



Falcon Homeschool Program Newsletter

January 9, 10, and 11 2024

UPCOMING DATES:

January 15, 2024: Martin Luther King Jr Day, District closed

Front Desk Number: (719) 495-5373

Class Updates:

Arts and STEM Exploration

Ms. Jill

Welcome back! I hope you had a restful break! Thank you all so very much for the treats, gifts, and notes - they were all appreciated! Please make sure your students are coming each week with warm clothing for recess! This week, we will start our new unit of art tasks related to the element of shape. During our performing arts time, we are going to begin a new bucket drumming march and learn about dotted half notes. Finally, for our new arts focus unit, we will begin learning about the music composer Gustav Holst and then will start listening to his musical composition called "The Planets." Please email me at jill.foster@d49.org with any questions that come to your mind!

Ms. Katrina

Happy New Year! I am so happy to be back with everyone this week. Thank you all for your very generous and heartfelt cards and gifts you spoiled me with before break! FHP families are so amazing and thoughtful! We are jumping right in with our unit learning about space travel, living in space, and the features of the solar system. We will also be completing quick build challenges this semester using the engineering design process. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Email: katrina.trujillo@d49.org

Ms. Stacy's Class (K-1)

Happy New Year to you all! Looking forward to seeing everyone this week. Thursday families be aware that your child will have something special for you this week. Sadly, we were derailed from best laid plans but I'm sure your child will still have fun sharing their special gift. This week we will be getting back into the groove of things and enjoying seeing friends while also starting to move into some new units of study. In Science, we will be starting our study of the Ocean this week. We will be learning about the 5 oceans of our world. In Social Studies, we will begin our study on life a long time ago. We will discuss the difference between the past, present, and the future. I want to thank you all for the sweet cards, gifts and sweet treats. I am so blessed to teach such AMAZING students with wonderful, thoughtful parents. Thank you.

It's Colorado and the weather looks like it's going to give us some cold temps so please be sure to send in those warm jackets, hats and gloves this week.

Have a wonderful week and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

stacy.kley@d49.org

Ms. Kassi's 2/3 Class

Welcome back FHEP families! I am so excited to jump into our second semester!

In addition to reviewing routines, procedures, and our Social Contracts, we will be starting our new

units!! This semester we will have four nine week units, two for quarter 3 and two for quarter 4. In Social Studies, we will begin our unit on Ancient Egypt. This week we will learn about the extremely important Nile River and how it sustained life in the very treacherous landscape of Ancient Egypt. We will discuss the Nile River cycle of flooding and how important this was to Ancient Egyptian life. In science, we will begin our unit on forces and motion. This week we will be learning about relative position and how we know that objects are moving. *Please do not hesitate to email me anytime with any questions or concerns at kassi.nemeth@d49.org.*

Ms Leanne's Class (4-5)

Welcome back! We are so excited to see everyone this week. I was so sad not to see Thursday students before break: it's been way too long! We will be wrapping up our energy unit this month: learning about fossil fuels and nuclear power. In art, we will do a 3-D arm project and in social studies we'll start learning about the leaders of the Civil War. I hope you had a wonderful break. I was able to relax and reflect. Thank you for sharing your kids with us at FHEP. It 's

an awesome place to work. Thank you for the kind words and generous gifts. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

leanne.mckinney@d49.org

Ms Katrina's Class (6-7)

Happy New Year and welcome back! I am so happy to be back with everyone this week. Thank you all for your very generous and heartfelt cards and gifts you spoiled me with before break! I felt so loved and appreciated! FHP families are the best! I am looking forward to an exciting semester as we learn about Earth's materials, rocks, minerals, mining and Colorado mining history. We are also going to be "Traveling West" in groups as we learn about the Colorado gold rush. In team time we are going to start a project based on culture and society. Students will be creating their own world and societies with their friends.. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions. Email: katrina.trujillo@d49.org

PROGRAM REMINDERS

Welcome Back

Last week we spent some time as a staff working hard to make the second semester amazing for your students, and we continued planning for next year. We hope you had a delightful break, and we look forward to seeing all of our families back this week!

Just a few quick reminders to set everyone up for a good start to the second semester:

- 1) School Hours: 8:15-3:15 (doors open in the afternoon at 3:10)
- 2) If your child is going to be absent or late, give us a call at 7194955373 or send an email to your child's teacher.
- 3) If you need to get in touch with us for any reason, our main number is 7194955373. If you're trying to reach us outside of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, please leave a message and we'll return your call as promptly as we can.

Happy New Year! We know it's going to be another AMAZING semester!

2024-2025 Re-Enrollment Survey–Coming Next Week

What an exciting time of year it is! We have already begun enthusiastically planning for next year, and I bet you have too! We are thrilled to announce that the 2024-2025 Re-Enrollment survey is ready for you to complete at your earliest convenience (sent via email). **Please try your best to complete the survey by Monday, February 5, 2024.**

Completing the survey holds your student's enrollment in FHP for the upcoming school year, even if you need to make changes afterwards. The sooner you complete the survey, the better your chances of getting a requested spot are. If you have a child that you would like to attend FHP in 2024-2025 who does not currently attend FHP, you can absolutely complete the survey for them. This lets us know that you are interested and to assist you in making sure that we complete all the necessary steps for enrollment. If you are certain that your child will not be returning, please let me know with a quick email reply as soon as possible.

As you will see in the survey, we have some exciting new options to our Enrichment Program. We work hard at FHP to continue to grow to meet our homeschooling community's needs, and the new program additions have been carefully considered, conceived of, and originated by our staff. We'll share more information in the survey with you about our existing and new options.

STAR 360–It's Here!

If you would like your child to take the STAR 360 assessment during this middle-of-year window, the opportunity is here!

Now in its fourth year of implementation, STAR 360 is back and ready for FHP students! We have partnered with STAR Renaissance 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*** as it utilizes a computer-adaptive design, meaning that questions quickly become individualized, allowing for efficiency and accuracy.

*As always, ***student information is kept private.***

If you're ready to get started, here is what you can expect:

What to 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 child to still answer each question even if the time expires.

3) *You will get an email with the results from Ms. Katie.* 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. Please be sure to send me an email so that I may share the results with you when your child is finished.

4) *I will see the results of the test, but I am not recording them anywhere.* I just need to be able to login to see the results and print them out for you. If you would like to discuss the results, we can certainly schedule a time to do that so you're very clear on what the data tells us.

5) *Since you are having your child complete the test at home, please make testing conditions as quiet as possible.* If your child is easily distracted or requires a very quiet room when testing, please send him/her with ear plugs to block the noise. If you are testing at home, please do your best to ensure that the environment is suitable for your child'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 child, don't give answers or hints, don't read for them, etc).***

Ready to Get Started?

The STAR 360 assessment fulfills the requirement for state testing, and if you send your results to Ms. Kassi Nemeth (knemeth@d49.org), she can file the results on your behalf. To access the assessment, please go to: clever.com/in/district49. This should prompt your student to login with their Google ID (student number and password--password for all students is fhp2022). If you need that login information, please send a quick email to Ms. Rachel (rawhite@d49.org) and she can get that to you.

Once your child has logged into Clever, they should be able to click on the STAR Renaissance tab. There will be the option to take STAR Reading and STAR Math. If your child is prompted to login to STAR, they should use their student number (same number as in the Google ID) and the password is abc.

Just prior to starting the STAR360 assessment, it may prompt for a monitor password. That password is admin.

Home Administration of the STAR360 Assessment:

If you are using this assessment to submit records to the state, please be sure to proctor the assessment with the same guidelines we would use at school: provide a quiet,

distraction-free space, don't give any answers/help with any answers, don't read the question for your child.

The testing window spans January 9-February 9, 2024.

After your student takes the assessment, send Katie Boal (kathryn.boal@d49.org) a quick email and she can get you the results. As always, please let us know if you have any questions.

Information Sessions for Next Year

If you are eagerly awaiting learning about the options available for next year, we are excited to share these options with you. As stated in the blurb above regarding the Re-Enrollment Survey that's coming out next week, we will share our informational videos next week. If you know of other families that are interested in enrolling, we will be sharing the information as soon as we have everything ready to roll. You can always direct interested families to our link so they can be added to our distribution list (available [here](#), or they can go to d49.org/fhp and scroll down to the bottom of the page to see our Interest Survey at the bottom right.

The After Holidays Blues

When our family used to homeschool, some of the hardest months for all of us were January and February. The anticipation, preparing, and joy that the holidays bring can cause difficulty in returning to routines, school schedules, and learning. Let's face it, the holidays are filled with exuberant fun and when they are over the winter blues may set in for children and adults.

So how can you transition your family back to your homeschool days? I would suggest, ease back into your homeschool day the same way you did at the beginning of the year.

- Start with a lighter first week with a few subjects your family enjoys..

- Reaffirm your homeschool WHY and remind yourself as the parent why you are homeschooling.

Perhaps revisit your homeschool vision and if you have never created one take a few moments to watch the recorded **Homeschool Refresh Workshop** found on our FHP Families webpage: [FHP Homeschool Support](#) *Remember as the homeschool parent, you set the tone for your homeschool!*

- Take it easy on yourself and your children. Always look for the joy in the small moments and start an awesome family read aloud, read poetry together with goodies, make family and individual goals for the new year, and/or refresh your school area/supplies.

- Remember that humans love to have something to look forward to, like the holidays. Perhaps plan a family outing after the first week of homeschool: go to lunch, find an indoor swimming pool, go to a used bookstore and let each child pick out a new book to read, or plan a playdate with another homeschool family. Any reward for a job well done that fits your family will work.

Take care of yourself and your family during these cold winter months! Please feel free to reach out anytime. I am here and happy to support you!

Additional Resource: [Homeschooling in Winter \(homeschool mom blog\)](#)

Find Joy in your everyday!

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

Winter is Here–Snow Days are a Possibility

This is the time of year when snowfall and cold temperatures cause school closures. Before leaving the house, be sure to check on D49's weather status on the D49 website. We would hate for anyone to make an unnecessary trip in ic driving conditions or frigid cold temperatures.