

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
FALK LABORATORY SCHOOL**

August 9, 2002

Dear Falk Parents:

Enclosed with this letter are a number of documents that will enable you to plan for the 2002-2003 school year. The most important of these is your Falk School calendar for the coming year. Keep the calendar in a convenient place as you will need to refer to it until the School Directory has been completed. The school day begins at 8:45 A.M. and dismissal at approximately 3:05 P.M., depending upon the scheduled arrival time of your child's bus. Classrooms will be open by 8:15 A.M. If students arrive earlier, they should report to an open homeroom or sit quietly on benches in front of the main office. Children who do not know their classroom assignment should go to the first floor bulletin board and locate their name on one of the class rosters that will be posted. Rosters will also be posted on the door of each classroom in the building and school personnel will be available to help new children and those who are unable to read find their rooms. Please note the **STAGGERED** schedule for the **FIRST TWO DAYS** of school. Also note there will be **NO AFTER SCHOOL the FIRST TWO DAYS** of school. If you have any questions, please call the school at 412-624-8020.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL:** On Wednesday, August 28, only Middle School I (6th) students should attend classes; Middle School II and III (7th & 8th) students do not attend school on this day. On Thursday, August 29, only Middle School II and III (7th & 8th) students should attend classes and the Middle School I (6th) students do not attend school.

**INTERMEDIATE:** On Wednesday, August 28, only Intermediate I and III (3rd & 5th) students should attend classes; Intermediate II (4th) students do not attend school on this day. On Thursday, August 29, only Intermediate II (4th) students should attend classes and the Intermediate I & III (3rd & 5th) students do not attend school.

**PRIMARY:** On Wednesday, August 28, the kindergartners (A-M) and Primary I (1st) should attend classes. Primary II (2nd) students do not attend school on this day. On Thursday, August 29, kindergartners (N-Z) and Primary II (2nd) students should attend classes; Primary I (1st) do not attend on this day.

All children should attend school on Friday, August 30, 2002. The purpose of the staggered schedule is to provide the children who are moving into new situations a comprehensive orientation at the beginning of the school year.

**PERSONNEL:** The primary parents will be interested in knowing that our primary team of Dr. Vollmer, Ms. Williams and Ms. Sarada Mr. Canizares and Ms. Jessica Miele are all returning. We look forward to another exciting year of learning in the Primary. Early learning experiences are very important, and these teachers will provide the best for our students.

Our intermediate parents will be pleased to know that Ms. Ridge, and Ms. Wertz and Ms. Metcalf are all returning. Ms. Lindsay O'Sullivan has been hired to fill the vacancy created by Ms. Davis' resignation. Intermediate students will again have action-packed, hands-on activities and academic experiences. The 2002-2003 school year promises to be one of continual excitement.

We are also happy to be able to report that Ms. Coughlin, Mr. Kramer, Ms. Maccarelli, and Mr. Wittig will be returning in the middle school. Mr. Ross from our intermediate team will be joining the middle school team and will be teaching math. Ms. Priore will again serve as an Instructional Assistant to the Middle School Team. We look forward to a very challenging, but fun-filled year for all middle school students.

In the area of humanities instruction, Ms. Krakowski is again preparing the art classes for another year, Dr. Conover will continue to teach the music classes, and Ms. Herward will return as the library teacher. Ms. Morimoto will be our Japanese foreign language teacher for all classes, and Ms. Bianco will provide computer instruction. Ms. Hunt will provide physical education instruction for all Falk School students. Mr. Critchfield will again provide instruction in theater arts. The Intermediate Unit specialists, Ms. Carleton (reading and math) and Ms. Sandy Salvi (speech) will again be a part our instructional staff. Special subjects will be an integral part of every child's day, and your children will participate in our very special humanities classes.

Ms. Talley-Armstead, Ms. Spotts, and Ms. Mattis will continue to provide the same fine support to faculty and parents that they have in the past. Ms. Cain is our cafeteria manager and will be assisted by Ms. Poziviak. Ms. Sholtis will return as our school nurse. Mr. Kiehl and Mr. Mihalcin will continue as our custodians. Ms. Maria Martin will return as Director of the after school program. All of our needs will be handled by these fine people.

We anticipate another exciting, productive year at Falk School and expect that your children's many needs will be met by our faculty and staff.

## **MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING (M.A.T.) PROGRAM AT FALK SCHOOL.**

The Master of Arts in Teaching program is a program for graduate interns who have been interviewed by the Falk School faculty. They are scheduled to have a full year practicum at Falk. These graduates from several educational institutions have decided to pursue graduate study while gaining practical experience working with children before they enter the job market. Many direct benefits to our children result from bringing this additional instructional delivery capability into our learning environment. Having additional responsible adults in the building contributes to our instructional flexibility and increases the amount of direct instructional time that is received by each student. Those who successfully complete the program are granted the Master of Arts in Teaching Degree, and upon application, a Teaching Certificate.

Each intern is assigned to an instructional team for the entire school year. Most interns are assigned to one master teacher but a few may rotate among different master teachers on a scheduled basis. The interns teach groups of children and supervise many other activities. Every intern is under the direct supervision of a Falk School teacher. The Falk teacher is responsible for all of the instruction that is delivered in the classroom. Although appropriate initiatives by interns are encouraged, it is the teacher who orchestrates all of the classroom activities. Just as Falk School provides highly individualized instruction for its children, we also employ an individualized teacher education model. Some interns may be ready to begin working with small groups immediately and others may not be prepared to begin working directly with children until they have been in the school for a period of time. The Falk School faculty sees the MAT program to be a significant benefit to the education of Falk School children.

This September we will also be providing experience for PY (student teachers) candidates from Penn State and Point Park.

The intern and student teacher assignments for the coming year are as follows:

<b><u>Level</u></b>	<b><u>Teacher</u></b>	<b><u>Intern</u></b>	<b><u>Student Teacher</u></b>
<b>Primary</b>	Mr. Canizares	Ms. Lamary	Ms. Auch
	Ms. Sarada	Ms. Dimitrovski	
	Ms. Miele		
	Ms. Williams	Mr. Walsh	Ms. Rittenhouse
	Dr. Vollmer	Ms. Gottheld	Ms. Vetter
<b>Intermediate</b>	Ms. Metcalf	Ms. Orlich	
	Ms. O'Sullivan	Ms. DeAngelo	
	Ms. Ridge	Mr. Wolovich	
	Ms. Wertz	Ms. Patel	Ms. Scarcella
<b>Middle</b>	Ms. Coughlin	Ms. Pawluskiwicz	
	Mr. Kramer	Mr. Thomas	
	Ms. Maccarelli	Ms. Bartolini	Mr. Alba
	Mr. Ross	Mr. Paladino	
	Mr. Wittig	Ms. McDowell	Ms. Cole
<b>Specials</b>	Ms. Krakowski		Ms. McGoldrick

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Pittsburgh Board of Education will continue to transport the children of city residents who live more than one and one half miles from school, to and from school, throughout the 2002-03 school year. This is also true for suburban school districts that bus children and are located within a ten mile radius of Falk School. The obligation to provide transportation is stipulated in Pennsylvania state law. This means that the Falk School office does not plan the bus routes nor schedule the pickup points for the children. This planning is done by the transportation offices of the respective school districts. Parents of city students are notified by the Board of Education of their route at least 2 weeks prior to the start of school. If you do not receive notification contact Ms. Spotts (412-624-8024). Parents of students who reside in the suburbs should be notified by the school district at least 2 weeks prior to the start of school. If you do not receive notification contact Ms. Mattis (412-624-8020).

## **AHERA MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Falk School and the Teacher's Center (Library) buildings must meet specific health and safety requirements with regards to asbestos materials at the school. To meet these requirements, the building is inspected twice a year and the management plan is updated every three years by the Environmental Health and Safety Department of the University of Pittsburgh. An updated copy of the management plan is kept in the Falk School office and is available for inspection by employees, students, or parents upon request as required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), that was enacted in 1986.

## **PARENTAL CERTIFICATE REQUESTS**

Act 195 and Act 90 require every participating school to maintain, on file, certificates of requests from parents for all textbooks and instructional materials loaned to their children under these Acts.

## **CHILD SAFETY**

The safety of the children who attend Falk School is the single most serious obligation of the Falk School faculty and staff. Although that truism is so obvious that it is accepted as a tacit agreement between the parent and the school, every generation of new parents is properly concerned about the security of its children. The purpose of this section is to reassure every Falk School parent that the safety of his/her children is never compromised.

## Building Security

Falk School has historically been a place where parents and visitors are welcome. Because our school population is small, parents, university students, and even occasional visitors are easily recognized. A visitation procedure requires all visitors to sign in at the office upon arrival. Visitor badges will be assigned to ensure proper identification during your visit. Badges should be returned to the office, and you should log out before you leave. Over the past few years we have established the pattern of locking the front door to the building soon after 9:00 AM. This is because the primary children's lavatories are located on the first floor and we want to ensure their privacy and safety. Children's movements to special subject areas (including the library) and all playground activities are always supervised by an adult. After-school program activities are supervised by Falk School staff and responsible university work study students. These people follow the same prescribed safety practices every day. Although we have not had occasion to require the services of the university police for an emergency situation, we have been assured that their response time is between 3 and 5 minutes.

## Fire

In spite of the fact that the Falk School building is of stone construction and essentially fire-proof, our alarm system is connected to a nearby fire station and fire drills are routinely conducted. Our experience has been that the building is evacuated in less than 2 minutes.

## Drivers and Traffic

Because the safety of children is a responsibility that must be shared by all of the adults associated with the school, there are guidelines for adults who drop off or pick up children at Falk. Allequippa Street is presently a throughway as well as the only access to the VA Pittsburgh Health Care System. There are stop signs which help to control the speed of vehicles as they approach and pass the school, and there is **NO PARKING** on Allequippa during the day. People who drop off children in the morning should always pull into the circle to deposit students (please note that a RIGHT TURN ONLY sign has been installed at the head of the turnaround). No child should ever be left out of an automobile so that he/she has to cross Allequippa Street. Moreover, no one should ever leave a younger child in a parked car while they are escorting older children into the school. At dismissal time, parents should wait in their cars in the SC lot to collect children. Because the dismissal lot is small, drivers need to be particularly cautious about starting cars when children are moving about the area. Because we normally have 10 to 15 buses picking up children at dismissal time, parents should **never** drive their automobiles into the bus circle or try to park near the circle during dismissal.

## **Rules**

The Falk School day is governed by explicit rules of safety. We establish room-level rules, team-level rules, and school wide rules. An example of a school wide rule is that no student is permitted to cross Allequippa Street without an adult. It's a non-negotiable rule set by the school director. The faculty and staff have also established strategies to be employed in crisis situations. For the protection of your children, these procedures remain confidential.

## **Nurse**

Falk School employs a full time nurse to conduct vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings, track growth and development, maintain students' medical records, administer prescribed medication and care for minor injuries and illnesses which arise in our school.

## **VACATION**

Most of the faculty and staff will be on vacation during the month of August. However, the school office will be kept open all summer. If you need to communicate with the school, you can call into the office by dialing: 412-624-8020.