

**Fernbrook Elementary**
School Year 2008-09

Fernbrook Elementary School
9661 Fernbrook Ln. N.
Maple Grove, MN 55369
www.district279.org/elem/fb/
Tele: 763-420-8888

PLEASE FILE THIS ISSUE IN THE FRONT OF YOUR ELEMENTARY PARENT HANDBOOK (white cover) FOR FUTURE REFERENCE. THE DISTRICT HANDBOOK CONTAINS DISTRICT POLICY/PROCEDURES; THIS NEWSLETTER CONTAINS PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO FERNBROOK. BETWEEN THE TWO PUBLICATIONS, MOST OF YOUR QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED.



Welcome!

**School begins
September 2**

School hours are
8:50 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

[This document is available in alternate formats upon a 72-hour request. Please contact Dean Olson at 763-391-7191/7250 (TTY) to make your request. Examples of alternate formats may include: large print, Braille, audio cassette, etc.]

WWW.Wendy's Words of Welcome

From: Wendy Biallas, Principal



By Maggie McIntyre

Welcome to the 2008-09 school year! I am so excited to start another school year and continue the work we began last year. I love this time of year because the building is filled with laughter and the anticipation of the days to come. Once students begin, their excitement permeates the hallways and the energy level rises.

This year we have the opportunity to welcome many new families to Fernbrook. We look forward to creating a collaborative culture and working with all of our students and parents over the months to come! As we work together we will create new learning for everyone!

Our school staff and Site Council will be working on developing our School Improvement Plan again this fall. The plan will be based on our MAP/NWEA student achievement data and the MCA II data from last spring. Fernbrook students traditionally do very well in comparison to the state and district averages. We want to celebrate that success while at the same time challenging each individual student to learn as much as possible each year!!

We believe that monitoring each child's progress and then making necessary adjustments to curriculum and teaching strategies based on the results is essential. Our 2008-09 school goals follow and reflect this philosophy.

1. To increase the reading achievement for every Fernbrook student.
 - a. Our reading target is to have all achievement levels (below, at and above grade level) of all Fernbrook students meet or exceed district average growth on the MAP/NWEA test.
2. To increase the math achievement for every Fernbrook student.
 - a. Our math target is to have all achievement levels (below, at and above grade level) of all Fernbrook students meet or exceed district average growth on the MAP/NWEA test.

Standardized tests are just one measure of student growth.

(continued on page three)



LUNCH ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Lunch money and lunch charges are processed electronically by computer. It is set up much like a checking account. You can send as much money as you would like to school for your child's account. Please indicate your **child's first and last name, lunch account number and room number or teacher's name**. Your child will put the money in a lunch money envelope located in each classroom. A daily collection of envelopes is made. Your child's money will be deposited in his/her own account. As your child purchases lunch or a beverage for cold lunch, these charges will be deducted from the account balance. If you have more than one child at Fernbrook, you can write one check with a note as to how you would like the money divided.

The cost for hot lunch with milk is \$2.00. For students bringing cold lunch and purchasing milk, the cost for milk is \$.50, juice is \$.55.

Students eligible for free or reduced price meals follow the same procedure as everyone else. Students eligible for reduced price meals will be charged \$.50 for each lunch and consequently must make prepayments into their account. Students eligible for free meals do not need to make deposits into their account to receive lunch each day, however, extra milk or juice and extra entrees will cost money.

Juice is substituted for milk at no charge if your child has a milk allergy. You must provide a doctor's note.

We also offer students an opportunity to purchase an extra main dish in addition to the regular lunch. An extra main dish example would be: Today's lunch would consist of a hamburger; the student may purchase an extra hamburger for \$1.25.

You may want to discuss with your child whether or not it is OK to purchase these extras. Students must have money in their account to purchase extras. The child will be notified by the cashier when the balance falls below \$2.00. Parents can receive a statement regarding their child's account at any time. The child will be allowed to charge up to three meals. However, Food Service will not permit a negative balance to exceed \$6.00.

Students may not share or exchange food. Lunch is a part of the learning situation, and as such, good conduct is expected. Table manners and appropriate lunchroom conduct should be practiced.

If you have any further questions our cashier, Julie Fandel, is on site from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Free and Reduced Lunch Application

Applications for free or reduced lunch will be mailed to every home in early August.

Parents are encouraged to complete and send in the application as early as possible.

Processing the applications will take longer during August and into the first several weeks of school.

Parents must pay for student lunch costs during the application approval process OR parents may choose to send a bag lunch with their student.

Please send money to the school prior to your student eating a school lunch.

FERNBROOK PHONE SYSTEM



The main office school number (763-420-8888) is connected to an automated answering system. Please listen carefully and proceed as directed. Your options will be as follows:

- Press 1 To report a student absent from or late to school
- Press 0 To reach the school office

***ATTENDANCE REPORTING**

STUDENT ABSENCES: *Any students who is late to or absent from school for any reason must be called in by a parent/guardian.* It's best to call before 9:15 a.m. by the day of the occurrence.

When reporting **STUDENT ABSENT/LATE** please leave the following information:

- Your name and relationship to student
- Student's name and grade
- Teacher's name
- Reason for being absent/late

You may direct dial the following:

- NURSE..... 763-391-8419
- VOICEMAIL FOR STAFF 763-391-7200
- FAX MACHINE 763-391-8420
- VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR..... 763-391-8423
- KIDSTOP PROGRAM 763-391-8415

2008-09 TESTING SCHEDULE

September 15 - November 21 MAP/NWEA New Students grades 3-6.

MCA –II Math grades 3-6 April 15 & 16

MCA-II Reading grades 3-6 April 21 & 22

MAP/ NWEA grades 2-6 April 27-May 22

MCA-II Science grade 5 May 18-22

Please make every attempt to ensure your child is in school on these testing days.



FERNBROOK FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES

Fernbrook Families Helping Families is a Fernbrook group which raises funds to support families in need, both financially and non-financially.

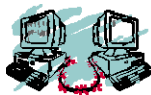
If you have any concerns regarding your family or another family in need, please call Miss Swanson or Mrs. Fouquette at Fernbrook (763-420-8888).



SchoolView is designed to enhance school/parent communication. Parents can access their child's attendance records, transportation information, lunch account information, and have the ability to update your phone numbers and e-mail address. Another feature will allow you to subscribe to an alert system which will automatically send an e-mail when your child is absent.

To initiate a SchoolView account, a parent or legal guardian must come to the Fernbrook office and bring a valid driver's license (or a valid State identification card, or a valid passport). You will be asked to sign and date an *Acceptable Use Policy* before receiving your access key and SchoolView registration materials. You will use this access key to setup and activate your SchoolView account.

SchoolView requires a minimum web browser of Internet Explorer 5.5 (PC) or version 5.1 (Mac) or Netscape version 6.2 (PC and Mac) or a browser with similar capabilities.



WWW.Wendy's Words of Welcome

From: Wendy Biallas, Principal

(continued from page one)

Last year we worked on expanding our own knowledge and skills around other forms of assessment. You will see changes in how we use daily assessment tools within classrooms to change instruction for students. For the past 3 years, the Fernbrook teaching staff has worked in teams to discuss student learning in a more systematic manner. Every teacher participated in a Professional Learning Community to discuss student achievement and teaching strategies. We will continue our efforts to increase effective teaching practices and maximize learning for ALL students!

Please feel free to contact me at anytime if you have questions, comments or concerns. My commitment is to provide a successful school experience for you and your child. My door is always open!

Once again, I look forward to meeting all of our families and working closely with you in the future. When we work together, we can accomplish GREAT things!

HOTLINE 4 HOMEWORK...

is a FREE telephone helpline which links students and parents with teachers who provide assistance with homework problems in any subject.

**Call 612-529-9622
Between 4:30-8:00 p.m.
Monday-Thursday**



Homework tips:

- Write the assignments down as they are given by your teacher.
- Take home all books and supplies needed to do your work.
- Find a quiet place at home to work.
- Schedule fun activities (play, TV) after homework is done.
- Have your friends call you before or after your study time.
- Take pride in your work—do your homework carefully and neat!

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S CORNER

Information for volunteering will be coming home in future Wednesday envelopes. There will be a volunteer orientation meeting in October (date to be determined).
THE VOLUNTEER OFFICE IS LOCATED IN ROOM 46.

**Carol Joelson, Volunteer Coordinator
763-391-8423**

Monday-Thursday, 9:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

WHAT PARENTS WANT/NEED TO KNOW THE MOST...

*Principal, Wendy Biallas
Secretary, Marilyn Warehime*

*Behavior Intervention Teacher, Mike Odell
Resource Manager, Carol Moormann*



LATE STUDENT SIGN IN

Students who are not in their classroom by the 8:50 a.m. bell will get an *Admit to Class* slip from the office to present to their teacher.

RELEASING STUDENTS EARLY

REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS VITAL FOR LEARNING. **Parents are encouraged to schedule all appointments outside of school hours whenever possible.** If a student needs to leave school during the day, they will be released from school through the office only. Please do not send a note expecting your child to be waiting in the office when you arrive. Allow enough time in your schedule to come into the office, sign your child out, and have the office call your child down. Thus, if you are late your child is still receiving instruction rather than missing classroom time. Teachers have been directed not to release a child to anyone without office authorization. You may want to send a note just to let the teacher know your child will leave at an approximate time before school is released. This does help the teacher to plan for your child accordingly. Unfortunately, we do not know all of our Fernbrook parents, therefore, please understand if we ask for identification. We are concerned about the safety of your children.

If someone other than legal parent/guardian is picking up your child, it is imperative that you send a note with your child or call the office in advance. The person picking up your child must have photo identification. Without appropriate documentation and identification, we will not be able to allow your child to leave with that person.

CHANGES IN GOING HOME

Anytime the regular arrangement of going home after school will be changed (i.e. your bussed student will be picked up by you) **please send a note to the teacher that day.** This will minimize confusion and anxiety for your child, the teacher, and you.

Bussed students are not allowed to ride any bus other than their scheduled bus. If a child wants to go home with another student; parents must work out the transportation arrangements between themselves.

DROPPING OFF or PICKING UP YOUR CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

See the separate letter on neon green in this envelope.

VISITORS TO FERNBROOK

Safety is very important to us. **EVERYONE** entering Fernbrook **must sign in at the office** and obtain the appropriate identification. Any adult without a visitor badge will be stopped by staff and directed to the office.

NON-CUSTODIAL FILE

If a non-custodial parent feels a need to receive school information via the school, we can develop a non-custodial file at the office. Check with Marilyn Warehime in the office for details.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal electronic devices (i.e. CD players, iPods, cell phones, game boys, etc.) are **not** to be used during the school day". We also ask that visitors conclude cell phone conversations **before** entering the building.

LUNCH VISITS

If you are planning to join your child(ren) for lunch at Fernbrook, please call the school by 9:15 a.m. to make your "reservation" so we can get numbers to the kitchen for food quantities as well as numbers for the cafeteria seating. We strongly discourage "fast food" (i.e. McDonald's, Wendy's, etc.) being brought into the school, however, if you'd like to provide a special treat for your child(ren), you may take them out for lunch during their lunch/recess time. An adult lunch costs \$3.10 and a pre-school lunch costs \$2.50. Please have exact monies or you may use your child's lunch account.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Our primary evacuation site is Maple Grove Senior High School. In the event of an evacuation, announcements will be made over WCCO radio. Parents may pick up their children at MGS; however, an effort will be made to transport students home as soon as possible if an emergency has made it impossible to re-enter the building.

WHAT PARENTS WANT/NEED TO KNOW THE MOST...(Continued)



SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for the school day. Articles of clothing must not be destructive to school property, offensive, nor interfere with the educational process and must comply with requirements for health and safety.

- Shirts must cover the entire midsection
- Sleeveless tops must have straps at least 1.5 inches wide
- Undergarments must not be showing
- Pants must be at a length so that the student will not trip on them
- Shorts and skirts must be of a length at the fingertip or beyond, when the student is standing with arms relaxed at their sides

In support of Dist. 279's commitment to tobacco free, drug free, and violence free schools, words or symbols on clothing or personal property that advertise products or actions which are illegal or harmful for students will not be permitted.

Examples of unacceptable clothing include:

- sexually obscene and/or profane language, slogans, emblems or pictures;
- advertisements for alcohol or tobacco products;
- gang symbols and/or emblems on clothing worn in a manner to identify gang membership;
- potentially hazardous items such as chains, pins, studs and rings;
- sexually provocative or immodest clothing, words, or symbols;
- headwear is prohibited—except for school-sponsored events and/or for cultural, religious, or medical reasons, with the approval of the principal.

WEDNESDAY ENVELOPE

Each Wednesday, a large brown envelope with your student's name on it will be sent home with your student(s). We will use this system to provide home-to-school communications. Students who need to replace their envelope (due to lost or destroyed) will be asked to pay \$.25 for a replacement or supply a folder as a replacement.

Please check with your child(ren) each Wednesday for the information, sign and date the envelope, and send it back to school the next day.

DATA PRIVACY/STUDENT RECORDS

Directory information is public information and may be disclosed in the form of class/other lists unless prior written denial of disclosure has been received from the parent/guardian of the students. (See page 27 in the Elementary School Parent Handbook 2008-2009 for complete explanation.)

Throughout the school year, there are times when parents/guardians request information regarding their child to plan for an appropriate educational program. In some instances, there may be a stepparent or significant other that you wish to have access to your child and/or pertinent school information. Without appropriate documentation on file, we will not be able to allow unauthorized adults access to, or information regarding, your child(ren).

Please be aware that this is not an authorization for friends, neighbors, etc., but for families with special circumstances. If this applies to your family situation, we ask that you contact the school office secretary, and we will provide you with the appropriate steps to complete.

NO PET POLICY

Due to health and air quality concerns: No dogs, cats, rodents, rabbits, reptiles, fish, birds, or exotic animals are allowed at school. Exceptions are certified therapy dogs, which will be permitted one day per week. Science curriculum approved by the district and organized educational groups that are pre-approved by the principal may bring in any of the above listed animals.

KIDSTOP PROGRAM AT FERNBROOK

Please DO NOT park in the area near the north sidewalk as this is a fire lane and truck delivery area. If you need to access Kidstop during school hours please use the front door and sign in at the office first. To call Kidstop direct, dial 763-391-8415.

???? Bus Concerns ?????

When a question arises regarding your child's bus pick-up or drop off location, an incident at the bus stop, an incident on the bus, or a concern about a bus driver, do you know whom to call? We've put together a short primer giving you the person and phone number to call for these and other questions which may arise regarding student transportation.

Bus Stop concerns:

Discipline: Board Policy 3814 states: "The responsibility for student supervision by the District shall begin when the student boards the bus and is retained until the child leaves the bus, or until released to the parent/guardian in a manner consistent with District practices on release of students." This means that parents are in charge of maintaining safety and discipline at the bus stop until the bus arrives.

Location of stops: If you have questions regarding the rationale of a bus stop, call the district transportation department at 763-391-7044. Also, please notify Mr. Odell, Behavioral Intervention Teacher at Fernbrook (763-420-8888 or odellm@district279.org) so we are aware of the concern.

Bus Driver concerns:

The bus company hires and trains the drivers. Call the bus company with driver related issues. If you do not feel your concerns were addressed, contact district transportation 763 391-7045. Also, please notify Mr. Odell at Fernbrook for awareness.

Bus Discipline concerns:

The bus driver is in charge on the bus and is the primary person who issues bus tickets. We support the driver by contacting the parents, talking with the students, and sending out the tickets in the mail.

Students should first take issues to the driver. If there continues to be a problem, please notify our Behavior Intervention Teacher, Mr. Odell, at Fernbrook. 763-420-8888 or odellm@district279.org.

ExCEL News By Mr. Odell

TAG
279

Welcome Back! I am very excited to begin another year at Fernbrook with the ExCEL program and as the BIT (Behavior Intervention Teacher). Classes will begin the second week of school and at that time students will receive a welcome back letter, schedule for the year and registration materials. A parent meeting will be held in September for parents of students in both the talent pool and core group. There are several changes in the program for this year, so please be sure to attend. More information will follow.

Testing for the ExCEL and junior high HP (High Performance) programs will be offered during the school year. Please read below for further information.

- ❖ ExCEL placement: (Grades 1 & 2)
 - A letter will be mailed in November to the parents of **all 1st grade students** offering the opportunity to have their child screened for the ExCEL program. Parents of 2nd grade students should contact their classroom teacher if they wish to have their child screened. Testing will take place in January.
- ❖ ExCEL placement: (Grades 3-5)
 - Nominations by parents, teachers or students for testing will take place in November and the testing will take place in January. Talk to your classroom teacher or Mr. Odell of more information.
- ❖ High Performance placement: (Grade 6)
 - Testing of students for next year's 7th grade HP classes (English, science, social studies and math) will take place in January. First trimester grades are critical because they are a significant part of the identification process. Placement in HP math 7 also includes NWEA/MAP test results. More information will be sent in early November to the parents/guardians of **all 6th grade students**.

CML (Continental Math League)

C

M is a challenging academic problem solving competition for math students in grades 2-6. There are 3 meets (January, February, March) for grades 2, 3 and 5 meets (November, December, January, February, March) for grades 4, 5, and 6. This year, in addition to classroom instruction and testing, I will be teaching a CML class for identified top students (15-18) in grades 2-6. Each meet contains 6 extremely rigorous math challenges. The selection process will take place in early September and classes will begin in October.

For more information about TAG program Services you can access our web site. Be sure to check out the elementary link, which includes ExCEL seminar information, important dates, our newsletter enrichment opportunities and much more.

Please contact me if you have further questions.

Michael J. Odell, TAG teacher/Behavior Intervention Teacher, odellm@district279.org

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OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS

UNITING COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE