

## Falmouth Middle School Home-School Communications

The following is a summary of our regularly scheduled school-to-home communications:

- **Principal's Notes** – A link to Principal's Notes are emailed by our student information system, PowerSchool on Sunday nights when school is in session. The email contains a link to the Principal's Notes Web Page containing a weekly message from me as well as various items for information. These items are updated regularly, so you may also want to bookmark the web address of the notes. It is: <http://www.falmouthschools.org/MiddleSchool/prinnote.cfm> (Also linked from the left hand side bar of the Middle School pages at the school web site ([www.falmouthschools.org](http://www.falmouthschools.org)))
- **Daily Bulletin on the Web** (linked from left hand side bar) - <http://www.falmouthschools.org/MiddleSchool/bulletin.cfm> – This is the basis for our school announcements and serves as a reminder of daily events including club meetings and other activities.
- Every grade level sends regular communications to parents. You will hear about those communications via email and at our Open Houses on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.
- **Middle School Calendar** - <http://www.falmouthschools.org/MiddleSchool/calendarMS.htm> (linked from left hand side bar) This is a Google Calendar that we are trying for the first year. We hope it will be helpful! You can switch to "Week View" from "Monthly View". The events may be easier to read that way. Clicking once on the even will reveal more detail about the event.
- **PowerSchool Parent Portal** – This portal is the parent access to our student information system. It allows you to access information about your child and includes the opportunity to update student contact information (including email addresses), attendance information, and in grades 6 through 8, information on assignments and grades. Enclosed with this letter is more information on the portal and your login and password information!
- **Falmouth Middle School PTO** – The PTO is a vital and part of the Falmouth Middle School community. It is both an opportunity for parents to support the school, and an opportunity to stay informed about what is going on in your child's school. Rick Hogan and I both attend the meetings, and besides scheduled presentations, we provide updates and are there to answer questions. The first PTO meeting is Tuesday, September 9 at 9 a.m. in the Middle School library. Hope to see you there. The PTO hosts their meetings at a variety of meeting times throughout the year in order to accommodate various schedules! The meetings are on our calendar and PTO information can be accessed from the Middle School Web site as well (left hand side bar).
- **Falmouth Middle School Student Handbook** – The handbook was updated this summer. It is printed in our Student Planners that all students will be receiving the first days of school. In addition, an updated copy is on the web at: <http://www.falmouthschools.org/MiddleSchool/documents/FMSSStudentHandbook0809.pdf> (linked also from the left hand side bar on the Middle School web site). There are a number of changes this year that will be highlighted in next week's principal notes.

We are all available for questions, concerns, and celebrating successes! Rick and I are best reached at the main Middle School phone number, 781-3740. The guidance counselors (Dawn Girsch – grades 5 and 6; and Pat Wright – grades 7 and 8) and the school nurse are best reached in the Student Services Office at 781-9886. Messages for teachers can be left with Cyndy Chaney at the 781-3740 number.

Our email addresses are on the web site. The formula for staff email is first initial followed by last name followed by @fps.k12.me.us, so Sue Palfrey, for example, is [spalfrey@fps.k12.me.us](mailto:spalfrey@fps.k12.me.us). Email is generally not the best choice for *time critical* communications, but is great for quick questions, informational items or a way of initially getting in touch. Teachers in particular are occupied during the day with teaching, and if their evenings have other demands (often both professional and personal), it may be a few days before they can respond adequately to your request. Also, generally, the expectation is that we are not responding to professional email on weekends.

Communication with parents is of utmost importance to us. The National Middle School Association's ***This We Believe*** document sums up our goal: "Successful middle schools promote family involvement and take the initiative to develop needed home-school bonds. The involvement of family is linked to higher levels of student achievement and improved student behavior."

<http://www.nmsa.org/AboutNMSA/ThisWeBelieve/The14Characteristics/tabid/1274/Default.aspx>

We're looking forward to our journey together throughout the 2008-2009 school year!!