



# Farquhar Forum

December 2011

Letter from the Principal

Diane D'Ambrosio Morris

## Dear Farquhar Community:

Dear Parents & Guardians,

It is unbelievable to think that after tomorrow the Winter break will be here. Our students have been engrossed in a number of extra-curricular activities from the annual food and clothing drives, to preparing for the winter concerts, to performing in the Variety Show, to auditioning for this year's musical, High School Musical Jr., and finally the long time tradition of participating in the school-wide Volleyball Tournament. I would also like to thank our parent volunteers, Marti Ladd, our Media Specialist, and Kathy Boswell, our Media Assistant for making the annual book fair a huge success this year.



With the holiday season upon us and increased educational requirements, some of our students may be experiencing school stress. As parents, you can support your children during this time by helping them implement some of these stress-relief tips. Help your child:

1. Manage their time wisely. Suggest that he/she set-up a schedule for study.
2. Get organized. Develop an organization system for note-taking, keeping track of assignments and other important papers.
3. Create a good study environment. Help your child identify a place in your home that is free of distractions.
4. Develop a positive attitude. Communicate that we all make mistakes and we should not focus on our mistakes, but learn from them and move on.
5. Get enough sleep. Stress the importance of rest and that in order to perform at your best, you must be well rested.



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Many people continue to be impacted by the economy, but the one thing that is certain is that you can always give the gift of time. Time spent asking your child how his/her day went, what he/she learned, or taking a look at some of the work your child did is a great way to stay involved in your child's education. As we continue in this season of thankfulness and celebration, let's focus on the important things in our lives – our children. I wish you the very best and hope that this holiday season is a time for you to reconnect with the people you love.

With best wishes,

Diane D'Ambrosio Morris

Proud Principal

## **Message from the PTA President, Joe Griffin**

As the Holiday break approaches I want to thank all of the volunteers who have helped to make 2011 a great year for the PTA and Farquhar community. All of the great programs and events which we have enjoyed over the past year are only possible through the efforts of many parents, teachers and students who volunteer their time and talents. I also want to thank the administration and faculty for providing a strong sense of community with our children during the day and with our families after school hours. Good communication through meetings and broadcast phone messages means everyone is better informed and therefore can only produce positive results.



We do need volunteers in the new year to help us make the second half of the school year a success. We need a couple of volunteers to co-chair the 8th grade dance. It is a tradition at Farquhar that the 6th and 7th grade parents organize and work this dance. I would like to have one 6th grade parent co-chair with a 7th grade parent so that in the future we will have a co-chair with experience training their co-chair to take over. There are several people who have volunteered to help with the dance, we just need a couple of parents to take charge. Be assured we do have complete instructions on what to do for whoever chairs this event.



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There is also a vacancy for chair or co-chair of the regular dances. We are scheduled to have a Valentines Dance which the kids have always really enjoyed. I hope some parents will step up to chair this dance so that we don't have to cancel. Please email me at [grif\\_joe@yahoo.com](mailto:grif_joe@yahoo.com) if you want to volunteer yourself or someone else. I do accept anonymous recommendations.

This time of year it is a tradition among many of us to give gifts to the people to show our appreciation for who they are and what they mean to us. If you have not already contributed to direct appeal, please consider doing so as a gift to Farquhar and your child's education. All of the money collected through Direct Appeal goes to supporting school programs, trips and classroom equipment. Please go to the Farquhar PTA website and make a gift to your child's school through Direct Appeal.

Over the holiday break I hope you and your families will be healthy, happy and safe and our children will do a little studying here and there so they don't forget everything.

Happy New Year. See everyone in 2012.

Joseph M. Griffin  
PTA President





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## SIXTH GRADE NEWS

The interim point of the second marking period has now passed. We hope that you and your child have analyzed the grades on Edline and had a conversation about ways to be a successful middle school student. Please encourage your child to meet with teachers about any questions you or your child may have and to seek help when needed.

Coming Attraction! Mark your calendar for the Outdoor Education Parent Meeting on Tuesday, January 17, 2012. Parents, please make every effort to attend this important meeting where you will receive information about the program, cost, permission form, and medication forms. This meeting will be held in the cafeteria at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in volunteering for overnight supervision in the cabins, please attend the Parent Volunteer Meeting in the media center at 6:30 p.m.

The Sixth Grade Team wishes you and your family a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year!

## SEVENTH GRADE NEWS

Hello from 7th grade!

Seventh grade teachers are still enjoying our work with the seventh grade class! We encourage parents to check edline and contact teachers with any questions or concerns, or with anything we can do to help support your child.

We would like to remind Math 7 students that they need calculators, paper, pencils, spiral note books, and calculators daily.

On Friday, December 23, seventh graders will celebrate "Dickens Day". This day will feature the afternoon viewing of "A Christmas Carol" as a culminating activity to a week-long study of Charles Dickens. Dickens was a social crusader who in 1843 published "A Christmas Carol" to convince readers to reach out to those less fortunate. This author's purpose is reinforced with seventh graders as we consider social needs within our own community. The study is coupled with





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a canned food drive among seventh graders and a holiday donation to Manna Food Center. Please feel free to contact your child's English teacher with any questions.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information above, please contact Jeff Levine ([Jeff\\_A\\_Levine@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Jeff_A_Levine@mcpsmd.org)).

## **EIGHTH GRADE NEWS**

We wish you a safe, restful and festive holiday season! This is a great time of year to help students organize their notebooks and refresh school supplies to start the New Year off right. We continue to encourage students to be "high school ready" and assist them with the skills they will need next year. Please encourage students to attend 8th Grade "Tuesday Tune-ups" for after school help. Please see your child's agenda and/or email your child's teachers at any time to check in with us and see how things are going and verify what they could work on at home.



8th Grade calendar items to help you plan ahead:

- Semester exams begin January 12th and continue through January 20th. MCPS high school credit exams count for 25% of the final semester grade, separate from the quarter grade.
- Hershey Park Field Trip-Friday, June 1st, 2012. Permission slips will be coming out soon! We will begin collecting for dues in February.
- 8th Grade Farewell Dance-Saturday, June 2nd, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.



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## WORLD LANGUAGES

Students taking Spanish IAB and Spanish 2AB are gearing up for their MCPS high school credit semester A exams in January. Students will receive a county study guide to help review and practice for the oral, listening comprehension, reading and writing sections. Starting now, students should begin organizing and reviewing their notes from topics started in September and should study a little bit each night to keep vocabulary and grammar items fresh in their minds. Use old flashcards they made, review vocabulary lists, worksheets, etc. Señora Rivas, Resource Teacher for World Languages and 8th Grade Team Leader, is available for extra help to Spanish students in the mornings at Connect Time, most 8th grade lunches, and after school help for 8th graders at Tuesday Tune-ups.

A resource for review is online with Spanish-only vocabulary lists for 1A at:

[http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spa\\_1A\\_Vocab\\_Rev\\_7\\_2009.pdf](http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spa_1A_Vocab_Rev_7_2009.pdf)

Extra information about the Spanish 1AB exam may also be found at:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/languages/spanish/>

[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spanish%201A%20Exam%20Information\\_2012.pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spanish%201A%20Exam%20Information_2012.pdf)



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Helpful online sites for conjugation practice:

<http://www.studyspanish.com>

<http://www.spaleon.com>

[http://conjugemos.com/home/docs/nologin/spanish\\_verbs\\_verbs\\_1.html](http://conjugemos.com/home/docs/nologin/spanish_verbs_verbs_1.html)

<http://www.quia.com>

Spanish 2A vocabulary lists:

[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spa2A\\_Vocabulary\\_Rev\\_July2010\(3\).pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spa2A_Vocabulary_Rev_July2010(3).pdf)

Spanish 2A exam reminders:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/curriculum/languages/spanish/Spanish%202A%20Exam%20Information%202012.pdf>

Spanish 2A rubrics:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/languages/spanish/>





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## MATH MATTERS

Practicing Math in the Real World with your child can be fun!

Here are some games and activities that either inherently use mathematics or can easily be adapted to stress math applications, sometimes without your child knowing they're learning!

### **Math folding: Origami**

Because it is an exacting activity that entails precise shapes and proportions, origami is a prime activity that enhances geometry.

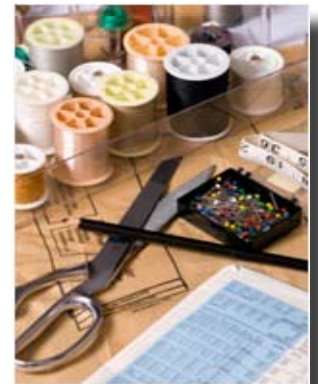


### **Math for fashion: Sewing**

The primary math application involved in sewing is measuring. Checking length and size of the material is imperative in this activity.

### **Crafty math: Beading**

This arts and crafts activity entails making jewelry, decorating clothing and accessories as well as creating artwork. Recognizing and creating geometric and other patterns, counting and measuring lengths are the basic math skills reinforced.



### **Sharp card math: Card Games**

Counting, addition, subtraction and geometry are the top math-related skills utilized and reinforced in any card game a child likes. Having the right number of cards to recognizing card suits and card hierarchy use several math skills that children need.



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## Tasty math: Baking

Volume measurement, weights and counting are the primary math skills involved in baking. Knowing the difference between a liquid ounce and a weight ounce, for instance, is a supplementary math skill that also plays an important part in baking and cooking in general.

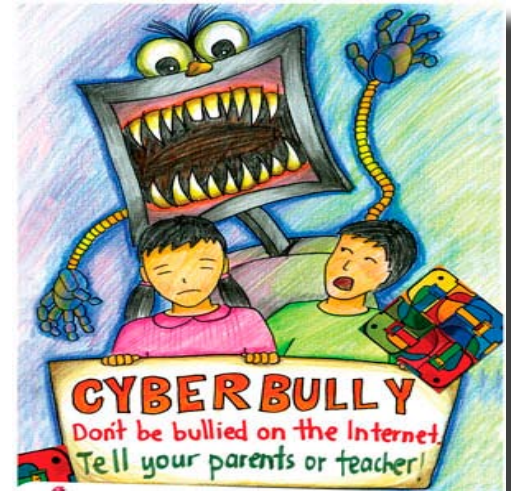
Information taken from a guest post by JC Ryan from MyCollegesandCareers.com at <http://www.mathsinsider.com/math-games-and-activities-for-your-preteen/>. Posted text has been shortened



## December Counseling Corner

### The Importance of Cybersafety

Counselors have been conducting lessons this month for all three grade levels on cybersafety. The lessons address cyberbullying, online predators, and even cyberscams. Students were given an "Internet Safety Pledge" and "Five Things to Think Before You Press Send" to use at home. A complementary cybersafety evening was held for parents by the PTA on December 13th.



### Five things to think about before pressing "Send"

- 1) Don't assume anything you send or post is going to remain private.
- 2) There is no changing your mind in cyberspace-anything you send or post may never truly go away.
- 3) Don't give in to the pressure to do something that makes you uncomfortable, even in cyberspace.
- 4) Consider the recipient's reaction.
- 5) Nothing is truly anonymous.



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## **Starting the New Year off RIGHT!**

Winter break is an excellent time to have a discussion with your children about their hopes and goals for the New Year. Some students are not familiar with the idea of setting New Year's Resolutions, and this can be an interesting idea to share.

As for parents, two upcoming opportunities in January may prove helpful in encouraging your child to be motivated and to take responsibility at both school and home. On January 10th at 7 p.m., the Farquhar PTA will feature a speaker at our school from the Parent Encouragement Program. The topic will be, "Helping Your Child to Take Responsibility." Then January 30, 7-9 p.m., the YMCA Youth and Family Services will hold an evening at White Oak Library in Silver Spring entitled "Understanding What Motivates Kids." Please register for the White Oak session by calling 301-229-1347 or emailing [parenting@ymcadc.org](mailto:parenting@ymcadc.org)

## **Thursday Club Now Under Way: You Have the Power!**

Project Change, a youth/adult nonprofit, is again offering its nationally recognized You Have The Power! Bullying Prevention program (YHTP!) to Farquhar MS students. YHTP! features high school mentors and their adult advisor working after school for 10 weeks with 15 middle school students to raise awareness about the characteristics, risks, and consequences of bullying; educate the younger students about how to be an ally to a target of bullying; and develop a school-wide anti-bullying presentation where the younger students can share this information with their school mates. These trained middle school students become knowledgeable bullying prevention leaders in their school.

The YHTP! Club will meet for 8 weeks on Thursdays after school from Dec. 22 until Feb. 23 in Room 7 at FMS.

If your child is interested in taking part in this unique program, just complete the attached permission form and bring it to Room 7 immediately after school on Thursday Dec. 22. Space is limited.

Please direct any questions to [rglass@projectchange-md.org](mailto:rglass@projectchange-md.org) and visit the web site at [www.projectchange-md.org](http://www.projectchange-md.org).



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## **About YHTP!**

YHTP! has achieved national recognition from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as a "Community Partner" for the federal "Stop Bullying Now!" Campaign. YHTP! has been featured on NBC Nightly News with Brian Williams, PBS, NBC4, and News Channel 8; highlighted in the December 2008 issue of TIME for Kids (Time Magazine's national publication for elementary students); and featured in the Washington Post, the Olney Gazette, and on Nickelodeon's "Nick News" website. Also, YHTP! teen mentors and the adult advisor serve on 2 advisory councils: (1) Cartoon Network's STOP BULLYING: SPEAK UP Initiative ([www.cartoonnetwork.com/promos/stopbullying/index.html](http://www.cartoonnetwork.com/promos/stopbullying/index.html)) and (2) The Great American NO BULL Challenge, the largest, youth-led national campaign against cyber bullying in America's history ([www.nobull.org](http://www.nobull.org)).