



# Mustang Message

Franconia Elementary School  
December 1, 2010



November was a month of service for Franconia students and families. Students participated in a *Help the Homeless Walkathon* sponsored by New Hope Housing. With our motivated walkers, we were able to help New Hope Housing earn an additional \$50,000 by reaching its goal of 3,000 walkers! The PTA also got in on the fun with its annual 3K Fun Run and earned New Hope Housing an additional \$350 to support homeless families in Fairfax County. What a way to begin the holiday season!

## From the Principal

Particularly during this hectic season, do you yearn for a few extra hours of sleep while your child pleads to stay up longer? The National Science Foundation recently published an article called *Sleep Deprived Kids*. This study reminds us of the importance of the recommended 10 to 12 hours of sleep for children ages 5-12. The article states that children who do not get enough shut-eye suffer serious consequences. They do not concentrate as well or perform well on tasks that are complex. When deprived of sleep, children are more likely to be depressed, sick or obese.

A good night's sleep not only prepares your child for the challenges of the day, but also helps the body and the brain grow and develop. The body needs sleep so that muscles, bones and skin can grow and fix injuries. Sleep can also help your child stay healthy and fight illness. When at school, having a good night's sleep helps your child remember what he/she learns, pay attention, think of new ideas, and solve problems.

If you find your child is not getting enough sleep, consider changing your child's schedule. Try removing distractions from the bedroom such as cell phones, Gameboys, iPods, and televisions at night.

If you'd like to learn more about the article mentioned above or the importance of sleep for children, go to <http://www.sleepforkids.org> or [http://www.nsf.gov/news/special\\_reports/science\\_nation/sleepdeprivedkids.jsp?WT.mc\\_id=USNSF\\_51](http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/science_nation/sleepdeprivedkids.jsp?WT.mc_id=USNSF_51). So, encourage those visions of sugarplums – 10 to 12 hours worth each night! You may even find you're able to treat yourself to a little extra shut-eye as well!

Merrell V. Dade

Principal

## For Your Information

### Support a family this holiday season

Each year, Franconia receives requests for holiday assistance. If you are looking for a way to help other families, please contact our school counselor, Sofia Echaide, or our parent liaison, Odette Boyce, at 703-822-2200 to donate. We are looking for food items, grocery gift cards, toys, clothes, and department store gift cards. All donations must be received by Wednesday, December 15.

### Away from school?

Whenever you know that your child will be out of school, please notify the school about the absence as soon as possible. You can send a written note, email the teacher, leave a phone message on the school office phone (703-822-2200) or absentee line (703-822-2222). Please include the date(s) and reason for the absence. If a child is absent and the school has not been notified, the office will make every effort to contact the parents.

### Lunch menus available online

In an effort to continue our "paperless" initiative, Franconia will no longer be distributing monthly lunch menus to all students. Please go to the Food Services site at [http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food\\_at\\_school/](http://www.fcps.edu/fs/food/food_at_school/) to download a menu. You'll also find interesting links such as a healthy snack calculator, wellness brochure and much more!

Families who have opted-out of the paperless initiative will still receive paper copies of the menus.

### Stress-free birthday cookies, ice cream, and holiday baking

On your child's special day, the school cafeteria can provide freshly-baked Otis Spunkmeyer cookies or ice cream for a small fee per student. Napkins and a surprise for the birthday child are included in the birthday package. Contact the cafeteria manager, Sherry Jara, at 703-822-2221 at least one week in advance if you'd like to take advantage of this great service.

Interested in cookies for the holiday season? Families can order chocolate chip, cranberry oatmeal, ginger spice, and macadamia nut cookies freshly-baked or frozen ready-to-bake. Sound tasty? Just contact our cafeteria manager. Order now through December 17 and allow at least 2 days for delivery.