In this issue:
- Director Reflection
- Class of 2020
- Student Summer Work
- Being A Writer

Director Reflection—Community Togetherness

The first quarterly Curriculum & Instruction newsletter published on November 1, 2019 welcomed our new staff, highlighted new and exciting curricular resources, opportunities and learning spaces. At that time, no one could have imagined we would end the 2019-20 school year the way we have. When we moved to distance learning in March, the true Spotswood spirit began to shine as we—students, parents, teachers, support staff, administration—came together to do our best as we ventured into unknown territory, transitioned to new ways of teaching and learning, pooled resources, and provided academic and emotional support. This time has been challenging for everyone and many might characterize the past few months as a negative time filled with anxiety, uncertainty, and angst. While that characterization is on point, this time has also included many positives as we worked together, demonstrating patience, compassion, understanding, flexibility, and grit. For all this, I say “Thank you!” As we begin to envision a return to “normal,” we recognize there will continue to be challenges, change and uncertainty. However, our community has shown that together, we can provide meaningful learning and life experiences that will prepare our students for future success.

I send my sincere wishes to your family for a wonderful summer!

Mrs. Pewitt

Student Summer Work

After much thought, the district has made the decision to eliminate required summer work this summer for all students except those enrolled in Advanced Placement courses at the high school. This decision was made to provide students and families more time to relax and connect away from electronic devices knowing that this has been your reality for the past few months. We also recognize that gaps in learning may exist due to our transition to remote learning, and we want to be sensitive to this possibility and not contribute to any anxiety students may be experiencing due to those gaps. We do, however, hope you still make this summer a time of learning. We know that not all meaningful learning takes place in a school building or from a textbook. Learning opportunities are everywhere!! Perhaps you pick up a new hobby, learn a new skill, read for pleasure, travel to new places, volunteer to help someone else. Whatever you do, look for opportunities to expand your knowledge!

Being A Writer

We are excited to add a new component to our elementary ELA curriculum beginning in the Fall. Being A Writer combines a writing process approach with guided instruction that ensures that students learn the important elements of writing in various genres at their grade level. The program includes mini-lessons to introduce grammar, mechanics, and conventions as needed during the writing process. Mentor texts are used for each genre, and students have many opportunities to confer with classmates and the teacher as they develop pieces of writing. Schoenly and Appleby teachers are currently participating in professional development to become familiar with the prescriptive features of the program. Through this professional development, teachers will learn how to effectively implement Being A Writer so that student growth in this area is maximized.