



Mustang Message

December 18, 2009
Franconia Elementary School



Run, run, run as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!

Well, these first graders not only caught the tasty little guy. They ate him!

From Betsy Fenske, Cluster V Assistant Superintendent

Dear Franconia Parents,

The purpose of this communication is to inform the Franconia School Community that, beginning in September 2010, Franconia Elementary will return to the traditional calendar. Recently, Lee District School Board Representative, Brad Center, and I attended a community meeting at Franconia Elementary to inform parents and staff that due to current economic challenges facing the state and the county, Fairfax County Public Schools is once again facing a significant budget shortfall of approximately \$170 million for FY 2011, which begins in July 2010. As a result, the Superintendent and School Board are faced with making difficult decisions regarding programs and services. Given such a budget crisis, it was decided to eliminate the modified school calendar at Franconia Elementary as of July 1, 2010, as there are no funding sources to sustain this calendar. Unlike the other six modified calendar schools, Franconia is not a Title I school, and therefore, receives no additional monies through Title I and Federal Stimulus funding. In order to qualify for Title I designation, the school community would have a significantly larger demographic of economically disadvantaged families than Franconia has.

Although the budget deficit is the primary reason for discontinuing the modified calendar at Franconia, the school is also scheduled to start its renovation in the new year. Continuing with the modified calendar would severely complicate the ability to perform the construction in a safe, secure, and timely manner. During a renovation, larger projects require the building to be vacant during the traditional two month summer vacation period. We expect the bid date for Franconia's renovation to occur in March, with an anticipated construction start date sometime in the spring of 2010.

While we acknowledge that there have been benefits of having a modified calendar, we are confident that the dedicated administration and staff will continue to offer a quality instructional program at Franconia Elementary on the traditional calendar schedule. We also recognize that it was important to inform you of this decision as soon as possible for your future planning purposes.

The school administration will keep you informed regarding important dates related to the 2010-2011 school year. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the principal, Ms. Merrell Dade, at 703-822-2200.

Thank you for your continued support on behalf of all the children at Franconia Elementary School!

Sincerely,
Betsy Fenske
Assistant Superintendent, Cluster V

Franconia Elementary School
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Alexandria, VA 22310
703-822-2200
www.fcps.edu/FranconiaES
Merrell Dade, Principal
Nancy Mercer, Asst. Principal

For Your Information

Early dismissal on Wednesday, December 23
Students will be released at 1:35 p.m. on Wednesday, December 23.

Intersession letters go home
Intersession confirmation letters went home with ALL students today. All students, attending and not attending, will receive a confirmation letter.

Confirmation letters should be brought to school by attending students on the first day of intersession classes.