

Florenceville Middle School February 2017 Newsletter

School Vision - "All students will be given the opportunity and support to become responsible citizens."

School Mission - "The mission of FMS is to develop students who are intellectually, technologically, physically and socially ready for their place in the 21st century world."



February 2017

1st: FMS Newsletter

8th: Calithumpians presentation to student body and workshop with Gaia club

20th: Go Girls Events for Grade 8 girls

20th - 24th: Book Fair

22nd: Pink Day

24th: Professional Learning Day - no school for students

28th: PSSC Meeting in Library at 7:00 pm

March 2017

1st: FMS Newsletter

3rd: AYR Motor Centre Activity Day

6th - 10th: March Break

23rd: HPV Vaccine #2 for Grade 7 Girls

23rd: FMS Dance

27th: Third Exploratory Rotation begins

28th: PSSC Meeting in Library at 7:00 pm

TBA: Science Fair for Grade 8

Calithumpians present "Y.E.S. InDeed"

Fredericton's Outdoor Summer Theatre's flagship Calithumpians troupe is presenting *Y.E.S. InDeed*, an environmental consciousness production, throughout NB Schools. They are coming to FMS on Wednesday, February 8th.

Adapting folklore, literature, history, pop culture and local humor to teach environmental stewardship to young New Brunswickers, *Y.E.S. InDeed* encourages working together to create a sustainable planet for all of us. Through drama, comedy and song, the family-oriented production translates the oft-dense scientific information on climate change into a language our young environmental stewards can comprehend, then calls them to action: from small gestures such as litter clean-up and water and energy conservation, to larger-scale efforts in association with parents and teachers.

We are also pleased to have the troupe do a workshop with members of our Gaia club following the presentation to the entire student body.

FMS Book Fair

Our next Book Fair is booked! ☺ It will be held Tuesday February 21 - Thursday February 23. It will be open for students to view the books Tuesday afternoon. Purchasing will start Wednesday morning for students, and be open for everyone from 2-4 Wednesday afternoon. Thursday the fair will be open for everyone to purchase from 12 - 5.

Pink Day

On February 22nd, FMS will be celebrating "Pink Shirt Day". Students are encouraged to wear a pink article of clothing in support of anti-bullying.

Games

Students have been enjoying board games from our games' tote in the cafeteria at noon. If you have board games or decks of cards in good condition that are not being used in your home, we would put your donation to great use. Thanks!

From the desk of . . . Mrs. K.



As many of you know, I was away from FMS for almost two months in the fall. In fact, there were a number of extended adult absences and with that, understandably, came some unrest. Despite those challenges, we have done some great things so far this school year, and there are many moments of which we can be very proud. However, my concern at this point is that despite the return of nearly all those adults and a return to routine, the road is still feeling very bumpy. In fact, the number of hours that Ms. Rioux and I have spent with our Administrators' hats on investigating and following up on what can only be described as nonsense is very disappointing. I've given this a great deal of reflection and in some cases, I've had conversations about this with some of you as parents.

Middle school students are going to use poor judgment at times. They are going to make mistakes. They are going to disagree, and sometimes be in conflict with each other and with us. They might even do things that might make us want to say "what on earth were you thinking?" This is expected and we have a skill set and a system through which we work to resolve these issues. It is a part of being there for them and supporting them in their development.

What has been time consuming and frustrating for the teachers and administrators in these past months is not usually the initial behavior itself, but rather the response to our addressing the problem. It is not specific to a certain class or grade and it seems to be 'spreading'. More and more, we are seeing students question our authority to set specific expectations, to correct their behavior when they don't meet the expectations and to apply consequences when applicable. There is also a higher incidence of vandalism and mess-making than the norm. The reactions of many seem to show that they don't understand why they can't just do what they want to do when they want to do it (often conveyed as 'so what?'). Students are frustrated that we don't just ignore poor behavior or 'let it go'. What we are trying to help them understand is that guiding 200 students through 'bumps in the road' at school will often look different than how you handle situations in the home. We simply do not have the flexibility to bargain or let things go like a family unit may be able to. A family of our size (over 220!) needs to operate consistently in order to create and maintain the positive learning and working environment where all can grow and learn.

As I explained to students on the announcements yesterday, we really have this simple ask of them. When you use poor judgment, or make a mistake, just be honest with yourself and with us about it. Own it. Do the work you need to do to make it right, (finish the work, clean up the mess, apologize to the person you impacted, etc.); and work hard to learn from the experience so as not to make the same mistake again. Those bumps in the road will happen and we can work together to get through them peacefully and without making it a big deal. Let's not invest energy in avoidance, blame, or arguing about the rules. Then we can put what should be a simple incident behind us, as part of our learning journey, and get the focus back where it should be: working to be the best learner and person we can be and contribute to making FMS the best that it can be.

We have great students and most are doing what they need to do most of the time. We would just like to improve things so that we can spend our focused time on engaging students in meaningful learning rather than on nuisance and nonsense that detracts from that. I am confident that they can do this if we help them understand the 'own it, make it right, learn from it' mindset. We appreciate the great work you do as supportive parents in helping them to understand this message.