

Mustang Message

We're Building Tomorrow

October 26, 2011

Franconia Elementary



Who doesn't like a good book? Well, Franconia students got an opportunity to meet award-winning authors and illustrators Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel today. Students learned about being authors and got to know the folks who wrote some of their favorite library books! What a treat!!

A Message from the Principal

Parent-teacher conference time is a great way to strengthen the partnership between home and school. It is the teacher's opportunity to share your child's successes and challenges. It is your opportunity to ask questions and share concerns. For both parents and teachers, it's an opportunity to problem-solve ways to support your child so that he or she can be successful in school. In order to make the most of conference time in November, below you'll find some tips to think about before you meet your child's teacher.

- **Talk with your child before the conference.** Ask what he/she thinks the teacher will say. Talk about any likes, dislikes, problems, and successes.
- **Think about what you want to learn from the conference.** Make a few notes. They help all of us stay focused!
- **Ask the teacher to explain anything you don't understand.** We are a profession of acronyms—EIT, SOLs, POS, IEP, DRA, MRA. No question is a foolish one.
- **Be prepared to talk and listen.** Tell the teacher what you see at home. Talk about your child's interests. Tactfully talk about any concerns. Let us know about anything that might affect your child's learning at school. Sometimes the smallest changes at home have an impact on your child at school.
- **Follow up. Stay in touch.** If you think of a question you didn't ask, write a note to the teacher. Remember that the teacher is also anxious to please. Try to mention a bright spot in your child's program. If there are issues, listen carefully to the concerns and ask probing questions. Sharing issues can be difficult for both teachers to convey and parents to hear.

As you know, when parents and teachers work effectively together, they make an unbeatable team!

Merrell Dade
Principal

Purchase Thanksgiving Luncheon ticket in advance

Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, a little pumpkin ice cream, and the company of your child? Sounds irresistible! Join us on **Friday, November 11**, for our *Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon and Classroom Open House*. To save you time and help our lines move quickly, purchase lunch tickets in advance. Return the invitation with your method of payment by **Friday, November 4**. On line, invitations and lunch schedules can be found on Franconia's take-home materials site. Go to www.fcps.edu/FranconiaES.

Tickets purchased for guests who do not attend Franconia will be sent home with confirmation that payment has been received. **This year, tickets for Franconia students do not need to be purchased in advance.** The classroom will complete a lunch count on the day of the luncheon. We hope to see you there!

Protect everyone's safety during arrival and dismissal

Taking care of your child's safety is a daily job for parents and school staff. At school, we work diligently to ensure the safety of your child in the building and on the playground. We also conduct various safety drills to make sure students and staff know what to do in the event of an emergency. However, arrival and dismissal can sometimes pose safety hazards for children and staff, especially when families are in a rush to get to and from school.

The Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education article, *Parents: Avoid Becoming a Traffic Hazard* describes the following ways parents and caregivers may inadvertently become serious traffic hazards:

- Double-parking a vehicle in a school zone.
- Calling a child to cross the street in the middle of a block while waiting in the car.
- Blocking traffic in a school zone while dropping off or picking up a child.
- Allowing a child to exit the car into traffic rather than on the sidewalk side of the car.
- Stopping in crosswalk, blocking visibility for children and other motorists.
- Driving beside the bus, sounding the horn, and requesting the driver to stop for a forgotten item.
- Illegally passing a loading or unloading school bus.

Parents can minimize hazards to children by doing the following things:

- Carpool with neighbors to reduce the number of cars at the school or bus stop, especially in bad weather.
- Accompany your child as he or she crosses the street. Do not make your child cross the street in a dangerous way just because it's more convenient for you.
- Never double park and do not let your child out of the vehicle that is not next to the curb.
- Follow the school's traffic pattern for dropping off and picking up.
- Reduce your speed when you enter a school zone or where children walk.
- Train your child to look all ways (left, right, behind, and ahead) and to walk cautiously when crossing the street. Stress the importance of using crosswalks.
- Make sure children wear seat belts or are appropriately secured in a child safety or booster seat when riding in a car.

The steps for keeping everyone safe are so easy. So, when using Kiss & Ride at Franconia, please remember the simple steps above. Remember, we want Franconia to be a safe and productive place for all!