

# MEREDITH HILL MESSENGER

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[www.fwsd.wednet.edu/Meredith](http://www.fwsd.wednet.edu/Meredith)

February 2002

Cindy Kelsey, Principal  
Mary Jane Henry, Office Manager

Kerry Woller, Secretary  
Lynette Edwards, Office Clerk

Dear Meredith Hill Families,

March brings three important events in our school calendar; (1) assessments, (2) parent-teacher-student conferences, and (3) report cards. Here's what you can expect to see as a result.

An outline of assessments which are occurring in our school during the month of March. These assessments will be used, along with classroom assignments, observations, and tests, to help teachers determine student progress toward meeting state and district standards. Results of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade standardized tests are expected by the end of April and will be shared with parents as soon as they are available. Results of district tests will be reflected in the March report card. Meredith Hill fourth grade students will take the Washington Assessment of Student Learning during the month of April.

Which Test?	Who will take the test?	How long is this test?
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) A "standardized test" which compares results with students across the nation.	All 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade students in Washington State.	Test takes approximately 3 hours total; each teacher selects dates for his/her class.
Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) A "standardized test" which compares results with students across the nation.	All 6 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Washington State.	Test takes approximately 3 hours total; each teacher selects dates for his/her class.
Reading Readiness Test A district test which assesses letter and word recognition.	All kindergarten students in Federal Way.	Test takes approximately 10-15 minutes per child.
Reading Readiness Test with Comprehension A District test which assesses letter and word recognition and comprehension.	All 1 <sup>st</sup> grade students in Federal Way.	Test takes approximately 10-15 minutes per child.
QRI Reading Assessment A state required reading fluency test.	All 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade students in Washington State who did not meet grade level standard on this test in the fall.	Test takes approximately 10-15 minutes per child.
STAR Reading Assessment A computer "standardized test" which measures student's reading level.	All Federal Way students in grades 3-6.	Test takes approximately 10 minutes per child.

One non-student day has been set aside for selected conferences on March 11<sup>th</sup> for grades K-5 and March 15<sup>th</sup> for grade 6. Teachers will schedule conferences first with parents of students who have needed extra support to meet grade level reading goals. This is a perfect opportunity to review student progress, and to discuss additional interventions which may be needed. Parents may also request a conference if there are issues they wish to discuss with the teacher. Conference invitations will be sent home in March.

Second trimester report cards will provide important information to parents on the progress their children have made toward mastering grade level skills. Report cards will be sent home Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

March will be a busy month of teaching, learning, testing, and reporting. We take joy each day in our opportunity to work with your children. We delight in each success, and we collaborate on ways to increase success when students are challenged. We appreciate the ongoing support of parents as you read with your children, help them complete their school work, and send them to school each day ready to learn. Let us continue our work together to help all children reach their highest potential.

Sincerely,

Cindy Kelsey, Principal

## **February is Dental Health Month**

Teeth are bone, the hardest tissue in the body; but they are vulnerable each time we eat. Sugar from food mixes with bacteria causing plaque, the sticky film of bacteria that live in our mouths. Plaque builds up every day. And it doesn't go away by itself. It takes about 12 hours for plaque to accumulate around the gum line; that's why dentists recommend brushing (at least) twice daily, in the morning after breakfast and before bedtime. Brushing your teeth with a pea-sized amount of toothpaste for two minutes is enough. Remembering to replace your toothbrush when it gets frayed will help you brush effectively.

Most dentists now recommend the use of sealants for extra protection on children's permanent teeth. Sealants are a plastic-like material applied to the pitted surface of the child's molars to help protect the tooth crevices from harmful bacteria. Sealants can last a long time, during which the child is acquiring the manual dexterity to brush effectively, use floss, and get into a regular brushing routine.

Flossing is a weapon against periodontal (gum) disease and a defense against halitosis (bad breath). So brush and floss every day. See your dentist regularly. Find out if the water, tap water or bottled water, your child drinks is fluoridated. If not, fluoride supplements may be recommended by your dentist.

Most dental problems are preventable. With proper care, a child's teeth should last a lifetime. Chewing, talking, and smiling well should be easy. Parents who take good care of their teeth set a good example.

If you need assistance in obtaining dental care for your family, please contact the school nurse.

## **Track Coach Needed**

Meredith Hill is in need of a track coach for our students. If you or anyone you know are interested, please call the school at 253-945-3200 for more information.

## **Great Body Shop**

February's theme focuses on growth and development.

Kindergarten – "Going to the Doctor and Dentist"  
Grade One – "Talk and Listen"  
Grade Two – "Babies and How You Grow"  
Grade Three – "Your Family, My Family"  
Grade Four – "Be Cool, Keep Clean"  
Grade Five – "Growing UP"  
Grade Six – "The Reproductive System"

Students will discuss reasons for going to doctors and dentists and the help they provide. They will learn how the body grows and changes. They will discuss the roll of family members and how they are influenced by family genes. They will discover reasons to feel pride in individual differences, including family heritage.

They will study the effects of cleanliness and name the things that contribute to a healthy appearance. They will discuss decisions that lead to behaviors that will make them look good and feel great.

Personal safety will be a theme. Students will identify where to get help in protecting themselves. They will practice effective ways to say "No!" to those things that threaten their safety.

## Looking Forward to Spring Testing

Springtime brings flowers, more rain, and **tests**. Time is spent in school preparing the students for these tests. We also need parents' help at home to make sure students are well-fed and rested on the days the tests are given.

We also ask parents to help by avoiding routine appointments that may take a child out of school on those days. While we don't have the exact schedule, the first two weeks of March will be when most of the ITBS tests are given to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. WASL testing for 4<sup>th</sup> graders will be in April. The bulk of the WASL tests will be the two weeks after Spring Break (April 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>). We need students in school during this time.<sup>7</sup>

### Spring Health Education

Sex Education is a district directed program. HIV/STD Education is a state mandated program for grades 5-12. Both are covered in the district adopted health curriculum, The Great Body Shop: Sex Education in February and HIV in April. Grade 4 will not receive an issue in April since it is devoted to HIV and the district has not adopted the program for fourth grade. Parents may exclude their child from Sex Ed. without attending the preview. To exclude a child from HIV, parents must have attended the preview.

District parent previews have been scheduled for the remainder of the school year: March 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:00 p.m. and March 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 10:00-12:00 a.m.

For more information, call Pat Smithson at 253-945-2033.

### Boundary Meetings

The Boundary Committee has scheduled it's first round of boundary meetings for public comment. The purpose of this meeting is to share the criteria or filters the committee will be using to determine where the boundaries should be placed. (No actual boundaries have been drawn at this time).

Meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> as follows:

Kilo Cafeteria, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Totem Library, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Lakota Library, 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Saghalie Library, 7:30-8:30 p.m.

You are welcome to attend any session. Please call 253-945-2043 or e-mail [boundaries@fwsd.wednet.edu](mailto:boundaries@fwsd.wednet.edu) with any questions you may have.

## Thank You Voters

Thank you voters for passing the Federal Way School District Levy.

### Double Your Donations

Would you like to double the money you give to our school? Many local employers match cash donations to public schools made by their employees, dollar for dollar or even more. This means your gift of \$25 instantly becomes \$50 or sometimes \$75. Many local employers offer matching funds; Boeing, Costco, Home Depot, Microsoft, Puget Sound Energy, Radio Shack, Washington Mutual, and Weyerhaeuser are just a few. If you're considering making a donation to any Federal Way school, please ask your employer for matching gift guidelines which are usually available in the employer's Human Resource office. If you want to find out if your employer offers this benefit or you have other questions, please call Heather Larson in the Development Office of Federal Way Public Schools at 253-945-2263.

# Mark Your Calendar

## FEBRUARY

- 8 – P.T.A. Bingo Night, 5:00-8:00 p.m.
- 11-15 – P.T.A. Food, Teddy Bear & Coat Drive
- 12 – GATE Testing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
- 13 – T.J. Band Festival Rehearsal, 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- 13 – T.J. Band Festival, 7:00 p.m.
- 15 – Parent’s Night Out, 6:30-10:30 p.m.  
(Sponsored by Champions)
- 18-22 – NO SCHOOL – Mid-Winter Break
- 26 – P.T.A. Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

### Set the atmosphere

- Help your child find a **quiet, comfortable place to read.**
- Have your child see you as a **reading model.**
- **Read aloud** to your child.
- **Reread** favorite stories.
- Let your **child read to you.**
- Recognize the value of **silent reading.**
- Keep reading time **enjoyable and relaxed.**

### Responding to errors in reading

The following prompts are recommended BEFORE saying, “sound it out”.

- Give the child **wait time of 5 to 10 seconds.** See what your child **attempts to do alone.** If we immediately jump in with an answer or sound it out, readers become dependent upon us and don’t attempt to solve the problem.
- Ask, **“What would make sense here?”**
- **Point to the picture** if it would help solve the problem.
- Suggest:
  1. **“Skip that word and read the rest of the sentence.”** Maybe it will help you figure out the word.
  2. **“Why don’t you read the sentence before this one and look for clues?”**
  3. **“Look at how that word begins. Start it out and keep reading.”**
  4. If you sense frustration after these attempts and sounding it out, **tell your child the word.**

Most of us were taught to “sound it out” when we come to a word we do not know and that is what we tell our children. Phonics is important but the

- 27 – P.T.A. See’s Candy Sale Begins
- 28 – Cookie Day

## MARCH

- 1 – Read Across America Assembly
- 4-12 – P.T.A. T-shirt Sale
- 8 – NO SCHOOL, State Inservice Day

## Ways to Help Your Child With Reading Federal Way Public Academy Open House

primary goal of reading is to understand what we have read. Teachers call this comprehension. Focus on and praise what your child is doing well. We build from what a child CAN do, instead of what they CANNOT. Your child should read books at his/her reading level. Not too easy and not too hard; just like Goldilocks!

Federal Way Public Academy (FWPA) is a college preparatory 7-9<sup>th</sup> grade public school in the Federal Way School District. Children who live in Federal Way may apply to attend the Public Academy instead of their geographically assigned junior high or high school.

The upcoming Open House with the Academy Director will include classroom visits. Participants will have the opportunity to observe classes in session and teachers in action:

February 13	9:30-11:00 a.m.
March 13	9:30-11:30 a.m.

Space is limited so reservations are needed. Please call 253-945-4681 or email [Cparis@fwsd.wednet.edu](mailto:Cparis@fwsd.wednet.edu) to reserve a spot.

If you are interested in enrolling your child for fall 2002, you must follow the Federal Way School District Choice Enrollment process. Forms will be available at the Sea Tac Mall in the Community Resource Center (CRC) by February 15, 2002. It must be completed by the April 15 deadline, and delivered to the CRC at Sea Tac Mall. If you have any questions, please contact the Choice Enrollment office at 253-945-2264.

## **Preschool Openings**

Meredith Hill Preschool needs your 3-4 year olds! We have an opening in our a.m. class and an opening in our p.m. class. Our morning hours are 8:38 – 11:30 a.m. and our afternoon class runs from 12:30 – 3:15 p.m. We offer a play-based pre-school yet we offer lots of learning opportunities. Call Meredith Hill Elementary School today at 253-945-3200.

## **Thank You Volunteers**

Meredith Hill volunteers donated 392 hours of volunteer time in January. We appreciate all the time you give to our students.