



Arlington  
Public  
Schools

## DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL & COMMUNITY RELATIONS

1426 N. Quincy Street • Arlington, Virginia 22207 • Phone: 703-228-6640 • Fax 703-228-7640

March 13, 2015

Dear NSPRA Judges:

I am pleased to present the **APS Public Relations Liaison Network** as an entry for the 2015 Gold Medallion Awards.

All of us in the field of school public relations understand the challenge of receiving funding to increase staffing for effective communications. Understandably, elected School Boards choose to allocate funding for staff to schools and classrooms to support instruction and benefit children rather than adding staff to the Central Offices. At the same time administrators and elected leaders want to build a greater knowledge among parents and community constituents to understand their challenges, programs and achievements.

The Arlington Public Schools (APS) School and Community Relations Department is staffed by a relatively small team. Working with me, our eight-member team is comprised of a communications director who manages the day to day operations; a coordinator who serves as webmaster and graphic designer for the school division; a specialist to assist with publicity, media and print publications; a coordinator to oversee school/program information, family communications and engagement, and community outreach; a coordinator to manage our countywide volunteer program, business and community partnerships and special events; and a three-member video production team to film and produce weekly video programming for broadcast via the web, social media and APS cable channels, and broadcasts all School Board and community meetings.

In 2004, APS invited principals to designate a "volunteer" PR Liaison to help gather information and news about the school or program, take photos for publication and to respond to special requests for media, newsletters and other public relations needs. Despite quarterly meetings, training sessions, a PR Liaison manual, and other support, the effort failed to generate timely and effective communications about the work in our schools. In our tenth year, the team of "volunteer" liaisons submitted a total of 159 news items from our 35 schools and programs over a ten-month school year. That averaged one news item per school every other month. Clearly, we were not hearing about the great things happening in our schools.

With the support of our Superintendent, we proposed a pilot program for the 2014-15 school year to pay a modest stipend to school PR Liaisons, much like the stipends paid for athletics, music programs and other special projects in schools. The total funding was \$51,000, less than half the cost of the salary and benefits for one full-time communications staff member. However, the return on our investment has been spectacularly successful. In the first half of our pilot year, PR Liaisons have submitted 668 news items, more than four times the total amount submitted by the volunteer group in the previous year. In addition, the quality of news has increased tremendously, and the group's active participation in social media and supporting our district communications efforts has generated much greater engagement and media coverage for APS. We now have an engaged and enthusiastic corps of liaisons who are committed to communicating our work and achievements. Needless to say, you really do get what you pay for. This year's pilot has been a tremendous success, and is moving from a "pilot" project to a fully-funded initiative in next year's budget.

We believe that the APS PR Liaison Network communications program implemented here in Arlington is a model that can benefit and be replicated by school districts throughout the country to increase staffing in a cost-effective way.

We appreciate the opportunity from NSPRA to showcase this successful communications initiative.

Sincerely,

Linda M. Erdos  
Assistant Superintendent

# **Arlington Public Schools – 2015 Gold Medallion Award Entry**

## **Public Relations Liaison Network**

**Purpose:** To develop a network of school-based public relations liaisons that would share school news and expand APS communications across multiple platforms.

### **Analysis (Research)**

For more than 10 years, Arlington Public Schools (APS) has enhanced its centrally-managed communications by soliciting news from staff who volunteered to serve as public relations (PR) liaisons. Each school and program designated a volunteer to submit news and announcements that were primarily incorporated into the biweekly employee newsletter and the biweekly community newsletter during the regular school year. Despite the longstanding effort to increase the news and information received from schools, in the 2013-14 school year only a total of 159 news submissions were received from a total of 35 school and program liaisons throughout APS. While we knew that many newsworthy activities were happening every day, the APS School and Community Relations (SCR) Department only occasionally received advance notice so that the information could be shared with the media, in newsletters, on APS video programs, and on APS social media pages.

### **Planning**

In order to improve the communications between schools and SCR, a system that included both an incentive and accountability was needed. SCR proposed that a pilot program be included in the FY2015 budget, allocating \$50,000 for a stipend to be paid for all school-based PR liaisons who were appointed by their principals to serve in that role. Superintendent Dr. Pat Murphy was very supportive of this model, as he has sought the expansion of transparent, responsive, and positive communication from all schools during his tenure in leading APS. He has been a positive role model, leading by example as he tweets about his activities on a daily basis, in his work as the Superintendent. As we will discuss later in this application, his use of Twitter fueled the rapid growth of this social media tool during the past year, and its use has “gone viral” throughout APS.

PR liaisons can be chosen from any pay scale, from administrators to administrative assistants. The PR liaison was required to fill out an application and be selected by the school principal for the position, sign a contract that required certain performance objectives to be achieved, and were provided with an iPad Mini, quarterly trainings and weekly email updates to support them in meeting their PR liaison obligations. *See attached PR liaison application and contract that must be signed as evidence of the employee’s formal commitment to serve in the role and the signed approval of the principal or administrator.*

SCR developed a framework for the roles and responsibilities of PR liaisons and developed stipends on a sliding scale. PR liaisons serving at the high school level earn \$2,000; those at the middle school level earn \$1,500; and those at the elementary or school program level earn \$1,000. Note: The total budget for the initiative is \$51,000, less than half of one full-time staff person. PR liaisons that are compensated at higher levels are also expected to submit more news items on a monthly basis, because their schools have more teachers, students, activities, and news to share than smaller, neighborhood elementary schools. PR liaisons receive a mid-year evaluation and a final performance review that documents their fulfillment of responsibilities in order to receive their first and second half stipend payments. *See the attached PR liaison evaluation forms, which summarize the requirements that must be fulfilled each quarter in order to receive stipend payments.*

### **Communication/Implementation**

At the end of the 2013-14 school year, principals were asked to advertise the PR liaison position, with its associated stipend, and send the application for their appointed staff member to SCR. SCR coordinated a three-hour kickoff training in August, during the in-service week that teachers and school staff participate in to begin planning for the new school year. During that training, PR liaisons received an iPad Mini, a training manual, and were given an overview of their basic responsibilities. These duties included sending monthly news submissions, photos, videos, and updates (at least weekly) to their school’s social media sites. *A training agenda and the PR liaison manual ([www.apsva.us/PRToolkit](http://www.apsva.us/PRToolkit)) are included to provide additional details about this training.*

Quarterly training sessions were held in November and February, with a final session at the end of April. The sessions provided time for more thorough social media training, video- and photo-taking tips, and general question and answer sessions. PR liaisons who excelled in particular areas of their job responsibilities also shared and modeled their successes with their peers.

On a weekly basis, the Communication Director sends out an update to all PR liaisons which provide communication prompts, current campaigns (such as Principal Appreciation Week, Arts in the Schools month, etc.), a list of Twitter hashtags, and media and video opportunities that they can leverage to share their school's news with SCR and in the community. *Sample updates are attached for reference.*

PR liaisons are encouraged to send news items on a weekly basis, and every Monday, the SCR team holds an editorial meeting to review them. Communication strategies are developed for news that can be pitched to the media, and a daily social media calendar is created to place news items on the APS Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages. Arlington Educational TV (AETV) updates the video production calendar to incorporate new opportunities for featured programs and the AETV bulletin board is updated with news announcements. The home page of the website is updated to highlight the most relevant and current announcements, media announcements via our Blackboard Connect, APS School Talk, are scheduled and plans to include in the bi-weekly staff and community newsletters are also scheduled. *See an attached editorial agenda and a sample of a daily content plan, with staff assignments, for APS communications.*

Additionally, because APS has planned strategically for its weekly communication priorities, we have been able to leverage unique tools and launch new ways of communicating effectively on our social media platforms:

- APS is using [Storify](#) to gather tweets from our hashtag campaigns and regularly provide a comprehensive set of tweets about activities in schools, such as our Team Kids campaign, the Regional Science Fair, and Arts in the Schools month.
- APS is using [Flipagram](#) to leverage the increased photo submissions from our PR liaisons. This tool was effective in sharing photo galleries from campaigns such as Read Across America, the Arlington Bookshelf, Black History Month, and H-B Woodlawn recent 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of desegregation, among others.
- SCR collaborated with PR liaisons and teachers to launch weekly [Twitter Chats](#) about topics of interest to APS employees. PR liaisons have promoted the chats widely in their schools, and the first chat on March 3, which discussed digital learning, had more than 50 participants who shared 700 tweets using #APSchats. These chats are ongoing, every Tuesday from 8-9pm. Participation is entirely voluntary, and Google forms are used for individuals to sign up as moderators, suggest chat topics, and submit suggested questions for each chat. [Nurph](#) is used to provide video replays of each Twitter chat, and the links are provided in NewsCheck, the biweekly employee newsletter. They are also shared via @APSchats and by APS moderators the day following each chat. Staff has also developed an online "RemindMe" tool so participants can sign up to receive updates on Twitter topics and times.

### **Evaluation/Results**

As of January 15, 2015, 668 submissions have been received by PR liaisons at all schools and programs. This level of participation is more than four times the total amount received in the previous school year, and APS is only at the halfway point. As a result of the additional news that is received, APS is able to pitch more stories to the media, enhance social media reach, and improve readership of the employee and community newsletters (*NewsCheck readership rose from an average of 600 readers per issue during the 2013-14 school year to a little over 1,400 this school year*). Here are just a few examples of what has been achieved as a result of using the current model:

- APS is effectively coordinating recognition opportunities by advertising them to PR liaisons and providing communication prompts to support these campaigns. In the fall, SCR asked PR liaisons to use the iPad Mini to record comments from their school psychologists, who shared why there are passionate about their work and how it positively contributes to students' lives. The video clips were compiled by our AETV team to create a wonderful video entitled "What is a School Psychologist?" (<http://www.apsva.us/Page/28314>) that was shared online and on the television station.
- Receiving news tips in a timely manner is one of the greatest benefits of the PR liaison network. One great example occurred in the fall, when Henry Elementary School's PR liaison notified SCR about the principal working from the roof of the school for the day to reward students for reading achievements.

Because of that timely notification, SCR was able to make a quick media pitch and achieve television coverage of this positive news. (<http://www.myfoxdc.com/Clip/10873220/va-school-principal-spends-day-on-school-roof-after-students-fulfill-reading-goal#.VG9GY2z-aGs.facebook>)

- Following a snowstorm in which community criticism was high regarding school openings, especially on APS social media pages, APS launched one of our most successful hashtag campaigns, #APrincipalsDay (514.3k Impressions on Twitter). It asked schools, families and the community to highlight the many important responsibilities of our school administrators. It shifted the conversation and promoted positive comments from the community during a difficult week for staff, students and families. (*See Attachment*)
- PR liaisons promote coordinated communication focused on one message with many voices. APS has been gradually implementing a one to one digital learning initiative, and PR liaisons have contributed to communications by providing great topics for a new video series called [#digitalAPS](#): exploring instructional frontiers. They also provided ideas for media coverage on [Digital Learning Day](#) and participated in a comprehensive Twitter campaign on March 13 using #APSDLD15.

*See attached examples of each of these successful initiatives.*

Our APS PR liaison network has been especially successful at promoting the use and integration of Twitter. The number of APS Twitter handles at the beginning of the school year numbered a few dozen, and as of March 2015, more than 500 APS Twitter handles have been documented by SCR. These handles represent departments, schools, APS staff, and classrooms throughout APS that are actively sharing school news and activities. Additionally, APS tweets are reaching a huge audience. Our Twitter reach is consistently reaching more than one million followers each week. Early in the school year, the reach was approximately 100,000 each week, so the social media activity has grown by an order of magnitude in the past six months. We are very proud of this remarkable achievement and expect it will continue to grow and evolve as more individuals throughout our school division join the Twittersverse.



**Arlington Public Schools**  
**School-Based Public Relations Liaison Application**  
**2014-2015**

***Part I - To Be Completed by the Applicant***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Years of work experience in Arlington Public Schools \_\_\_\_\_
2. Describe any communications or public relations experience you possess, including any past volunteer service as a public relations liaison.
3. Summarize any training related to the requirements of the public relations liaison position, including media relations, photography skills, social media use, etc.

I agree to serve as the school's public relations liaison and fulfill the work requirements for the Department of School and Community Relations in 2014-2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee's signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

***Part II - To Be Completed by an Administrator ONLY.***

**Principals, Assistant Principals, or Supervisors, please initial the boxes where appropriate.**

- ☐ At this time, I recommend this applicant to serve as a public relations liaison.
- ☐ At this time, I do not recommend this applicant to serve as a school-based mentor.
- ☐ I have discussed my decision with the applicant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Principal's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Principals should return or fax a copy of this form to Jennifer Harris, Director of Communications, Department of School and Community Relations, Education Center. Fax Number: 703-228-7640.

# Public Relations (PR) Liaison: Elementary Schools, New Directions, Langston Program, Stratford Program

GOALS/TASKS: School \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

In the appropriate box, please indicate the date on which a goal was accomplished.

GOAL/TASKS	1 <sup>st</sup> QTR	2 <sup>nd</sup> QTR	3 <sup>rd</sup> QTR	4 <sup>th</sup> QTR
<b>Goal 1. Identify news and provide information about the events, activities and milestone achievements of your school to share with internal and external audiences.</b>				
• Collaborate with administrators, staff, students, and parents to submit monthly news tips about events, initiatives, and accomplishments at APS				
• Submit news items to be used in <i>NewsCheck</i> , <i>News Tips</i> , or <i>APS School Talk</i> messages. Minimum requirement: 2/month				
• Contribute suggested content for APS social media pages (text, photos, videos). Minimum requirement: 2/month				
• Propose one topic each semester for possible videos – either Snapshots or Green Scenes				
• Take pictures at school events and submit them quarterly for use in all APS communications channels – e.g., APS printed materials, web, social media, and AETV. Minimum requirement: 3 times/month				
• Suggest content for AETV Bulletin Board. Minimum requirement: 1/month				
<b>Goal 2. Participate in ongoing PR Liaison training and share information with the PR Liaison Group.</b>				
• Attend quarterly online meetings for professional development and to receive updates about outreach efforts and current initiatives				
• Provide monthly update on school news to share with all PR Liaisons, in order to support and, where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
<b>Goal 3. Support teachers' understanding of PR best practices and upcoming APS opportunities to share news and classroom highlights with the broader Arlington community.</b>				
• Regularly solicit information from classroom teachers, administrators and PTA representatives about news, upcoming events, awards, etc.				
• Provide monthly updates to staff about opportunities to share school news, in order to support and where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
• Share information about APS communication channels including PR tools, templates and other supports available to assist school staff in their efforts to promote progress, achievements				

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

# Public Relations (PR) Liaison: Middle Schools, H-B Woodlawn, Career Center, Arlington Mill

**GOALS/TASKS:** School \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

**In the appropriate box, please indicate the date on which a goal was accomplished.**

GOAL/TASKS	1 <sup>st</sup> QTR	2 <sup>nd</sup> QTR	3 <sup>rd</sup> QTR	4 <sup>th</sup> QTR
<b>Goal 1. Identify news and provide information about the events, activities and milestone achievements of your school to share with internal and external audiences.</b>				
• Collaborate with administrators, staff, students, and parents to submit monthly news tips about events, initiatives, and accomplishments at APS				
• Submit news items to be used in <i>NewsCheck</i> , <i>News Tips</i> , or <i>APS School Talk</i> messages. Minimum requirement: 3/month				
• Contribute suggested content for APS social media pages (text, photos, videos). Minimum requirement: 4/month				
• Propose one topic each semester for possible videos – either Snapshots or Green Scenes				
• Take pictures at school events and submit them quarterly for use in all APS communications channels – e.g., APS printed materials, web, social media, and AETV. Minimum requirement: 5 times/month				
• Suggest content for AETV Bulletin Board. Minimum requirement: 3/month				
<b>Goal 2. Participate in ongoing PR Liaison training and share information with the PR Liaison Group.</b>				
• Attend quarterly online meetings for professional development and to receive updates about outreach efforts and current initiatives				
• Provide monthly update on school news to share with all PR Liaisons, in order to support and, where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
<b>Goal 3. Support teachers' understanding of PR best practices and upcoming APS opportunities to share news and classroom highlights with the broader Arlington community.</b>				
• Regularly solicit information from classroom teachers, administrators and PTA representatives about news, upcoming events, awards, etc.				
• Provide monthly updates to staff about opportunities to share school news, in order to support and where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
• Share information about APS communication channels including PR tools, templates and other supports available to assist school staff in their efforts to promote progress, achievements				

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

## Public Relations (PR) Liaison: High Schools

**GOALS/TASKS:** School \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

In the appropriate box, please indicate the date on which a goal was accomplished.

GOAL/TASKS	1 <sup>st</sup> QTR	2 <sup>nd</sup> QTR	3 <sup>rd</sup> QTR	4 <sup>th</sup> QTR
<b>Goal 1. Identify news and provide information about the events, activities and milestone achievements of your school to share with internal and external audiences.</b>				
• Collaborate with administrators, staff, students, and parents to submit monthly news tips about events, initiatives, and accomplishments at APS				
• Submit news items to be used in <i>NewsCheck</i> , <i>News Tips</i> , or <i>APS School Talk</i> messages. Minimum requirement: 4/month				
• Contribute suggested content for APS social media pages (text, photos, videos). Minimum requirement: 6/month				
• Propose one topic each semester for possible videos – either Snapshots or Green Scenes				
• Take pictures at school events and submit them quarterly for use in all APS communications channels – e.g., APS printed materials, web, social media, and AETV. Minimum requirement: 7 times/month				
• Suggest content for AETV Bulletin Board. Minimum requirement: 5/month				
<b>Goal 2. Participate in ongoing PR Liaison training and share information with the PR Liaison Group.</b>				
• Attend quarterly online meetings for professional development and to receive updates about outreach efforts and current initiatives				
• Provide monthly update on school news to share with all PR Liaisons, in order to support and, where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
<b>Goal 3. Support teachers' understanding of PR best practices and upcoming APS opportunities to share news and classroom highlights with the broader Arlington community.</b>				
• Regularly solicit information from classroom teachers, administrators and PTA representatives about news, upcoming events, awards, etc. High school PR liaisons should also submit content from student clubs and after-school activities.				
• Provide monthly updates to staff about opportunities to share school news, in order to support and where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				
• Share information about APS communication channels including PR tools, templates and other supports available to assist school staff in their efforts to promote progress, achievements				

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

# Public Relations (PR) Liaison GOALS/TASKS

School \_\_\_\_\_ School Year \_\_\_\_\_

In the appropriate box, please indicate the date on which a goal was accomplished.

GOAL/TASKS	1 <sup>st</sup> QTR	2 <sup>nd</sup> QTR	3 <sup>rd</sup> QTR	4 <sup>th</sup> QTR
Identify and provide information about the good news of APS to share with internal and external audiences.				
• Collaborate with administrators, staff, students, and parents to submit monthly news tips about events, initiatives, and accomplishments at APS				
• Submit at least two to three articles per month for <i>NewsCheck</i> , <i>News Tips</i> , or <i>School Talk</i> messages				
• Contribute monthly to suggested content for APS social media pages, to include text, photos, and/or videos to share with APS online community				
• Propose topic each quarter for video – either Snapshots or Green Scenes				
• Take pictures at school events and submit them quarterly for use in all APS communications collateral				
• Suggest content ideas quarterly for AETV Bulletin Board				
Attend PR Liaison training and share information with PR Liaison Group.				
• Attend quarterly online meeting for professional development, and to receive updates about outreach efforts and current initiatives				
• Provide monthly update on school news to share with all PR Liaisons, in order to support and where appropriate, share promotional materials throughout APS				

X \_\_\_\_\_  
*Principal's Signature*

X \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employee's Signature*

# Sample Tracking Form For One School Only - Henry Elementary

[illegible]



Arlington  
Public  
Schools

# Public Relations Liaison Manual



The APS Public Relations Network Manual is designed for school-based public relations liaisons who are responsible for promoting APS.

Submit your news to [apsnews@apsva.us](mailto:apsnews@apsva.us)

Online at [www.apsva.us](http://www.apsva.us) Follow us



/ArlingtonPublicSchools



@APSVirginia

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## **PR Liaison Survey Results (2014-2015)**

### **What's Working Well:**

- Lots of APS employees using social media/Twitter to communicate and collaborate
- Better variety of news in Newscheck, greater readership
- Providing iPads for PR Liaisons to use in their work
- Increased communications and reminders from School and Community Relations to keep us informed about the latest news, hashtag campaigns, etc.

### **What Could Be Improved:**

- More social media interaction between school communities, create increased awareness of activities throughout APS
- More lead time to promote events and recognition activities (i.e. Principal Appreciation)
- More guidance, feedback, and acknowledgement needed about the submissions sent for consideration in Newscheck, News Tips, etc.
- Create a web-based resource for sharing best practices and ideas with each other
- Increase the training and help us train others in our school community

### **What to Consider for Next Year:**

- Countywide Twitter chats or book studies
- Create an improved tracking system for submissions
- Centrally-located web calendar for hashtag campaigns and recognition activities
- Central resource for placing all content (articles, photos, videos, etc.)
- Refine opt-out system so it's easy to confirm who is in and who is out
- More school-based support and collaboration for school-based events
- Highlight a greater variety of programs (ESOL/HILT; Gifted; Library Services; Title 1, etc.)

**From:** [Harris, Jennifer](#)  
**To:** [Sonn, Erin](#); [Hall, Jennifer](#); [Everett, Tori](#); [Fallon, Larry](#); [Pippins, Jacqueline](#); [Shaw, Renee](#); [Decker, Beth](#); [Gorsky, Renee](#); [Uscinski, Carolyn](#); [Tippens, Blake](#); [Gray, Stevie](#); [Honeywell, Donleigh](#); [Williams, Asia](#); [Hurley, Heather](#); [Pond, Micaela](#); [White, Grace](#); [Haley, Nora](#); [Amin-Arsala, Dawn](#); [Wiggins, Rita](#); [Wieboldt, Linda](#); [Brent, James](#); [Palomo, Elizabeth](#); [Hale, Kim](#); [Waddell, Shawn](#); [Roberts, Richard](#); [Noetzli, Colleen](#); [Dyer, Shauna](#); [Holland, Trevor](#); [Schonfeld, Jeffrey](#); [Uravitch, Andrea](#); [Macdonald, Lara](#); [Grant, Kristale](#); [Legagneur, Francis](#); [Meyer, Danielle](#); [Meadows, Stephanie](#)  
**Cc:** [Bourdouane, Gladis](#); [Bellavia, Frank](#); [Smith, Dawn](#); [Erdos, Linda](#); [Patrician, Molly](#); [McLaughlin, Joshua](#); [Hale, Katharine](#); [Burgos, Julia](#); [Murphy, Pat](#); [Carpenter, Jeffrey](#); [Joyner, Darryl](#); [Farrell, Pam](#); [Johnson, Darrell](#); [Stuhldreher, John](#); [Koller, Jeremy](#)  
**Subject:** PR Liaison Weekly update for March 2 - 6, 2015  
**Date:** Monday, March 02, 2015 11:29:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [Oh the Thinks You Can Think.mp3](#)  
[#APSchats \(1\).png](#)

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PR Liaisons,

Greetings from the iceberg here in Arlington! Here are our communication updates for this week.

1. **Read Across America:** Since schools are closed today, Dr. Murphy tweeted out a message encouraging families to enjoy reading at home. You may want to retweet it, the link is [here](#). If you have [Read Across America](#) celebrations in honor of Dr. Seuss that will be rescheduled due to schools being closed, please let us know. We'd still like to send our AETV team out to capture videos. You can also continue to share your photos using **#ReadAcrossAmerica** and/or **#APSreads**. Additionally, Molly Patrician at Hoffman-Boston is trying to compile a video of APS staff dancing in their **#ReadAcrossAmerica** costumes to this edited version (see attached music file) of Oh the Thinks You Can Think from Seussical. Send her a video clip if you want to join in on the fun!
2. **Arts in the Schools Month:** March is Arts in the Schools Month, and Pam Farrell's team has a [great web page](#) where you can learn how we're promoting it. Use **#APSArtsHappy** in your social media communications so we can share the love of art throughout APS!
3. **National Social Worker Month:** March is also the month for [National Social Worker](#) recognition. Please use our hashtag **#APSSocialWorkers** to share your recognition activities on social media. If you want to take an additional step, complete our video challenge and record 60-second clip in which your social worker responds to the question "How do social workers pave the way for change in our school community?"
4. **Digital Learning Day:** Digital Learning Day is coming up on March 13. We will be doing an extensive campaign, using new social media tools that will help us broadcast our work "live" using the hashtag **#APSDL15**. If you have an innovative or interesting digital learning project that you would like us to highlight, please contact me and Darryl Joyner, or ask your ITC to reach out to us [as soon as possible](#). I will be sharing our communications plan with you later this week.
5. **Operation Rain Barrel:** If your school has begun (or even finished) painting your rain barrel as part of the annual Operation Rain Barrel program, please share your photos with us using **#APSRainBarrel**. We also would love a jpeg to be sent to our APS News email account or Dropbox.

**APS is now on Instagram!** Please give us a follow [@APSVirginia](#) and share your photos using our hashtags. We have also been experimenting with [Storify](#) and [Flipagram](#). We encourage you to check

out these tools and see if they might also be useful to you.

**Reminders:**

- **Teacher and Support Employee of the Year:** Please remember to take several photos of your teacher and support employees of the year, preferably action shots over several days as they are doing their jobs in the school. We prefer them to posed photos. When you have taken 3-5 good photos of each, please save them to our shared drive in your designed school or program folder located here → S:\public\2015 Teacher of the Year Photos and Video
- **Twitter Chat Update:** We are excited to announce our very first county-wide Twitter chat on **Tue, Mar. 3 from 8-9 PM**. This chat will occur using the hashtag #APSchats and the first topic will be on Digital Learning. Some of our very own APS teachers will be moderating the chat: Molly Patrician from Hoffman Boston, Joshua McLaughlin from Barrett, and Katharine Hale from Abingdon. Launched by APS teachers, for all teachers, we plan to discuss our successes, challenges, and collaboration efforts in relation to the APS Digital Learning Initiative! It will be an energizing, one hour discussion on Twitter with APS teachers just like you and we hope to have a great turnout! You are also invited to contribute ideas for questions using this link: [#APSchat Question Submissions](#). Never participated in a Twitter chat before? This quick “[Beginner’s Guide to Twitter Chats](#)” tutorial provides easy to follow instructions that will help you jump in and get engaged in no time! **Please join us, and spread the word to your colleagues. We have also attached an image you can use to post to your own social media channels (thank you, Joshua)!**

Jennifer Harris

Director of Communications

Arlington Public Schools – School and Community Relations

703-228-6003 (office)

571-249-0485 (mobile)

Follow us on Twitter: [@jenlynnharris](#) [@APSVirginia](#)

**From:** [Harris, Jennifer](#)  
**To:** [Sonn, Erin](#); [Hall, Jennifer](#); [Everett, Tori](#); [Fallon, Larry](#); [Pippins, Jacqueline](#); [Shaw, Renee](#); [Decker, Beth](#); [Gorsky, Renee](#); [Uscinski, Carolyn](#); [Tippens, Blake](#); [Gray, Stevie](#); [Honeywell, Donleigh](#); [Williams, Asia](#); [Hurley, Heather](#); [Pond, Micaela](#); [White, Grace](#); [Haley, Nora](#); [Amin-Arsala, Dawn](#); [Wiggins, Rita](#); [Wieboldt, Linda](#); [Brent, James](#); [Palomo, Elizabeth](#); [Hale, Kim](#); [Waddell, Shawn](#); [Roberts, Richard](#); [Noetzli, Colleen](#); [Dyer, Shauna](#); [Holland, Trevor](#); [Schonfeld, Jeffrey](#); [Uravitch, Andrea](#); [Macdonald, Lara](#); [Grant, Kristale](#); [Legagneur, Francis](#); [Meyer, Danielle](#); [Meadows, Stephanie](#)  
**Cc:** [Bellavia, Frank](#); [Erdos, Linda](#); [Bourdouane, Gladis](#); [Smith, Dawn](#); [Daniel, Sara](#)  
**Subject:** PR Liaison Update  
**Date:** Thursday, February 05, 2015 5:37:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [PR Liaison Survey Results.docx](#)

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Dear PR Liaisons,

Thanks to everyone who was able to come out to our quarterly meeting earlier this week. We appreciated the opportunity to provide an update and collaborate on ideas to move us forward. I wanted to follow up on a few areas we discussed:

1. **Your Survey Feedback.** Thanks so much for completing the survey to let us know what's working well, what can be improved, and how to plan for the program if it continues next year. We have summarized the feedback to share it back with you, and we've done this for two reasons. First, we want to make sure we accurately captured what we heard from you; and two, we want you to have it so you can help us stay accountable to making changes that will improve the program for you. We hear you, and we are already discussing how we can make improvements that make your job easier. We truly appreciate all of the hard work you are putting in and want to maintain the buy-in and positivity!
2. **Teacher & Support Employees of the Year.** Please start now in taking a variety of photos to highlight your teacher and support employees of the year. We will need these for our presentation in May. We would also like to experiment with asking you to record very short video messages (10-15 seconds each) from those who know your teacher/support employee best, about what makes them so special. Consider asking their colleagues, students, and families to share a special word. Keep in mind that if you would like to produce a longer video, that's completely fine too. You can always post it to your web page and social media sites to share. However, for the purpose of what we need for the video produced by AETV, a 10-15 second clip is the most that we would need. I have asked our AETV team to share some tips with you in advance, so you'll be able to record the best possible footage that they can use to incorporate into our videos that are presented at the event. They are listed below, and AETV is also working on a "Tech Tips" video to share with you that will demonstrate some of these tips visually to help support you. We have created a location on the shared drive (S:\public\2015 Teacher of the Year Photos and Video) with individual folders for each school, so you can begin placing those photo and video files in your folder now. We'd like to have all submissions by April 10, if possible.
  - a. Most important: always shoot in landscape view (horizontally, instead of vertically)
  - b. Keep the iPad as steady as possible. Keep it as still as possible and do not move the device around while shooting video.

- c. Give yourself 2-3 seconds at the beginning and end of recording before an individual begins speaking, to avoid clipping off audio
  - d. High-quality audio is critical to making the video footage useful, so make sure the person you are filming speaks clearly, loudly, and film as close as possible to the speaker. Make sure you're away from background noise (noisy hallways, mechanical equipment, etc.)
  - e. Don't shoot with a window in the background, it will affect the quality of your photos and videos
  - f. Be aware of the location of your microphone and camera on your iPad, and review the video to make sure it looks good right after you capture it
3. **Upcoming Campaigns.** We briefly discussed a few promotional campaigns we're planning in the weeks ahead, and wanted to give you some updated information about how you can participate! No requirement to do so, but it gives your school community a few additional ways to tweet!
- a. February is **Black History Month** (#BlackHistoryMonth) and we'll be tweeting out questions and looking for your answers out in the Twitterverse! You can also use this hashtag, plus our handle, if you want us to retweet and share your activities regarding Black History Month.
  - b. February 10 is "We Love Our Bus" day sponsored by the American School Bus Council. A major event is occurring at Tuckahoe and you can join in the fun with photos using #APSLovestheBus if you want to participate.
  - c. February 11 is **Crossing Guard Appreciation Day** (#APSSRTS) and we are partnering with Safe Routes to School to celebrate our wonderful crossing guards. Our theme is "**Cocoa for Our Crossing Guards**" and we will be encouraging families to share their favorite hot beverage with their crossing guard, and of course share their photos with us, using the hashtag. You're welcome to join us in this campaign!
  - d. February 12 – PreK Information Night; Elementary Report Cards reminder on Twitter
  - e. February 19 – Proposed FY16 Budget Announced (#APSFY16Budget)
  - f. February 20 – Summer Activities Fair (#APSSummerFair)
  - g. February 28 – Whole Child Conference (#APSWholeChild)
  - h. March is **Arts in the Schools** Month (#APSartshappy)

**2014-2015 PR Liaison Training**  
**Department of School and Community Relations**  
**Syphax Center, Room 101-103**  
**AGENDA – Tuesday, August 26, 8:30 – 11:30AM**

**8:30 Welcome & Introductions**

**8:45 Communications Overview: Roles & Responsibilities**

- SCR Department
- Communication Tools and Platforms
- PR Liaison Responsibilities

**9:15 NewsCheck & NewsTips**

- Audiences
- Content
- Submission Deadlines

**9:45 Social Media: Content and Use**

- Facebook vs. Twitter platforms
- Creating contagious content
- Information vs. Engagement

**10:15 Working with AETV**

- Production schedule
- Story outline
- Content development
- On-camera interviews
- AETV Bulletin Board

**10:45 Photography Tips**

- On the iPhone
- Behind the camera lens
- Sharing photos – policies and proper credit

**11:00 Using SharePoint**

- SharePoint Overview
- SCR PR Calendar
- Submissions for *NewsCheck*, *News Tips*, Website, AETV, Social Media

**11:30 Q&A/Wrapup**

**Quarterly Meeting Dates (Tentative):** Nov. 3 @ 3:30pm, Feb. 3 @ 3:30pm, and Apr. 28 @ 3:30pm

**PR Liaison Quarterly Training**  
**Department of School and Community Relations**  
**Education Center, Board Room**  
**AGENDA – Monday, November 3, 4:00 – 5:00PM**

**4:00 Welcome & Review of Media Opt-Out Policy and Procedures**

**4:10 Communications Update: What's Ahead**

- Recognition and Awareness Events
- New social media campaigns
- PR Liaison Responsibilities

**4:20 Writing & Storytelling Tips**

**4:30 Social Media Statistics**

- Facebook vs. Twitter platforms

**4:40 Newscheck Reminders**

**4:50 Photography Dos & Don'ts**

**5:00 Adjourn**

**Mark Your Calendar for Quarterly Meetings: Feb. 3 @ 3:30pm and Apr. 28 @ 3:30pm**


Sample Editorial Calendar/Job Assignments

Title	Author	Topic	Time	Images	Publishing Channels
Monday					
Schools Closed	Frank	Operational Announcement	5:00AM	Text	Facebook, Twitter
Motivation Monday	Dawn	Inspirational quote to begin school week	9:00AM	Photo	Facebook, Instagram
Snow Day Activities	Jen	Family Engagement	4:00PM	Link	Facebook, Instagram
Tuesday					
APS FY16 Budget	Jen	Dr. Murphy's Presentation to School Board	9:00AM	Video	Facebook, Twitter
Go GaGa for Green	Jen	Green Patriot Awards	9:00AM	Link	Twitter
Snapshots Video -- Kenmore	Dawn	Langston Hughes Poetry Celebration	4:00PM	Video	Facebook, Twitter
Read Across America	Frank	Dr. Seuss School Celebrations	4:00PM	Flipagram	Instagram
Arlington Bookshelf Photos	Frank	#ForTheLoveOfReading	7:00PM	Flipagram	Facebook, Twitter
Wednesday					
Operations Update for Conference Days	Frank	Update if Schools are Closed or Delayed	11:00AM	Link	Facebook, Twitter
Makeup Day Plan	Frank	Makeup Day Schedule if Schools Close	2:00PM	Link	Facebook, Twitter
Schools Closed or Delayed	SCR	Operational Announcement	7:00PM	Text	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
Thursday					
Snow Learning	Frank	#APSSnowDay	10:00AM	Image	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
School Board Meeting Update	Frank	Schedule Changes	12:00PM	Link	Facebook, Twitter
Follow us on Instagram	Frank	Social Media Promo	4:00PM	Text	Twitter
Schools Closed or Delayed	SCR	Operational Announcement	7:00PM	Text	Facebook, Twitter
Friday					
March is Arts in the Schools Month	Dawn	Storify #APSArtsHappy	9:00AM	Photos	Facebook, Instagram
Follow Friday	Gladis	Social Media Promo	12:00PM	Text	Twitter

Regional Science Fair	Jen	Update to Schedule (if needed)	3:00PM	Text	Facebook, Twitter
Saturday					
HR Recruitment Fair	Frank	Job openings, #APSJobs	12:00PM	Text and Link	Facebook, Twitter
Spring Forward Reminder	Dawn	Move your clock forward one hour	4:00PM	Image	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
Sunday					
Regional Science Fair	Jen	Storify #NVAScienceFair	2:00PM	Hashtag Campaign	Twitter
#APSRainBarrel	Jen	Green School Activity	10:30AM	Photos	Twitter (RT)

**Annie Frye**  
@APSHenryPAL

Patrick Henry Principals Raise the Roof!!  
150,331 minutes read!! @APSVirginia  
[@APSHenryAP](#) [@SuptPKM](#)  
[@jenlynnharris](#)



RETWEETS 3 FAVORITES 4

11:28 AM - 20 Nov 2014

Reply to [@APSHenryPAL](#), [@APSHenryAP](#), [@SuptPKM](#), [@jenlynnharris](#)

### Trends

#TLCof2015	#GOLDay	Fri Day	#AsheHamas	#GOPVantsWar	Friday the 13th	Darren McDadden
#SXSW	Kylie	Kenny Stills				

The image shows a computer screen displaying a web browser window with a Twitter page. The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://twitter.com/APSDrew/status/552927995166744578". The Twitter interface includes a top navigation bar with icons for Home, Messages, Discover, and Search. The main content area features a tweet from "Drew Model School @APSDrew". The tweet text reads: "A principal never sleeps.... #APrincipalsDay @APSDrew @APSVirginia". Below the text is a photograph of a man in a grey suit (the principal) lying on his side on a red mat, appearing to be asleep. Next to him, a young boy in a striped shirt is also lying down, seemingly asleep. To the right of the photo are statistics: 36 Retweets and 61 Favorites. At the bottom of the tweet is a reply box with the placeholder text "Reply to @APSDrew". The Windows taskbar at the very bottom shows various application icons, including Internet Explorer, Firefox, and several instances of Google Chrome.

Tracker for @APSVirginia

All Time



Arlington Schools  
@APSVirginia

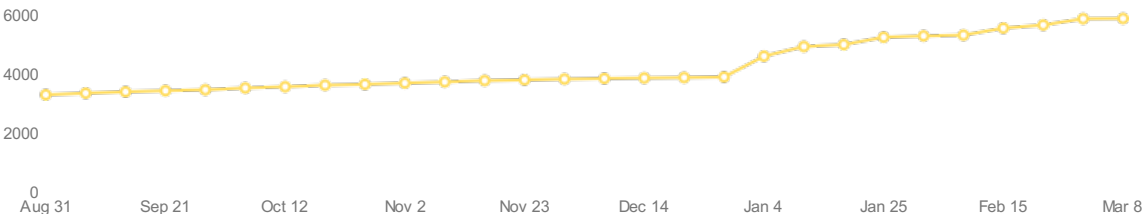
TWEETS  
1.9k (9.75%)  
IMPRESSIONS  
8.2M (42.97%)

RETWEETS  
2.7k  
RT RATE  
1.44

AMP. IMPRESSIONS  
10.7M  
AMP. MULTIPLIER  
1.30x

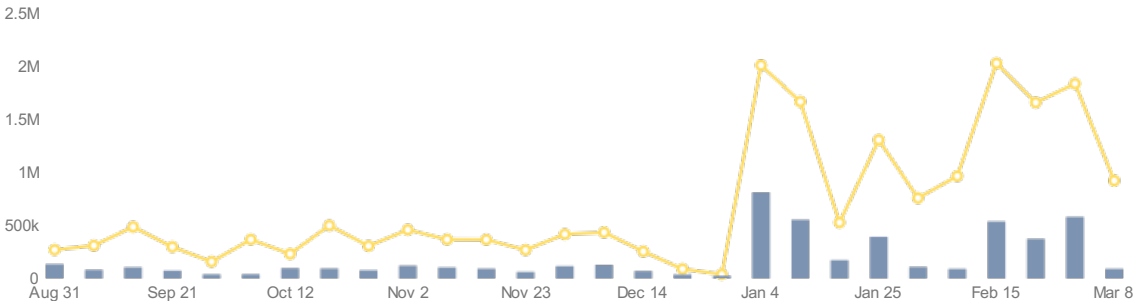
5.9k

FOLLOWERS



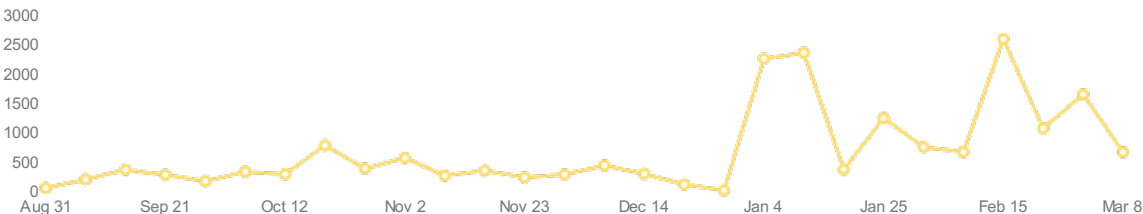
2.1M

REACH



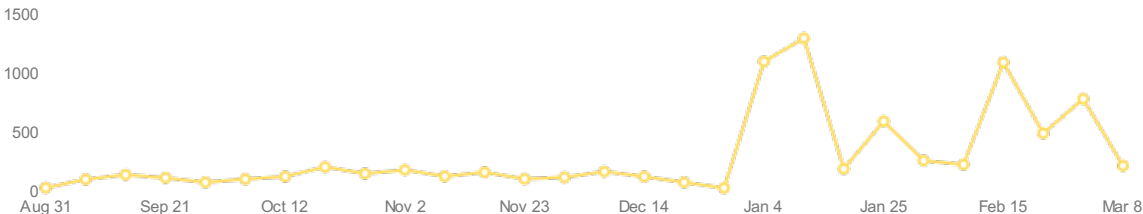
19.2M

EXPOSURE



19.3k

TWEETS



4k

CONTRIBUTORS

TWEETS



MENTIONS

18.4k

AVG TWEETS/WEEK

688

AVG TWEETS/CONTRIBUTOR

4.8

TOP HASHTAGS

	TWEETS	IMPRESSIONS
#KWBpride	770 4.0%	719.1k 3.8%
#MSMS	617 3.2%	590.2k 3.1%
#APSiSAwesome	463 2.4%	574.9k 3.0%
#APrincipalsDay	87 0.5%	514.6k 2.7%
#HFBtweets	281 1.5%	413.4k 2.2%

TOP URLS

	TWEETS	IMPRESSIONS
www.myfoxdc.com/...	92 0.5%	492.5k 2.6%
www.facebook.com...	210 1.1%	192.5k 1.0%
apsva.us/emergency	129 0.7%	186.1k 1.0%
www.apsva.us	135 0.7%	101.4k 0.5%
www.apsva.us/Pag...	39 0.2%	99.8k 0.5%

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

	IMPRESSIONS
APSVirginia	8,240,411
ABC7News	981,874
fox5newsdc	645,865
ilovearlingtonv	573,949
SuptPKM	492,578