



## Falcon Homeschool Program Newsletter

August 19, 20, 21 and 22 2024

### UPCOMING DATES:

Front Desk Number: (719) 495-5373

#### **Class Updates:**

##### *Arts and STEM Exploration 4th/5th Grade*

*Ms. Jill*

We had a great first day of arts class last week developing our class expectations and talking about what it means to be an explorer! This week, we will dig into our curriculum for the semester. In music, we will begin our year of exploration by traveling to West Africa and learning about the music and instruments of Mali. We will connect that to drama by thinking about time and place in stories and how actors use settings to help them create characters. Finally, we will look at the principles of “balance” and “symmetry” in visual art and then practice creating three types of balance ourselves. Please email me at [jill.foster@d49.org](mailto:jill.foster@d49.org) with any questions that come to your mind!

##### *Ms. Heather M*

What a great first week we had in STEM. We begin talking about the differences in our atmosphere compared to space and how that interacts with the human body. This upcoming week, we'll be learning more about how the three different types of muscles in the human body and how space travel can impact your muscles. Please reach out with any questions you have for me: [heather.mitts@d49.org](mailto:heather.mitts@d49.org).

##### *Middle School Arts*

*Ms. Jill*

Our first day of Middle School Arts was amazing! It was awesome to connect and get to know each other! Today during our music time, we will review types and durations of music notes through rhythmic clapping exercises. We will then begin a focus on Nationalism in music beginning with Chopin. Next, we will finish our class contract/talking stick and complete a drama lesson on ‘sharing power’. Finally, we will experiment in art using texture rubbings as a technique and then compare and contrast some of Lichtenstein’s art. Please email me at [jill.foster@d49.org](mailto:jill.foster@d49.org) with any questions that come to your mind!

##### *Ms. Stacy’s Class (K-1)*

What a fantastic first week of school we had. I went home this week feeling overjoyed with having met some AMAZING students and parents. It is going to be a wonderful year. I’m one lucky teacher!

This week we will continue to work on procedures in our classroom and also talk about how we should treat one another and how we want to be treated in our classroom. This will be a Social Contract that we will use all year as a basis of building a classroom community.

A BIG thank you for sending in those extra clothes in a ziplock bag, water bottles and some extra snacks as all those extra pieces make for a smooth day.

This week I will be introducing a STAR STUDENT to the class. Your child may come home with a letter attached to a "All About Me" Poster in which they can complete and send back to share about themselves and their family. Each week one student will take home the letter and poster. Reassure your child it will be their turn soon enough as they all want one right away but we will be drawing names each week so they may have to wait their turn.

As I shared before it's going to be a great year and please know I am here for you and your children. Have a great week and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

[skley@d49.org](mailto:skley@d49.org)

## *Literacy Foundations*

### *Ms. Kassi*

This week we will continue to learn about literacy rotations. We will practice read to self, word work, work on writing, and listening to reading. During literacy rotations I will begin working with small groups and individuals.

#### Week 2: Literacy Activities:

- Phonograms: A-Z
- Read Aloud/Grammar: The Kissing Hand
- Phonics Focus: learning how to count sounds and word map, short i and o words
- Poem of the Week: "Tumbling"
- Writer's Workshop: Letters, words, sentences, illustration labeling, and spacing.

I hope you have received your Logic of English curriculum and have started working on lessons at home. Please let me know if you have any questions! We are partners this year, I hope to hear from you often. Please email or chat with me anytime!

[kassi.nemeth@d49.org](mailto:kassi.nemeth@d49.org)

### *Ms. Kassi's 2/3 Class*

Thank you everyone for a fabulous first week! We had a great time getting to know one another and learning our classroom procedures.

This week we will jump into our content units. In Social Studies we will learn who the Pilgrims were and why they wanted to leave their original home. In science, we will begin our weather unit. We will discuss the difference between climate and weather. We will also begin our weather lapbooks and weather log, where we will log the weather each day we come to school.

Please make sure to bring in any missing supplies, especially their binder and dividers. Students are also encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle each day to school. Each day students in my class are also allowed to bring an item to share. This item must have approval of parents, not be a weapon, and it must stay in their backpack except for sharetime and free choice.

*Please do not hesitate to email me anytime with any questions or concerns at [kassi.nemeth@d49.org](mailto:kassi.nemeth@d49.org).*

### *Ms Leanne's Class (4-5)*

What a fantastic first week we had. This week in art, we will learn about the history of paisley print. Students will then create their own paisley designs. We'll also finish up our social contract too. Students did great last week establishing classroom norms. We've discussed how students want to be treated by each other and myself. They were incredibly thoughtful.

We'll continue to learn about invertebrates in science and the American colonies for social studies.

I've just planned our first field trip to the Bug Museum on September 10, 11 and 12. A separate email will be sent out this week. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

[leanne.mckinney@d49.org](mailto:leanne.mckinney@d49.org)

### *Ms Heather M (6-7)*

This first week flew by. We learned so much and all got to know each other a little better. This upcoming week in social studies, we'll be digging deeper into the Legislative Branch of government. We will also start our mini lesson on the Olympics learning more about the history of soccer (and celebrate the USWNT's Gold Medal win of course)!

In science, we will start talking more about matter and the flow of energy as it pertains to the ecosystem. During science, students have some free choice time. Please remind your student to bring something for this time. *Ideas:* a book to read, a quiet game to play with friends, a learning activity they want more time to work on.

Please reach out with any questions you have for me:

[heather.mitts@d49.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:paul.austin@d49.org)) a quick email for next steps. As always, please let us know if you have any questions.***

## ***Calendars and Supply List for 2024-2025 School Year***

Please see below for our 24-25 School Year Calendar. This calendar will give you all the important dates including, start dates, dates of our breaks or holidays, special activities, etc.

### **[24-25 Student and Staff Calendar](#)**

Please make sure you have brought your supplies in: the list is on our website:

<https://www.d49.org/domain/2042>

## ***Drop off and pick up***

One of our top priorities here at FHP is the safety and wellbeing of your students. For this reason we would ask you to read through the below directions regarding Drop Off and Pick Up.

Please note that the front doors will be opened and someone will be attending to the Kiss and Go lane **from 8:15 am to 8:30 am**.

### **Dismissal Pick-Up:**

We ask that all parents come into the building to pick up their students. This gives you a chance to have a short conversation with your student's teacher each day. Please be sure to park in a designated parking space. We will open our main door **at 3:10 pm** so that you may come into the building and head to your student's classroom. Teachers will begin dismissal, from their classrooms, **at 3:15 pm**.

**\*Please Note:** Banning Lewis Preparatory Academy (the school adjacent to ours) dismisses at 2:45, please be sure to plan for traffic accordingly when scheduling what time to arrive at FHP.

**\*Please Note:** There is a neighborhood street (Pacific Crest Drive) just north of our doors that has parking along the street, a crosswalk, and a sidewalk leading to our doors. This will be a great place for overflow parking if it is needed.

## 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](http://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](mailto:leahanddanny@comcast.net)

### ***Notes from the Healthroom:***

Please complete the D49 Annual Health Form in your parent portal in powerschool if you haven't already, **ESPECIALLY** if your child has any specific health concerns, ie. allergies, needs medication, special circumstances with care, and so on. I just want to be equipped with all the tools I need regarding your children so they are healthy, and happy. Also a reminder that immunization exemptions are needed to be filled out **EACH** year, and if you have any updated shot records you can

email or bring me a copy whenever. Lastly, we are a **NUT FREE** campus, please please check your child's lunch and look for ingredients that say "may contain" as well.

### ***Everyone's Favorite: Beginning of School Paperwork -***

All FHP 'beginning of school' paperwork is electronic!! All parents need to log into their PowerSchool Parent Portal and select 'forms' on the left hand side of your screen and fill out all forms electronically. Please note, once you are in your Parent Portal, you will see each of your students have a tab at the top of the page. Parents will click each student tab, then choose 'forms', fill out and submit all the paperwork.

We need the following forms for each Enrichment/Bridge student, as soon as possible:

1. Annual Contact Verification
2. FHP - Annual Health Form (not the D49 one)
3. FHP Parent/Student Handbook Signature Page (our handbook is located on our website: [Parent Handbook](#) )
4. Photo Opt-Out
5. FHBE: Enrichment - D49 Computer, Network, and Internet Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA)
6. **Bridge Students Only:** FHBE: Bridge and Academic - D49 Computer, Network, and Internet Acceptable Use Agreement (AUA)
7. **Bridge Students Only:** FHP: Academic - Mutually Agreed Upon Plan (MAP) Form

**D49 PowerSchool Parent Portal:** [PowerSchool Parent Portal Link](#)

**Cannot remember your log in or password or having trouble logging in?** Please contact Nancy Carder [nancy.carder@d49.org](mailto:nancy.carder@d49.org) to get yourself up and running!

**Don't have a PowerSchool Parent Portal?** Please click here for a help page that will walk you through your set up: [PowerSchool Parent Creation Guide](#)

### ***Homeschool Helpful Tips: Curriculum***

As you are starting the school year, I wanted to discuss curriculum with you this week. Choosing curriculum is one of the most difficult tasks of a homeschool family. There are so many options to choose from out there.

Here are a few helpful reminders as you begin/continue your year:

- Be consistent with your curriculum-students thrive on routine
- Be very thoughtful when choosing early literacy curriculum. A few great ones are Logic of English, Foundations, All About Reading, and Explode the Code.
- You control your curriculum, it does not control you-do not worry about rushing through to finish by a certain date. Always strive towards mastery, especially with early literacy and math skills.
- What works for one child, may not work for another.
- Use your curriculum for a good amount of time before trying to adapt it.
- If a curriculum does not seem to be a good fit, try to adapt it first before throwing it away. You can assign less problems, work through it more slowly, explore different ways for your student to show mastery, or scaffold lessons with videos or technology.
- If you need guidance on choosing a curriculum at any time I can help you in your search.

*Find joy in your every day!*

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