



# Mustang Message

September 8, 2010



Franconia Elementary School

It's like we never left! Franconia Mustangs got back into the groove of school without missing a beat. Despite the long summer, students arrived at school yesterday ready to learn. While it is their first time being in school, these kindergarten students are already excited about writing in their journals. Wow, our Mustangs are truly going to have a tremendous year of learning!

## From the Principal

The start of a new school year holds much promise. The excitement of learning new things and being with friends is a draw for students. It is also a great time to get your child organized. By helping your child get organized now, you can help him/her develop good organizational skills that will last a lifetime!

**Evening efforts pay morning rewards.** Chaotic mornings increase chances of students forgetting lunches, homework, or projects. Get an earlier start by having your child pack backpacks and lunches, lay out clothes, and get "must haves" together before bed time.

**Clean the backpack daily.** Your child should empty his/her backpack of school work and notes from teachers daily. If done regularly, it will help remind your child of items he/she may need to give you.

**Break down homework assignments.** Some students get overwhelmed with homework. Develop a step-by-step plan to break assignments into smaller "bites." Monitor progress and provide encouragement as each step is completed.

**Add a "to do" and a "must do" list.** If your child is old enough to read and write, a "to do" list can become a part of his/her school life. Demonstrate how to make a list of that day's assignments and activities. Keep track of what's been completed and those items that still need to be completed. Knowing what needs to be done is an important step toward getting organized.

**Don't be a "pack rat."** Make a monthly "dump it" day. Go through materials and get rid of things that are no longer needed, and file away things you may need in the future. Show your child how to label and organize folders to keep materials organized and easy to find.

Remember, parental involvement in helping your child get organized is essential. Better organization at home will benefit everyone in the family. There will be less stress and better grades. Who can argue with that?

*Merrell Dade*  
Principal

## For Your Information

### Look for important papers and the newsletter on Wednesdays

Look for homework and important papers on Wednesdays, our new take-home day. School news and fliers will be posted to the school website on Wednesdays. As a part of our paper"less" initiative, parents will receive a Keep In Touch (KIT) message by 4:30 p.m. every other Wednesday when new school information is posted to the Franconia website. Go to [www.fcps.edu/FranconiaES/](http://www.fcps.edu/FranconiaES/) and click on the Take-Home Wednesday link to review posted items.

If you prefer paper copies of the school newsletter and other important information, contact the school office at (703) 822-2200.

### Earliest arrival is 8:40 a.m.

With the excitement of opening school, we have had many students arriving before the teachers! Students are waiting in the front of the building without supervision. Additionally, construction crews work in the front of the building until 8:30 a.m. Help us keep children safe. Walkers and car riders should arrive at school no earlier than **8:40 a.m.**

### Moving you through Kiss and Ride

As you may have noticed, our Kiss and Ride area has been extended! This has helped with the congestion on Kathmoor in the mornings and in the afternoon. In order to keep Kiss and Ride moving in the afternoon, if your child has not arrived outside for pick-up, we will ask you to loop around and enter Kiss and Ride, again. By doing this, we will get the students who are already waiting into their cars and on their way home quickly. At the same time, we will be able to move you through Kiss and Ride faster.

### Back-to-School Night, September 16 at 7:00 p.m.

We hope that all parents will attend our Back-to-School Night on Thursday, September 16. Because of limited seating, we ask that children not attend.

Representatives from community groups will be available at 6:30 p.m. to provide information about their programs before the evening begins. At 7 p.m., go straight to your child's classroom for the first session. You will watch our news show and get an overview of your child's school year.

Never fear if you have more than one child at the school. Parents can go to another classroom for a second session at 7:45 p.m.