



Mustang Message

We're Building Tomorrow

January 25, 2012

Franconia Elementary



Got a buddy? When in school, students travel with buddies for safety. During class meetings, health lessons and when discussing what to do in crisis situations, students learn about the importance of staying together and seeking a trusted adult when they need help or feel uncomfortable. With the recent events in the Clermont community, Franconia staff are reinforcing what students should do if they are approached by a stranger. Help us make the message even more powerful by having the same discussion at home. For pointers, see the attached sheets that were provided by the Fairfax County Police during the Clermont community meeting.

A Message from the Principal

“Drill and Practice” is no longer a reference to math flash cards or spelling words. Students in today’s schools also “drill and practice” for many emergency situations.

Monthly fire drills help students practice exiting classrooms and the building quickly. Large numbers over exit doors direct fire/rescue teams to the appropriate location. Tornado drills occur annually, and offices have weather radios and means for emergency communication.

Should a school need to evacuate for any reason, a Crisis Management Plan details student relocation and parent notification. School Crisis Response teams are trained and practice responding to emergency scenarios.

Teachers have been trained to respond to a “lock down” announcement to secure the classroom and building quickly. Should a chemical in the atmosphere pose a threat, schools institute a plan to “Shelter in Place” by closing all windows, securing doors from exit and entry, and shutting down electrical air intake systems. Students remain “sheltered” until public safety officials signal “all clear.”

In emergencies, we make every effort to relay critical information to parents. So that you, too, may be prepared, FCPS has the Keep in Touch (KIT) notification system in place. While parents are enrolled each year when they return their emergency care form, interested parents can go to <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/> to customize KIT messages from Fairfax County Public Schools.

Merrell V. Dade
Principal

Earliest arrival is 8:40 a.m.

With recent community events, it’s important that we work together to ensure student safety. At times, we have noticed that students are arriving at school before the teachers! They are being dropped off at the Kiss & Ride loop without supervision.

Staff members arrive for duty at 8:35 a.m. To ensure an adult is supervising your child, please plan to arrive at school no earlier than **8:40 a.m.** when using Kiss & Ride. If arriving at 8:40 a.m. is a challenge, try putting your child on the school bus. All Franconia students have access to bus transportation to and from school. If you are not sure about your stop, contact the school office at 703-822-2200. Help us keep children safe.

The importance of being on time

Some of our families find mornings hectic. Sometimes getting everyone out the door and to school on time is a challenge. While being a few minutes late for school may not seem like much, it may impact academic progress and create possible safety concerns.

Participation in morning routines is essential for academic success. Teachers use the first few minutes of the day to review the class schedule and collect assignments. Instruction begins promptly. When a student is late, it takes time to check in the office and walk to class. Thus, when a student is tardy, he or she misses valuable instructional time.

Tardiness is also a concern because of safety issues. When the last bell sounds at 8:55 a.m., safety patrols and school staff leave their assigned duty posts. Students who arrive after the bell should be accompanied into the building by a parent or guardian to ensure safety.