



Mustang Message

October 6, 2010



Franconia Elementary School

On Tuesday, sixth grade students put their team building skills to the test at Hemlock Overlook Regional Park. Students participated in challenging outdoor activities that helped them exhibit their problem-solving, leadership, and teamwork skills. At the end of this fun-filled day, students had a new appreciation for how to work together. They truly have a better understanding the power of trust, collaboration and communication!

From the Principal

Resilience: The 4th R

Reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic have long been the staples of a school experience, but building RESILIENCY is equally important. In this edition of *The Mustang Message*, you'll find a special section: "Building Resiliency: Helping Children Learn to Weather Tough Times."

How can we help children succeed not only in school but also in life? In his popular book, *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman argues that self control, zeal, and persistence are the main features of every successful story. Dorothy Rich, founder of the *MegaSkills* program, proposes that there are "superbasics:" beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes that determine our achievement in school and in life. These include confidence, motivation, and perseverance. Persistence, perseverance---the ability to bounce back when faced with adversity---how can we help children develop this important life skill?

Modeling positive attitudes and positive emotions is very important. Children need to hear parents thinking out loud positively and being determined to persist until a goal is achieved. Emotions, such as love and gratitude, increase resiliency. Children who achieve academic success or who develop individual talents, such as playing sports, drawing, making things, playing musical instruments, or playing games are much more likely to deal with stress positively.

Look for other ideas from our psychologist, Tonya Blanchard, in this newsletter. May we work together to help our students become confident, resilient learners!

Merrell Dade
Principal

For Your Information

New calendar, new Progress Report Dates

Now that Franconia has returned to the standard calendar, Progress Report dates have changed. Instead of the last day of the quarter, parents will receive Progress Reports on Wednesday, November 10.

Schedule your parent-teacher conference

First quarter parent-teacher conferences will be held on November 1-2. If you have not scheduled your parent-teacher conference, contact your child's teacher as soon as possible. This meeting is a valuable opportunity to learn about your child's strengths and areas for growth.

Advanced Academic Opportunities Parent Information Night

Come learn about Franconia's Advanced Academic Opportunities on Monday, October 18 from 6:00-7:00 p.m. All interested parents of students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade will receive an overview of the continuum of services and opportunities offered through K-12 Advanced Academic Programs. For more information, go to <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/gt/timeline.html>. If you have any questions, contact Linda Simon, Franconia's Advanced Academics Resource Teacher at (703) 822-2231 or LESimon@fcps.edu.

Advanced Academic testing and screening

All second grade students and students in grades 3-6 who are new to Fairfax County Public Schools will take the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) in October. Our school will administer this test **October 19-21**. Scores from this test provide information that is used as part of the selection process for advanced academic school and center-based programs.

Additionally, parents of children in grades 3-6 may request that their child retake one ability test, such as the CogAT, once between grades 3-6. To exercise this one-time option this year, **notify the school office in writing by Friday, October 15**.