



The Firebird Screams

“Ask not for whom the Firebird screams, he screams for you!” - Fred the Firebird

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Welcome to the SCREAMER!



HAPPY NEW YEAR!! Fred the Firebird here, wishing one and all the happiest New Year possible. We're going to learn more, progress more, and do more great things than you can even imagine in 2014! So let me start the year off right with a Firebird's SCREAM about what's going on at FLA.

Here we go - - - !

-Fred the Firebird

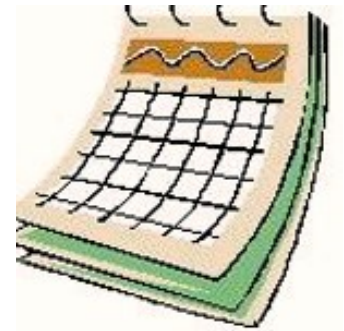
2014-2015 Enrollment Lottery

Applications for next year's lottery are now available online and will be available through 5pm on March 7th. The lottery itself is set for Saturday March 22nd. Students who are already attending FLA do **NOT** have to re-apply if they are returning next year, their slots are guaranteed as long as they stay students in good standing. But every student who wants to be in the enrollment lottery for next year's slots **MUST** submit a new application. Please note: last year's applications are no good now, and if you're on the waitlist now, you must re-apply for next year.

The names of brothers and sisters of students who are currently enrolled at FLA will go into a special "sibling lottery" which will be held first. These students get first shot at any slots we have open, at all grade levels, including kindergarten. If there are still slots open after the sibling lottery, those slots will go to all other applicants in the lottery order until all slots are filled.

One big thing: we will be expanding next year to include 8th grade, and we'll also have at least 40 open slots for kindergarten. But we will also be opening up a brand-new third class of 7th graders and a third class of 8th-graders, too. So even if all our current 6th-graders return, we'll still have 20 new slots open for 7th grade. Same thing is true for 8th grade.

Help us spread the word about our 7th- and 8th-grade expansion and about all the kindergarten slots. There might well be a few slots open in each of the other grades, too, so we encourage everyone who wants a chance at an enrollment slot in any grade to get their applications in before the deadline.



Inclement Weather Information about Closings, etc.

We're moving into winter weather season this week, the time of year when we can expect occasional weather-related school delays and cancellations. [If you don't believe it, just ask Dr. D, who rolled and totaled his truck on "black ice" the day after Christmas!] For your convenience, here's a reminder about our bad weather procedures:

When Falls Lake Academy opens late, dismisses early, or closes for inclement weather, that information will go out to parents via the following:

FLA website

WRAL TV Channel 5

WTVD TV Channel 11

WRAL.com

Radio Mix 101.5

SchoolConnects direct phone and email to Parent

Student Service Hours Vs. Parent Volunteer Hours

Let's clear up the confusion about student hours vs. parent hours:

Student Hours The FLA state-approved charter includes a provision that all students will complete 10 hours of school or community service each year. In order to get credit for those hours, and to help us assure that everyone actually completes real service hours, we ask that students get their service hours activities approved (in advance, if possible). Once they complete each service hours activity, the adult responsible for supervising the students in that activity is required to sign off on them on the student's School-Community Service Log (service log forms are available from Mrs. Orr or Mrs. Lee). Yes, parents can sometimes be the supervising / signing adult, depending upon the type of activity, but not always; if the activity is being sponsored by some group or organization, then the person in charge of the activity on behalf of that group or organization is the one who signs off.

Mrs. Lee is in charge of receiving, checking, and recording service hour logs for students in grades K-3, Mrs. Orr is in charge of receiving, checking, and recording service hour logs for students in grades 4-7.

Important note: completion of 10 approved and recorded service hours each year is a promotion requirement at FLA. Students who do not complete 10 approved hours and get them recorded on their logs by the deadline each year, with supervisors' signatures, will not be promoted to the next grade level.

From time to time, Mrs. Orr and Mrs. Lee will hold special activities here at school designed to help students earn service hours credit. Students should not wait for those activities, however, but should actively seek out opportunities to engage in school and/or community service activities in and around their own neighborhoods and throughout the greater community (just remember to get them approved before charging into them!). Mrs. Orr and Mrs. Lee are the ones who approved off-campus hours opportunities, too.

Parent Hours On the other hand, parents are asked to complete at least 10 volunteer service hours directly to the school each semester (other adult family members may complete them instead of the parents, if necessary). Parent / family service hours are managed by FLAP. Here's what Jody Haynes, FLAP president, sent us regarding parent hours:

Redeem Your Volunteer Hours:

The way we prefer our FLA parents to track their 10 hours per semester is to send an email to the following address: volunteer@fallslakeacademy.com

The information we need in the e-mail:

- Subject Line: < Name > Volunteer Hours
- In the Body of the email:
 - Name: < Name >
 - Date you Volunteered: < Date >
 - Number of Hours: < # of Hours >
 - Volunteer Task Description: < Task Description >



Hours that aren't e-mailed in don't get recorded, and you can't get credit for them. And you should definitely want to get credit for all your service hours, because we plan to recognize our most active volunteers at the year-end awards program, including the Volunteer of the Year award!

Hope this clears up any confusion. Happy volunteering!

3rd Quarter Lunch Ordering

It's that time again – catered lunch orders for 3rd quarter are due by Friday, January 10th. The online ordering window is now open and if you're planning to have lunch delivered one or more days each week between January 22nd and March 27th, you must have your order in by the January 10th.

One big thing: we're changing a couple of our lunch vendors! We have contracted with Roma's Pizza, McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, American Hero and Simply Delicious Catering to provide deliveries daily. Check it out! If you haven't been ordering lunch so far this year, you might well decide to do so now because of your new lunch choices!



Snow and Ice Removal

Winter weather is coming, and we know that there will probably be one or more times this winter when we will need help clearing snow and/or ice from our walkways, parking lot, and aluminum decking; even from our entrance and exit drives! We are looking for a team of volunteers who will stand by to be called when winter weather makes it unsafe to move around on campus, even when the roads are generally clear and school is open. Regular public schools belong to county and city school systems who send out maintenance people to handle these things; we don't have that, and so we must rely on parent volunteers.



Stephen Averette has volunteered to head up this standby volunteer crew (many thanks, Steve!). If you don't mind working outside in cold, wintry weather, and if you'd agree to be on our volunteer team call list for clearing snow and ice, please call either Ms. Ford at the FLA main desk or call Stephen directly at 919-906-4943. Of, if you prefer, you can e-mail Stephen at Sodman238@aol.com.

Here's what we need:

- tractors with blades
- snow shovels (flat ones work also)
- Bobcats/skid-steers/ front end loaders
- commercial spreaders
- volunteers to dig, spread, & operate equipment.

Hopefully, with the large equipment on stand-by, we can tackle any inclement weather that may occur. Don't wait until the day we are blocked in under three feet of snow and ice, that will be too late – please contact Steve ASAP to be put on the bad weather contact list if you would like to help. Thank you!!

Upcoming FLAP Event

Winter Jubilee Family Fun Night [Chairperson: Kelly Fetterhoff]

When: Friday January 31, 2014, 6:00-9:00pm

Where: Richie Bros. Auctioneers, 800 Business Park Drive, Butner

What: Our Winter Jubilee Family Fun Night held at the Richie Bros. Auctioneers' Butner facility will be a FLAP fundraiser fun night open to all family members of FLA students, surrounding community members, and friends of FLA. The PTA is partnering with the Kiwanis Club in hosting our family bingo games. The PTA is also offering concessions, games, and other activities occurring alongside the family bingo games.

All proceeds from the Winter Jubilee Family Fun Night will go toward funding our current projects, which include the purchase of playground equipment, classroom technology, and music equipment for all grades.

Rain Dismissal Procedure

Reminder: when the weather is bad (rainy, snowy, sleeting, etc.) at 2:45, we will put our Rainy Weather Dismissal Plan into effect:



- All students will line up inside the building but remain inside until they are called out.
- Students will be called out by name and grade as usual, but the pickup line of cars will have to wait until those kids called make it out to be picked up.
- "Park and Walk" kids – those whose parents (or other rides) park in the lot and wait for them to cross the drive and meet them – will be released last (about 3:15), after the cars in the pickup line have moved on and the drive is clear.

These procedures will result in a slower afternoon pickup, but the safety tradeoff is potentially significant. We thank you in advance for your cooperation as we work to keep our kids safe.

Yearbook Sales

FLA's very first Yearbook will go on advance sale starting Monday, January 6th. Advance sales only, no extra copies will be ordered. If you'd like a copy of this school's very first yearbook, send a check for \$15 made out to Falls Lake Academy



PBL Presentations and Student Led Conferences

All FLA students have been working hard throughout this first semester on PBL projects, and they are almost ready to present their latest efforts. At the same time, they've all been working hard to develop their individual Showcase Portfolios. Both will be presented on Thursday, January 16th, 2014. You'll be hearing from your PAA soon about your scheduled time on the 16th to come in to witness your sparklet's PBL presentation, followed immediately by his or her Student-Led Conference using his/her Showcase Portfolio. It's an exciting addition to our PBL way of teaching and learning, and we promise you'll be impressed! Just keep in mind that this is the first time our kids – and our staff – have done this, and they are still learning how to do it right. But we will be following this procedure at the end of every semester from now on, so project presentations will be getting stronger better as we go along, as will Student-Led Conferences.

Parents must be there for semester-end PBL project presentations and Student-Led Conferences, because their feedback is part of each student's grade. Parents who just plain cannot find a way to come are approved to send someone in their place: grandparents, older siblings, other family members or close friends; any adults who can stand in for the parents to observe each student's presentation and participate in Student-Led Conferences are OK.

IMPORTANT Calendar/Date Changes

Due to new state legislation, all public schools (which includes charter schools) in North Carolina are required to complete all End of Grade Testing during the last 10 days of school. Gone are the days when we could spread testing out, and because of this legislation, space becomes a major issue for us this year. Therefore the Board has approved the recommendation to end this school year for Kindergarten and 1st grade on Wednesday, June 4th – a week earlier than the rest of the school. The reason is simple expediency: Grades 3 through 7 EOG tests will each require several extra rooms (by state and federal law) to test EC students who require separate settings, and we just plain don't have any options for extra space.



Please note the following changes to the calendar (These have been updated on the School Website):

- May 22nd - Early Release for PBL Project Presentations and Student Led Conferencing
- May 23rd - Field Day for Grades K-7
- May 26th - No School - Memorial Day Holiday
- May 29th - 3rd Grade Reading EOG
- May 30th - 3rd Grade Math EOG
- June 4th - Last Day of School for Kindergarten and 1st grade students (Full Day of School)
- June 5th - 4th and 5th grade Reading EOG / 6th and 7th grade Social Studies Common Exam
- June 6th - 4th and 5th grade Math EOG / 6th and 7th grade Science Common Exam
- June 9th - 6th and 7th grade Reading EOG / 5th grade Science EOG
- June 10th - 6th and 7th grade Math EOG / 3rd grade Reading EOG Retest
- June 11th - Last Day of School for 2nd grade - 7th grade students (Early Release Day)