

Jackson River Governor's School

# Experience JRGS!

Serving the Alleghany County, Bath County, Botetourt County, Buena Vista City, Covington City, and Rockbridge County School Divisions

- 9/18 JRGS Breakfast
- 10/8 Midterms
- 10/23 Mole Day
- 11/8 JRGS Board meeting, 6:00 PM
- 11/19-23 Thanksgiving Break
- 12/7 Last day of classes
- 12/11-14 Exams
- 12/17-1/4 Winter Break

## Director's Corner

I am so excited to be working with the twenty-one students attending JRGS. It is a wonderful opportunity, a great challenge, and a huge responsibility. I have been entrusted with the academic futures of the best and the brightest in this area. I do not take this duty lightly.

My three top priorities for the coming year are:

1. To provide the best possible academic experience for the students.
2. To establish enduring relationships among all members of the JRGS academic community.
3. To present unique learning opportunities to all students to enable them to broaden their knowledge of mathematics, science, and technology.

Most students are taking the junior-level curriculum, which includes Advanced Chemistry, Precalculus, Statistics, and Research. The senior-level

curriculum includes Physics and Calculus. In addition, some advanced students are taking a software design course and will take an advanced mathematics course during the spring semester. Most students will be presenting their research at the JRGS Science Fair on February 23, 2008.

I encourage you to read about the Friends of Virginia's Governor's Schools for a volunteer opportunity.

Please feel free to contact me with ideas, needs, or concerns (Call 540- 863-2841 or email [jdrewry@dslcc.edu](mailto:jdrewry@dslcc.edu)) . My door is always open!

Julie Drewry



We're on the web!  
[jrgs.dslcc.edu](http://jrgs.dslcc.edu)

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## Exploring Greece

**Euclid, Pythagoras, and Archimedes...** What do they all have in common? They were famous Greeks who made extraordinary contributions to the world of mathematics and science.

JRGS students have the opportunity to visit Greece in June 2007. After an overnight flight to Athens, students will spend

2 days touring Athens, visiting the Plaka, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and the Acropolis. The following day, the students will tour the ancient city of Delphi. A four day cruise of Mykonos, Kusadasi, Patmos, Rhodes, Heraklion, and Santorini will provide a unique opportunity to see many of the Greek islands. The last three

days will be spent touring Epidaurus, Mycenae, Argolida, Pilos, and Olympia.

For many of the students, this will be their first trip out of the country. It will be a grand way to see the country that provided science with some of its greatest findings. They are looking forward to this great adventure!

## JRGS Student IEPs



From left: Rebecca Gates, Buena Vista School Superintendent; Dr. Julie Drewry, JRGS director; Karl Christensen, student at Parry McCluer High School; DSLCC President Dr. Richard Teaff; Dr. Keith Christensen, JRGS Chemistry instructor; and Dr. Steve Baldridge, member of the Buena Vista School Board.

IEP, or Individualized Education Plan, is a term generally associated with Special Education. Students at JRGS are “special” in that they are considered “gifted.” In the past, students who are identified as gifted learners have been bombarded with more information, often by way of more homework. Instead, gifted learners need to be provided with more depth and breadth of understanding within a particular concept.

As gifted learners, JRGS students are best suited to being taught using techniques that

have been developed over the years for gifted learners, including differentiation of instruction, compacting the curriculum, learning contracts, alternate study strategies, and cooperative learning.

In addition to their academic needs being met, students’ affective needs must be met. The students at JRGS are typically more mature than the average high school student, but they have the same range of emotional issues and needs.

All new JRGS students have

had an opportunity to evaluate their personal learning styles. They have written about their present level of performance in mathematics and science. Finally, they have developed goals for the year. Student goals will be evaluated regularly throughout the year to see if the goals are adequate and if the students are making progress toward achieving their goals.

To take a learning profile inventory, visit <http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>.

## What’s going on at JRGS?

## Tutoring Initiative

One of the best ways to master a concept is to teach it. Students at JRGS have the opportunity to tutor students at their former middle schools and their home schools.

This is a win-win situation for all involved. Students at JRGS are able to provide a service to their communities. In addition, they will strengthen their

mathematical background. Students obtaining the tutoring services will have one-on-one help from students who are closer to their own age and with whom they may relate on a different level from their teachers and may perform better than they would otherwise on the SOL tests.

Fifteen of the twenty-one stu-

dents currently attending JRGS have volunteered to tutor, either at their home school, their middle school, or both.

Some students have expressed apprehension about tutoring. Most are excited and enthusiastic about giving something back to their communities.



Pat Bennett-Wilhelm of Clifton Forge, her daughter, Mary Wilhelm (a student at Alleghany High School), and Dr. Drewry.

## Student-Parent Reception

Over half of the JRGS students and their parents joined superintendents and other personnel from three school divisions and members of the JRGS Governing Board for a reception on Thursday, August 30, 2007. The event was catered by The Club Car .

Prior to the JRGS Governing Board meeting, students and

parents were able to talk with members of the school community who are responsible for the leadership of JRGS. They also had the opportunity to meet three of their students’ instructors.

Many of the parents discussed concerns about the future of the school. All were able to ask questions of the

new director and other key leaders of the school.

Students enjoyed talking with one another outside of school. They all had smiles on their faces while talking with members of the school community. They also made sure that the food that was available did not go to waste!

## JRGS Orientation

August 13th was a day of learning for students, both new and returning. The day began with a few “meet and greet” activities, including Bingo and Truth and Lies. Students then completed the mandatory library orientation. The DSLCC Learning Resources Center has been temporarily displaced. Students learned how to request books and became familiar with the online resources.

A favorite part of the day for many students was determining personal learning styles. One student stated, “I learned what to expect and what I need to do to help myself to learn and to do better.” Students used this information to develop their own Individualized Education Plans (IEP). In their IEPs, students explained their perceived current level of knowledge in math and science. They also developed

goals for the year. The IEPs will be reviewed periodically to insure that students are making excellent progress at JRGS.

After completing their IEPs, everyone headed outside for the DSLCC Scavenger Hunt. When asked if they learned anything during the day, one student quipped, “The number of handicapped parking spaces [at DSLCC].” (Which is

Be looking for a new JRGS logo soon! Students are providing information for a new look for JRGS. The new logo will be representative of the dynamic nature of the mathematics and science education available for students at JRGS!

## Friends of Virginia’s Governor’s Schools

The Friends of Virginia’s Governor’s Schools (FOVGS) is an organization made up of at least one parent from each Governor’s School in Virginia. One of the major purposes of this group is to lobby in Richmond for continued funding for the Governor’s Schools.

FOVGS meets regularly to develop talking points to send

to each of the parents of Governor’s School students so that they may then send letters to their legislators. These letters are to remind the legislators of the importance of the unique opportunities provided by the Governor’s Schools for the gifted students throughout the state.

JRGS needs a representative

for this vital group. If you would be willing to go to Richmond to be a part of this group, please contact Julie Drewry (jdrewry@dslcc.edu) as soon as possible.

This is a tough budget year in light of the spending cuts Governor Kaine is making in the education budget. We need our voice to be heard.

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## Technology in the Classrooms

Students at JRGS are constantly utilizing available technology to enhance their understanding of new concepts. Each student has been issued a laptop and a graphing calculator for their personal use during the school year. Each day, they use these tools more and more.

Blackboard is used to support

learning by providing students with 24/7 access to lecture notes and other resources provided by the instructors. Tests may be taken on the computer and students receive instant feedback on their performance.

Students have constant access to the world wide web while at DSLCC. In addition, students have access to thousands of

research resources through the DSLCC library databases.

Most recently, the students were given the opportunity to evaluate each of their instructors using a resource called “Survey Monkey” on the web. This allows instructors to make adjustments to their courses and be more effective teachers.

How do JRGS students cheer at a football game? They wildly throw their hands in the air to form an absolute value function!

Be sure to make sure that JRGS students provide very clear directions for making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.