February: Love and Honesty	August: Cooperation and Initiative
March: Kindness and Forgiveness	September: Respect and Attentiveness
April: Courage and Tolerance	<b>October: Sharing and Self-control</b>
May: Helpfulness and Perseverance	November: Thankfulness and Responsibility
June: Politeness and Neatness	December: Joyfulness and Wisdom

### Are you having RenWeb issues????



### Get help!

Send questions to:  
[Renwebissues4aa.mcs@gmail.com](mailto:Renwebissues4aa.mcs@gmail.com)  
 Reminder: You can check grades, lesson plans, and other important student information 24/7 at RenWeb.

### October Menu

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1 Chicken kabob, rice & salad	2 Pizza & salad	3 Chicken curry, rice & yogurt	4 Chicken sandwich, tortilla chips & salsa
7 Pasta & meat sauce, roll & salad	8 Chicken kabob, rice & salad Early dismissal	9 Pizza & salad	10 Chicken curry, rice & yogurt	11 Mini Hajj Followed by BBQ by Br. Basil <b>\$5 all you care to eat</b>
<b>Eid ul Adha Break</b>			17 Chicken curry, rice & yogurt	18 Chicken sandwich, tortilla chips & salsa
21 Pasta & meat sauce, roll & salad	22 Chicken kabob, rice & salad	23 Pizza & salad	24 Chicken curry, rice & yogurt	25 Chicken sandwich, tortilla chips & salsa
28 Pasta & meat sauce, roll & salad	29 Chicken kabob, rice & salad	30 Pizza & salad	31 Chicken curry, rice & yogurt	

### Lunch Information

Lunch fees (\$4 per day) are billed at the end of each month. All lunches include water and Zabihah halal meat.

Enclosed is a lunch order slip. PLEASE mark the days your child(ren) will be having lunch so we can order enough lunch, and return the marked menu with payment to the office on Monday.

Please understand our lunch routine. We send two copies of the menu home, you (Parent) mark days your child will be eating and return the marked copy to school with payment. We will only be ordering lunch for those who have informed us they will be eating. We do not want to waste food, nor can the school order extra food in case someone needs to eat and then the school has to pay for extra ordered food.

If your child needs to eat on a certain day that was not checked on the returned menu, please call the office and let us know by 9:00am. Some of the students are very shy and will not tell us they need to order food. We don't want any child to go hungry, but we need your cooperation in informing the office of the days your child will be ordering lunch.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

## What's the BIG idea?

Continued from page 1. . .

### Week 1

Sr. Kemi's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class talks about their BIG idea—math place values and learning styles

Students demonstrated how to determine place values using multiple strategies. Sr. Kemi then discussed how important it is to take into consideration the way students learn (e.g., visual, tactile, auditory) when teaching concepts.



### Week 2

Sr. Mariam's 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class's BIG idea focuses on citizenship in recognition of Constitution Day

Students sang the Star Spangled Banner, and Sr. Mariam explained the occasion of Constitution Day.



### Week3

Ms. Yeater's 8<sup>th</sup> grade English class

Some of the students shared original works from journal entries to describe objects using vivid, descriptive language and imagery as they occurred to all of the senses. Fellow students then had to guess the object that was being described.



## Message from the Principal

*As salamu alaikum*, MCS-AA Family—

MashaAllah, this school year is off to a great start! In planning for this academic year, we made a few changes in an effort to build on what was already working and to adapt to the new direction that we are now undertaking under new administrative and board leadership. We have completed a full month of school, and I must say how impressed I am with our faculty, staff, and students. I have also had the opportunity to meet with many parents and members of the IEC community. Our school is blessed to be a strong community within a strong community.

My emphasis is on strengthening our academic program and ensuring that our students not only meet learning expectations for their grade levels but exceed them, inshaAllah. In adopting the Common Core State Standards this

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**Message from the Principal, continued from page 4. . .**

academic year, we are sending a strong message that we understand and embrace the importance of a standards-based education. I am also working to position our school to begin the process for regional accreditation next year, inshaAllah. That requires a good deal of preparatory work to ensure that we meet the standards before we enter the self-study process.

Our students are our products, if you will. While I care about each students' success for the sake of that child, I am ever mindful of the need to ensure that our students are shining examples of what an MCS-AA education can do for a person to prepare him/her for success in this life and the hereafter. Our education should be second to none. Success breeds success; so, when we accomplish our goals this year by the grace and mercy of Allah (swt), we will move closer to my goal of making MCS-AA the school of choice for Muslim children in this metro area. That is the challenge before us.

We are currently being challenged in other ways we did not imagine at the start of the summer, when I first arrived. Still, we have a committed group of faculty and others who are giving their full efforts to continue to educate our children because they realize that this special test we are currently undergoing requires us to come together even more to protect our school and the education that we value so much. Special fundraising activities will be ongoing this year, and we hope to see you at them. This helps to create school spirit, cohesiveness, visibility, and a general feeling of well-being. **Our first event is a Hajj Carnival set for Saturday, October 12 from 1:00 to 7:00 at the IEC.** Come out and join in the fun!

We ask for your continued support and duas as we continue this path of providing an excellent education for our children.

Sincerely,



Dr. Althia F. Ali  
Principal

**Special Events**

**Career Day helps students dream**

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” is a question most children are asked all the time. Our Career Day gives them a chance to see what is involved in several careers so that they can begin to dream and plan.

Many thanks to Sr. Somayyah Nahidian and Sr. Hoda Maslehat for getting some dynamic presentations for this year’s event.

Special thanks to the presenters:



- |                            |               |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Montgomery Police          | 9:30          |
| Montgomery Fire Department | 10:30         |
| Mohammed Ali               |               |
|                            | Engineer      |
| Mohammed Hassan            | Test Engineer |
| Yasamin Ekrami             | Mechanical    |
| Engineer                   |               |
| Fatimah Naqvi, MD          |               |
| Zahra Hashenipour          | Pharmacist    |

**Red Ribbon Week**



**October is Bullying Prevention Month**



**Muslim Community School**    
**ALIM ACADEMY**  
Presents

**H A J J C A R N I V A L 2 0 1 3**

Saturday October 12, 2013

1:00pm - 7:00pm

**Family Fun!**



**Hajj reenactment!**

Islamic Education Center  
7917 Montrose Rd, Potomac, MD 20854  
\$10 Entrance Fee