

FINN HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL MATTERS

09.11.2020

SECOND EDITION

Dear FHMS Falcon Families,

This Week's Highlights

The focus of our first week was to develop connections – between students and teachers, and amongst students. Many online activities fostered these – as an all-school group, in advisory clan sessions, and during initial classroom meetings. Strong connection is a key component of our FHMS community, and we will continue to nurture it. We continued to focus on building connections as we launched our first school-wide assembly. The theme was remembering 9.11.01 by a moment a silence and making connections between the atrocity on 09.11.01 and the Covid-19 Pandemic. In many ways, both crises united the country and made it stronger.

Another objective was to help students become familiar with the technology and online routines. As expected, there were some bumps along the way, but teachers, students, and parents worked well together to quickly smooth them as they were encountered. Students and parents informed FHMS staff of issues and we moved quickly to respond and resolve them. While all of the issues are not resolved yet, we are making great progress with addressing the issues. Please don't hesitate to let us know when students are experiencing difficulties (see "Communication" below).

Where we are Heading Next!

The next area of focus is to localize the Lake Washington School Districts Strategic Priorities. The strategic priorities are the outcomes of a collaborative process with staff, students, and the community. Their feedback helped us prioritize key initiatives and indicators that set the direction of our district work for the next three years. **There are six priorities that we will focus on (not all at once), at Finn Hill Middle School.**

- **Success-** We will set high expectations and provide support to help students and staff grow each year.
- **Well-Being-** We will create safe, welcoming and inclusive places to learn for students and staff.
- **Engagement-** We will engage students, families, and the Finn Hill community partners (such as the PTSA), to improve student outcomes and build trust.
- **Excellence-** We will ensure organizational responsibility through the effective use of resources and systems that align with district values and strategic priorities.
- **Innovation-** We will encourage and invite new ideas that embrace creativity and reimagine teaching and learning.
- **Equity-** We will increase equitable outcomes by addressing barriers to engagement and success!

We will strategically develop all six priorities while we restructure our organization so that all families and students can access educational resources at Finn Hill. Equity and well-being are foundational in order for students to be successful, engaged, and reach excellence! Over the past few years, Finn Hill Middle School has created an Equity team comprised of teachers. We are intentionally asking that students and parents/guardians join as well. In the upcoming weeks, the Equity Team will proactively

recruit members. We will also solicit feedback and information that will help Finn Hill to reach the goals set forth in the district-wide strategic priorities.

Fill | Family Survey Fall 2020

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! As we begin a new year, we wanted to hear from all our families and gather information on how to best support our student(s) at Finn Hill. Thank you! **Equity Team**

Here is the link:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=P2fUH5bflUaGOKHYjEyF1x90XmKVjtFPoU-oIVLVxi9UMFFYRkdDOUVYNDZPVkdMN1BLRTBIS0tJRy4u>

A message from our Counseling Community

Congratulations on getting through the first two weeks of school! As we get the school year up and running, we want to ensure that you know who your student's counselor is and how to get in touch with us. We are here to support both you and your student(s) as they navigate middle school. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

One of our roles is to help connect families with school and community resources. We recognize that COVID-19 has significantly impacted our community and that many families may need additional supports at this time. If your student, or your family, needs resources or support, please click on the link below and fill out the short survey. The results of the survey are confidential and will only be seen by the counselors. If you prefer, you can fill out a paper version, which you should have received in the mail this week. Paper versions can be mailed to Finn Hill Attn: Kirstin Doughty or can be dropped off at the school, there is an envelope outside the main doors for collection.

Again, please don't hesitate to reach out if there is anything we can do to help. We look forward to working with you and your students this year!

Please don't hesitate to let us know when your child(ren) are experiencing social anxiety or academic challenges.

Sincerely,

Counseling Team-

[Counselor intro email 2020.docx](#)

[Resources and Support Form Click Here](#)

SHOUT-OUTS

Congratulations to our entire FHMS community on a very successful first week of remote learning! While it cannot replace the power of in-person instruction, it was a great second week, nonetheless. Students were excited to see friends they hadn't seen since June, the use of our Teams platform was generally smooth, and we've resumed many FHMS routines.

Special thanks go to Nichol Cassaro (former FHMS V.P.), and Peter Strong, our librarian and tech wizard, for providing technical support during the Back to School Assembly.

Below you'll find important information as we move Forward!

Schedule:

This coming week we'll begin our normal daily schedule. As Monday is a non-school holiday, we need to adjust for that. Attached you'll find our regular schedule. We suggest printing and posting (conspicuously), one or more copies of this schedule so it is available as needed.

- Finn Hill Middle School Weekly Schedule
[file:///C:/Users/jsmith/Downloads/FHMS%20Weekly%20Schedule Community.pdf](file:///C:/Users/jsmith/Downloads/FHMS%20Weekly%20Schedule%20Community.pdf)

Attendance:

It was impressive that almost every student entered last week's Teams meetings on-time and were engaged. We did have some students who did not join some class or all-school sessions. Please remember that, while we are flexible due to being online, students are expected to attend all online meetings and attendance is taken for all sessions. As we work to develop efficient ways to monitor and communicate attendance, parents will be notified when students miss an online session.

It's also extremely important that students are present for the start of each online session. When they join late, important introductory announcements and initial activities are missed. We've incorporated 10-minute breaks between sessions in most of our schedule to help students with transition.

- If students miss a class session, they should email the teacher for directions and assistance.
- If students know ahead of time that they will miss a class, they should contact the teacher in-advance to get needed information.

Please note that, due to federal privacy regulations, we cannot record class meetings for later use.

- For all absences, parents should notify the FHMS office by phone (425-936-2340) or email (FHMSoffice@lwsd.org), preferably no later than 9:00 am each day that your student is absent.

Technology:

Another goal was to help students become familiar with the technology and online routines. As expected, there were some bumps along the way, but teachers, students, and parents worked well together to quickly smooth them as they were encountered. Students and parents informed FHMS staff of issues and we are trying to respond and resolve them.

As expected, there were some tech issues during the first week, but patience, flexibility and communication persevered. Here are lessons learned:

- Stylus isn't working – Unscrew the cap and remove/reinsert the AAAA battery. Reinsert (same direction) and screw the cap on firmly. If it still doesn't work, the battery may be expended and need replacement. We are awaiting info from the district on dealing with this. In the meantime, a replacement should be purchased. Student can't see one or more classroom Teams in the application – Close all programs and restart the laptop.
- Slow/Intermittent Connection – Student should close all programs/apps except those currently needed. If this continues, restart the laptop. This may also be a home wifi bandwidth issue if several family members are online at the same time.
- Most importantly, students should properly shut down their computers at the end of each day!

Communication:

- As we continue to **emphasize**, communication is vital to successful remote learning. Please let us know if your student is experiencing any academic or social challenges!

Helpful Links

Picture Day is Coming October 7th!

- [Hello Finn Hill Middle School Community \(002\).docx](#)
- [Time Breakdown for Student Pictures 20.21.docx](#)

Get Your pics in the Yearbook!

- [Request for Pictures \(002\)Yearbook Link.docx](#)
- [6th Grade Family Information OneNote link \(click here\)](#)
- [Return to School Task Force Updates](#)
- [Child Care Resources](#)
- [Meal Information for Fall 2020](#)

The **Procedural Safeguards**, your rights as a guardian/parent, are available at the link below:

- <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1551981853/lwsdorg/n7zeg4tk2lfal29mgtsf/Procedural-Safeguards.pdf>

Finn Hill Resources and Support

- <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=P2fUH5bfIUaGOKHYjEyF1yU8uWdyPepHuvxEicRH2RBUN0FBWTdHRE9IUFIITIBUNIBCMkdXOE05WS4u>

PTSA-VOLUNTEER!

- <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080d49a9a628a2f94-student1>

Once again, we thank each of you for helping make our second week so successful!

Have a Great Weekend!

The FHMS Staff