

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2009

FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, February 2 - JV/V G/B BB vs. East Mills Here 6:15

Tuesday, February 3 - JV/V Wrestling vs. Bedford at Shenandoah 5:30

Thursday, February 5 - JV Wrestling Tournament at Atlantic 5:00

Friday, February 6 - JH Wrestling at Lenox 4:00

Varsity G/B BB at Hamburg 6:15/8:00

Afternoon performance of State Speech Performances to JH/HS @ 1:00

Saturday, February 7 - State Large Group Speech Contest TBA

Varsity Sectional Wrestling TBA

Monday, February 9 - Regular School Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 10 - JH Wrestling vs. Nebraska City at Shenandoah 4:00

Varsity G/B BB vs. Sidney Here 6:15/8:00 (Parents' Night)

Jr. Class Parents Soup Supper 5:30

Wednesday, February 11 - Jr. Class Parent After Prom Meeting 6:30 p.m. in concourse

Thursday, February 12 - Girls' BB Districts Here (Farragut vs. Hamburg) 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 14 - Varsity District Wrestling Tournament TBA

Monday, February 16 - Boys' District BB TBA

February 18-21 - State Wrestling Tournament TBA

All-State Speech Contest TBA

Monday, February 23 - JH Wrestling vs. Red Oak at Shenandoah 4:00

Saturday, February 28 - District Individual Speech Contest TBA

MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, March 2 - JH Science Fair at Farragut School

Tuesday, March 3 - JH Wrestling Tournament at Tarkio 4:30

Monday, March 9 - Regular School Board Meeting 6:30

Saturday, March 14 - State Individual Speech Contest

Saturday, March 21 - Pre-Contest

Thursday, March 26 - Elementary Spring Concert 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 30 - All-State Individual Speech Contest

ELEMENTARY UPDATE - MRS. BREDENSTEINER

The month of February is packed with activities. We begin with the Spelling Bee and end the month with testing.

The Farragut Spelling Bee is scheduled for February 5 at 3:30. The 4th and 5th grade students will spell in the Music Room and the 6th through 8th grade students will spell in the Media Center. At this time, the Fremont County Spelling Bee is set for February 18. The top three spellers in each class move to the county level competition.

Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for February 13. We hope to see parents attend and discuss the progress of their children with the teachers. It is important for student progress to continue communications. Students will have Friday, February 13, off and Presidents' Day, Monday, February 16.

The fifth grade class will attend the Concert for Youth at the Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha February 20. Students have the opportunity to see an excellent performance put on by the Omaha Symphony.

Students in grades 3 through 6 will be taking Iowa Tests of Basic Skills later in February. This year because of a vacation day and other meeting commitments by staff, the testing will be done two days in two different weeks. We will start testing February 18, test February 19, 25, and plan to finish testing February 26. The PTO will be furnishing healthy snacks for the testing classes. The junior high and high school students will be testing at this time. Encourage your child do his or her best on the test. Help them get a good night's sleep for testing and make sure they eat a good breakfast. They will also need at least two #2 pencils for testing.

February may be our shortest month, but it always seems to be packed with activities and learning.

SOUP SUPPER

Jr. Class Parent Soup Supper will be held on Tuesday, February 10, starting at 5:30 p.m. in the concourse. Chili and Chicken Noodle Soup, Dessert, and Drink will be served. A free will offering will be accepted. Please help provide the Jrs. and Srs. with a safe and fun-filled evening for their After-Prom Party.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER...MRS. SWENSON

It is hard to believe that we are already in the swing of second semester, a.k.a. spring! Though we cannot see the flowers blooming yet, there are lots of things to keep our focus until then!

ACT-- The next ACT date is April 4th, with a registration deadline of February 27th. This is a great testing date for juniors to start their ACT experience. Seniors that have not taken the ACT yet, that will need testing scores for college entrance, this date is VITAL! The ACT website is full of information and where you can register to take the test. Paper options are available in my office. The website is: www.act.org. With that in mind, I plan to start hosting mini ACT prep sessions, titled: "Lunch and Learn". I will host lunch time in the library (or classroom if necessary) for any high school student interested. Students will simply bring their lunch into the session, and I will walk through the John Baylor Test Prep program. This program offers a workbook full of suggestions and hints, as well as video clips of instructors giving suggestions and assistance in various portions of the testing areas of the ACT. This site is also available for students to review on their own at: www.johnbaylortestprep.com. Farragut has a user name and password in order to fully use the site. Please see me for those codes.

SCHOLARSHIPS- "Show me the MONEY." "Money doesn't grow on trees!" "What, you think we are made of money?" You have heard all the parental statements, now is when we learn the truth. Seniors, preparing for graduation, need to start thinking about how they intended to fund their college experience. A master list of any scholarships that the school has been notified about is posted outside of my office and on our school website. Applications and paper information is available in my office, filed by scholarship name. I can help the students figure out what they are qualified for. Deadlines begin in February and run into April. I am more than happy to assist with filling out applications, edit scholarship essays, write scholarship letters of recommendation, but the STUDENTS are the ones that need to fill out the applications, and make sure they are mailed, or submitted by the appropriate deadlines. There are MILLIONS of scholarships available, we are only notified of a small portions of those, mainly local and state level scholarships. A few sources for scholarship searches are: www.fastweb.com, OR http://apps.collegeboard.com/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp

COLLEGE VISITS- Just a reminder that spring is a good time for juniors to start visiting college campuses, and for seniors to re-visit some of the colleges they are considering. Before students can miss school to visit a campus visit, please make sure the white half-sheet college visit form is turned into the office with parent signature. Also, there is a full yellow sheet to take on your visit with you to help you reflect on the visit, and get a signature to prove you did visit the college. Both forms are available in the racks outside of my office. I can also help schedule your campus visit, please let me know where you would like to go, date, arrival time, and areas of focus you may have.

8th graders- FOUR YEAR PLANS- This spring, I will be meeting with the 8th graders and start working on their "four year plans." These plans are done through CHOICES, a statewide career and college planning computer program. We will investigate career options, start mapping out all four years of their high school class schedules and play with college possibilities based off of their career profiles. These plans will be saved on the CHOICES website. Each student will set up their own user name and password, in order to access them to make alterations as they advance through high school. Please ask your 8th grader about this process and learn about their current career interests.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any concerns relating to your student, or questions about our school's counseling program. I am always excited to visit with parents about their child and their overall well-being.

Mrs. Deana Swenson

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Board Bits by Bob Lynn

As many of you already know I lost my father a couple of weeks ago. As family and friends reminisced about him, his life, and his personality, it became even more evident how he had influenced the people my sisters and I became. Forgive me if I sound self righteous, we are not perfect creatures by far, but my siblings and my own values and core beliefs are similar to each others and I think align very closely with Dad's.

Dad believed in being honest, respectful, and working hard to achieve the things he wanted in life. He valued friends and family and was proud of our family's heritage within our community. His behavior reflected these ideals and he wanted us children to follow the same standards in our lives.

He instilled these and other values in us by being rock solid in demonstrating them in his actions. For instance the importance of religion in our lives was reinforced not by sending us to church every Sunday morning, but rather by taking us to church and attending Sunday school and worship services with the family every week. I don't recall attending a worship service when I was growing up without him being there right beside me in the pew.

Any job worth doing was worth doing well. Whether it was squaring up a building project, keeping the corn rows straight, or weeding the garden it was to be done to the best of our ability. If our attempts fell short of his standards he was there to help discover where we had fallen short and to fine tune our efforts for better results. And when standards were met he was there to give his approval if even with just a nod or slight smile.

We all worked hard to please him even as we grew more independent. If we disappointed him he was hurt and somehow his internal pain was felt by us as well. We stayed away from smoking and drinking and the other temptations of the 70's not because we were afraid of him but because we didn't want to hurt him.

I share this to build on my topic from last month. If something is important to you and you demonstrate that importance to your children on a regular basis, it will be important to them as well. For example if you want to impress upon your children the habit of saying please and thank you, you must first make sure the adults in your household are consistently displaying this courtesy. Then you must encourage your children to use these words when appropriate. And finally recognize when they display the expected results and show your approval.

This may seem overly simplistic but as I look back at my childhood it is this type of guidance that helped form me into the person I am.

In today's world this is harder to do. I see it in the way Robin and I raised our family. We both worked away from home and had less time to spend with our children. They spent much of their time in daycare and didn't have the opportunity to be with us 24/7 like we were with our parents when we grew up. We tried to make use of the limited time we had with them and I hope we have instilled our beliefs and values in them, but at this point only time will tell.

So if you have younger children, take time to teach them basic skills like honesty, respect for others, and the value of hard work. I know it's hard to find time, but show them how to say please and thank you and be kind to others. Your life will be enriched and these traits will form a basis for them to be better students, ready to focus on learning in school instead of being a problem in school. Remember we only have one chance to give every child the education they need and deserve.

Farragut's Junior High Science Fair

March 2, 2009

All Junior High Students are expected to complete a Science Fair Project for the Science Fair- no late projects will be accepted. The top 10 projects from each grade will advance to the Corner Conference Science Fair in Hamburg on March 23rd.

Students were given more specific guidelines in December. Below are general guidelines to follow when completing the project. If you need a copy of the specific guidelines, please let Mrs. Erickson know as soon as possible.

When you complete your Science Fair Project in February, you will need to report the following information (usually on a display board):

Title (What is your experiment or research)

Introduction- write a short summary that includes the hypothesis, procedure, materials, results, and conclusion. You should also include how you came up with the idea and why it's important.

Question and Hypothesis

Experiment- List the materials needed and a step by step procedure that can be followed by anyone (similar to the labs you find in your textbook).

Data and Results

Conclusion- was your hypothesis correct or incorrect, why?

Bibliography and Sources- where did you get your information for your research



SPELLING BEE

The Farragut Spelling Bee will be held February 5, at 3:30 P.M. for 4th through 8th grades. The 4th and 5th graders will spell in the choir room and the 6th, 7th, and 8th graders will spell in the Media Center. The public is invited to watch the competition. Medals will be awarded to the first, second, third, and alternate place winners provided by PTO. The top three spellers in each class will advance to the Fremont County Spelling Bee on February 18 (tentative date) at Hamburg.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES - MR. SWENSON

I am writing you this to inform and remind you that parent-teacher conferences this semester will be held in the middle of the 3rd quarter. We are hoping by having parent-teacher conferences earlier, we will be better able to help students make changes to their academics before it's too late. Parent-teacher conferences will be held on February 13th from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Mid-term grades for students will be handed out in the front office, and the teachers will be set up in the concourse for you to visit. If at all possible, try to attend parent-teacher conferences as they are important to the success of your child's future. We look forward to seeing and visiting with you on February 13th.

From the Helm of the Ship

Jay D. Lutt,

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Physical Plant

The board of education has taken many steps over the last seven years to provide students with a top-notch facility. The last three years we have struggled with finding a way to efficiently heat and cool our buildings. As you may know, the building's boiler broke down on a weekend and the students had a chilly Monday. The repairman came and the heat was going by the end of the day, but it was a chilly reminder that our forty year-old boiler needs replaced.



Also during the last three years the board has tried to find a way to be able to cool the building during August, September, April and May. We all know that students learn more when they are not sweating at their desks or shivering from the cold in their seats. Teachers do a better job instructing students when conditions are right in the classroom.

The question I hear the most is why do we need air-conditioning or a new heating system for that matter if we are going to Whole-Grade Share in the future? This is a valid question and I hope I can address it adequately. Our

district is contiguous to four other districts along our borders. Three of these districts have new heating and air-conditioning systems. It is the board's goal during any type of consideration of Whole-Grade-Sharing that we utilize our current facilities. If we are going to have students come to our buildings, they need to be just as accommodating as the facilities in their own district.

Whether Farragut remains its own district or decides to start sharing grades, a heating and cooling project needs to be installed in the near future.

Board Questions about Whole-Grade-Sharing

The Board of Education is taking two questions a month from the public about Whole-Grade-Sharing and answering them to the best of their knowledge. Those questions are reviewed at the regular board meeting and then posted on-line. If you have a question about the process of whole-grade-sharing, post your question at <http://www.farragutschools.org/vnews/display.v/ART/2008/11/21/4926d42ba8bfd> or search Questions to the Board on the front of the web-site.

School Special Election-Board Membership

During the January board meeting the board found some language in the state statute troubling. After further review with the school attorney it was found that the state statute was not written for our situation of changing from a seven member board to a five member board. It would make our district have six board members for two years which is not allowed by current statute. The Iowa Attorney General is currently writing a "rider" for the legislative bills that would allow Farragut to change from a seven to five member board without a six member board. If the legislature passes

this bill, it would go into effect immediately. After the bill passes the district could hold a special election this June and thus changing our board to a five member at-large for the regular election in September.

School Alerts: Weather

We are in the heart of winter. Please take a few minutes to sign-up at Iowa School Alerts (listed below) to have an email sent to you or a text message sent to your phone. This is a free service provided by the state!

<https://schoolalerts.iowa.gov/>



Visit us on the web @
www.farragutschools.org

Parent Teacher's Conference

I am proud to announce that starting February 2nd the district is offering online Parent Teacher's registration. Conferences are scheduled for February 13th from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. There will be no school on February 16th. We encourage parents PK-12 to register as soon as you can to get the time you want. If you don't have internet access, call Pam or Becky and they can sign you up for the time you need.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

February 13th!