



FREEDOM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Freedom Web Site: <http://www.carrollk12.org/fes>

Richard H. Huss
Principal

Nicole M. Jensen
Assistant Principal

September 2009 Newsletter

Character Trait of the Month

September – Respect

Dear Parents,

The school year is off to a fast start. We hope everyone enjoyed our Back to School Night and Volunteer Trainings last week. We were thrilled to see so many families come out to support their children, our teachers, and staff!

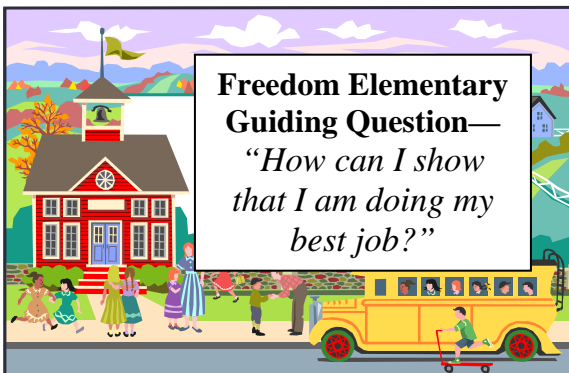
Please continue to reinforce the expectations for student behavior sent home on the first mail day. This is part of our “Respect, Responsibility, and Right to Learn” program. Our guiding question, “How can I show that I am doing my best job?” is also displayed prominently around the school and is a regular part of classroom discussion. Please ask your children regularly to share with you how they have demonstrated this by their achievements and behaviors.

During the summer we received the data for the MSA (Maryland School Assessment) administered to grade 3, 4, and 5 students last spring. Freedom students, parents, and staff have much to be proud of. Our grade 3, 4 and 5 students performed well above state and county averages in nearly all areas assessed.

Our ILT (Instructional Leadership Team) met several times over the summer to review MSA scores and other data from last year. They have created a plan for this year as we always look to learn, grow, and improve.
Sincerely,

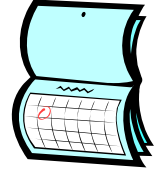
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September Conference Evening

Freedom, along with several other elementary schools, will offer a conference evening around the time of first quarter interim reports. For Freedom, conferences will be held on Wednesday, September 30th from 3:30-7:00 p.m. Conferences for September 30th will be on an as needed basis by teacher request.



AlertNow! Replaces Eschoolnewsletter

Please be sure to update emergency card information any time there is a change. This information is used for the school and county notification system via AlertNow. School event and newsletter information will be communicated via AlertNow and posted on our school website.

We have moved to an electronic newsletter. We only send print copies upon request. You must complete and return the flier on the front of this newsletter to continue to receive a printed copy.

Checks or Money Orders Only

We can no longer accept cash payments. All school related purchases (other than daily lunch purchases and school store) must be made using a check or money order. This includes school pictures, spirit wear, field trips, etc. We appreciate your cooperation as we follow new financial guidelines established by Carroll County Public Schools.

GOODSEARCH.COM

Go to www.goodsearch.com and select Freedom Elementary as the non-profit you wish to support. For every internet search you do, we receive a penny. Pennies make dollars!

2009-2010 School Calendar

Early Dismissal Dates

Please take notice of the early dismissals that are built into this year’s calendar. **The following dates are scheduled to have 2 hour and 45 minute early dismissals (Freedom dismissal at 12:20 p.m.):**

September 18th

October 29th

November 9th

December 3rd

December 23rd

January 22nd

February 5th

March 15th

April 1st

May 11th

June 10th

Looking Ahead

Please place our testing dates on your calendar and make every effort to avoid planning appointments or vacations during testing.

.....**MSA for 2009-10** The Maryland School Assessments will be given to students in grades 3, 4, and 5 on March 9th – 10th (Reading) and March 16th - 17th (Math). Grade 5 students will take the MSA Science Assessment from April 21st – 27th.

Residence Is Required

Attendance in Carroll County Public Schools is for bona fide residents of Carroll County only. It is the practice of Carroll County Public Schools to investigate claims of county residence when there is reason to believe a student may not be a bona fide resident and entitled to enrollment. Individuals who make false claims of residence may be charged with felony theft and prosecuted. In some cases, complete restitution to Carroll County Public Schools will also be sought.



Student Insurance

Student accident insurance enrollment will occur during September. Forms were sent home with students on the first day of school. If you wish to take advantage of this insurance coverage, kindly return the insurance forms **directly to Health Special Risk, Inc., P O Box 678328, Dallas, TX 75267-8328.**

Custody Issues

In situations where parents are separated, divorced or do not live in the same household the school must remain as neutral as possible. Each parent has specific legal rights in regard to school issues. A telephone call, note, or letter from a parent or attorney is not sufficient notification to establish custody or restrict another parent's contact with students and teachers. An official court order is required to establish custody. A copy of the most recent custody order should be on file at the school. When changes occur please be sure to provide a copy of any court documents. The CCPS Student/Parent Handbook has a complete description of the Carroll County Public Schools' guidelines that we follow. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office for further information.

School Closings - School Activities

When schools are dismissed early or closed for the entire day, all school-sponsored and use of facilities activities are automatically postponed/canceled in the entire school system.

Cafeteria Reminders

If you would like to have lunch with your child, please call the school in advance so that we can prepare enough. For safety and liability reasons, please do not bring siblings.

A special guest table (complete with center piece) is provided for parents wishing to have lunch with their child.

Please do not send lunch items to school that need to be heated. Students are not permitted to bring sodas for lunch due to the potential for the drink to burst from its container upon opening. Noncarbonated drinks, such as milk and juice, are recommended. Containers with metal pull top lids are not permitted, as the edges can be sharp and dangerous.

School Pictures

Pictures will be taken on September 11. Payment for the package desired must be sent in with your child on that day. Additional information and payment envelopes were sent home recently with students.

These pictures are used for our school yearbook; however, purchase is not required in order for a student's photo to be included in the yearbook.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Please note – Freedom Elementary does not distribute a separate parent/student handbook so please review the policy and procedure information found in this newsletter. We apologize in advance that it reflects so many do's and don'ts but it is necessary to make all families aware of this information related to school and county policies. The CCPS Student/Parent Handbook will be distributed in the near future.

Food Items and Birthday Treats

Due to the increasing number of students with potentially life-threatening food allergies, we have implemented a policy here at Freedom Elementary similar to that at other elementary schools. Parents are not to send in food items to be shared for birthday treats. Instead, we are asking that parents who wish to send items consider non-food items such as pencils, erasers, stickers, etc. Treat certificates can still be purchased from the cafeteria for \$.75 each. That would allow students to select from any of the snack items sold in the cafeteria.

Party Invitations

Please be sure that all invitations to private outside events (birthday parties, etc.) are delivered outside the school setting. It has caused much heartache when someone is left out and others are receiving invitations in the classroom.

Fieldtrip Chaperones

We encourage parents and guardians to accompany children on trips when possible. At times the number of chaperones is limited by available bus space or allocation from the location we are visiting. Chaperones are to be parents or legal guardians over the age of 21. Please be sure you have completed the required volunteer training **prior** to signing up to chaperone.



Homework Requests and Vacations

While we recognize that many trips provide valuable learning experiences, the increase we are seeing in lost school time due to vacations is very concerning. Teachers are receiving requests to provide 1-3 weeks worth of work in advance of trips. To prepare this work takes valuable time away from their classroom preparation and from students. When a teacher receives a parent request for homework due to a vacation (minimum 3 school days advance notice) some basic assignments will be provided. All other work will be collected during the course of the absence and will be provided upon return. Please be aware that loss of instructional time due to vacations can have a negative impact on student learning and possibly grades. Many activities are lab or discussion based and cannot be duplicated outside of the classroom.

CCPS Student Dress Code

Students of Carroll County Public Schools are required to groom themselves in a manner that is modest, clean, appropriate, decent, and not disruptive to the educational process. Students are expected to abide by this dress code upon arrival to the school through the defined ending of the school day.

The requirements include, but are not limited to--
Head Coverings:

- ◆ Hats, sunglasses, or head coverings of any kind, including bandanas and visors, may not be worn in the school building unless approved for religious or medical reasons. Certain headbands, scrunchies, etc., which are used to hold hair in place and do not cover the entire head, are permitted.

Shirts must:

- ◆ Cover the entire back.
- ◆ Cover the midriff area (bottom of the shirt must meet the top of the lower attire at all times).
- ◆ Cover undergarments (i.e., muscle shirts, under armor shirts, and tank tops are considered undergarments, and must have a shirt over them).
- ◆ Not be see-through.
- ◆ Fit modestly so that cleavage area is covered.

- ◆ Have two straps, one on each shoulder (no tube tops or halter tops).

Skirts/Skortts/Shorts/Pants:

- ◆ Skirts, skortts, and shorts should not be excessively short. The guideline for “excessively short” is clothing that exposes the upper half of the thigh while standing.
- ◆ Pants will cover undergarments at all times and not be excessively long as to drag on the floor.

Other:

- ◆ No bedroom slippers may be worn.
- ◆ No spiked clothing or accessories.
- ◆ No mutilated, cutout, or ragged clothing may be worn.
- ◆ Underwear should not be showing and should not be worn as outerwear.
- ◆ Not convey advertisements for condoms or other birth control devices, stated or implied.
- ◆ Not convey messages that express hate, racial slurs, or sexual harassment.
- ◆ Not convey establishments or products whose names can be directly interpreted, or construed as carrying a “double meaning” involving sexual innuendo, tobacco, alcohol or drug use, gang symbols, weapons, or sexual activity.

Violations:

A student found wearing inappropriate clothing will be asked to change or remove the item, and be given an opportunity to do so. Should the student not be able to change or remove the item, clothing may be provided by the individual school. Student failure to cooperate will be referred to an administrator. Any student not complying with the direction of the administrator may be considered insubordinate, and subject to appropriate administrative action.

Requests for exceptions:

Exceptions to the dress code, for the purpose of school spirit activities by clubs or organizations, are up to the discretion of the school administration.

Board of Education Meeting - September 9

The Board of Education of Carroll County held its regular monthly Board meeting on Wednesday, September 9.

The agenda and back-up materials for the Board meeting are available for review on BoardDocs, which may be accessed by visiting the school system's website at www.carrollk12.org and clicking on CCPS Online Meeting Agenda on the home page. The meeting will be broadcast live on Channel 21, with rebroadcasts on Thursday, September 10, at 8:00 p.m.; Saturday, September 12, at 9:00 a.m.; Sunday, September 13, at 8:00 p.m.; and Thursday, September 17, at 8:00 p.m.

Integrated Pest Management Program

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program employed by CCPS uses inspection, monitoring, employee education, and sanitation practices to minimize the use of pesticides in our schools.

Maryland law requires that parents of all elementary students be notified automatically prior to application of any pesticide. Parents of secondary students must request to be placed on a pesticide notification.

CCPS notifies all students and staff 24 hours prior to scheduled applications of pesticides on school property. If an emergency pest control situation arises and a pesticide is used, notification will be made within 24 hours. Space-spraying of a pesticide throughout an entire room or area by a fogger or aerosol device requires one week advance notice to all students and staff.

Copies of material safety data sheets (MSDS) and product labels for each pesticide and bait station used on school property are maintained in the Department of Plant Operations. Persons wishing to review this information should contact Plant Operations, at 410-751-3470. For additional information about this program, please contact Ray Prokop, Director of School Support Services, at 410-751-3177.

A.H.E.R.A. Notice

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (A.H.E.R.A.) management plans for all buildings owned or leased by the Board of Education of Carroll County are available for review at the individual Carroll County School locations and at the Office of Plant Operations located at 191 Schaeffer Avenue, Westminster, MD 21157. Management plans are required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and depict the location, amount, condition, and response action projected for any asbestos-containing materials, if any are located in the school building.

College Savings Plans of Maryland – Get a Head Start on College Savings!

It's never too early or too late to start saving for college. The College Savings Plans of Maryland offer Maryland families a flexible way to start saving for college today. The Maryland Prepaid College Trust allows families to "lock-in" tomorrow's tuition at today's prices and is backed by a Maryland Legislative Guarantee. Enrollment for the Prepaid College Trust is generally open from the beginning of December through the end of March. The Maryland College Investment Plan is open for enrollment year-round and offers 13 mutual fund portfolio investment options managed by T. Rowe Price so you can choose what works best for you.

Please read the Enrollment Kit available online to learn more about the College Savings Plans of Maryland, their investment objectives, risks and costs. If you live outside of Maryland, check with your state to see if it offers tax or other benefits for investing in its 529 plan. Visit www.collegesavingsmd.org or call 1-888-4MD-GRAD for details.

Community News

Childcare Choices

This agency maintains a database of all regulated child care centers, registered family care, school age programs, preschools, and nursery school programs meeting the State of Maryland's regulations for child care services. The Locate Child Care Referral lines are 410-751-2917, 877-230-7422, or TDD 301-695-7225. Emails can be sent to childcarechoices@fcmha.org and additional information can be accessed on their website at www.fcmha.org.

LOCATE: Enhanced Special Needs Services is a free child care service available for children with special needs (i.e., asthma, allergies, medical issues, social/emotional behavioral issues) to assist parents in locating licensed child care programs. For referrals, please telephone 1-800-999-0120 (TDD 410-385-1042), Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING SESSIONS

September 2009

Level II Volunteers (classroom helpers, tutors, chaperones, mentors, etc) are required to attend an annual training session at least seven (7) school days prior to volunteering. School days are defined as days when schools are open for students.

Please call the number provided to confirm that the training session is being held on the date and at the time listed on the schedule. Allow adequate time so you can arrive at the training location in a timely manner. The training session will begin promptly at the scheduled time, and those arriving after the starting time may be asked to attend another session.

DATE	SCHOOL	TIME	CONTACT Please call the number provided to confirm the scheduled training session.
11	Elmer Wolfe Elementary	9:30 AM	410-751-3307
14	Linton Springs Elem.	4:00 PM	410-751-3280
14	Wm. Winchester Elem.	6:00 PM	410-751-3230
14	Carrolltowne Elementary	7:00 PM	410-751-3530
15	Parr's Ridge Elementary	6:15 PM	410-751-3559 301-829-6585
15	Sykesville Middle	6:30 PM	410-751-3545
15	Winfield Elementary	7:00 PM	410-751-3242
16	Cranberry Station Elem.	6:30 PM	410-386-4440
17	Westminster High	2:45 PM	410-751-3630
17	Linton Springs Elem.	7:00 PM	410-751-3280
21	North Carroll High	7:00 PM	410-751-3450
24	Spring Garden Elementary	7:30 AM	410-751-3433
24	Westminster Elementary	9:00 AM	410-751-3222
29	North Carroll Middle	7:00 PM	410-751-3440



Not My Child

“Help and Hope for Carroll County’s Youth”

September 2009



Not My Child is a prevention program that endeavors to educate and support families in raising healthy, drug-free children. This initiative began with a local parent who lost a child to drugs and is passionate about helping other parents avoid tragedy. Parents want to believe that their children would never “do drugs.” But the reality is that in 90% of cases, children get drugs from their friends! We need to get past the “not my child” mentality and be proactive by talking to our children and staying current about the drug culture.

According to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, the use of illegal drugs is going down. However, the use of prescription and over-the-counter medications is going up among teenagers and young adults. These drugs are readily available to children who may believe these medicines are “safe.” Children of all ages need to understand the dangers of misusing even the most commonly taken medications, such as ibuprofen or cough syrup.

Look for **Not MY Child** columns in future school newsletters to receive up-to-date messages regarding current areas of concern, contact e-mail addresses, and local resources.

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or provision of services, programs or activities. Information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the Director of Facilities, 410-751-3177. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Office of Community and Media Relations at 410-751-3020 or publicinfo@carrollk12.org, or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed.