

August 2008

# The Fairless W.A.V.E. (We All Value Education)

Please join us for the  
"Welcome to the  
New Year Corn Roast"  
Thursday, August 21, 2008  
from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Fairless  
See Page 4 for details!

Volume 7, Issue 1

## A Message from Dr. Deborah M. Vereen, Fairless Principal

Welcome to the 2008-2009 school year. As we enter yet another exciting year, the entire Fairless Intermediate School learning community joins me in renewing our commitment to providing your child with an exceptional educational experience. While we will utilize the very best instructional strategies that will meet your child's unique learning needs, we are devoted to maintaining a safe, nurturing school environment.

We have several positive school related highlights to summarize so that you, too, will be excited about the new school year. These things follow.

- Specialized Guidance Groups facilitated by our Guidance Counselor, Mr. Fratangelo, and local agencies will continue to help meet the needs of our children. Student academic and behavioral efforts will be celebrated continuously.
- Sixth graders will participate in the final annual McKeever Adventure in September.
- Fairless incentive programs will continue to be used to help children develop motivation to do their best at school. They include:

- Lunch With The Principal each Wednesday. Three children will be selected from a rotating grade level schedule to enjoy a formal lunch with me.
- The Fairless Lottery will be held each Friday after school to promote and recognize good school attendance. One student from each grade will be selected to win an age-appropriate prize.
- Fairless Bucks will be awarded to children for making positive educational choices by staff members. Students will be able to use their bucks at the Fairless Store. Each grade level will shop at the store on an alternating basis each Tuesday morning.

- Teachers will be involved in continuous professional development to ensure all that children have every opportunity to experience the highest level of educational success.

We look forward to having an awesome school year as well as working with you and your child.

**"There's only one child in the world and that is called all children."  
—Carl Sandburg**

**Be sure to visit our Parent Resource Center when you visit our school!**

### The District Wellness Policy Will Be Strictly Enforced

All employees and students will continue to develop healthy habits because of the district Wellness Policy. Fairless will eliminate all forms of "junk food" for student incentives, snacks and treats. In fact, cookies, donuts, candy, soda, cake, and so on will not be permitted for classroom celebrations. Healthy alternatives must be used instead. Examples of these include: fresh or dried fruit; trail mix; natural fruit juice; enriched breakfast or snack bars; nuts and seeds; and fresh vegetables with dip. The list of healthy snacks is almost endless! All parents are requested to respectfully follow our school wide guidelines to good health.

Here is additional information. We will continue to give students fifteen minutes of daily recess on days when they do not have physical education. This will promote exercise. Recess may not be held due to inclement weather or if additional academic time is needed.

### First Day of School

The Fairless staff anticipates greeting our wonderful students on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 which is their first day of school.

Fourth graders will report to school at the usual time. Students may enter the building at 8:30 a.m. The late bell will ring at 9:00 a.m. A special orientation will be held for these students upon their arrival to

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school. This will include an extended lunch period to help our younger children get used to our cafeteria procedures.

Fifth and sixth graders will have a two-hour delay on the first day of school.

Dismissal will be at 3:30 p.m.

Remember, breakfast will not be served the first day of school.

## TIPS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AT FAIRLESS

Children experience higher levels of success at school when parents partner with the school by being actively involved in the educational process. We encourage you to become visibly involved in your child's education at home and school.

At home, talk to your child about school experiences daily. Help your child with homework and monitor the completion of assignments. Always be aware of your child's academic performance. Prepare your child for all of the standardized tests he/she will take. It is also vital to review the

quarterly report cards that will be distributed. Finally, support your child's educational efforts by maintaining open lines of communications between home and school. You are welcomed to do so at Fairless.

You may be actively involved at school by attending the meetings and events shown on the Fairless Calendar as well as those listed below:

- Quarterly Principal's Coffees/Title I Meetings
- Open House
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Honors Assemblies
- Music Concerts and Demonstration Program
- PTO Monthly Meetings
- Working at the Fairless Store each Tuesday

- Chaperoning and attending special school events and assemblies
- Having lunch with your child
- Volunteering in your child's classroom.
- Attending special events

You are a vital link to your child's education. Remember, "it takes a whole village to raise a child". (An African Proverb)



## PTO SUPPORT

As we start a new school year, the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) of Fairless Intermediate would like to say welcome.

The mission of our PTO is to promote family involvement that builds true partnerships between our teachers and parents, and to maintain these partnerships that they may yield academic success in each child's education. Therefore, please consider participating in the PTO this year. We need your help to get our mission accomplished.

**Please sign up to be a member of the Fairless PTO at the Corn Roast on August 21, 2008. (Call Mrs. Paull in the school office at (412) 271-1317 Ex.t 3210 for information.)**



## FAIRLESS STAFF CHANGES

We are welcoming the following new and returning members of our Fairless staff and we would like to announce the staffing changes shown below:

Mrs. Pearson will be returning to Fairless as the Gifted Support Teacher.

Mrs. Novotny has transferred from grade 6 to grade 4. She will be in room 20.

Ms. Gable will be in room 32 for this school year. Mrs. Rizza will be

providing Learning Support to fourth grade students in Room 12 this year and Ms. Bochicchio will be providing Learning Support to sixth graders in room 31. We welcome Mrs. LaRoche from Dickson as our new fifth grade Learning Support Teacher. She will be in room 25.

We welcome Mr. Dill as our new Physical Education teacher. He will be joined by Mr. Larabee who will be at Fairless one day a week.

We welcome Mr. White to teach general

music one day a week along with Mr. Shaw.

Four fifth grade classrooms will no longer be self-contained. The following instructional teams will work together to deliver instruction to our children. :

Ms. Kummer (Mathematics) and Mrs. McDowell (Language Arts); Ms. Ashby (Mathematics) and Mrs. Kristian (Language Arts).

Ms. Johnson's classroom will remain self-contained.

## HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

As always, we must work together to maintain positive lines of communication between our school and our parents. Please follow these important guidelines to strengthen our efforts.

1. Participate in school-wide activities. Fairless always has a variety of events for parents to participate in at school. Remember, you are an important member of our "...Team Committed to Excellence" and you are always welcome at our school.
2. Use your child's monthly, Daily Planner as a communication tool. Send notes to teachers regarding your child's educational progress and respond to teacher's notes using the

daily planner.

3. Review the Homework and Communication Folder that your child will bring home. Closely monitor the completion of your child's homework and major assignments. Be sure to read the important school and classroom information sent to you.
4. Use the Fairless Ride the W.A.V.E. Calendar which you will receive during the first week of school so that you may participate in our special activities. Also, be sure to update your calendar regularly.
5. Call the school if you need to speak to any staff member or if you would

like to make an appointment for a conference. (While your presence is welcomed at our school, we strongly encourage you to make an appointment to meet with any member of the faculty.)

6. Read the Student Handbook to become familiar with our expectations for all Fairless students as well as all school procedures
7. Use e-mail to communicate to school personnel.
8. Be sure to view the Fairless webpage periodically for updated news.

Open lines of communication will contribute to your child's success throughout the school year.

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Approximately 350 Fairless children are enrolled at our highly diverse school. The number of sixth grade homerooms has changed compared to last year. There will be four classrooms. Mr. Hart (Mathematics, Science, Social Studies) and Mrs. Furby (ELA) will be instructional partners. Also, Mr. Zimmerman (Mathematics, Science) and Ms. Gable (ELA, Social Studies) will serve as instructional partners. There will be five fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Fourth grade classrooms will continue to be self-contained this year. That means that the homeroom teacher will provide in-

struction in language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

All Fairless children will receive additional instruction in art, music, and library science one period per week. Physical education classes will meet two periods per week.



**"Achieving starts with believing."**

— *Unknown*



**The Fairless Educational community *believes* that each child will achieve at the highest levels.**

## SPECIAL EDUCATION INFORMATION

Children enrolled in special education children will receive instruction according to their Individualized Education Program. The programs include: Learning Support, Gifted Support, Emotional Support, Speech, and Life Skills Support. Fairless will be working to fully include children enrolled in the Learning and Emotional Support programs into regular education. That means that the special education and regular teacher will ultimately work together very closely in the regular education classroom to provide

instruction for all Fairless children including those students with an IEP. Fairless will initially pilot co-teaching in some regular education classrooms. The learning and emotional support students in those designated classes will remain for instruction instead of going into the special education classes.

Full inclusion is a process. Teachers will be engaged in extensive training on an ongoing basis so that learning and emotional support children are ultimately in-

cluded in regular education 100% of the time.

Fairless will keep the lines of communication open so that families are updated with the progress that the school is making with inclusion. Dr. Vereen is available to answer questions related to this.

We value working with your child very closely.

## WELCOME TO THE NEW YEAR CORN ROAST

We cordially invite all Fairless families to attend our informal gathering to officially begin the new school year. In addition to enjoying delicious roasted corn and other treats, the following will highlight our unique event:

- Meet and get to know members of the Fairless staff as well as district administrators
- Visit classrooms and tour the building
- Meet the S.E.S. (Supplemental Education Services) provider and sign your child up to receive free tutoring
- Sign up to serve on the Fairless PTO
- Meet Mrs. Kurpaikis, Coordinator of Solid Foundations and sign-up to serve on the Fairless Parental Involvement Team
- Enjoy the entertainment provided by our Fairless music teachers and former Fairless students

Be sure to mark your calendars so that you will attend our event on: **Thursday, August 21st from 6:00–7:30 p.m.!**



## FAIRLESS READING AND MATHEMATICS PSSA DATA

Fairless Intermediate School failed to make AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). As a result of the 2008 test scores, the Corrective I status has been placed upon the school. (The specific PSSA scores will be distributed to parents at a later date.)

Several initiatives are in place so that Fairless will make AYP as evidenced by the 2009 Reading and Mathematics PSSA student performance data. These detailed strategies include the following:

1. The reading and mathematics curriculum has been updated district wide.
2. The building principal and all teachers will be participating in continuous professional development so that the highest quality instruction will be delivered to each Fairless child.
3. A School Improvement Plan will be developed in the near future. It will be vital for parents to assist with this process. A copy will be placed on the Fairless webpage.
4. The Fairless AYP Plan has been developed so that very specific strategies are outlined for the school to follow. This roadmap to success is also located on the Fairless webpage.
5. School-wide efforts are being made to heighten parental involvement.

Parents are vital to each child reaching and exceeding the PSSA performance targets.

Fairless is, indeed, committed to making AYP.



## ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Your child will be given a variety of assessments throughout the school year. The purpose of these tests will be provide specific information about how he or she is performing. Even though the Fairless "Ride The W.A.V.E." Calendar will the testing information, the dates and names of these assessments are shown below:

- The Terra Nova Achievement Test—November 3-18, 2008 Grades4-5-6
- The Otis Lennon School Ability Test—November 3-18, 2008 Grade 5
- Writing PSSA—February 9-20, 2009 Grade 5
- Reading and Mathematics PSSA - March 16-27, 2009 Grades 4-5-6
- The Science PSSA—April 27-May 8, 2009 Grade 4

Fairless will also give other assessments to your child during the school year. These will help to monitor your child's education growth and to determine his or her needs. The assessments include:

- 4 Sight Benchmark Tests
- The DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)
- DIBELs (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)

You are encouraged to keep in touch with your child's teacher to regularly monitor his/her academic progress.

# THE VISION AND MISSION OF FAIRLESS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

## Building Vision

We envision Fairless Intermediate School as a learning community focused on meeting the educational needs of each student by:

- Utilizing student achievement data to drive instruction,
- Fostering mutual respect, and
- Developing positive, collaborative relationships between the intra-district feeder schools as well as between staff, parents, and the local community.

## Building Mission Statement


Fairless Intermediate School is dedicated to educating students in a standard driven, child centered, nurturing learning environment where the highest expectations are maintained for each learner. Students, staff, parents, and the local community share responsibility for this process. Each student will be prepared to make a transition to secondary education.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR


Fairless children are expected to maintain appropriate conduct at school, on the school bus, and while walking to and from school.

The Woodland Hills School District Student Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced. As a result, our school will be a safe and well-managed building.


Cameras will be installed on each school bus. Students who misbehave will lose his or her privilege to ride the school bus.



Remember to  
Ride the Fairless W.A.V.E.  
(We All Value Education)  
this school year.



Fairless will be working very hard to help families who need various levels of support. Listen for details about the opening of the Parent Resource Room.



## THE ROADMAP TO EXCELLENCE


The following documents are available on the Fairless webpage for your review:

- The AYP Plan
- Parent Involvement Action Plan.
- The Fairless Title I Parental Involvement Plan
- The Fairless Title I Compact

Fairless parents have a decision-making voice. Opportunities exist for parents to serve on the following school related committees:

- School Improvement
- Parent Involvement

Interested parents should call the school.



## ATTENDANCE REALLY MATTERS



WOODLAND HILLS  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

FAIRLESS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL  
531 JONES AVENUE  
N. BRADDOCK, PA 15104  
(412)271-1317 Fax (412)271-6657

### A Team Committed to Excellence

We're on the Web!  
[www.whsd.net](http://www.whsd.net)

Meet the Fairless Staff during  
Open House on Wednesday,  
September 24, 2008  
from 7:00-9:00 p.m.



**WE NEED YOU...!**

Parent volunteers are needed  
to work at the FAIRLESS  
STORE each Tuesday morn-  
ing from 8:35- 9:00 AM



Any parent interested in working at the Fairless Store should call Mrs. Paull, Administrative Secretary at (412)271-1317 Ext. 3210. Mrs. Paull may also be e-mailed at: [paulja@whsd.net](mailto:paulja@whsd.net).

We are in need of new donations for our store. Your support will help to encourage our children.

Good school attendance is related to the academic success students achieve. It is also closely related to the "No Child Left Behind" Federal Law. In an effort to achieve AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in the area of *school attendance*, we must maintain a student attendance rate of 90% each year. Because of your efforts, Fairless continues to do so each year.

Fairless will consistently work with the Woodland Hills School District to maintain and even improve our student attendance rate. It must be emphasized that First Offense Letters will be sent to parents whose children are absent from school three days without bringing in an excuse from home. Additionally, Attendance Citations will be issued through Magistrate Schriker in Turtle Creek to the parents of children who *continue* to be absent illegally without bringing in an excuse upon each additional absence. Costly fines as well as parental imprisonment may result once the magistrate becomes involved. Chronic offenders will be referred to CYF.

Adhering to the Attendance Tips below will improve the attendance rate at Fairless.

1. Discuss the importance of good, consistent school attendance with your child regularly. Make connections with their excellent attendance and their academic success.
2. Help your child get organized for school the night before. This includes reviewing the Homework and Communication Folder as well as the Daily Planner and categorizing assignments, helping to arrange his/her book bag, preparing clothes to wear, and packing their lunch.
3. Submit an official medical excuse or written excuse for your child within three days of the absence. **No exceptions will be made to this district mandated policy.** Always remind your child to give the excuse to their homeroom teacher or to Mrs. Paull in the main office upon their arrival to school.
4. If medical or judicial appointments must be made during school hours, students should return to the building after such meetings with an excuse.
5. Please call the school office (412)271-1317 Ext. 3210 in the morning to report your child's absence for the day.

**Remember, good school attendance matters!**

### Be sure to support the Fairless PTO!

#### Meeting Schedule for the 2008-2009 School Year

September 30	January 26
October 28	February 23
November 25	March 31
December 16	April 28
	May 26

All meetings will be held in the Fairless Library at 6:00 p.m. The support you provide will help enrich your child's educational experience.



We're looking forward to seeing our children on August 26th!