



NOTES TO PARENTS

August 2010

FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

I am very excited to have finally “arrived” at Friends School, after six months of anticipation! Although the students and teachers are not yet here, I am having a busy summer working with the leadership team to get ready for the start of school. I am extremely grateful to the Board for the opportunity to begin my work by first spending a week at the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Institute for New Heads in Atlanta along with 51 other new independent school heads. We heard outstanding speakers and engaged in breakout workshop sessions led by seasoned heads from 8 AM to 9 PM each day. Besides learning a lot I also got to bond with a cohort of truly outstanding individuals who are now my professional peers and mentors.

As I enter the community I am mindful that Friends School is not “my” school. Rather, the Board has entrusted me to serve as the steward and leader for the next important chapter in its evolution. I am charged to build on the school’s already impressive 45-year history. Woven throughout its evolution are threads of connection, continuity and change. Before I can begin to shape the school in any material way I need to understand it. This will involve a high level of listening to members of all constituencies.

In order to do this I am currently meeting with each member of the FSMH Board of Trustees to ask a consistent set of questions. I will follow this with meetings with each teacher and administrator where I will ask a similar set of questions. Finally, during the Fall I will create opportunities to listen to *you*, our parents. This will most likely be in small groups, although it may be supplemented with a survey. In the late fall or early winter I will then address the community in a public forum to share and test what I have learned, to see if I have gotten it right as I launch an agenda to address the most pressing issues and to begin the process of making longer term strategic plans. I look forward to hearing from many of you in this process.

Beyond my own plan for entry into the community I am also excited about two new projects this year. The first is fulfillment of a recommendation from last year’s Language Arts Curriculum Committee. We are poised to roll out *Making Meaning*, a K-4 program designed to build reading comprehension and social skills through community building. At the same time we will also introduce *Being a Writer*, a year-long K-6 writing curriculum that draws from the work of four of the leading experts on teaching writing to help each student find and develop their own voice as authors. My focus in this effort is to be sure that as a community of learners we take the time necessary for teachers from all grades to communicate among themselves regularly and frequently about their experiences using these programs. Our goal by year-end is to teach using these materials in both an effective consistent fashion from grade to grade. In the Spring I will ask the Language Arts Committee to present to the Board, sharing insights on our progress incorporating these programs into our curriculum.

The other exciting project will be the development of a communications plan. My preliminary “read” of our communications, both within and outside of the school community, is that we are not being clear or consistent in expressing the greatest and most important core strengths of this wonderful school. A small committee will guide development of the plan. It will include at least one administrator, teacher, parent and board member. We cannot be successful in this work without hearing from many of you as well as from many teachers, alumni and students. The first step will be to determine what it is that is so special about Friends School. After that we will work on how best to express that “specialness.”

As we begin the year I look forward to meeting each of you and your students!

Bruce Haines
bhaines@friendsmh.org

FSMH Faculty & Staff for 2010-2011

ADMINISTRATION

Head of School	Bruce Haines
Business Manager	Laura DiLella
Principal	Patti Sanderson
MS Coordinator	Nicole Donnelly
School Nurse	Carol Hummel
Athletic Director	Shaner Brown
Extended Day Director	Rhonda Pennington
Director of F&P Arts	Julie-Ann Whitely Green
Office Manager	Paula Cera
Maintenance	Rudy Tighe

LOWER SCHOOL

Pre-Kindergarten:	Nancy Goldsmith
Kindergarten:	Lesley Grill
Early Childhood Assistant:	Dorothy Baldino
First Grade:	Megan Naphy
First Grade:	Patti Sanderson
	Meredith Harz
First Grade Assistant:	Sandy Weise
Second Grade:	Kathy Saia
Second Grade:	Debbie Rozanski
Third Grade:	Colleen Fitzpatrick
Third Grade:	Glenn Parker
Fourth Grade:	
Language Arts:	Corri Barnett
Math:	Corri Barnett
Advanced Math:	Shaner Brown
	Patti Sanderson
Science:	Rhonda Pennington
Spanish:	Sophie Ragone
Social Studies:	Sophie Ragone
Advisory:	Corri Barnett
	Sophie Ragone
Fifth Grade:	
Language Arts:	Peter Manzelmann
Math:	Jason Hummel
Science:	Rhonda Pennington
Spanish:	Sophie Ragone
Social Studies:	Peter Manzelmann
Advisory:	Peter Manzelmann
	Jason Hummel

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sixth Grade:

Language Arts:	Joe O'Brien
Math:	Joseph Menna
Science:	Jason Hummel
Spanish:	Nicole Donnelly
Social Studies:	Peter Manzelmann

Seventh Grade:

Language Arts:	Joe O'Brien
Pre-Algebra:	Joseph Menna
Science:	Jason Hummel
Spanish:	Nicole Donnelly
Social Studies:	Peter Manzelmann

Eighth Grade:

Language Arts:	Joe O'Brien
Algebra:	Joseph Menna
Advanced Topics in Math:	Joseph Menna
Science:	Jason Hummel
Spanish:	Nicole Donnelly
Civics:	Shaner Brown

Middle School Advisory:

Nicole Donnelly
Joe O'Brien
Joseph Menna
Diane Driessen

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Chorus 6-8:

Julie-Ann
Whitely Green

Drama 6-8:

Sophie Ragone
Sue Hay

Librarian:

Shaner Brown

Physical Education PK-8:

Corri Barnett

Quaker Studies PK-5:

Eve Friedman

Recorder 4-5:

Rhonda Pennington

Science PK-3:

Sophie Ragone

Spanish PK-3:

Lela Tsinadze

Violin 1-3:

Diane Driessen

Visual Arts PK-8:

Olga Yelkina

Vocal Music PK-5:

Classroom Teachers

Technology:

Classroom Teachers

Technology is integrated into each subject area. Classes are scheduled to use the computer lab on a regular basis.

From the Principal

This past June my longtime friend and colleague, School Nurse **Carol Hummel**, and I reflected upon our 20+ year decision to remain at FSMH. We have sent our children through the school who have, in turn, returned to FSMH to be a teacher or a camp counselor. While it was clear that our hearts belonged to FSMH, the reasons for our commitment to educating FSMH students can best be found within the following comments:

"I am closer to my middle school friends than my friends from high school or college. When I come back to Friends, it feels like home."

Lexie Sheller, FSMH Asst. Camp Director
& former FSMH student

"My philosophy of education did not change when shifting paths from Friends School to Elmer (public school). Rather, my philosophies became clearer and took shape... I sincerely feel children learn best when they are actively engaged in their learning through hands-on experiences, making real-life connections, and leading their own inquiry. Friends School fosters and encourages these types of learning styles and is a community I want to be part of again... It is a place where ideas are encouraged and the possibilities of the potential of a child are met."

Megan Naphy, FSMH First Grade Teacher

"To me it seems clear that a good school is one that is constantly engaged in self-examination, in improving itself, in becoming wiser in its ability to both teach and inspire. It's a school that is intent on turning out good people who will help make a better world. It's a school where ideas and ideals are in everyday circulation, the coinage of ordinary transactions."

Those who think of good schools solely in terms of their students' scores on standardized tests miss the point. A school can educate in ways in which its curriculum cannot. It's the soul of a school—its intangible persona, its character, its principles, its daily life over time, the impressions it makes, the efforts it inspires, and the moral authority it possesses—that helps mold a child into an educated, assured, humane, and caring adult. It takes a school—not just bricks and books—to educate a child."

Robert Lawrence Smith, *A Quaker Book of Wisdom*
Former Head of School, Sidwell Friends

- Patti Sanderson

Meet the new PA Committee!

Clerk	Lori Rowe, 3rd & 5th grade parent
Co-Clerk	Kathi Stetser, 1st grade parent
Treasurer	Justin Agliodoro, PK & 1st grade parent
Secretary	Andrea Brosky, 1st grade parent
Volunteer	
Coordinator	Christine Shulden, 1st grade parent
Grade Rep	
Coordinator	Pamela Becker, 1st & 6th grade parent

First Day of School

Thursday, September 9th

- Lower School students will receive a welcome letter from their classroom teacher during the last week of August.
- Students should arrive between 8:30 and 8:45 each morning. Parents are welcomed to take "first day" pictures in the classrooms.
- When dropping off or picking up students, it is important to use the High Street entrance.
- The Salem Building parking lot may only be used when picking up students from the Extended Day program.
- Students who are arriving by bus will be greeted by FSMH staff and supervised until they arrive safely in their classroom.
- Please return the form that tells how your child will be dismissed—car, bus or Extended Day.

PA's Back to School Coffee — 8:30am

After your children are in their classrooms on the first day of school, parents are invited to the gymnasium for coffee and goodies.

Friends School Picnic

Sunday, September 12th — 4pm



One School, One Book

Exploring ancestral diversity in our school community is our introduction to the year's book. Through the year, we'll learn about South Jersey's ancestors too.

Back to School Nights

Lower School: September 21st — 7pm
Middle School: September 30th — 7pm

Lower School News

Exploring the Solar System

On May 18th groups of students entered this inflatable sky dome planetarium that was erected in our gymnasium. A very entertaining guide showed us a night time sky filled with planets, the sun and moon, and star constellations. Each of his four presentations were tailored to the students' age group. While the younger students connected the star dots to see the mythical animals, the older students learned about the Greek mythological characters. **T. Jason** reported that it was the best assembly ever held at Friends School. All students, from the youngest to oldest, agreed that the assembly was out of this world!

SPCA Adoption Day

Kindergarten classes hosted the first ever SPCA Adoption Day at FSMH on May 25th. The lure of three adorable dogs brought many moms and dads to the event, of course, by the insistence of their children. Betty Lou McKeich (T. Rhonda's sister) and volunteers from the Salem County Humane Society were on hand to answer pet related questions and share stories about pet care. To date, two dogs have been adopted. Thanks Kindergartners for helping to find homes for these pets!

Congratulations to New Parents!

On July 26th **T. Maura** gave birth to a healthy baby girl. We hear that mother and baby are doing well. In June, **T. Amanda** also gave birth to a baby girl and is enjoying motherhood. We wish both of these new moms all the best with their new families.

Fifth Graders Travel to Gettysburg

On the Friday before Memorial Day, the fifth graders boarded a Rowan University bus headed for the Gettysburg National Military Park. Rowan's history professor, **Bill Carrigan**, had extended an invitation to the fifth grade to join his annual journey to this historical landmark.

Upon arrival at the park, fifth graders were partnered with current Rowan students. A scavenger hunt had been planned for them! At each point of interest on the battlefield, the partners searched monuments for important dates. Each fifth grader was also assigned an individual in the Battle at Gettysburg. With the help of their Rowan partners, they learned if the individual was a Confederate or Union soldier and if he survived, was killed or was wounded in the battle. Although the intention of these fun activities was to teach the fifth graders about the historical events, the Rowan students also benefited as they enjoyed their interaction with our inquisitive, earnest students.

The tour of the battlefield was narrated by Bill Carrigan and one of his former students.

They shared their extensive knowledge of the three days of battle and highlighted the local participation as we viewed the monument dedicated to New Jersey's 12th Regiment known by their motto, "Ball & Buck". The day concluded with a lecture on Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address. We are appreciative of Bill and the Rowan students for including the fifth graders on this fascinating trip.

Middle School News

Hello from the Middle School!

The other teachers and I can't wait to catch up with students about their summer activities. This summer had me playing on a field hockey team on Rowan University's turf field - under the lights! When I arrived for my first game, and my teammates were introducing themselves, I quickly discovered that most were on their way to their first year playing college hockey. Yikes! I was going to have to keep up with college freshmen – one of them was even a former player of mine from Friends! Needless to say, it was an interesting experience, and I enjoyed the chance to push myself and to take part in a sport that I have loved since my days as a student on the Friends field hockey field. I am now extra excited about getting this year's Friends field hockey season underway.

It's tough to watch the last days of summer pass by, but school brings a reunion of friends and teachers and a creation of great middle school memories. I look forward to working with the incoming 8th graders as the new student leaders of the school. It's a pleasure to guide, encourage, and observe the transformation that occurs in their final year at FSMH.

- T. Nicole Donnelly

The First Day of School & Daily Schedule

On the first day of school students should arrive by 8:45 with their lunch and supplies. They will be directed to homerooms and lockers on arrival. Schedules will be distributed.

Students should report to their homerooms every morning between 8:30 and 8:45 am. At 8:45, all students and teachers will move to the Big Exciting Space for *Collection*. This is a time for the Middle School to come together as one. Teacher announcements, the daily attendance and recognizing students take place during this time.

Advisory

All middle school students will be assigned to a member of the faculty who will serve as an advisor. Advisors will lead advisory discussions and activities during advisory period and act as an extra academic and social support to plans developed by the individual classroom teachers and the student.

Assignment Books

Each student will be issued an assignment book by the school. Students are expected to record all assigned work at the end of every class. If students do not have homework in a particular class, they are expected to record "NONE." At the end of each week, homeroom teachers will check the assignment book for accuracy and sign it. Classroom teachers may also communicate with parents through the assignment book.

Parents are asked to review and sign the book each weekend (feel free to write messages to us!). If the assignment book is not signed by the parent, the student will receive consequences at school until the book is signed. The assignment book is the student's responsibility, but we appreciate your support to reinforce the need for them to meet this responsibility. We believe it is essential to developing their organizational skills.

Fall Sports

Sports practices will begin during the first full week of school. It is important to the success of the team that players not miss the first practices. Players will not be allowed to participate in games or practices until they have turned in a physical examination form signed by a doctor and have obtained the proper equipment.

- Field Hockey – mouth guard and shin guards
- Soccer – shin guards

Supplies for the Academic Year

Middle school students are required to have:

- **1 or 2 three-ring binders**, with the following:
 - 7 or 8 single subject, spiral bound **notebooks**
 - 8 ½ x 11 loose leaf **paper**
 - 7 **folders** with pockets and 3 holes
- 1 marble **composition book** (100 pages)
- **Note cards** (at least 300) & a storage **box**
- 1 **Spanish/English dictionary**
- **Pens**
- **Pencils/erasers** (required for mathematics)
- **Highlighter** (any color)
- 1 **Flash drive** (at least 1GB)
- **Book covers** (either "book socks", or made from brown paper bags)

Sixth graders will also need (for Geography):

- Blue, green, red, and black **fine point pens**
- 1 set of **colored pencils**
- 1 **world atlas** (*recommended*)



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BACK TO SCHOOL PICNIC

Sunday, September 12th

4:00-6:00

We're grilling... Are you willing
to bring a covered
side dish and to
share a meal
with old friends
and new families?

Hope to see you on the
Friends School lawn!

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