



NORTHERN EXPOSURE

The Newsletter of Village Academy North, Inc.

Politics is certainly in the news today - health care, jobs, "cap and trade", etc. You don't read so much about pre-K education. There has not been a raise in school readiness student payment rates in 10 years. VPK

doesn't have enough money this year, and is not yet funded for next year. We are going to ask our JPK and VPK parents to get involved and help us lobby for adequate pre-K education funding in Florida.

VILLAGE
ACADEMY NORTH

SANTA CLAUS IS
IMPORTANT

LOBBY FOR VPK
FUNDS

CLOSED FEB 15

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H1N1 NEWS

The Health Department is still doing free H1N1 shots. I dropped in at 1 in the afternoon just before Christmas and I was in and out in 5 minutes. We aren't finished with this yet - so please get your shot!

CHILDREN & FANTASY

Would you think that believing in imaginary characters such as Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy at a preschool age is healthy - and even necessary?

There was a fascinating article in the Wall St Journal entitled "The Power of Magical Thinking". The article stated that imagination is an important indicator of cognitive development.

Children with an active imagination - believing in Santa or having an imaginary playmate - learn the ability to take someone else's perspective, and develop a better ability to contemplate

reality. (The article also states autistic children don't engage in much imaginary play.)

The scientists interviewed think it is "important but not necessary" for parents to encourage fantasy play. If uncomfortable with a belief in fictitious characters, parents can encourage dress-up play or reading fiction.

LOBBY YOUR LEGISLATURE

This note is primarily for our VPK and JPK parents.

We attended a conference last week where we were informed that VPK for the remainder of this year is short of funds and will require a supplemental appropriation. This situation is even more dire for next year.

A brief primer is in order. Voluntary Pre-K education for 4 year olds is guaranteed by the constitution of the State of Florida and must be funded. To be sure, it is not well-funded; Florida is 2nd in

the nation in providing access to Pre-K education, but only 36th in funding that education.

Last year, although we had a contract with the state, our funding was cut twice because the program was under-funded by the legislature.

For comparison, New Jersey spends \$10,989 per child, Georgia spends \$4,249, and Florida spends \$2,500. You can find an excellent study of the state of Pre-K at http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_report_detail.aspx?id=50880&category=92

We are working with the Florida Association of Child Care Management to lobby the legislature. In addition, we are going to prepare some suggested letters for you to send to your state senator and representative urging them to fully fund VPK both this year and next. We will have those ready for you by the first of next week. Please help your children on this vitally important issue.

CLOSED ON FEB 15

Per our contract with you, we are closed on President's Day, February 15th. This is a staff training day for us, not a holiday, as we conduct 6-8 hours of in-service training to comply with the requirements of DCF and our accreditation agency.

	FEB 2	FEB 3	FEB 12	FEB 15
DATES TO REMEMBER	Science Enrichment Class Show 12:30	Art Enrichment Class Show 12:30	St Johns County Schools Closed (Village North Open)	Village North Closed (President's Day)

DON'T ASK STAFF TO BABYSIT OR TRANSPORT CHILDREN

Parents, we know that finding a good, trusted babysitter can be very challenging. We also know that some of you have engaged members of our staff to sit for you, and in some cases actually take your children home from North at the end of the day. Our insurer has informed us that both practices must be forbidden due to liability issues.

Please, do not arrange babysitting with our staff while on Village Academy North property. Our staff will risk termination if they agree to such requests while they are at work. Also, under no circumstances will a staff member of Village Academy North be allowed to leave this facility with an enrolled child that is not their own. We appreciate your support of these policies - it is very hard to get insurance for a child care facility these days and we can't afford to lose it.

LATE PAYMENTS

Tuition is due and payable on Monday morning. Late fees are assessed on Tuesday. Please pay on time since, like you, we also have expenses that we must meet. Many centers require payment in advance of the school week, or even monthly payment. We don't want to resort to such practices.

TYLENOL RECALL

54 million packages of Johnson & Johnson medications are the subject of a voluntary recall. The recall includes some packages of Children's Tylenol and Children's Motrin, as well as 10 other drugs. For more information, call McNeil Consumer Healthcare at (888) 222-6036 or visit the website at www.mcneilproductrecall.com.

ADMIN NOTES

Potty-trained or not, we really need your child to have a change of clothes here...There is no VPK on Feb 12 or Feb 15...Can you donate any used clothing for ages 1-4? We can use some spare clothes to deal with accidents...Please read to your child - every night...Sometimes, even in cold weather, children take off their jackets when we are playing outside. We are going to have to force them to wear their jackets, even if they don't want to.