



Mustang Message

We're Building Tomorrow

February 8, 2012

Franconia Elementary



Do you have a question about school health policies or wonder what to do if your child has medication he/she needs to take at school?

No worries, Debbie Quinn (left), Health Room Aide, and Julie Pellman-Webb, School Nurse (right), are here to help you! Our Health Room staff can be reached directly at 703-822-2210.

A Message from the Principal

It has been quite a week at Franconia, and it's only Wednesday! As you may know, last week, a pattern of gastrointestinal illnesses were discovered at Franconia. While the percentage of the school population infected was low, the Fairfax County Health Department wanted to ensure absences due to this illness did not become excessive. Yesterday, we received notice that the illnesses we have been experiencing are, in fact, *Norovirus*. This is a resilient virus, and it takes vigilance to prevent the spread. To ensure students and staff stay healthy we have:

- Sent notice to families via KIT about gastrointestinal illnesses; students in highly impacted the highly impacted classroom received a backpack letter.
- Screened students and staff daily to ensure they were not experiencing symptoms within the past 24 hours that may cause reinfection.
- Cleaned the contact surfaces thoroughly throughout the building with a bleach solution.
- Encouraged handwashing, handwashing, and more handwashing .
- Used the Morning News to discuss why we were screening students and how they can stay healthy.

We are happy to report that our proactive efforts are working. The number of students and staff experiencing symptoms of *Norovirus* are down. While we will continue to be diligent in our cleaning efforts, Franconia families can also help at home. If your child has experienced fever, diarrhea, or vomiting, please keep him/her home 24 hours once the illness ends. For example, if you are using medication to prevent/lower a fever, your child should not come to school. Wait until your child no longer needs the medication and has been fever-free for 24 hours.

For more information on the *Norovirus*, see the attached fact sheet. Stay healthy, Franconia!

Merrell V. Dade
Principal

New date for progress reports

Due to challenges presented this week due to illness, progress report distribution has been delayed. All progress reports will go home on Friday, February 10.

New rules about Kindle, Nook and other device use in school

There are new rules governing the use of personal electronic devices such as Nooks, Kindles, Tablets and the like that students bring to school to use during independent reading time. Students who would like to bring such devices to school are welcome to do so, at their own risk, as long as it is for instructional purposes. The school is not responsible for theft or damage. However, if your child chooses to bring the device to school, parents must make an appointment with our Technology Support Specialist, Greg Lalande, to register the device with FCPS and to sign an acceptable use permission form. Once the device is registered and the permission form is submitted, students may use the devices at school.

The students who are currently using the devices in school will attend a brief meeting on Friday, February 10 to learn about the policy and to receive the appropriate paperwork. Students will not be allowed to use these devices in school until all paperwork is complete beginning Monday, February 13.

If you would like to make an appointment, please call the school office at 703-822-2200.

Be ready for the weather

With the weather fluctuations, it is sometimes hard for your child to determine what is appropriate to wear each day at school. Please help your child make good decisions. It is always easier to remove items of clothing than to be underdressed.