

# WELCOME TO



**Mantua Elementary School**  
**9107 Horner Court**  
**Fairfax, VA 22031**

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**Main Office Phone: 703-645-6300**  
**Attendance Line: 703-645-6363**

Clinic Phone: 703-645-6310  
Cafeteria Phone: 703-645-6321  
Fax: 703-645-6397  
School website: [www.fcps.edu/MantuaES](http://www.fcps.edu/MantuaES)  
PTA website: [www.MantuaPTA.org](http://www.MantuaPTA.org)

Principal, Mantua ES: Jan-Marie Fernandez ([JanMarie.Fernandez@fcps.edu](mailto:JanMarie.Fernandez@fcps.edu))  
Asst. Principal: Cheryl Thompson ([Cheryl.Thompson@fcps.edu](mailto:Cheryl.Thompson@fcps.edu))  
Total Communication Program Asst. Principal: Tina Tingler ([TinaMarie.Tingler@fcps.edu](mailto:TinaMarie.Tingler@fcps.edu))

***Included in this Welcome Packet:***

1. Welcome to Mantua ES/ Information on the PTA and how to join
2. PTA Sponsor Program for New Families / Volunteer Opportunities
3. FAQs for K-2 families/ FAQs for 3-6 families
4. Where to find more Information Resources
5. Mantua ES 2011-12 Calendar
6. New Family Meet & Greet Invitation

## **Welcome to Mantua Elementary School!**

As Mantua parents, we all have the same goal -- to ensure our children have positive and rewarding elementary school years. Joining the PTA is a great way to enhance your family's experience at Mantua. The Mantua PTA is a dynamic organization. We work to keep you informed, host fun events, sponsor enrichment programs, provide outreach to children and parents, and support our terrific school staff and teachers. If you have any questions about programs or events, please ask us--we are here to help. Our PTA has been very blessed to have parents who are engaged and involved, and we invite you to join in. It's a great way to find out more about how Mantua works, to meet your child's friends, and to make some new ones of your own!

# It's Easy to Join the PTA

## **What the PTA does for the school**

The PTA sponsors and/or organizes the basketball program for grades 3-6, Fall Book Fair, Spring Carnival, Drama Club, before- and after-school foreign/sign language and science programs, the volunteer program, teacher appreciation events, the weekly Alert News and much more.

## **Get a school directory**

By joining the PTA, you receive the school directory! This valuable resource of family, teacher and staff phone numbers, e-mail addresses and more is distributed free to all PTA members.

## **How do I join?**

You will receive a flyer in your "first day" folder with instructions. Also, at the beginning of each school year, the PTA has sign-up tables at the Open House before school starts and Back-to-School night in the first month of school. You can also sign up online at the PTA website at [www.MantuaPTA.org](http://www.MantuaPTA.org). For more information, contact Shannon Murphy, PTA Membership Chair, at [shannon.murphy29@verizon.net](mailto:shannon.murphy29@verizon.net) or Liz Schatzman at [lschatzman@cox.net](mailto:lschatzman@cox.net)

The number one reason to join the **Parent Teacher Association** is to benefit your child.

In doing so, you also help your school. But there are many more PTA advantages:

- **Get Connected.** There's no better way to know what's happening in your school.
- **Discover Great Resources.** The PTA offers a variety of programs designed for parents as well as students.
- **Tap into a Network.** PTA functions are opportunities to meet other parents and teachers, building rapport and discussing issues that are on your mind. You can share ideas, concerns, and experiences.

# Got Questions? Get a Sponsor!

The PTA Sponsor program helps new Mantua ES parents with transition

Many parents at Mantua remember what it's like to have a new kindergartner or a transfer student. That's why we've created the Sponsor program ... to help ease the transition to a new school.

Your sponsor can answer questions via e-mail, phone, in person however the two of you decide. Some of the many answers a Sponsor can provide are to questions like these:

*Help! How does the Kiss and Ride work? What happens if my child forgets his lunch? How can I volunteer at the school other than during the weekday? Which principal handles what? What sport programs are available for a kindergartner?*

Sponsors are friendly, patient, knowledgeable, and they really want to help new families find their way at Mantua. We have sponsors that speak languages other than English, as well. Best of all, it's easy to get one!

**If you're new to Mantua ES and have a question or would like a sponsor, e-mail New Family Welcome Coordinator [monica.cameron@cox.net](mailto:monica.cameron@cox.net) or call 703-359-4298.**

## Volunteer Opportunities

Our volunteers make Mantua Elementary a very special school and all of our children benefit from any amount of time that you can give.

Volunteering gives you the chance to know your children's school, teachers, community and other parents better – AND kids love seeing their parents participate at their school!

There are many opportunities to volunteer at Mantua. If you would like information about any of them, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator:

**Direct Classroom Involvement:** Room Parent, Party Coordinators, Spring Carnival Booth Coordinator (March), Carnival Basket Coordinator (March), Teacher Appreciation Luncheon Class Coverage (May), Field Day Helper (June), Art Room Assistance and/or Computer Lab Assistance (with class 1x every other week), and Take Home Reading Parent for grades K-2.

**School-Wide Volunteers:** Book Fair (November), Cafeteria Assistance (Sept/Oct during lunch periods), Clinic Aide, Health Screening Aide (half day in Oct/Nov), Library Assistance, Office Assistance (Clerical or Receptionist 2-3 times per year), Secretaries Day Coverage (April), School Spirit and Hospitality Committees (family fun nights, ice cream socials, teacher luncheon, etc), and Spring Carnival Planning Committee. To find out more about volunteering, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Teresa Willebeek-Lemair at [teresalemair@aol.com](mailto:teresalemair@aol.com) or 703-560-9205.

# FAQs for Mantua K-2 Grade Parents

## **I keep hearing about “families” of classes. What does that mean?**

From kindergarten through second grade, students are placed into one of three Families – Family 1, Family 2 or Family 3. Each family has one or two classes each of kindergartners, first-graders and second-graders. Most students stay in the same family for kindergarten through second grade. All three families are supported by Mantua’s specialists (Reading, Learning Disabilities, ESOL, Technology and Total Communications).

The teachers within each family work together. Students sometimes have different teachers within his or her family. For example, your first-grader may be very strong at subtraction. For that subject, she might be in a classroom with mostly second-graders in her family. Likewise, if she needs extra help learning to tell time, she’ll be grouped with children with similar needs in the same subject, perhaps more first-graders and kindergartner from her family. This is called “flexible grouping.” Still, most of your child’s day will be spent with her primary classroom teacher. In addition to enabling the teachers to meet a wider range of student needs, the families also provide a comforting “small-school feel” to younger students.

## **What is an SOL?**

The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) are state-mandated standardized tests taken every year starting in third grade. They are taken in May and June. For more information, visit <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml>.

**What is a Tuesday Folder?** A Tuesday Folder (TF) is your child’s personal “mail pouch” for things that need to go to and from home for examples notes/ flyers distributed by the teacher/school like homework, permission slips, money for class activities, flyers for PTA and club activities, etc. The TF will be sent home each Tuesday and should be signed by the parent and returned to class the next day.

**How does my Kindergartener get to the right classroom from off the bus? How does my Kindergartener get on the right bus after school is dismissed?** Kindergarteners are assigned “School Patrols which are 6<sup>th</sup> graders that are responsible to get them on and off their school bus and to the correct class. Patrols voluntarily accept this responsibility to help the younger students. Patrols are given the bus and class information for each of their children. Faculty are also involved in the process to ensure all children are cared for and delivered safely to their buses and classrooms. The School Patrol position is a coveted position of responsibility for 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

## **What is Back To School Night (BTSN)?**

BTSN is within the first two weeks of school beginning in September. It is a parent/guardian only activity to hear a formal presentation from the Principal about Mantua ES and then be dismissed to visit your child’s classroom where your child’s teacher will present the class format and curriculum and answer questions. There will be two timed 30 minute sessions during the evening so if you have more than one child you will be able to attend two different classrooms. You’ll also have an opportunity to learn more about school clubs, PTA membership, fundraising activities and Scouting registration.

# FAQs for Mantua 3-6 Grade Parents

## **Do students in grades 3-6 have “families” at the school?**

No, students are not divided into families after second grade.

## **What is the “Blackboard 24-7” online tool?**

Fairfax County Public Schools has extended learning beyond the traditional school day and beyond school facilities by using a tool called FCPS 24-7 Learning, commonly known as "Blackboard". Beginning in 3rd grade, students, parents, and teachers are invited to use FCPS 24-7 Learning to access homework and classroom assignments, view class calendars, explore links to enrichment activities, and much more. Visit <http://fcps.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp> for more information.

## **What is an SOL?**

The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) are state-mandated standardized tests taken every year starting in third grade. They are taken in May and June. For more information, visit <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Superintendent/Sols/home.shtml>.

## **I’ve heard Mantua has an extensive music program for older students.**

Starting in third grade, all students learn to play the recorder. In the fourth grade, students may elect to also play a string instrument once a week in the orchestra or join the chorus. In fifth grade, students may elect to play a band or orchestra instrument, and may join the chorus as an extra-curricular activity. Every student takes general music education classes, whether or not they choose to participate in orchestra, band or chorus. Information from the music teachers will come home with your student.

## **What is Colonial Day and Ancient Cultures Day, etc.?**

You’ll find that students in grades 3-6 study a specific subject throughout the year, such as Colonial Virginia, ancient cultures, etc. These themes culminate in a special day when the students dress up in period clothing and participate in related activities, often assisted by parent volunteers.

## **What is the AA (Advanced Academics) Program?**

Mantua has a full-time Advanced Academics (formerly called Gifted and Talented or GT) Center. Students are tested in the fall of second grade for possible placement in the AA Center for grades 3-6. For more information about AA, please contact Kathy Phillips at [kathyphysics@hotmail.com](mailto:kathyphysics@hotmail.com) and see the Fairfax County Public Schools website, <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt/index.html>.

## **What’s the basketball program?**

Students in grades 3-6 are invited to play in the Mantua PTA Basketball League. Students are divided into boys’ and girls’ leagues. Grades 3 and 4 play together using an 8-foot goal and grades 5 and 6 play together using a standard 10-foot goal. The league is coached by Mantua parents/guardians and is designed for the kids to have fun while learning basketball fundamentals.

## **Where to Find More Information Resources**

### **The Alert News**

The Alert News is the Mantua PTA weekly email newsletter. It is sent out in HTML format with important school updates, activity and event information, and comes complete with links to documents (such as registration forms for clubs) hosted on the PTA website. A paper copy is provided to families without access to email. E-mail [info@mantuapta.org](mailto:info@mantuapta.org) to get on the distribution list.

### **Mantua School and PTA Web Sites**

Mantua PTA web site: [www.mantuapta.org](http://www.mantuapta.org)

Mantua Elementary School web site: [www.fcps.edu/MantuaES](http://www.fcps.edu/MantuaES)

Fairfax County Public Schools web site: [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) Parents are encouraged to sign up to receive FCPS-wide bulletins via Keep In Touch (KIT) mass notification system. This is especially helpful during inclement weather and local/national emergency situations.

*Translations are now available on the PTA website at [www.MantuaPTA.org](http://www.MantuaPTA.org)! Click Google translation button on the right side and follow instructions. Under the "Parent Resources" tab, there are also links to Fairfax County Public Schools-translated documents.*

### **The Student Directory**

When you join the PTA, you receive a FREE copy of the Student Directory, a 60-page phone and address book that will help you find your child's friends, as well as contact information for teachers, staff, PTA officers and chairs, and much more. If you've paid your PTA dues and have not received a directory, please contact PTA Membership Chair Shannon Murphy at [shannon.murphy29@verizon.net](mailto:shannon.murphy29@verizon.net). Additionally, most classrooms have a class roster, generated by a parent volunteer or the teacher. Be sure to ask for one!

### **The Sponsor Program**

Dozens of Mantua parents remember what it's like to have a transfer student or a new kindergartner, and that's why we set up the Sponsor Program for new families. If you'd like to be paired with a friendly, knowledgeable parent to call or e-mail with your questions, please contact [monica.cameron@cox.net](mailto:monica.cameron@cox.net) We also have foreign language speaking Sponsors.

### **FCPS Red Apple 21**

For cable TV subscribers, channel 21 offers information about Fairfax County Public Schools.

### **The Mantua PTA Parent Handbook**

The Mantua PTA Parent Handbook is on the PTA web site under the "Parent Resources" tab. The Handbook answers many questions about Mantua Elementary School and the many PTA programs offered. Additionally, you will receive an FCPS handbook from Fairfax County Public Schools in the fall via your child's Tuesday folder.

# Mantua Elementary School 2011-2012 Calendar

## (Based on FCPS calendar)

August TBD – Open House – Students and families find teacher assignments in gym, visit new classrooms and can bring in school supplies.

Sept. 6 (Tues) First Day of School

Sept. TBD Back-to-School Night (This is a parents/guardians only event.)

Oct. TBD Custodian Appreciation Week

Oct. 10 Columbus Day holiday

Nov. TBD Book Fair (held in library/ proceeds benefit library)

Nov. 7-8 Student holidays

Nov. 23 Students released two hours early

Nov. 25-26 Thanksgiving holiday

Dec.23-Jan.2 Winter Break

Jan. 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday holiday

Jan. 30-Jan. 31 Student holiday

Feb. 20 George Washington Birthday/President's Day holiday

Mid March Literacy Night/Heritage Night

Late March Spring Carnival

April 4 Student holiday

April TBD Secretary/Administration Appreciation Week


April 2-6 Spring Break

April 9 Student Holiday

May 2-6 Teacher Appreciation Week

May 28 Memorial Day holiday

June 19 Last Day of School



**Welcome New Families  
Meet & Greet  
at Mantua ES Playground**

**Mantua PTA New Family Welcome Committee invites you and your family to play and meet other families at Mantua ES Playground. It's a great way to ease the transition into school if your child knows familiar faces. Please bring cold drinks for your family.**

**Play Dates are scheduled:**

**Saturday, July 16 at 10am-11:30am**

**Saturday, August 20 at 10am-11:30am**

**Saturday, Sep 3 at 10-11:30am**

**Contact Monica Cameron if you'd like more info about how to get a sponsor family or any other information needs about Mantua ES.**