



Falcon Homeschool Program Newsletter

August 26, 27, 28 and 29th 2024

UPCOMING DATES:

Front Desk Number: (719) 495-5373

Class Updates:

Arts and STEM Exploration 4th/5th Grade

Ms. Jill

This week in Arts we will continue to look at the art principle of balance, focused on symmetry. It's fun to see how the arts relate to math! During our music focus, we will travel to China to meet a new musician and hear instruments and music native to that culture. Finally we will continue brainstorming how time and place is used as an element in drama through some fun improvisation activities. Please mark your calendars for September 30, when students will participate in a virtual field trip with Ms. Heather's STEM class! More details coming soon! Please email me at jill.foster@d49.org with any questions that come to your mind!

Ms. Heather M

This last week, we all worked on being engineers and building a machine that could be used in space to prevent muscle atrophy. Ask your student if they remember what muscle atrophy means and how it can be prevented.

Next week, we will be learning more about the bones and joints of our skeletal system.

Don't forget to send your student with two snacks as they have both a morning and afternoon recess to enjoy a peanut/tree nut free snack.

Stay tuned for more info on our virtual field trip (that will take place right here on the FHP campus) coming up on September 30th.

Please reach out with any questions you have for me:
heather.mitts@d49.org.

Middle School Arts

Ms. Jill

Coming up in our visual art studies this week, we will learn about the artist Salvador Dali and compare his art to the Pop artists we've studied the past couple of weeks. We will also work on creating value using pressure as a technique with crayons. During our music time, we will listen to the Nationalistic style of Aaron Copland's music and then continue to review rhythmic patterns as we read simple music. Finally, as we turn to our devised theater time, we will work on activities that teach how to 'share power' and 'take risks' as a group.

Please have your students think about what types of arts 'personal choice projects' they might be interested in pursuing (a few examples: creating a monologue or scene, completing an art project, costume design, practicing an instrument solo or composing a song, creating a dance) for a portion of our day. We will brainstorm and plan those ideas this week! Please email me at jill.foster@d49.org with any questions that come to your mind!

Ms. Stacy's Class (K-1)

It has been amazing getting to know your children the past few weeks and watching them become familiar with their classmates and the classroom procedures with such ease, has been wonderful. This week we will begin our units of study in Science and Social

Studies. In Science, we will be learning about the Rainforest habitat. We will learn about where the Rainforests are on the globe and what makes the tropical rainforest habitat unique. In Social Studies, we will begin our unit by reading "The Legend of the BlueBonnet" which is about a time when the Comanche people were experiencing a terrible drought. Students will discuss what a legend is and will get a chance to finger paint bluebonnet flowers to honor the great heart and generosity of this legend. So we will be using paint for this lesson so please do not send your child in their Sunday best as they may wear some home. It is washable but I wanted to give you a heads up.

Have a wonderful week and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

skley@d49.org

Literacy Foundations

Ms. Kassi

Wow, we are having a blast in literacy foundations! Last week I was able to meet with every small group and individual and work on individual skills. This week we will add partner reading, our last center to add to our literacy rotations.

Week 2: Literacy Activities:

- Phonograms: A-Z
- Read Aloud/Grammar: Officer Buckle and Gloria: nouns and Proper nouns
- Phonics Focus: learning how to count sounds, word map, short vowels: u, and e
- High Frequency words: Second sound of /s-z/: as, has, is, his
- Poem of the Week: "Let's Be Friends" (visualization and main message of poem)
- Writer's Workshop: Writing a complete sentence with four parts: capital letter, subject, predicate, and ending punctuation-periods.

Many of you have already submitted your first assessment for Logic of English! Way to go! Please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, or difficulties. I am here to help. I appreciate all of the questions I have received so far.

We are partners this year, I hope to hear from you often. Please email or chat with me anytime!

kassi.nemeth@d49.org

Ms. Kassi's 2/3 Class

Last week we jumped into learning about the Pilgrims and weather. We took notes for the first time and practiced putting work away in our binder.

This week in our Pilgrim unit, we will discuss both ships the Pilgrims left England on, the Mayflower and the Speedwell. We will learn how the Speedwell did not make the voyage because it kept having leaks. There is actually a theory that the crew kept sabotaging the ship because they did not want to travel all the way to the New World.

In our weather unit, we will discuss the job of a meteorologist and learn about some of the tools they use to predict and describe the weather.

Please do not hesitate to email me anytime with any questions or concerns at kassi.nemeth@d49.org.

Ms Leanne's Class (4-5)

Hopefully you got the information about our field trip (to the May Museum, aka the "bug museum" on September 10, 11 and 12). If you didn't, please notify me immediately. Also note in the newsletter below how to be a chaperone and what our field trip policy is here at FHEP. For this field trip, please make sure you have filled the survey out, and brought in a signed permission slip and your child's money. I don't want any students to miss the field trip! I know it's a lot of information, please email me if you have any questions.

This week we will be doing some fun Punk Art, creating people, places and things out of aluminum foil. We'll also continue to learn about arthropods in Science.. Students will finish up by taking notes on the Northern, Middle and Southern American Colonies in social studies.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. leanne.mckinney@d49.org

Ms Heather M (6-7)

Next week, our 6th and 7th grade students will be digging into the executive branch of government during social studies. They'll also be learning more about gymnastics during our mini lesson on the Olympics.

In science, students will learn about food webs and how they impact our ecosystem.

Students have a free choice opportunity once weekly and are able to bring a game, book, or another quiet activity they would like to use during this time.

Please reach out with any questions you have for me: heather.mitts@d49.org.

PROGRAM REMINDERS

STAR360 Assessment

STAR 360–It's Here! Now through August 29, 2024

If you would like your student to take the STAR 360 assessment, the opportunity is here! Now in its fifth year of implementation, STAR 360 is back and ready for FHP students! We have partnered with STAR 360 to offer this testing option on a voluntary (no requirement) basis. This option is available to all enrolled FHP students, is free of charge, and gives nearly instant results that will be sent to you via email. The goal of including this as an option to parents is to allow for another layer in our partnership with you.

Some benefits of STAR 360 include:

- *It can be taken multiple times throughout the school year. This can give you vital information about your student's strengths and areas of growth in real-time. This empowers you to adjust your homeschooling instruction to set goals that can be measured regularly.
- *STAR is a nationally normed test that you can use as (or in addition to) the state requirements for odd year (grades 3-11) testing.
- *STAR assesses in both reading and math and is aligned to Colorado State Standards.
- *Most assessments take 20-30 minutes per section as it utilizes a computer-adaptive design, meaning that questions quickly become individualized, allowing for efficiency and accuracy.
- *STAR allows your child to experience a standardized test in a very non threatening way.
- *As always, student information is kept private.

If you're ready to get started, here is what you can expect:

- 1) The STAR test takes about 20-35 minutes per section. There are two sections--Reading and Math, so the total for the test will take about 60 minutes.
- 2) The test is on the computer and timed. As far as I know, there is not a clock in the top right corner that counts down, but please instruct your student to still answer each question even if the time expires.
- 3) Please be sure to send me (Mr. Paul: paul.austin@d49.org) an email so that I may share the results with you when your student is finished. The results will include an overall score in both reading and math that can be used as a composite. You will also see your student's National Percentile Rank (NPR). These are the two requirements for standardized testing for compliance with the state of Colorado, so it fulfills your testing requirement at the odd grade levels when homeschooling.
- 4) If you are having your student complete the test at home, please make testing conditions as quiet as possible. If your student is easily distracted or requires a very quiet space when testing, please use ear plugs to block the noise. Do your best to ensure that the environment is suitable for your student's best results. The test can be paused as well if a sudden distraction arises. Also, please be sure to provide an appropriate assessment proctoring experience (don't help your student, don't give answers or hints, don't read for them, etc).

*****If you want your student to take the STAR360 assessment, then please send Paul Austin (paul.austin@d49.org) a quick email for next steps. As always, please let us know if you have any questions.***

Field trip Volunteers/Chaperones

Fall Classroom Field Trips are Quickly Approaching - Have you completed a background check yet?

Field trips for our program depend on parent drivers and chaperones. If you would like to help out our program and volunteer, you will need to have a background check completed by District 49. (If you are not sure if your background check is still valid, please check with Ms. Nancy)

- If a background check is completed between July 1 and Feb 28, the background check is valid through June 30th of that year
- If a background check is completed between March 1 and June 30, the background check is valid until June 30th of the following year.

To complete a background check follow this link and complete the application linked at the bottom of the page. The cost of the background check is \$5.00. Thank you so much for your willingness to help our program with this need. [Volunteer applications](#)

****Please note that if you would like to go on the field trip with your student, but are NOT chaperoning or driving other students, you do NOT need to have a background check completed.**

If you have any questions regarding volunteering, please contact Ms. Nancy at nancy.carder@d49.org

Field Trip Policy regarding Survey, Permission slip and fees

One of the exciting things we do here at FHP is our classroom field trips. Each class will have two field trips throughout the year, one each semester. (Our Literacy Foundations class will not be having field trips.) These field trips usually take us to exciting locations but sometimes the field trip comes to us right here at FHP. Our teachers put a lot of time and effort into finding wonderful field trips that go with their curriculum and that they feel their students will love and benefit from. We want all of our students to experience these field trips. Here is our timeline and policy for items being turned in so that students can attend their field trip.

Three to four weeks before your student's field trip you will receive a Google Survey via email. This survey will contain all of the details regarding the field trip. Your response allows us to know if your child will be attending the field trip and if your child needs a ride. (Please see Chaperoning information below) The survey will also have a permission slip attached.

Deadlines: The survey will let you know when the survey is due by and when the permission slip and any fees are due. All items will be due no later than one week before the field trip. If these items are not turned in one week prior, your child will **not** be able to attend the field trip. We will have a list on the board in the multipurpose room of all the upcoming field trip dates (not all have been scheduled yet) what is needed and the date it is all due by. Your child's teacher will also have due dates and permission slips outside their classrooms.

Please be sure to stay on top of these dates for all of your kids as we want all of our students to be able to attend their field trip.

Safety Drill, August 29th

We have a building wide safety drill next week, August 29th. In our continued efforts to best serve your students, we will be conducting a safety drill next week Thursday August 29th. Safety drills last approximately 10 minutes, and during that time, an announcement will be made over the PA system directing staff and students to remain inside their classrooms for the Lockdown Drill which includes the terminology, "Locks, Lights, Out of Sight." During the time, FHP staff will be with students and our staff will communicate silently with our cellphones and laptops to be sure that all students were safe and accounted for.

All students will be in classrooms with their FHP staff who will remind students that it is just a drill and that there is no cause for concern. At the conclusion of the drill, it will be announced calmly and quietly that the drill is over and classes will resume with what they had been doing prior to the drill.

When we have a lockdown or lockout drill, we can not allow anyone entrance into the building. I know this may be inconvenient, but it's very important that we put everyone's safety first, and that means practicing these drills in a way that is consistent with how they are to be run.

I know that I am not alone in my dislike for the need for these drills, but I do also see the need for the safety drill. It is of the utmost importance that your children are safe when in our care. We conduct these drills so that we can ensure safety while students are in our care, and the FHP staff appreciates your understanding and trust. Should you have any follow-up questions, please contact me and I'll be happy paul.austin@d49.org

I would suggest giving your child a heads-up prior to their enrichment day with us to go over the details of the drill that I have mentioned above so that they know what the drill is and what they can expect, especially if your child can get a little nervous or anxious about drills.

Homeschool Landsharks Team

Landsharks Running Club: Northern COS Homeschool Hammerheads



We offer a non-competitive youth program to introduce running to young athletes in a safe and fun environment. The focus is on self-improvement, being an encouraging teammate, and making new friends. The Fall Cross Country Series is a fun running program led by coaches, parents and teachers and is open to students in kindergarten through 6th grade. Please remember to purchase a team race shirt if this is your first season running.

Practices are scheduled on **Wednesday** 8:30-9:15 at Leaping Lizard Park in Flying Horse and **Fridays** 4:45pm to 5:30 west of Frank Costello Park at the trailhead off of Potomac Dr. Our first practice will be September 4, 2024 and ending on October 4, 2024. Practices consist of running games and workouts with a strong focus on fun.

Races are held Sunday afternoons at the Air Force Academy. At the races, runners receive a race tag with their number, ribbons and a series medal at the final race. Race results are posted on the Landsharks website. Meets are tentatively scheduled at 3:00 pm at the Falcon Stadium South Parking Lot on the following Sunday afternoons: September 22, September 29, and October 6, 2024. Runners run ONE of the following distances: Kindergarten & 1st grade 0.5 miles only, 2nd - 5th grade 1 mile OR 1.5 miles

Registration closes September 11, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Runners must be registered prior to their first practice.

Please register online at www.Landsharksrunningclub.com

\$75 registration fee through September 1, 2024 then an additional \$15/runner fee applies

I look forward to working with your athletes! Please consider volunteering to help coach or work at our race site. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer,

Coach: Danny and Leah Wicks

Email: leahanddanny@comcast.net

Homeschool Helpful Tips: Academic Stamina

As we returned to the classroom with your students after a long summer, our staff has recently been discussing academic stamina. Academic stamina refers to the duration your student can work on school work/academic activities before needing a break or getting distracted.

If you took a summer break from a full day of homeschool, you may be noticing your student is struggling with their stamina as well.

Academic stamina is important to build in our students throughout the years so that eventually they will be able to stick to brain power tasks in the workforce and other adult endeavors without getting

distracted. We know our students can stick to highly stimulating activities such as playing with friends and video games so we need to be very thoughtful about increasing the stamina for activities that take longer to produce rewards, such as academics.

Here are a few helpful ways to increase academic stamina in your homeschool:

- Remember the younger the child, the less stamina they may have
- Follow a schedule with routines that are predictable; these help students know what to expect
- Use timers to encourage an increase in stamina and help students set tangible goals
- Build in brain breaks to your schedule and consider timing those as well
- Never underestimate the power of reward for hard work

More reading about academic stamina:

<https://www.berrystreet.org.au/news/building-stamina-in-at-home-learning>

<https://truthforteachers.com/truth-for-teachers-podcast/how-to-improve-student-focus-and-attention-stamina/>

Find joy in your every day!

Ms. Kassi, FHP Home Based Education Specialist
kassi.nemeth@d49.org