



Ben Franklin Herald

September 2009

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

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From the Principal

The 2009 – 2010 school year is off to a terrific start! On the academic side, Ben Franklin achieved AYP from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the sixth consecutive year. We have also received an Art and Literacy Grant that included the beautiful new prints that are on display throughout the lobby. In addition, Ben Franklin was awarded the Project Fit America grant and has installed a new physical education playground. Our official ribbon cutting will be held the morning of October 9th.

September marks the beginning of our Heartwood Character curriculum and the theme for the months of both September and October is **RESPECT**. This is such an important character attribute that we dedicate two months to it. Model respect for your children by speaking respectfully to others and by remembering to say your “please and thank you”.

Reading Tip of the Month: Simply modeling reading each and every day makes a statement that’s louder than words. If you take 15 minutes each day and read with your child, their reading will improve and they will love every minute of it!

Attendance: Please take attendance as seriously as I do and get your child to school. Absences lead to lost instructional time resulting in lost learning opportunities. If an absence is necessary, a written excuse is expected. Thank you!

I look forward to seeing you at the picnic on the 24th!

- Mr. Minnick

Dates to Remember

September 16	Back –To-School Night 4-6 6:30 PM
September 21	School Picture Day
September 24	Back-To-School Picnic at Mack Park 5-8 PM
October 1	Principal’s Coffee 2PM
9	Early Dismissal 11:45AM
12	In-Service Day (Act 80)-No classes
13	Homeroom Parent Tea (PTA) 6:30
22	Open House, Parent Visitation Day
27-29	6 th Grade Lutherlyn Trip
30	Halloween Parties 2 PM

CLASSROOM NEWS

KINDERGARTEN

It was nice to see so many of you at Open House and Back to School Night. The students are adjusting to the daily kindergarten routines and learning about school rules. We are mixing the primary colors to make new ones and watching for a butterfly to come out of its chrysalis. We’re getting better at putting numbers in for lunch!

FIRST GRADE

First grade students are adjusting to their new rooms and teachers! We will be reinforcing school rules and routines, discussing respect and responsibility and the importance of **good listening skills**. We are all getting to know one another. In reading we are reviewing high frequency words and letter sound associations, and have begun our new reading series, **Treasures**. In math, we are learning the importance of numbers and their relationships. We are counting, skip counting, writing and using numbers in our everyday routines.

SECOND GRADE

During the first month of school, second graders are learning important routines and habits to help them become responsible learners. All second graders have a homework folder and a blue assignment book that they are responsible for carrying to and from school each day.

It is very important for the parents to look at the assignment book each evening with their child and help them to read and remember to do their assignments. We are asking parents to please place their initials beside the assignments each day. This lets the teachers know that you are aware of the homework and classroom activities.

Teach your second grader to put finished homework assignments in their folder and then into their book bag each evening. We are telling your children that it is **their** responsibility to do this, as they frequently like to blame their parent for not packing the book bag.

Thank you for working with us to help your child become a responsible student. We are attempting to develop good study skills and organizational habits that will help your child in the coming years in school.

THIRD GRADE

Third grade is "off and running"! Students are learning to graph information in math, to explore their world in their reading anthologies, and to find their way around a map in social studies. We will be learning about the different kinds of sentences and writing personal narratives.

FOURTH GRADE

Fourth grade is a giant step for most students. The children are adjusting to the "Block System" schedule. During reading the students will be reading stories, novels, and completing different kinds of projects during the month. Math students will be keeping vocabulary notebooks, developing skills and concepts, and completing written practice. During social studies and science the students will be learning about explorers, body systems and personal health.

FIFTH GRADE

As we kick off a new math year our fifth grade students will round, compare, order, estimate, add, and subtract whole numbers & decimals. They will also analyze problems & strategies to solve them. Remember that completing homework provides needed practice and allows for the opportunity to discuss any questions that were encountered.

The beginning of the school year is a busy time in reading class. Fifth grade students will be reading stories in Unit 1 of Treasures, working on reading strategies & skills and reading novels. Reading fluency checks will be administered throughout the school year.

In science, students are exploring the realm of microorganisms in our Micro-Worlds Unit. Students will have the opportunity to analyze living organisms and non-living items and make detailed observations about them using different types of magnifiers.

SIXTH GRADE

After a relaxed summer, we are returning to the structure of another school year. As the students begin their final year at Ben Franklin School, they can anticipate a busy and productive year. Back to School Night will be on

Wednesday, September 16th at 6:30. We look forward to meeting you, sharing our curriculum, and answering any of your questions. School Picture Day is on Monday, September 21st. Our trip to Lutherlyn will be on October 27, 28 & 29. The students will be bringing home a packet of information that will include a health form, a permission slip, and a suggested list of items to pack next month.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES REMINDER:

Students who purchase meals in the cafeteria are expected to have an adequate balance in their account. Children will be informed by the cashier if their balance is low. The food service department will also prepare letters once per week for elementary students whose balance is below ten dollars (\$10.00). These letters will be sent home with the student. Parents should submit funds for their child's account promptly if they receive a letter. It is the parent

or guardian's responsibility to maintain an adequate balance in their child's account and to pay for all purchases made by their child on an overdrawn account.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

It's hard to believe that it is September already. The students are beginning to adapt to their new schedules and are learning the new routine. We are happy to welcome many new students to Ben Franklin this fall; we are all trying to make them feel comfortable. Guidance lessons are well underway. All lessons this month are focusing on acceptance and bullying prevention. I will be visiting all classrooms throughout the month. Your child will learn what bullying is and what they can do to help stop bullying here at our school. As always if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

As we start a new school year, K-2 students will be working on locomotor movement skills. Locomotor movements include walking, running, jumping, skipping, galloping, sliding and leaping. We will be working on these skills and participating in activities that utilize these movements. Third through sixth grade students are beginning a football unit. We will be working on passing, catching and kicking through different stations and through different types of mini-football games. We will also conduct an NFL Punt, Pass and Kick competition in mid to late September. Papers will be sent home with those students that are interested in competing.

ART

Kindergarten is starting the year with a project which practices many art skills, such as following directions, drawing, coloring, painting, cutting and pasting. First through sixth graders are all becoming familiar with their ongoing projects, which are projects they work on independently throughout the year when they have free time in the art room. First graders search magazine pictures for hidden letters, while second graders weave using the tabby technique (over-under). Third graders are creating a symmetrical design on graph paper (and taking a turn on the Promethean Board!), while fourth graders are creating a latchhook square. Fifth graders create several paper strip projects based on different color theories, while sixth graders weave a pocket using several advanced weaving techniques.

FROM THE NURSE

Medication Policy Reminders:

1. Medication required by students should be given at home by the parent or guardian whenever possible. However, if medication is required during the school day, it must be brought into school in its original package or pharmacy labeled container.
2. All medication **including over the counter medication** must be accompanied by a

Physician Authorization for Administration of Medicine form as well as a parent authorization form or note specifying the name of the medication, dosage, time and duration for medication administration. Authorization forms may be obtained from the school nurse or downloaded from the school district's website under health services at www.iasd.cc.

Medication should be delivered to the school by the parent, guardian or designated adult. If you are unable to personally deliver the required medication, please contact Mrs. Miller, the school nurse, for alternative arrangements.

Please read the attached information in this bulletin regarding the H1N1 flu strain (Swine flu). We will be following all of the recommendations made by the Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). New guidance from the CDC states that a student with the flu will need to stay home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications such as Tylenol or Motrin. Please make sure to have a plan in place in case your child needs to stay home or be picked up at school due to illness.



K-KIDS

K-Kids will be meeting on Day 5 from 2:30-3:15. A Schedule will be posted soon. If your son or daughter is in grades 4-6 and wishes to be part of this service-learning group please have them see Ms. Helm or Ms. Zacherl. Information will be sent home soon.

GARDEN CLUB

Any students wishing to be a part of the Garden Club at Ben Franklin should sign up outside Ms. Helm's room.

Indiana High School Football Tickets

During the week of the home football games, we will be offering pre-sale student football tickets in the main office for **\$2.00**. If you do not purchase a student ticket at school, all general admission tickets at the gate will be **\$4.00**.

No student tickets will be sold at the gate.

All games begin at 7:30PM on the following dates:

Friday, September 18 vs. Kiski Area (Pee Wee Night)

Friday, October 9 vs. Highlands (Homecoming)

Friday, October 16 vs. Knoch

Friday, October 30 vs. Franklin Regional (Senior Salute)

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

PTA Homeroom Parent Night
Tuesday, October 13, 2009 – 6:30 pm
Ben Franklin Cafeteria

If you've completed your PTA application and signed up to be a Homeroom Parent, you won't want to miss our Ben Franklin Homeroom Parent Meeting on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 6:30 pm. Please return your membership forms by September 28.

This meeting will be an introduction to the Homeroom Parent program as well as a planning meeting for our upcoming Halloween Party. This is your opportunity to meet with the other parents in your child's class and discuss the event. Plan for activities, snacks, and more. All in one night.

Ben Franklin Homeroom Parents plan for a Halloween event on October 30 and a Valentine's Event on February 11, 2010. Additionally, Kindergarten Homeroom Parents have two additional events and will have the opportunity to meet with Kindergarten teachers and plan accordingly on October 13.

Don't forget – Homeroom Parents must become a member of the Ben Franklin PTA to participate in homeroom activities and be represented in the Homeroom Parent Directory.

Be sure to complete the homeroom parent form in addition to your PTA membership application. While we realize everyone cannot make the time commitment to attend classroom activities, donating Homeroom Parents are much appreciated.

If you have any questions regarding the Homeroom Parent Program, please feel free to contact Kelly Corrinne-Thomas at 724.349.4069 or kellycorrinne@yahoo.com

Questions about. . . the back to school picnic?

What is the Back To School Picnic?

The Back to School picnic is a PTA sponsored event for all Ben Franklin students and their families. It is a way for families in Ben Franklin school to meet one another. The picnic is a fun way to kick-off the new school year as old friends become reacquainted and new friendships form.

Who is invited?

All members of the Ben Franklin family are invited to the picnic. This includes parents, students, teachers, and other staff members.

Where is the picnic held?

The picnic will be held at Mack Park on Thursday, September 24, 2009. Dinner is served inside the pavilion. The menu includes hot dogs, hamburgers, chips, pasta salad, fruit, and cookies. The picnic is held between the hours of 5:00 and 8:00.

Does our family have to stay all 3 hours?

This picnic has been organized to give families time to come at their convenience. It is like an open house that you can come and go at any time during 5:00 and 8:00.

What kinds of activities will occur?

A picnic dinner will be provided. A SnoCone station will be available to the students from 6:00-7:30. The playground equipment at Mack Park is also available for use.

What happens if it rains?

The pavilion at Mack Park has been reserved for the school for September 24. We cannot change the date due to poor weather. If it rains, then the festivities will be held inside the pavilion at Mack Park.

Can we bring our child's brothers and/or sisters with us?

Absolutely! This is a picnic for the whole family.

Should we bring anything with us?

If your last name starts with A-M, please bring a bag of chips or pretzels to share.

If your last name starts with N-Z, please bring a dozen cookies to share.

Please encourage your children to submit their Reflections Project to their teacher or the front office. Due by October 21, 2009. Projects should reflect the theme: "Beauty Is..." Rules and Entry Forms have been sent home. If you need another copy or have any questions please call or email Lynn Simmerman. 724-349-1348 lynn_simmerman@hotmail.com All participants will be invited to the Gallery and Awards Night on Thursday, November 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the gym.

The Ben Franklin PTA Annual Fall Fund Raiser materials have been sent home with your child. We would like to thank everyone in advance for participating in this very important event. All money raised from this fund raiser supports programs for students, classroom parties, field trips, and much more.

This year there are a number of new catalogs in your fund raising packets, including wonderful decorative and garden flags, cookie doughs, \$1 beef jerky sticks, and \$1 gourmet coffee packets. Plus, we are again offering gift wrap, candy, nuts, magazine subscriptions and other items. Parents and students are reminded that order forms are due back to the school by Monday, September 28. Delivery for the items is expected to be Monday, October 19, or possibly sooner. (A flyer will be sent home to let you know exact pick-up and payment collection information.)

Don't forget -- every student who participates will receive a special prize! And, of course, there are prizes for different levels of sales, top sellers, and top-selling classrooms.

Attention Parents: Edline will no longer be used as the parent portal for the Indiana Area School District, beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. As a result of a required change in our child accounting system by the vendor, a new parent portal to access student grades - called PowerSchool - will be in use and will soon become available. Letters outlining how to access PowerSchool will be mailed when the system is fully implemented. Please watch for additional details.

Recycling

Our school is collecting Box Tops, Campbell's labels, Tyson labels, pop tops, and ink cartridges again this year. Please help us earn money and supplies for our school. A full list of products and rules will be coming home soon.

Parent Visitation

Ben Franklin will be having a parent/guardian visitation day this year. This is a new event as only parents and guardians will attend. Grandparents will attend later in the fall during our Veteran's Day celebration. Visitation will be held on October 22nd. More information will be coming home closer to the event date.