



# THE VILLAGE'S VOICE

The Newsletter of The Village Academy

Summer is almost over...hard to believe. We're just over four weeks from the start of the fall term. Are you ready? We are facing a very challenging year. For the third year in a row, the legislature cut the funding for VPK. The Early Learning Coalition suspended Gold Seal funding to nationally accredited schools like us; it seems quality schools for School Readiness kids aren't important to them. But we will succeed!!

THE VILLAGE  
ACADEMY

BEST OF ST  
AUGUSTINE

FALL VPK

AFTER SCHOOL  
PROGRAM

VOLUME III, ISSUE 3  
DATE: JULY, 2011

The Village Academy  
145 Lewis Point Road  
St Augustine, FL 32086

(O) 904.797.5909  
(F) 904.797.2804

info@village-academy  
[www.village-academy.com](http://www.village-academy.com)

## BEST OF ST AUGUSTINE

Did you vote yet? Please vote today! Voting ends on July 31st, and we need your support.

Just go to [staugustine.com](http://staugustine.com), look for a "vote here" label or the trophy symbol, and click through the prompts. After registering, select "Professional Services", then "Best Day Care Center", enter The Village Academy, and then click "Record Your Vote". We appreciate your support!

## FALL VPK

Have you signed up for fall VPK? Our program continues to deliver outstanding results. Each year, children entering Kindergarten go through an assessment test, and that forms our "grade". We did very well last year! That means the children who leave us and go to Kindergarten are prepared to succeed.

Do you have new neighbors that don't know about VPK in Florida? Please send them our way. Remember, the basic 9-12 VPK program is absolutely free.

The data is very clear: children who attend VPK do better in elementary school. No child should miss out on this free, essential program.

## SUMMER CAMP

Has this been an outstanding Summer Camp or what? Miss Misty and her staff have just done an amazing job.

## VPK PROGRAM OPTIONS

We offer more options than other schools because we are dedicated to meeting the needs of our parents. There are four different program options available:

★ VPK Only. Meets M-F from 8:45 am-11:45; 9:00 am to 12:00 pm or 9:15 am - 12:15 pm.

★ VPK with Enrichment. Enrichment classes meet from 12:15 - 1:15. Lunch is included. The classes are Dr. Gooley's Science Lab, Iron Chef, Van "Go" Arts & Crafts, and Tumbling.

★ VPK plus wrap around. Provides up to 10 total hours of care and education. Enrichment classes are optional.

## AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

Is your child in a safe, supervised environment after school? We read and see too many stories about children being injured - or worse - when they are left unsupervised at a young age.

We pick up children each afternoon in our seat-belt equipped, air-conditioned vehicles. Unlike public school buses, our drivers cannot leave until they verify where your child is.

We run a wider variety of activities than public school extended day because we run our program like our highly successful Summer Camp!

We pick up at R.B. Hunt, Hartley, Mason, Osceola, Webster.

And remember, we are open about 20 days each year when the public schools are closed. We only close 10 weekdays a year.

We provided care for your preschooler - we have already earned your trust. Sign up now as places are limited!

## WEEKLY RATE CHANGES

For those of you who have been with us a while, you know that we haven't changed rates in over 2.5 years. We've reached the limit of our ability to operate within these confines, especially given state funding cuts in VPK and Coalition cuts to School Readiness. Beginning Monday, August 22, our weekly rates will change. Because that's also "moving day", when JPS, SPS, and JPK children move up to their next "grade", we are going to minimize the pain for our parents. In most cases, no one will pay more beginning moving day than they are already paying. We know that you, like us, have to contend with higher prices for things like food, energy, fuel, employee costs, etc. On top of that we have the state budget cuts mentioned above. We've held off as long as we could.

	AUG 11	AUG 22	SEP 5	OCT 24
DATES TO REMEMBER	6:15 Open House 6:45 Family VPK Orientation	First Day of the Fall Term	Labor Day Holiday Village <u>Closed</u>	St Johns County Schools Closed Village <i>Open</i>

## ARE PLAYGROUNDS BECOMING TOO SAFE?

How can something be too safe for our children (or for our liability insurance providers)? There was an interesting article in the NY Times that discussed new research that suggests "safety-first playgrounds...may stunt emotional development, leaving children with anxieties and fears that are ultimately worse than a broken bone." That certainly seems to contradict modern thinking. I'm older than just about anybody reading this newsletter, and the school yard playground I used would scare most of our young parents out of their wits. Swing heights of 12-15 feet, monkey bars, jungle gyms higher than 10 feet, and play surfaces of asphalt, concrete or gravel. The article points out that children who suffer a fall prior to the age of 9 are less likely to have a fear of heights! It's an interesting read. [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/19/science/19tierney.html?\\_r=1&scp=2&sq=playground&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/19/science/19tierney.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=playground&st=cse)

## RESPONDING TO STATE AND LOCAL BUDGET CUTS

Three years ago, VPK was funded at approximately \$2,700 per child for the school year. This year it is under \$2,400. We are still expected to deliver the same high quality program - and we will. What we can't do is charge our parents for anything because of the constitutional mandate. This year, we are going to prepare a list of materials that we are asking you to help us with. This is not mandatory, and participation is entirely voluntary. While the list of materials will primarily go to VPK parents, each class will be given a list. Anything you can do to help is greatly appreciated.

## WE ARE ON FACEBOOK

We don't think "facebooking" should be a verb, but social media is the rage. You can now find The Village Academy on Facebook! . Please visit and let us know if you "like" us. Just enter "The Village Academy" in the search box.

## OPEN HOUSE / FAMILY ORIENTATION

Thursday, August 11 will be Back To School Night at The Village. From 6:15 to 6:45, we invite new parents who have not had a tour of The Village to come in for a visit. If a friend or neighbor needs quality child care, please let them know about this. At 6:45, we will have a meeting for **all VPK parents**. This will be an informational meeting about VPK, a chance to meet your child's teacher, and the opportunity to get your questions answered.

## ADMIN NOTES

Your annual registration renewals are due August 22. Check with the front desk for pro-rated renewal rates for children registered in the last 6 months...We need book donations! Please bring in any books for ages infant-5 that are no longer needed...Parents, remember to clock your child in and out. That is our official record for DCF... There is no smoking anywhere on the school campus, including the parking lot...Britax strollers have been recalled...Target has recalled some infant girl sandals - white with decorative flowers attached to the toes and sides.