



The Firebird Screams

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2013

VOLUME #1 NUMBER #5

Welcome to
the SCREAMER!



Hello out there in Firebird Country, all you Firebird parents ("FLAP"pers) and students ("sparklets")! Fred the Firebird here, wiping a shaky wing across my blazing brow and SCREAMING "Whew!" at all the goings-on around FLA over the last couple of weeks. Sure has been a lot of hot stuff happening here in Firebird Country, hasn't there? ["Hot stuff" - Firebird Country - get it? Yuk, yuk.]

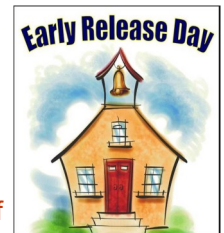
Anyway, it looks like things are going to calm down for a little while now. Or ... are they? Read on to find out .

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-Fred the Firebird

Early Release

Parents, please don't forget to pick up your kids early this Wednesday, November 27th! Wednesday is an early-release day prior to the Thanksgiving holidays later this week. School will let out at noon on Wednesday. [FAST is still open until 6:00 as usual.]



And mark your calendar for a slight change: the Board has authorized an early release day on Friday, December 20th - the last day of school before we close for Christmas break. Make note!

Lost and Found

Last call to go through our ever-growing mountain of lost and found clothing, water bottles, and various other stuff before it goes out the door! Any lost and found stuff left here after school closes this Wednesday 11-27 will be donated to a local charity. Just in time for Christmas!

First Annual Christmas Concert

The Falls Lake Academy Music Department is pleased to announce the First Annual FLA Christmas Concert, to be held in the Bible Baptist Church gym on Thursday evening, December 19th. All the elementary classes will sing, the middle school chorus will perform, and both beginner and cadet bands will play. Elementary classes will sing at 6:00pm and Middle School classes will sing/play at 7:30pm. Mark your calendars! You won't want to miss this one - we guarantee, A GOOD TIME WILL BE HAD BY ALL!

Inclement Weather Information about Closings, etc.

'Tis the season for school to close for snow and ice. Please note our 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
parents

WRAL.com
Radio Mix 101.5
SchoolConnects direct phone and e-mail to

About Homework Club

Since FLA opened in August, we've offered academic assistance and a safe, quiet place for students to study three afternoons each week when Homework Club is held on the middle school hallway from right after school until about 4:15. Homework Club has become so popular that it's in danger of losing its focus, so we have been obliged to forge some rules. ***The following Homework Club regulations and procedures went into effect last week and are in effect from now on,*** barring further action to the contrary:

- Homework Club is not FAST (Firebird After School Time), nor is it a babysitting service: Homework Club is for students who need a place and time to study, and/or some informal tutoring help. Students are NOT to be "sent" to Homework Club by parents when they are going to be picked up late; picking up students after school by 3:30 is the responsibility of all FLA parents, and students who are not picked up by then will be sent to FAST. Parents will be billed at the regular weekly rate when that happens.
- Likewise, students who finish other FLA after-school extracurricular activities before 4:15 are not to be sent to HW Club to wait for their rides.
- Students will *only* be permitted entrance to Homework Club when they are approved by their teacher. Teachers will send a list of students approved for Homework Club each day to the HW Club coordinator (Mr. Decker or Ms. Cunningham). Teachers can approve students for HW Club at the student's request or at the student's parents' request, but only FLA teachers and administrators can approve students for HW Club on any given day.
- Students may only come to HW Club when they have an assignment from an FLA teacher or something they plan to study on their own. Students who show up without something to work on, even with the approval of a teacher, will not be allowed entrance.
- Students in HW Club are expected to stay until 4:15 (may stay as long as 4:30 if they are working steadily and wish to stay that long). HW Club students' rides must pick them up by 4:30 or they will be sent to FAST; again, parents will be billed at the regular weekly rate when that happens.
- Parents who come to pick up students in HW Club between 3:15 and 4:15 must come to the office and have those students called up by the secretary; parents may not go down the hall unannounced and take a student out of HW Club without authorization. Nor may students pack up and leave HW Club before 4:15 without authorization. Students in HW Club will NOT be allowed to leave and wait outside for parents who tell them to "be ready" to be picked up at any time before 4:15.
- Teachers are assigned to HW Club every day it is open: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 3:15-4:15 (4:30 latest). They can and will all help students who need help in whatever subjects are needed, but our teachers are all subject-area specialists with more expertise in some areas than in others. Students who want special extra help and/or tutoring in certain subjects are strongly encouraged to find out which afternoons one or more specialists in the areas in which they need help are scheduled to cover HW Club in order to get the best possible help when they need it.
- Middle school (and a very few upper-elementary school) students who excel at one or more academic subject areas can earn required School and Community Service hours' credit by tutoring during HW Club. Students who think they can handle that kind of peer-tutoring responsibility should see Mr. Decker or Ms. Cunningham to volunteer to tutor one or more afternoons per week.

Take advantage of Homework Club: it is potentially one of the strongest tools we have in our toolbox to help students excel academically. With the establishment of these rules, we hope it will be even stronger!

FLAP/PTA Meeting Schedule

FLAP and the PTA will hold their regular monthly meetings on the following schedule for the rest of this school year (all Monday evenings, 7:00pm in Mrs. Holcombe's classroom unless otherwise announced):

December 9th
January 13th

February 3rd
March 3rd

April 7th
May 5th

June 9th

Additional called meetings may be added if / when necessary. All such non-scheduled meetings will be announced in the SCREAMER, on the school's website, and by SchoolConnects phone call and/or e-mail, if alert time permits.

FLAP Officer Contacts

Are you bewildered about who to contact when, to talk about what - - - ? Here's a key to understanding the parent support organizational structure:

FLAP (**F**alls **L**ake **A**cademy **P**arents) is the "big" parent organization that ALL Firebird parents belong to, just because you have a child at FLA. The PTA (**P**arent-**T**eacher **A**ssociation) is a smaller parent group associated with the state PTA that includes only those parents who join and pay their \$4.00 dues. The PAC (**P**arent **A**dvisory **C**ouncil) is the "steering committee" for both parent groups; it's made up of one parent elected from each grade. They're called "grade-level representatives," or "parent reps" for short. The eight parent reps who make up the PAC organize and manage the business, activities, and events of FLAP and the PTA. Each parent rep has an officer title as well, as you can see from this:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Cell Phone</u>
2	President	Jody Haynes	fallslakeacademypta@gmail.com	919-562-0923
6	Co-Vice President	Crystal Jones	crystalanddavey@yahoo.com	919-529-0676
4	Co-Vice President	Karen Ellis	kjellis13@nc.rr.com	919-599-3443
1	Co-Vice President	Brandi Chappell	brandi.chappell@basf.com	919-730-2789
3	Co-Secretary	Kim Holmes	kimholmescm@yahoo.com	919-529-2675
K	Co-Secretary	Ann Rouse	acr0612@gmail.com	919-477-0428
7	Treasurer	Heather Fisher	hfisher@bop.gov	919-604-5624
5	Communications	Corinna Sammons	sammonsnc@aol.com	919-528-9546

When you have a question, concern, or idea that needs to be shared with parents and/or teachers, FLAP and the PTA are the organizations to take it to. Do that by first contacting your own grade-level parent rep (see above), then one of the other officers. FLAP and the PTA want to hear from you!

Upcoming FLAP Events

A Conversation About FLA High School [Chairperson: Jody Haynes]

When: Monday evening December 2nd, 6:00pm
Where: Mrs. Holcombe's classroom

What: A short year from now, we'll be gearing up to open our annual enrollment lottery to incoming 9th-grade high school freshmen. And only two years from now, we'll be a third of the way through the first year of the Falls Lake Academy High School. What should our high school look like? What kinds of programs should we have? What time of day will the school be open, and what courses will be offered? Do we need career and technical options? What about the AIG program, and what's all this we're hearing about the International Baccalaureate Diploma program?

These and a host of other topics are in the initial planning stages right now, and the Board and administration are interested in hearing your ideas and input. There will be no firm decisions made at this informal conversation meeting, but your voice will be heard, and your suggestions will be made available to the Board of Directors as they plow into the thousands of decisions that must be made before opening the FLA High School in August, 2015.

Secret Santa Shop [Chairperson: Susan Zink]

When: Friday December 13th, 3:00-6:00 and Saturday December 14th, 10:00-3:00
Where: FLA main building (hallways outside the 3rd through 7th grade classrooms)

What: This is a very special in-school holiday shopping experience for students of all ages. The FLA Santa's Secret Shop program allows students the opportunity to "shop" for Christmas presents for their parents and loved ones in a safe, secure, environment while parents wait for them in our "Grown-Up's room".

This is a special event for the kids, not really a fundraiser. With that said, all of the modest proceeds from the Secret Santa's Shop will go toward funding our current projects, which include the purchase of playground equipment, classroom technology, and music equipment for all grades.

Hopefully, the big man of Christmas himself, Jolly Old St. Nicholas – otherwise known as Santa Claus – will be on hand, stopping by for cookies, hot cider, and hot chocolate. Kids will have a chance to take photos of themselves with Santa while shopping at Secret Santa's Shop for kid-priced gifts.

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.

Boxtop Bucks

FLAP has been very busy so far this year, raising money and providing support for the whole FLA educational program. Box Tops for Education is one of those efforts, an easy way to bring in some real money in support of our classrooms and kids. Here's a note from Karen Ellis, PAC 4th-grade rep and the team leader in charge of that program:

Falls Lake Academy's first Box Tops for Education contest began November 18th and will end December 6th. (Sorry for the last minute notice.) The contest is simple: the class with the most box tops turned in during this time will win a celebration party prior to Christmas break! The last day to turn in box tops is Friday, December 6th. Please place your class box tops in a ziplocked bag labeled with your teacher's last name so we can keep each class separate. This contest is only 3 weeks, so don't delay! Remember: Box Tops = \$\$\$ for our school. If you have questions or need clarification, please let me know. Thanks for all you do!



A Note from Dr. D.....

Thanksgiving is upon us, and I want to take this opportunity to thank the whole Falls Lake Academy family for all the tireless work and enormous levels of support you've given the school, the staff, and the kids since it all started coming together a few short months ago. This has been one of the most incredible experiences of my career so far. I am sincerely grateful and deeply honored to have been asked by the Board to lead this effort, and to have been so enthusiastically embraced as I returned to southern Granville County after 23 years away to do so. So when I'm asked this year what I have to be grateful for, one of the things I can say without hesitation is that I'm thankful for FLA: for you, our parents, and our Board, and our staff, and most especially, for our kids. As we move into this holiday season, I wish all of life's best and the abundance of God's bounty for each and every FLA Board and staff member, student and parent. Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours, from me and mine!

OK, that's about it for this week, FLAPpers and sparklets! And as we all prepare to pause for a short time this week to give thanks, let us please remember those less fortunate than ourselves, and take a moment to help brighten their days by volunteering our time, our talents, and our money to give them something to join with us in offering thanks for. After all, everyone deserves something joyful to SCREAM about this time of year!

Happy Thanksgiving!

- Fred the Firebird

