

Welcome, All Middle School Teachers & Students

**By: Derald Jones, Assistant Principal
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I am delighted and honored to serve on the board of directors for the Azalea International Folk Fair programs. All teachers may find that the Teachers Field Trip Planner we prepared for you here are invaluable and beneficial.

I look forward to being a part of this program each year. What started out as a favor to narrate for the event has turned into something that I am truly honored to be a part of.

I am always amazed at the mass amount of coordination that takes place in order to bring everything together. I know of no other program in our schools (besides standardized testing! Ha!) or in the Valdosta community that brings so many people together for a single purpose.

The experience has proven not only to be entertaining, but very educational. Being a part of this program while a teacher at Dewar Elementary School and now an administrator at Hahira Middle School has helped me to see the program from different perspectives.

As a teacher, I was able to see first-hand how much the students learned and how the program tied into our educational standards for Georgia. It really helped them to have a point of references when were discussing different countries, customs, or interests.

Years later, as an administrator, it was obvious to me that this was something that our entire 7th grade group could benefit from and I was delighted to be a part of making that happens. All sections are

informative, entertaining, and the students are allowed to participate "hands-on"! In a society where kids are constantly being told "do not touch", it is really a treat when they get an opportunity to actually play traditional games, instruments, and other items.

I absolutely love to see so many different kinds of students dressed in traditional Asian costumes! What a great life lesson on understanding cultural differences. I even got to get dressed up as an Asian King! A big, black, bald king!! I loved it and the kids really got a kick out of it. Then on top of that, I have been privileged to narrate a few of the programs, which is my delight.

I pray this program will continue and that I will be a part of it for years to come.