



## Principal's Message

Families,

Week 2 is flying by, and we continue to love our time with your kids! This is our first official monthly parent newsletter (last week's short newsletter was a bonus!). Look for this via email and Thursday Folders during the first Thursday of every month.



We have so many great things happening at school, but our main topic is the kick-off of the Positivity Project, which officially begins on Monday. The Positivity Project is an approach used in elementary and middle schools nationwide to teach character strengths to all students. Using the tenets of positive psychology, the project endeavors to combat the rising trend of narcissism in the world and raise the level of empathy. All Coates teachers will be using dedicated class meeting times each week to teach and model 24 character strengths over the course of the year. Strengths include fairness, forgiveness, humility, perspective, love of learning, humor, honesty, and judgment. Each week, all classes in K-6<sup>th</sup> grades will focus on the same strength (the instruction and examples, of course, will be developmentally appropriate for the age of the students). You can stay up to date on our weekly character strengths by visiting Coates Facebook & Twitter each week. Please help us promote character at home!

We begin next week by learning about the "Other People Matter Mindset," which is all about empathy. This will set us up for teaching the 24 strengths throughout the year.

At Coates, we're proud of our academic achievements and the high expectations we have of our students. Rigorous curricula and tough standards will not be compromised by the Positivity Project's enhanced focus on character. To the contrary, I think it will make our school an even better place for kids to feel good about themselves and others so that they can do a better job of learning.

We appreciate the parents who came to last night's PTA meeting to learn more about the Positivity Project. For those who missed it and are still interested, we are offering the same presentation again during the day on Thursday, Sept. 13 from 9:30-10:00 at school. Join us!

In other news, our biggest family event is coming very soon, and we need your help and/or attendance to make it a success. See the PTA Message below regarding our annual Fall Festival on October 6.

Have an amazing month!

*Jesse Kraft, Proud Principal*

*The Stars Parent Newsletter will be sent home on the first Thursday of each month. It will be sent in your child's Thursday Folder. An electronic version will be uploaded to the Coates Facebook page and website. Please read for important information.*

**Contact Coates:**

Front Office: (703) 713-3000  
Attendance: (703) 713-3030

Jesse Kraft, Principal  
jkraft@fcps.edu

Jessica Shroyer, Ass't Principal  
jashroyer@fcps.edu

Brittany Vigil, Ass't Principal  
bavigil@fcps.edu

# PTA News

Thanks to the parents who came out last night for our first PTA meeting! It was a great success, and we're excited about the year ahead. We hope to have every parent involved and included in the many great family events we have planned for this year! For now, our two most important points are...

1. Join PTA! Coates PTA won the award for largest increase in membership of any elementary school of our size last year from the Virginia PTA! Let's keep this trend going! Our members include parents, grandparents, volunteers, and teachers. Please join by completing the membership form and including your membership fee. Even if you cannot volunteer to support any events, your membership still signifies moral and financial support for our school!
2. We need volunteers for our annual Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 6! Look for a flyer in upcoming Thursday Folders with a link to our SignUp Genius page. Any help selling food, running games, handling ticket sales, etc. would be appreciated! This is our biggest event and it's fun for the whole family!

What does PTA do for the school? We help in many ways. In recent years, we raised money to increase the amount of student laptops at school, we've subsidized the costs of field trips, provided special assemblies (performances) to students, purchased resources for teachers, coordinated after school programs, and funded several free family events for you including Movie Nights, the annual Spelling Bee, and more.

Please let us know if you have any questions, ideas or want to help out this year!

Tisha Bowman, PTA President— [coatesptapresident@gmail.com](mailto:coatesptapresident@gmail.com)

Malini Madras, PTA Treasurer— [coatesptatreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:coatesptatreasurer@gmail.com)

Rodrigo Gesswein, PTA Secretary— [coatespta@gmail.com](mailto:coatespta@gmail.com)

## 10 Years of Coates!

It's been ten years since Lufie Lewis Coates Elementary School opened its doors! We need to celebrate and commemorate our history! In the coming weeks, look for opportunities to give input and ideas into ways make our anniversary amazing. We aim to hold a celebratory event this spring. Stay tuned!



### PTA Sponsored After School Clubs

Go to [www.6crickets.com](http://www.6crickets.com) and enter "Coates" into the My School box. Sign up today for coding, chess club, basketball, robotics, and more!

## Mark Your Calendar

### September 2018

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4	5 PTA Meeting @ 6:30	6	7
10 Focus on Other People	11	12	13 Parent Presentation: The Positivity Project @ 9:30	14
17 Focus on Curiosity	18	19 Students Dismiss @ 1:00	20	21
24 Focus on Teamwork	25	26	27 Fall Picture Day	28

### Looking Ahead In October

- Oct. 4—Interim Grade Reports go home
- Oct. 6—PTA Fall Festival 10:00-2:00
- Oct. 8—Columbus Day / Student Holiday
- Oct. 9—AAP Parent Info Night 6:30-7:30pm
- Oct. 18—Family Science Night

## Other News

### Did You Know?

All 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders have daily access to a laptop during the school day! We achieved this 1:1 ratio last year through PTA fundraising, local church and business partner donations, and Title I funds. The final phases of our technology goal are realizing a 1:1 in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and gradually replacing outdated SMART projectors in our classrooms. If your business, church, or community organizations would like to support our fundraising, please contact Mrs. Peckham in the office at [fpeckham@fcps.edu](mailto:fpeckham@fcps.edu)



### Family Life Education

This week in your child's Thursday folder you will see opt out forms for Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Family Life Education (FLE) program for all students. If you wish to opt your child out of all or part of FLE for this school year please complete the form and return to school by Friday, September 14, 2018. Detailed grade-level program descriptions are available online at on the fcps website. The human growth and development unit for grades 4-6 will occur the week of December 17-21.

We will also be holding a parent preview night of all materials in November. More details will be coming. We look forward to working as your partner in providing information that will help your child make healthy choices related to the exciting changes and new challenges he/she will be facing in the next few years.

### Parent Handbook

If you're ever curious about rules or procedures at Coates (e.g., sending in birthday treats, student dress codes, volunteering at school, etc.), simply call the office or check our Parent Handbook. Hard copies were sent home on the first day of school, and the online version is on the Coates website at <https://coateses.fcps.edu/parent-resources>

### FCPS Calendar

Please take a look at the calendar for the entire school year. It includes early dismissal days and teacher workdays (student holidays) at times that are different from the past. Early dismissals at Coates occur at 1:00. Take a look and plan accordingly: <https://www.fcps.edu/index.php/calendars/2018-2019-fcps-standard-school-year-calendar>

### Ways to Stay Connected

Here are the best ways to stay connected to school:

The Best Way— Your child's teacher sends a weekly email or text (through the Remind app) that highlights the learning that week. Ask your teacher to include you if you're not already on it.

Social Media— Visit Coates Facebook & Twitter regularly, especially if you love pictures of happy kids learning. Our best way to highlight the Positivity Project and other events is through our social media.

Coates Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/coateselementary/>  
Coates Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CoatesES>



Subscribe to News You Choose so that you can receive important emails that Coates sends out to all parents: [https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAEDUFCPS/subscriber/new?qs=VAEDUFCPS\\_1](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAEDUFCPS/subscriber/new?qs=VAEDUFCPS_1)

General Info about Coates

Check out the Coates website, especially the "About" page: <https://coateses.fcps.edu/>

Call the school office at (703) 713-3000. Unlike many businesses, we actually answer the phones!