



## November Principal's Letter

November 17, 2008

Dear Parents:

Friday afternoon, October 31, 2008, thirty-five very courageous Student Council potential officers made speeches as part of their campaigns for Student Council offices on Farmington Woods TV News. Students did excellent jobs outlining their future responsibilities and goals as they concluded their campaigns for Student Council offices. Following the campaigns and speeches, elections were held. The following students were elected by the students, by popular vote, as their council officers for the 2008-2009 school year: Sonali Karmalkar, President; Maggie Woodhouse, Vice President; Eleanor Warren, Secretary and Peter Engler, Treasurer. All participants need to be praised and congratulated, as they exhibited attributes as risk-takers and communicators; we are all very proud of the student participants.

Superintendent Del Burns' vision for our school district is for ..."every student to graduate on time prepared for the future". As standards tighten in high schools and courses become more stringent, the bar also rises for grade level expectations in all subject areas in the elementary classrooms. Recently, the State Department of Public Instruction has chosen to raise the bar higher than we have experienced in the past. On the End of Grade Reading Tests, expectations have now been raised to a level where by 50 to 60 % of students statewide (as opposed to 87% on past tests) in grade three through five would pass the reading exams. And although our students were administered this Reading EOG last spring, results were released by the State Department of Public instruction on Thursday, November 6. As predicted by the superintendent, the Wake County's passing rate was much lower than in the past; at Farmington Woods IB/PYP our scores are in line with other Wake County Schools with similar student populations.

It will take our staff some time to process all of the results and evaluate our students/schools strengths, and reflect on areas needed for improvement in reading. As the bar rises, so will our level of expectations of ourselves, as professionals. We will continue to meet the new demands of our reading standards and continue to facilitate academic change and challenge for all of our students. We have not as of yet, received individual score reports to distribute to parents. As soon as those are received, we will forward them to you.

Recently, The Wake County Public School Board demagnetized Daniels IB/MYP. It was their feeling that Daniels is now heavily populated by the base population, and no longer falls within the criteria outlined for magnet schools in Wake County. Many parents have been asking me how that affects our students. Farmington Woods IB students already attending Daniels will continue to receive instruction at Daniels under the IB program until its phase out. But Daniels will no longer be accepting new IB students for the 2009-2010 school year in grade six. Please understand that the removal of the IB programme had nothing to do with the quality of the program at Daniels, as it is a successful authorized program; the school boards' only consideration was that it did not fall within the criteria of the guidelines



for a magnet school in Wake County. Two IB/MYP's will remain open to applicants in Wake County, East Garner Middle School and East Millbrook Middle School. Most students currently attending Farmington Woods IB can apply to East Garner Middle School to continue in the programme.

As the school board removed the IB status from Daniels, it added funding for an additional IB/PYP to open at Smith Elementary in Garner. (Schools in Garner will offer the continuum of IB Programmes at Smith ES, East Garner Middle IB/MYP and Garner Senior High School MYP/DP.) Tomorrow, the school board will discuss, new district maps, which will be a guide for parents in understanding which IB schools, (by home address) students can apply to. Those new district lines will include all PYP's, MYP's and DP's and that will bring more changes for Farmington Woods. Students, who presently attend Farmington Woods as magnet students, may be grandfathered by the board to remain at Farmington Woods IB/PYP if transportation lines change. Any newly applying magnet students would be subject to the new transportation zones. Families affected by changes, will soon receive letters from the Magnet Office.

American Education Week and International Education Week is November 16<sup>th</sup> through November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Use this week to say "thank you" to a favorite educator!

Upcoming Dates: Book Fair November 17-21, 2008 Family Night on Thursday  
Parent Conference Night, Wednesday November 19, 2008  
Thanksgiving Vacation Begins Wednesday November 26, 2008

Sincerely,

Frances Venezia  
Principal

As we look at ways to help our students improve their skills in reading, please encourage your child to read 20 minutes each night. Just as practice helps you become a better musician, practice assists children in becoming more fluent readers.