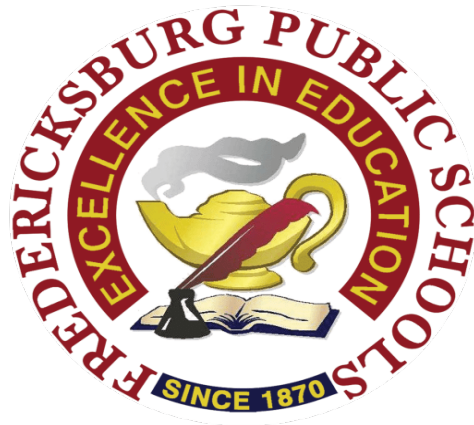


EQUITY & INCLUSION



1-14-22

EDITION 2.8

If you are interested in being a part of the **Dr. Martin Luther King Holiday Peace Walk in DC on Monday, January 17th** you can register below. I will be attending as long as the roads allow me to get to the Metro. I do plan on going regardless of the weather. If the weather is not horrible then the other 7 members of my household will also walk.....although the 30 mph winds might keep them at home. If you would like to walk with us and form a FCPS contingent I will be at the corner of First St SE and NS SE at 9:30.

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)

HISTORY:

The **Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Peace Walk** is held annually on the federal MLK holiday. The Peace Walk is coordinated by the Coalition for Peace, a group of individuals and non-profits dedicated to peace and positivity for the Washington DC metropolitan communities.

You can also take part in other activities to honor Dr. King's legacy. There is a little something planned for every individual 😊. Just click on the following link. <https://mlkholidaydc.org/>

FCPS Cultural Highlights

This is a new feature to the newsletter. We will be highlighting different cultures that exist within our school community throughout the upcoming months. It is important for Educators to get to know these cultural beliefs of their students because with this knowledge comes a better understanding of who your students are and where they have come from. Knowledge of their religion, ethnicity, social relationships, and gender roles can help educators better prepare for accommodating these students in their classrooms.

I do NOT claim to be an expert on any one culture, but I am always striving to learn and understand more. If you have information that you would like to share for future newsletters, please send it my way!



AFGHANISTAN

I will highlight some cultural aspects of Afghanistan, but before I do I think it is important for us to understand that the people of Afghanistan have experienced significant trauma due to war that has continued for over 40 years. Afghan refugees experience high levels of PTSD and anxiety.

Historically, Afghanistan has been a very peaceful and neutral country. However, invasions by Britain and the former Soviet Union really had a major impact on the Afghan people and their culture. Furthermore, it also became necessary to defend against the Taliban and different jihadist groups. These conflicts have led to many Afghans fleeing to other countries. Further trauma occurs in refugee camps and upon resettlement. Due to all of the conflict, the average age in Afghanistan is only 18 years old. In the U.S., the average age is around 40 years old.

Key concepts:

- Afghanistan is a part of Asia. It is not a part of the Middle East or the Arab Peninsula.
- The largest ethnic group is the Pashtun people. Pashto is the language spoken by the majority of the Pashtun.

- The second largest ethnic group is the Tajiks. Persian is the language spoken by the Tajiks and is most commonly referred to as Dari or Farsi.
- There are two main branches of Islam (Sunni and Shi'a) that are followed.
- Sunni Muslims believe that after the Prophet Mohammed's death that new leadership should be elected based on who is the best fit to lead.
- Shi'a Muslims believe that leadership should be passed via family lineage.
- **FAMILY** is more important than anything else in Afghanistan. Being loyal and honoring the family are of utmost importance.
- Typically, men are the source of income and women are viewed as the homemakers.
- Separation of genders is very common and "mingling" usually only occurs with the family unit. When in public a physical distance between genders is usually observed.
- Most Afghan people do not touch non-family members when greeting each other.
- Afghan people are very welcoming and they are honored to have guests.

Common mistakes to avoid/how to avoid common mistakes with our Afghan families:

- NEVER ever ever call Afghans "Arabs or Middle Easterns".
- Do not ask about the Taliban or jihadist groups.
- Do not assume that Afghan people are uneducated or unfamiliar with things we take for granted like tv, cellphones, computers, cars, etc....
- Avoid complaining about the little stuff. Most of our students and families have suffered significant trauma.
- Asking about family in Afghanistan can be a trigger to sadness. Many have relatives that either been killed or who are still in Afghanistan.
- If you are a male, wait for a female to extend her hand for a shake.

We have a lot of cultures to celebrate in our community. The more that we learn about each culture, the more that we will move towards understanding, celebrating and eventually unity. We need to help our co-workers and our students to understand each other. Kindness and respect are NEEDED in every aspect of our lives!!!!

7-year-old boy's escape from Afghanistan

