



Alfred-Almond Central School District Newsletter

November 2020

Inside this Issue

Elementary news;
Fourth grade activities
.....Pg. 2

Secondary School news;
Elementary PE classes
enjoy a variety of
activitiesPg. 3

Try PBIS at home, too;
School safety and
learning opportunities
enhancedPg. 4

News from the
Counselors;
College search calendar
for juniorsPg. 5

College application tips;
Free student meals
updatePg. 6

Courses offer advantages;
Mark your calendar;
Important test dates
.....Pg. 7

November menu;
Yearbook seeking photos;
Seeking census data;
School closing info. .Pg. 8

A message from the Superintendent

The Alfred-Almond Central School District is pleased to announce that we have implemented the Raptor Visitor Management System in our district. Safety is our number one priority, and part of keeping students and staff safe is knowing who is in our building at all times. The Raptor system will allow us to do that by tracking visitors, contractors, volunteers, etc. in our building and help us to ensure a safer school environment.

Upon entering either the Elementary or Secondary entrance, visitors will be asked to present a valid state-issued ID, which will be scanned into the Raptor Visitor Management System. It is important to note that the Raptor system only scans the visitor's name, date of birth and photo. Additional visitor data from the driver's license is not gathered nor is the system connected to any other system such as the Department of Motor Vehicles. Therefore, any other information on the ID is not scanned by the system and is not accessible to any of the users.

Once entry is approved, the system will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, date, and the purpose of his/her visit. The visitor will be expected to wear this badge in a visible place so that district employees are able to verify they are an approved visitor. A visitor's badge will not be necessary for those who visit our schools simply to drop off an item in the office or pick up paperwork. In the event a person does not have identification, he/she will still be given access to the building, but will be escorted by a school staff member.

If you are interested in learning more about the Raptor Visitor Management System, please visit the Raptor Technologies website at www.raptortech.com. If you have any questions, please contact the Elementary Office at 607-276-6530 or the Secondary Office at 607-276-6558.

The safety of our students is our highest priority and the Raptor Visitor Management System provides a consistent way to aid in identifying visitors that may present a danger to our students and staff. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support as we enhance the school safety protocols in our district.

Sincerely,

Tracie Bliven

Superintendent of Schools

Elementary news

Thank you for such a great start to the school year! As challenging as things have been, it is a breath of fresh air to see students, faculty and staff back in the halls at AACs. As we progress through the remainder of the school year, here are a few reminders to help navigate this unique time:

ROLE OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS

- Provide new instruction and support for ALL students
- Monitor the progress of ALL students, focusing on all areas of instruction
- Offer academic support to those who may be struggling
- Conduct daily check-ins with ALL students (Morning Meetings)
- Maintain communication with families

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- Identify a quiet learning area while learning at home with minimal distractions
- Be prepared with all necessary learning materials
- Arrive on time and for the duration when attending Zoom Meetings
- Visit Google Classroom/SeeSaw daily for assignments and messages from your teacher(s)
- Active participation in classroom discussions, assignment completion and work submission
- Advocate for yourself – Ask for help and/or clarification when needed

PARENTAL SUPPORT

- Facilitate academic support, encouragement and motivation for your child
- Support a daily routine and work area for your child when learning at home
- Become familiar with your child's learning and communication platforms (Google Classroom, SeeSaw, Class Dojo, Remind, emails, text, phone)
- Ensure your child is on track with assignment completion and understanding

- Monitor your child's activity on the internet and/or social media (Google, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, etc)
- Communicate with your child's teacher regularly
- Complete the Operoo COVID Screener for all days that your child is here for instruction. Please complete it BEFORE your child arrives at the building in the morning.

Daily attendance is an expectation. Whether your child is participating in-person or remotely, he/she should be on time and ready to learn. Participation is required in Google Classroom, SeeSaw and Zoom Meetings for all content area (reading, writing, math, social studies and science) lessons as well as special areas (art, music and physical education) and support services (Speech, OT, PT and Counseling). If for some reason your child is not participating in the school day, PLEASE contact the Elementary Main Office at 607-276-6525 and let us know the reason and duration of the absence.

Parent drop-off and pick-up will continue to occur in the same designated areas. Please be patient with one another as traffic sometimes gets backed up when leaving school.

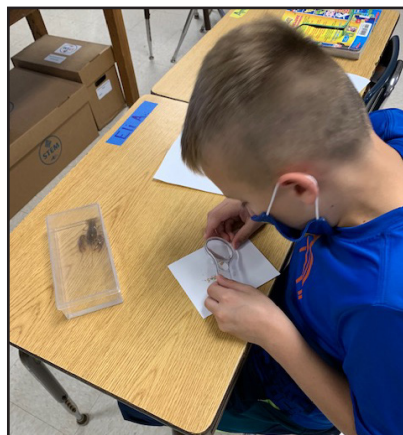
Students have done an excellent job of maintaining health and safety measures while at school. Please continue to practice and encourage handwashing, social distancing, wearing masks and monitoring symptoms while at home. If your child is experiencing symptoms including, but not limited to fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose or diarrhea, please keep him/her home. We will continue to maintain communication with you, as the DOH guidelines are continuously changing.

Take care, and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Brett Dusinberke
Elementary School Principal

Fourth grade activities

Fourth graders are off to a socially distant, yet educationally-engaging year! Some highlights include getting to know the "critters" in science class (left) and enjoying an afternoon of cider pressing thanks to Mrs. Jackson (far left).



Secondary School news

Thank you to the students, faculty and staff for an incredible job as we have started this school year. Our Eagle community has worked together to ensure each other's health and safety daily and everyone has been flexible with each and every challenge that has arisen. I would like to especially express my gratitude to those who worked to plan our safe return to our hallowed halls and those who have provided feedback to help us continue to move forward.

Although things may look and feel a little different for our students, faculty and staff have been exceptional in following safety protocols and engaging with our learning models. As we continue to progress through the school year, I would like to remind students and families of the importance of adhering to our health screening protocols. With our increased ability to teach and learn via the internet, please pay attention to your health and stay home if you are ill.

I would also like to remind students and families that in our Hybrid Blue and Gold groups, students must check in and work on their remote learning days. Attendance is

taken daily through Google Classroom, assignments are posted with deadlines and important information is being shared via email and Google classroom sites. On remote days, to be marked present and on time, students must complete attendance by 8:45 a.m. via their Blue or Gold Google Classroom site. Students should expect to complete 35 minutes or more of work for each class on their remote days.

Please tune into our LiveStream events to cheer on our Eagles athletic teams as they continue to compete with incredible sportsmanship and skill. More events will be coming up.

To paraphrase John Adams, "Every challenge is an opportunity in disguise." I am incredibly proud to be leading the Alfred-Almond Secondary School as our school community creates opportunity in this time and works to rise above.

Dr. Melissa Rivers
Secondary School Principal

Elementary PE classes enjoy a variety of activities

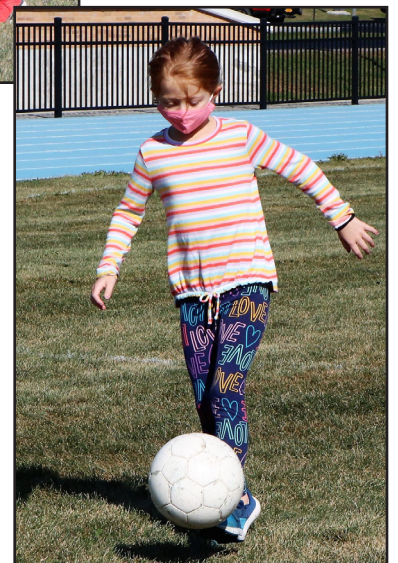
Elementary School PE has included hiking, practicing soccer skills and playing rounds of soccer golf. Students recently challenged their balance with obstacle courses and yoga poses. The biggest highlight so far was the soccer golf unit, where students had 18 holes that challenged their strategy and skills. The course was laid out all around the playground and courtyard near the elementary wing. A variety of the holes were inspired by favorite putt-putt golf courses, with hills, obstacles and curves. PE teachers have thoroughly enjoyed seeing our students again and making the absolute most of both in-person and online days. Thank you for all of your support at home.



*(Left and below)
Students practiced
their soccer skills in
preparation for taking
on the soccer golf
course.*



*(Left) Students
had fun navigating
through the
challenges of an
obstacle course that
was set up in the gym.*



Try Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports at home, too

This year marks the third year of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at Alfred-Almond Elementary. Your students may remember PBIS by the “Golden Tickets” and assemblies. Since we’ve started PBIS, More than 40,000 Golden Tickets have been awarded to our students. The goal of PBIS is to positively reward students for the appropriate demonstration of specific behaviors.

As we continue to use PBIS with students at school, families may wish to implement their own PBIS at home. Using positive reinforcement for specific behaviors at home may help to improve your student’s willingness to engage in virtual learning, complete an assignment and/or follow parent or teacher directives.

To start PBIS at home, make a list of your positively-phrased expectations. Examples may include following adult directions, completing work, doing your personal best, taking care of your electronic devices and attending

the morning Zoom session. Create expectations that encourage appropriate behaviors from your students. When he/she demonstrates one of your expectations, provide positive reinforcement in the form of a ticket, sticker or



other tangible items. A fun activity may be having your student create a new PBIS ticket to use at home. The frequency of the reinforcement can vary from day to day, but when you first start providing the reinforcement, it should be frequent so the child makes a connection between the demonstration of an expected behavior and the addition of the positive reinforcement.

Check out the school webpage for more information on Alfred-Almond Elementary’s use of PBIS or go to www.pbisworld.com for even more information about starting PBIS and supporting positive behaviors. If you have any questions about using PBIS at home, please contact Casey (Roche) Barber, School Psychologist.

School safety and learning opportunities enhanced

You may be wondering why the trees behind the Alfred-Almond Central School are being cut down. The best way to answer this is with a few questions. Is safety important? Is the chance of dead and diseased trees falling on the school or people a cause for concern? Would students benefit from having access to an outdoor learning space? All of these questions are answered in a multi-phased project that began last spring.

The safety of students, employees, and community members is of the utmost importance. With this in mind, we requested that a vulnerability assessment be conducted by the NYS Police, in collaboration with Homeland Security. A little more than a year ago, this assessment was performed and our school building and grounds were evaluated for potential safety threats.

There were several findings that were addressed without difficulty, but one substantial finding was the wooded area behind the school, as it posed a potential danger for two reasons. First, it provides a dense cover for an unwelcome guest on our property. Second, the overall health of the trees and their proximity to the school building is a liability, confirmed when one fell and damaged the exterior of the walk-in freezer several years ago.

After receiving the recommendation to remove the trees from behind the school, the district contacted the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Forestry Division to schedule a thorough evaluation of the health and sustainability of the trees. A walk-through was conducted by a D.E.C. Forester and it was determined many of the trees had lived past their life expectancy and were

recommended for removal, thus supporting the results of the vulnerability assessment.

With safety as the primary focus, a multi-phase plan was developed and placed into action. The first step of the process commenced by utilizing an Alfred-Almond employee with logging certification, as well as several other staff members during the COVID-19 closure. We were also fortunate to receive very generous donations of equipment and services such as a bulldozer from GST BOCES Heavy Equipment program, a log skidder from Getman Logging and time donated for log relocation by Cornelius Logging. We appreciate these donations, as they greatly enhanced our ability to remove the dying and diseased trees.

Throughout spring and summer, employees worked diligently in hot temperatures to make significant progress on the first phase of the project. During the removal of trees, D.E.C. Best Forestry Practices were continuously followed to minimize sedimentation and erosion. Periodic site inspections were also performed by a landscape architect from Hunt Architects and Engineers.

The second phase of the project involves clearing and terracing the hillside to minimize erosion and to control any invasive plant species from re-establishing. Currently, we are working collaboratively with students enrolled in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Heavy Equipment program at the GST BOCES on the Wildwood Campus. This is an excellent opportunity for students to receive a work-based learning experience as well as to help the school district advance this exciting project.

Continued on page 7

News from the Counselors

Juniors are working with Ms. Decker on their junior interviews. Juniors should be busy researching post-secondary schools and exploring their career options. Students are learning how to use web resources for their college/career search. They are educated on the importance of college entrance exams (PSAT, SAT and ACT), grade point average and rigor of class schedule (AP classes, Regents classes), as well as involvement in sports and/or clubs and community activities to be a well-rounded student.

Students are encouraged to use the Guidance Direct Program to facilitate their career search. Juniors are encouraged to attend college tours and open houses, meet with college representatives at school and take the appropriate entrance exams recommended by colleges.

The PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) is a comprehensive assessment program that measures college readiness and provides students with the tools they need to plan for the future. The test is offered each year at A-A in mid-October for juniors. The PSAT measures skills in critical reading, mathematics and writing. It also prepares students for the SAT. The PSAT also is used by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a means of screening entrants in its annual competition for recognition and college scholarships. On average, students who take the PSAT/NMSQT score 120 points higher on the SAT than those who do not.

Juniors also are encouraged to take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) in March, May and/or June (test dates are offered year round). Parents of juniors were mailed a letter stating the deadline dates for this test. The SAT helps colleges and universities identify students who could succeed at their institutions. It also assesses critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing skills. The SAT is an internationally recognized, accurate measure of college readiness and scholarship potential.

The ACT is similar to the SAT. It also is a national college admission and placement examination. It covers the subject areas of English, math, reading, science and writing. The ACT is more curriculum-based versus aptitude-based. It is offered year-round at designated schools. Retakes for both the SAT and ACT are encouraged to improve your score. Some colleges recommend that students take the SAT subject test(s) as well.

Alfred-Almond offers review sessions for the SAT/ACT in February and March. For test review, go to:

www.collegeboard.com

www.act.org

www.guidancedirect.com

www.khanacademy.org

College search calendar for juniors

September: Start your college/job search by reviewing as many college/career guides, catalogs and resources as possible. Put together a list of roughly ten colleges/employers you are interested in. Plan to apply to at least three to five schools/employers. Become familiar with the school counselors' office (SCO) and its resources. Attend the college fair at Hornell High School. Register for the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in the SCO. Prepare at collegeboard.com/psat. Please use Guidance Direct to access colleges/careers.

October: Attend college fairs. Create a list of your interests, special talents and educational and/or career goals. Take the PSAT/NMSQT. Inquire about Advanced Placement (AP) or summer college courses that may be available to you. Start learning about the colleges you're considering.

November: Consider the characteristics a college or job should have to meet your needs. Think about size, location, cost/earning potential, courses/job requirements, teaching staff/supervisors, facilities and social activities and opportunities.

December: Write or call colleges/work places you are seriously considering and request information (course guide books, application and financial aid). Investigate scholarship opportunities. Look for your PSAT/NMSQT score report. Start planning to take the SAT I and/or SAT II exams, if necessary. You may also need to take the ACT. Check with the schools you are interested in for specific testing requirements. Ask your high school counselor about registration deadlines.

January: Prepare for college entrance exams (SAT/ACT). The SCO usually arranges for a free SAT preparation course that is team-taught by an English and math teacher here at AACS (six evening sessions). The SCO has SAT preparation programs on computers. Attend financial aid nights if you haven't already done so. During any college visits, make sure you meet with an admissions counselor and a financial aid officer to find out what types of aid are available.

February: Start seriously investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Ask your teachers and counselor if any local organizations offer free use of a scholarship search program.

March: Continue to gather and evaluate information on colleges and jobs. Continue to investigate financial aid resources of the colleges you are most interested in. Call or write for applications and more information. Register for the June ACT.

Continued on page 6

College application tips for seniors

Currently, Mr. McAneney is completing interviews with each senior. These meetings take place to assist and solidify future plans. For most seniors, this is the time of year when they will begin the important task of applying to colleges. Regardless of the number of colleges to which students apply, the following process will help avoid confusion and unnecessary delays.

Step 1

When registering for the ACT or SAT, designate which colleges are to receive your score reports. Most colleges require that you send “official test scores” directly from the test center (at an additional cost).

Step 2

Complete the college application forms online. The Common Application site and the SUNY online application site are good starting places (see Mr. McAneney to find out which colleges use it). It is a good idea to make a copy of the application. Students can also download and print applications from the college website. If the application requires a teacher and/or counselor recommendation, arrange for those immediately.

Step 3

Students applying online will need a credit card number for the application fee. Students mailing their application will need to enclose a check for the appropriate amount. Do not send cash.

Step 4

An official high school transcript will need to be sent to the college from the School Counselor’s Office either electronically or by mail. Students applying online through the Common Application can electronically invite their counselor and teachers to submit the necessary information. This information will be uploaded electronically by the teachers and/or Mr. McAneney. Students applying online to SUNY may print a transcript request form that needs to go to the SCO. If you would like Mr. McAneney to check your online applications before sending them electronically, please see him.

Step 5

Don’t delay, act today!

Reminder: Seniors need to start their FAFSA applications beginning Oct. 1.

Free student meals update

On August 31, the USDA announced that meals would be free for all students until December 31, 2020 or until the funding from Congress is no longer available. This means that each student can get a breakfast and/or lunch at no charge. Participation is strongly encouraged, as students learn better when nourished and our district will receive greater state reimbursement as more students take advantage of these free meals.

Even when students are not attending school in-person, meals are still available. Each week, meal packs will be prepared for students who have signed up to receive them. These packs will have three or five days of breakfast and lunch and include a variety of items. To sign up, please visit <https://alfredalmondcafeteria.gstboces.org> to fill out the “Virtual Meal Sign Up” form. Once a student has signed up, he/she will continue to have meals packed and available for pickup each Monday from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the High School.

Please note that families should still submit applications for free and reduced meals so that if/when meals are no longer free, those in greatest need will still have access to healthy breakfast and lunch. Applications can be found by clicking on “Meal Applications” at <https://alfredalmondcafeteria.gstboces.org>.

If you have any questions, please contact Tori Parmenter at tparmenter@gstboces.org or by calling the High School.

College search calendar, continued

April: If you decide to retake either the SAT or ACT after receiving your scores from the first administration, plan for when you will do so. SAT retake registration may be called in over the phone (fee involved) or submitted online at www.collegeboard.com. Begin scheduling visits to the top five schools of your choice. If appropriate, set up an interview and/or an overnight visit. Begin preparing essays for college admissions and scholarship applications.

May: Look into volunteer work/internships, career-related employment opportunities, on campus academic experiences at a college or university and travel opportunities. These kinds of experiences may give you material for major decisions, college essays and transcript building. Colleges like to see more than strict academics on a transcript. Continue to research scholarship opportunities.

June: Prepare for Regents and final exams. Take the SAT if you have not already. Start drafting your résumé. If you have the opportunity, visit as many colleges on your list as possible. Obtain a summer job that might be related to your career interests.

Courses offer advantages

Alfred-Almond Central School currently offers nine Advanced Placement classes, four ACE classes, one Alfred University and two Alfred State classes taught at A-A, as well as online Alfred State and Corning Community College classes. Students who are planning to go to college should take advantage of these opportunities. Taking these classes while in high school can be a great benefit during both the college application process and undergraduate life. Below are four reasons why students should consider AP classes in high school:

1. Strengthen Your High School Transcript

Most colleges would agree that the most important part of an application is a student's academic record (transcript). Admissions offices want to see that students have participated in the most challenging courses available. Success in these courses demonstrate that a student is prepared for the next level. At A-A, the most challenging courses offered are high school college classes.

2. Develop College-Level Skills

College classes require critical thinking skills that are required of college students. The ability to write essays and problem solve successfully are just two of the skills necessary to succeed in college.

3. Save Money

Taking several college classes may allow students to graduate from college a semester or even a year early. In the long run, this could save thousands of dollars.

4. Choose a Major Sooner

College courses provide an in-depth introduction to a specific subject area and also may fulfill a general education requirement. This means you may have more room in your schedule to explore different fields earlier in your college program.

Mark your calendar

Veterans Day—No School	November 11
Parent-Teacher Conferences	November 15-16 (Elementary dismissal at 11:50 a.m. both days)
Thanksgiving Recess – No School	November 25-27
Holiday Recess—No School.....	December 23, 2020– January 1, 2021
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No School.....	January 18
Superintendent's Conference Day – No School for Students	February 1
Winter Recess	February 15-19

As of now, all activities are postponed.

School safety, continued

The final phase of the project will include the designing and building of outdoor educational learning spaces and repurposing the natural resources harvested from these areas. This is a cost-effective way to provide diverse and unique learning spaces for students and to maximize the use of natural resources. Outdoor learning spaces provide new opportunities for students and teachers to interact in a stimulating way and bring learning outside. It becomes a gathering place for teachers and students and provides an opportunity to integrate nature into our school setting.

So, as you drive by and wonder, “Why are the trees behind the school disappearing?” remember, with time comes change and embracing change creates new opportunities!



GST BOCES students are gaining hands-on work experience while assisting with the clearing project behind AACs.

Important test dates

SAT I & II

Date	Reg. Deadline	Test Center
12/5/20	11/5/20	Hornell or Geneseo
3/13/21	2/12/21	Geneseo or Wellsville
5/8/21	4/8/21	Hornell
6/5/21	5/6/21	Geneseo

ACT

Date	Reg. Deadline	Test Center
12/12/20	11/6/20	Wellsville
2/6/20	1/8/21	Check act.org
4/17/21	3/12/21	Check act.org
6/12/21	5/7/21	Wellsville

POSTAL PATRON

Alfred-Almond Central School
6795 Rte. 21
Almond, New York 14804
Return Services Requested

U.S. Postage Paid
Alfred, New York 14802
Permit No. 20
Non-Profit Organization

Yearbook staff seeking photos

The 2021 ALCEN Yearbook Staff needs your HELP! We are asking community members to help us with pictures for this year's book. Due to the pandemic, the staff is limited in the things that they can photograph. With your help, we will be able to create a wonderful yearbook for the students. We are asking that if you attend any sporting events and have photos you are willing to share, please email them to Mrs. Valentine at kvalentine@aacsapps.com. We are also asking the parents of elementary students to submit photos of your child during any youth soccer game and/or photos of them in their Halloween costume (please send them to Mrs. Valentine). We can't thank the community enough for their support. We will be working hard on the page layouts and sections for each part of the yearbook. Yearbook sales will be offered soon and the cost of the book will be \$50.

Seeking census data

Each year, district residents receive a census data card in the mail requesting important information concerning all children living in the household from birth through age 21. The information collected is *vital* for the district to plan staffing structures and attain precise information of district preschool students.


If you have not returned your census card this year, please do so as soon as possible. Your help with compiling this information is greatly appreciated and critical for planning purposes. If you did not receive a census card, or need an additional copy, please contact Bryan Burdick at 276-6565 or at bburdick@aacsapps.com.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and helping us best plan for the educational needs of children.

School closing information

As a reminder to parents, it is sometimes necessary to close school because winter weather conditions make it unsafe for students to walk or ride to school. Should it be necessary to close school, you will receive an automated message notifying you of this occurrence. For additional information on school closings, please listen to one of the following radio or TV stations:

WLEA 1480 AM WLSV 790 AM WKPQ 105.3 FM
WCKR 92.1 FM WJQZ 103.5 FM WZKZ 101.1 FM
WKBW-TV (Buffalo) WETM-TV (Elmira)

November 2020				
ALFRED-ALMOND CENTRAL SCHOOL GRADES PK-12th				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Virtual Meal - See Hybrid Virtual Menu	3 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Golden Sweet Corn	4 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Golden Sweet Corn	5 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Tater Tots Fresh Baby Carrots	6 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Tater Tots Fresh Baby Carrots
9 Virtual Meal - See Hybrid Virtual Menu	10 Baked Chicken w/ Potatoes w/ Bread Egg Salad Sandwich Golden Sweet Corn	11  Veteran's Day No School	12 Pizza Dippers w/ Marinara Sauce Egg Salad Sandwich Fresh Baby Carrots	13 Pizza Dippers w/ Marinara Sauce Egg Salad Sandwich Fresh Baby Carrots
16 Virtual Meal - See Hybrid Virtual Menu	17 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Golden Sweet Corn	18 Meat & Cheese Sandwich w/ Buffalo Chicken Wrap Golden Sweet Corn	19 Hot Turkey & Gravy w/ Stuffing Chicken Ranch Wrap Steamed Broccoli Thanksgiving Cookie	20 Thanksgiving Lunch! Hot Turkey & Gravy w/ Stuffing Chicken Ranch Wrap Steamed Broccoli Thanksgiving Cookie
23 Virtual Meal - See Hybrid Virtual Menu	24 BBQ Pulled Pork Quesadilla Tuna Salad Sandwich Golden Sweet Corn	25	26	27
30 Virtual Meal - See Hybrid Virtual Menu				