

April 1, 2010

Dear Parents, Grandparents and Guardians:

This week, the students, staff and I have enjoyed the "Reading Roundup" Right to Read Week activities planned by our Falcon Philosopher volunteers, Mary Nenninger, Andrea Wyatt, Susan Reedy, Angela Erhart, and Kathy Balon. We have learned and experienced many things on our trek westward, even sampling SHRUG, the pioneers' "energy drink." As we begin spring break, I wish you a blessed Easter and an enjoyable, safe break!!

1. Our annual Choral Concert will be held on April 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the gym. Come enjoy the talents of our students in Grades 1-4.
2. A huge JOB WELL DONE goes to our academic teams. The 7th grade Power of the Pen teams competed in January at the district tournament held in Cincinnati, with the 7th grade team taking 1st place honors. The 7th grade team then competed in the regional competition. Two 7th grade team members, Breanne Johnson and Katie McCarthy, have advanced to the state competition in May at College of Wooster. Good Luck, Breanne and Katie!
3. John XXIII's MathCounts team competed in the Regional MathCounts competition held at the University of Cincinnati in February. Our team finished 12th out of 35 teams, up from 30th place last year. Congratulations goes to MathCounts team members, Will Cummins, Gabriel DeBiasi, Jake Fedders, Kenny Lewis, Brandon Moore and Michael Paddock. Many thanks goes to our MathCounts coaches, Amy Paddock and Barb Steel, for taking the extra time to run our MathCounts program and coach our Mathletes.
4. Bishop Fenwick High School is hosting a special mixer dance just for 8th grade students from all area parishes and Catholic schools. All 8th grade students are invited to come and mix, mingle and dance. Students will be encouraged to dance, enjoy music, chat with friends, play games and enjoy meeting others. A signed permission slip and \$5.00 are required for admittance. Information about the important guidelines for the dance as well as the required permission slip is available online at www.fenwickfalcons.org. For direct communications, please contact Mrs. Celena Williams at cwilliams@fenwickfalcons.org.

With all of the benefits that come from using texting and social media such as Facebook, there are also drawbacks. Since these forms of communication are more impersonal than face-to-face communication, they can be used to send or post hurtful, mean-spirited messages to or about another person. The anger and hurt that these messages create can end up being brought to school and cause students to be distracted from learning. As a school community, we are

dedicated to constantly working to be proactive where children's safety is concerned.

I recently received information containing six points to consider regarding a cell phone for your child. These points come from Greg Ramey, PhD, a child psychologist at Dayton's Children's Hospital and a syndicated columnist with the Dayton Daily News.

- Have your child pay part of the cost. Insist that your child complete regular chores to pay for the phone and be strong enough to end phone privileges if your child doesn't comply with this expectation.
- Discuss respect and etiquette. Talk about cyberbullying and gossiping with your kids. Dr. Ramey points out that by texting, it is too easy to share any fleeting thought or feeling. Things they would not say in person, they freely text to their friends. The text can be sent to others or used in ways that are harmful.
- Monitor text messages. Young children have no understanding of the risks of the electronic world and it's your job to protect them. Tell your child that you will be regularly reviewing their text messages. Your child's safety and security takes priority over their privacy.
- Place limits on phone and text messaging. Kids can become easily preoccupied with the online world and withdraw from real life. Limit the number of minutes and text messages that can be used monthly.
- Have an explicit discussion of sexting with your child. Phones and cameras are a dangerous combination for many preteens and teens. If you feel your child is too young to learn about sexting, he or she is too young for a cell phone.
- Set privacy and safety rules. Kids should never give out their cell phone number or accept text messages from strangers.

Also look for future information about an iSafe internet safety parent program that we are in the process of scheduling for sometime in May.