



Farquhar Forum

May 2010

Letter from the Principal

Scott Murphy

Dear Farquhar Community:

Can you believe that there are about four weeks of school remaining? Parents-- thank you for your constant support as the school year accelerates to an exciting finish with many activities, celebrations, important assessments, and academic demands. We appreciate your support in reinforcing with students the appropriate "balance" between celebrating the end of the school year, being involved in activities, and taking important end of year work in classes seriously.



Thank You To Our Parent Volunteers

As the school year winds down, the staff and I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the hundreds of parent leaders and volunteers who dedicated their time and energy to Farquhar this school year. From PTA events to Roadrunner Night to concerts to sports travel to Beauty and the Beast to staff appreciation and many more— we could not make these events happen without you.

Thank you for your tireless efforts.

I would also like to extend a special thanks and appreciation to Mr. Joe Griffin, who has done an outstanding job in his first year as PTA President. Moreover, a thank you our 8th grade parent leaders who will be "moving on" with their kids to high school next year. I would like to extend a special thanks to Ms. Margie Beatty, volunteer coordinator, and Ms. Sandy Abel, PTA Treasurer and past Vice President. Your commitment and dedication as parent leaders over the past several school years has been a tremendous asset to our school. You will be missed, and thank you!

(Cont. on next page)



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The Roadrunner Way/College Month



As you are hopefully aware, this month's theme is about career and college awareness, which counselors will be discussing with all students in classes throughout the month of May. Some of the themes include: there is a college for everyone; being prepared for college through hard work in middle and high school keeps more doors open and options to choose from after graduation; every career path in the 21st century requires some post-secondary education after high school; college readiness also means career readiness.

Next year, we are looking forward to continued emphasis on The Roadrunner Way as a tool for teaching students about core values, peer relationships, and their role in maintaining a positive learning environment. Highlights of the program include monthly lessons with students around five core values: respect, responsibility, kindness, self-control, and honesty. This program also includes anti-bullying initiatives and opportunities for students to participate in small groups that discuss issues unique to middle school.

Modernization On Schedule; Anticipated to Begin 2013

Planning for Farquhar's modernization has begun! This month, the MCPS Department of Facilities Management has begun meeting with staff to develop educational specifications for a modernized facility. Next fall, similar opportunities for parents to be part of the process will occur.



In the meantime, the only information that I have is that the anticipated completion of the modernization is fall 2015, with construction taking place for two school years beginning in fall 2013. I do not have any other information on the plan for a move to a holding school or any other details about construction planning. Those specifics will be discussed over the next several months. I will keep you posted throughout the process.



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Summer Information

Registration is still open for summer courses and courses are filling fast! Times are from 7:45 – 11:30 a.m. during the dates listed below. Courses include:

Reading 7/8 (July 6-30, Cost \$95, check made out to MCPS)

Mathematics 7 (July 6-30, Cost \$95, check made out to MCPS)

Focus on Algebra (July 12-30, Cost \$75, check made out to MCPS)

Writer's Workshop (July 12-30, Cost \$150, check made out to FMS)

Courses will be filled on a first-come basis until filled. Bus transportation is available, as is financial assistance for students who have financial need. All registration information is available on Edline and the school website. If there are any questions,

Please contact Mr. Geddes (Walter_C_Geddes_Jr@mcpsmd.org), summer school coordinator, with any questions about summer reading and math programs, or Mr. Heifetz (Adam_M_Heifetz@mcpsmd.org) for Writer's Workshop information.

Also, enrichment packets in reading and math will be sent home with students prior to the end of the school year. This information will also be posted on our website throughout the summer.

2010-11 Course Schedules

Confirmation of course selections for next school year will be sent home on or around June 1. Please review the course selections, and contact your child's counselor if you have any questions or would like to make adjustments. Please note that final course offerings may change due to low enrollment or MCPS budget changes. Students will receive their final schedule with the class periods, teachers, and room assignments on the first day of school on August 30, 2010.



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Calendar & Assessments

The High School Assessment (HSA) in Algebra is given on May 18. All students enrolled in Algebra will take this test, and passing the HSA is a high school graduation requirement. More information on these requirements can be found here: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/hsa/>

Meanwhile, students will also be preparing for MCPS final exams, tests, and culminating activities in other classes, which will take place June 9-15. Please note these other important dates as we approach the end of the school year:

May 18	Algebra HSA
May 18	8th Grade Portrait
May 20	Last day for after-school activities and activity buses
May 28	8th grade trip to Hershey Park
6th Grade	End of Year Programs & Academic Awards* 8:30 a.m.
7th Grade	End of Year Programs & Academic Awards* 10:30 a.m.
June 1	Spring concert at Sherwood HS, 7:00 p.m.
June 4	Yearbooks Distributed
June 5	8th Grade Dance. 7:00 – 9:30 p.m.
June 8	Exam Review Day
June 9-15	Final Exams and culminating activities (special exam schedule)
June 15	8th Grade Farewell* 1:00 p.m.. 8th grade Ice Cream Social 2:00 p.m.
June 16	Last day for students, dismissal 12:10

*Parents of students receiving awards for academic honors at the end of year programs will receive an invitation by mail in late May.

Dress Code

As the warm weather arrives, please keep in mind the following expectations for appropriate student dress at school: no muscle shirts or tank tops; no "spaghetti straps," strapless tops, midriff, or tops that reveal under garments; skirts should be of appropriate length to pass the fingertips with hands resting at sides. Students will be asked to change clothing, wear alternative clothing provided by the main office, or call home for a change of clothes if deemed

inappropriate by a staff member. If you have any questions, please contact an administrator.





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Reminder on Cell Phones, iPods, Cameras, Other Electronic Devices

Just a reminder that cell phones, iPods, digital cameras, and other electronic devices are not authorized for use at all during the school day. If students bring the devices to school with parent consent, they must be turned off and out of sight during the entire school day (secured in a locker). Increasingly students are attempting to send text messages or phones are ringing during class, including contacting their parents, which causes a serious disruption. These items are subject to confiscation and inappropriate use is subject to disciplinary action. Please discuss with your child whether it is appropriate to bring these devices to school, as they are often misplaced, shared, or lost. If you need to reach your child, the main office can efficiently route a message to your child during the school day, and students are always welcome to use the office phone to contact a parent if a need arises.



Bravo!



For anyone who missed our student production of *Beauty and the Beast*, you missed quite a show! Our talented students, parents, and tech crew gave an incredible performance and made us very proud. I would like to thank director Erin Lorenz, director, for her outstanding leadership, as well as the support of many other staff members. I would also like to acknowledge the many dedicated parents who spent countless hours making this happen for our students. We could not do it without you.

Finally

Let's make it a positive culmination to a great year, and thank you for your strong support of our school community. I look forward to seeing you at our end-of-year activities and celebrations, and have a great summer!

Sincerely,
Scott W. Murphy
Principal



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Message from the PTA President, Joe Griffin



At the end of every school year our calendars become filled with various end of the year activities and events. While we want every student to partake in and enjoy these celebrations, it is important for them to continue to learn and complete their school work. It would be a shame for a child who has done "A" work all quarter to receive a "B" or lower because they didn't turn in work or study for their last exam.

I am very grateful to all of the wonderful volunteers who help with the PTA this year. Your contribution made a difference in Farquhar and our children's education. There are a few volunteers who will be leaving us and deserve special recognition.

Sandy Abel has been a PTA volunteer for several years including serving as Treasurer this past year.

Margie Beatty has served for the past six years as the Volunteer coordinator.

Pat Mangus has worked on the Direct Appeal for the past 3 years.

These three people have been an integral part of the Farquhar PTA and will be greatly missed. We thank them for their contributions and wish them well. I am sure the High School PTAs will be glad to see them.

Please consider volunteering with the PTA. As each class graduates we lose some of our parent volunteers. These volunteers must be replaced by the existing or incoming parents in order for our organization to remain strong. The PTA supports improvements to our school and has a positive effect on our children's education and development. The more members and volunteers we have the greater the contribution to our children.

Have a wonderful and safe Summer.

Joe Griffin
PTA President



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Counselor's Corner



Lessons

May is College and Career Awareness Month at FMS! The counselors visited all three grade levels to provide a lesson to inspire future possibilities. The lesson took students through visualization to dream about where they want to be 10-15-20 years from now. After the students created a future fantasy, they were challenged to think about how to make it a reality. They reflected on skills, interests and personal values. They took these unique characteristics and applied them to thinking about career and life style possibilities. Students also had the chance to learn about the MCPS Thomas Edison High School of Technology. Every student took home a career packet to complete at home and to share with parents.

Career Café

Career Café presented its ever-popular college student visit! Several college students came to share their college experiences and chat with our students about what middle school students can do now and in high school to prepare for college.

Teacher's College Fact Sheets

If you have walked through the halls of FMS in the month of May, you may have noticed the sheets outside of teacher's doors. Teachers completed information sheets on where they attended college. Our students enjoyed browsing the hallways, learning what their teachers majored in, what colleges they attended and interesting tidbits of information about their particular school.

Fun Celebrations

Our school supported their favorite colleges by participating in college gear day. Students and staff wore their colors and mascots with pride!

Lastly, we held our monthly Roadrunner Jam (music at lunch) in celebration of everyone setting goals for their future.

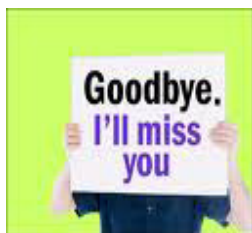


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June

We value the opinion and ideas of our students! In June, we will visit all grade levels for the last time this school year to give a survey of counseling services. We are asking for feedback on favorite lessons, helpfulness of groups, school climate and availability and support from the counselors. Ideas and feedback from parents are always welcome.

Goodbyes and transitions



We must bid two of our counselors goodbye. Ms. Kohlerman was hired as a long term sub and is off to find a full time school counseling position of her own. Ms. Sobieralski will be joining Tilden Middle School, as the .5 counseling position at FMS has been eliminated.

From Ms. Kohlerman:

As a substitute counselor, I extend a heartfelt thank you to the sixth grade and their parents for the pleasure of working with all of you. It is through my communication with you that I have learned why FMS is a stellar school community. Please know that I appreciate the time that I shared with the students – they were very warm and welcoming, and I have learned from them. I am sure that I will continue to hear wonderful things about 'my kids' as they progress through the next two years! I wish you all the very best, and again, thank you for the wonderful experience of serving as the sixth grade counselor.

Sincerely,
Maria Kohlerman

From Ms. Sobieralski:

It is with great sadness and fond memories that I close the Farquhar chapter of my professional life. I have met many amazing families in my two years here. Thank you for sharing your stories and children with me! Some of my most rewarding experiences are when students and parents from the past contact me to brag about how well they are doing. If you have a brag that you would like to share, you can find me at Tilden Middle school for next school year. It was my pleasure working with you and your children!

All the best,
Heather Sobieralski



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SIXTH GRADE NEWS



The sixth grade teachers would like parents to know how much we've enjoyed teaching your children this year! We appreciated their enthusiasm, creativity, and sense of humor. It was truly rewarding to discover so many distinct personalities. This is the reason why we enjoy coming to Farquhar each day! Have a great summer and be sure your children complete their summer math and reading that will help prepare them for the rigors of seventh grade. Look for the packets to be brought home by your child during the last week of school.

During the first week in June, the reading classes will have special speaker. He is Evan Vucci, a former Farquhar student, who is currently an Associated Press photographer. His assignments have taken him to Afghanistan, Iraq, the political trail, Air Force One, Summer Olympics in Australia and Spring Training. He will share some of his experiences and photographs with the classes to connect with our





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SEVENTH GRADE NEWS



Our students have the good fortune of living in an area which allows them to extend their learning beyond the classroom walls. The 7th grade team has compiled a listing of some well known and some lesser known summer day/evening trips that students may enjoy. Who knows everyone might learn something new

English: In May, all students read and acted out scenes from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in their English classes. Students will continue to develop an appreciation of such classics

next year. Visit Folger Shakespeare Library online to discover more about "the bard". http://www.folger.edu/index_sa.cfm?specaudid=3

Math: All 8th grade math textbooks are available for preview by visiting the FMS homepage. Click on the math department link and find the course information. <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/farquhars/teams/math.shtm>

Learn to use your new graphing calculator*. Visit the Texas Instruments website for free tutorials. *Graphing calculators are required for all students enrolled in Algebra 1 and beyond. <http://education.ti.com/studentzone/index.html>

Science: Unit 5, Interactions within the Solar System, is the last unit of study for our 7th grade science students. They have built models and used different light sources in their exploration of eclipses and phases of the Moon.

Everyone who looks up at the night sky can enjoy visiting a planetarium. If you are interested in astronomy, please visit <http://www.astro.umd.edu/openhouse/>.

Social Studies: The Impact of Economics: One World Past and Present, unit 4, culminates the sixth and seventh grade survey of early world history and cultures and provides a foundation for the study of U.S. history in eighth grade.

Visit the National Gallery of Art Renaissance exhibits in person or online. Let your child be the tour guide. After this unit of study, students will be able to analyze the time period and the artist's purpose. <http://www.nga.gov/collection/>

Don't forget the American History Museum is now renovated and open for visits too. I Do Solemnly Swear: Photographs of the 2009 Inauguration is one new exhibit open until July 12. This exhibit commemorates the historic Presidential Inauguration of Barack Obama. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/>



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Eighth Grade Hershey Park Trip Information



Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

As the Hershey Park Trip approaches, the 8th Grade Team would like to remind/inform you of the following:

• Trip Specifics - May 28, 2010

8:00am - Depart FMS

8:30pm – Arrive at FMS

- Please be sure that students are on time to school on the day of the trip. We will board buses at 7:50am and leave Farquhar at 8:00am. Students may ride the school bus as on any other day.
- Please arrange for your child to be picked up at Farquhar at 8:30pm on the day of the trip. Students should have transportation arrangements prior to the trip.
- Hershey Park does not allow radios, tape/CD/MP3 players, food, or beverage are allowed to be brought into the park. (Exceptions will be made for medical reasons. Please alert us to any issues).
- Students will be permitted to bring cell phones, but each student will be responsible for his or her personal belongings.
- Lockers are available for public use (for a nominal fee). They are on a first come, first served basis.
- Please remember to give your child money for food while in the park. Unless required medically, food and drink are not allowed to be brought in. \$20-\$25 will be more than adequate for lunch and dinner.
- In the rare circumstance that a student must be picked up by parents at Hershey Park, the student must be signed out. Please allow as much notice as possible. If there is a family emergency during the trip, please contact the Farquhar Main office so we can set up the safe pickup of your child.
- In case of emergency, staff may be contacted through the following channels:

Farquhar Main Office: 301-924-3100

Hershey Park First Aid Station: 717-534-3370 (Located in the CVS Family Health and Services Center)

THANK YOU! THE EIGHTH GRADE TEAM



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Teaching our students about Math that mattered THEN and NOW...



If your child has taken IM (Math Investigations) this year or is signed up for the course this fall, the National Cryptologic Museum would make a great day-trip this summer. Students spend the month of May learning about number theory. While the concept is abstract, you will be able to experience how this concept is applied in the field of cryptology .

According to information taken from the National Cryptologic Museum website:

"Originally designed to house artifacts from the Agency and to give employees a place to reflect on past successes and failures, the Museum quickly developed into a priceless collection of the Nation's cryptologic history. The Museum opened to the public in December 1993 and quickly became a highlight of the area. Being the first and only public museum in the Intelligence Community, the Museum hosts approximately 50,000 visitors annually from all over the country and all over the world, allowing them a peek into the secret world of codemaking and codebreaking. The Museum is also an invaluable educational tool, benefiting thousands of students and teach-



ers every year. Tours are provided allowing students of all ages the chance to learn about cryptology's impact on history and the possibility of exciting jobs in an area they may not have thought possible."

The museum also has two exhibits that highlight the different experiences of women and African Americans in the field of cryptology.

For more information, please visit http://www.nsa.gov/about/cryptologic_heritage/museum/



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END OF THE YEAR AND SUMMER SSL INFORMATION



The **LAST DAY** to turn in ALL SSL forms is **June 4**. No forms will be accepted after this date. The **ONLY** exception to this is for those that volunteer for the Strawberry Festival. I will accept those forms on the **MONDAY AFTER THE FESTIVAL ONLY**.

Summer Contact Information for SSL- If you have any questions over the summer, please call- 301-279-3454 or fax 301-517-8166. (JUNE 18 to AUGUST 25)

It's Summertime.. ...and the SSL Hours are Easy!!



Summertime is a great opportunity to address a real need in the community and earn student service learning (SSL) hours toward the graduation requirement. All SSL opportunities must be secular in nature, performed in a public space and supervised by an adult representing a nonprofit tax exempt organization. Parents and relatives cannot serve as supervisors for their own. Beginning with the class of 2011, students need 75 hours of SSL in order to graduate from high school.

Come speak with Mrs. Rodriguez for ideas for SSL opportunities, or go check out organizations and opportunities that are posted as MCPS SSL approved at the website <http://www.mcpsssl.org>.

If an opportunity does not specifically state "SSL-Approved", students must have it approved by the SSL COORDINATOR (Mrs. Rodriguez) at 301-279-3454 or Pamela_A_Meador@mcpsmd.org.

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before school ends, or by Pam Meador over the summer at the County SSL office. It's a simple form, but it must be approved BEFORE SSL hours can be awarded from an organization. Approval is good for one year, for that student only. That means if you have done the activity before, or you know someone who has done the activity, you still need to have it pre-approved for yourself. If you have an activity in mind but are not sure if it is already pre-approved, check the web site or ask Mrs. Rodriguez or Ms. Meador. Many students earn SSL hours volunteering at non-profit summer camps or clinics, but they often require pre-approval, even if they're run by an MCPS coach or teacher.

Please hold on to your completed SSL verification forms and then turn them in to Mrs. Rodriguez by the last Friday in September.

Mrs. Rodriguez can be reached at Lisa_L_Rodriguez@mcpsmd.org

After school ends, Ms. Meador at the county SSL office can be reached at 301-279-3454 or Pamela_A_Meador@mcpsmd.org.

Once the 2010-2011 school year starts, you may immediately start turning the summer forms in to me. Please do not wait until the September deadline.

Please let me know if you have any questions! The website is extremely useful. Please make sure you realize that there are a lot of organizations that are NOT approved. If you are unsure if something is definitely approved, please check on the website or double check with me using the pre-approval form from the website listed below.

I do not want anyone to work the hours and find out they are not approved after the fact!

Thank you!!!
Lisa Rodriguez
SSL Coordinator
Farquhar Middle School