



Director’s Corner

December 2017

Dear Fraser Families,

With holidays approaching, families frequently want to give a little something to their child’s teacher. Staff members love to receive small tokens like family photos or child-made cards. You do not need to spend money to spread joy during the holidays. If you do choose to spend money, there is a limit families need to follow. Because Fraser is a tax-exempt organization, we need to follow Minnesota state law regarding the maximum amount for gifts to employees. Gifts to individual staff should have a value of \$25 or less.

Another idea is to give a small token to the classroom, such as a children’s book or an item from the classroom wish list. You could also give gift cards for the children to use to purchase items for the classroom. If you want to give a gift card or money to the classroom, your gift can be tax deductible since Fraser is a non-profit. Please ask the front office staff to help you with a tax deduction form.

We were honored to have some very special guests visit us on November 17. Scott Fraser is the grandson of our founder, Louise Whitbeck Fraser. He, his wife, his son, his daughter-in-law, and his grandson toured Fraser School. He had lots of great memories of his grandmother and her passion for children with special needs. Scott even told us stories about the year that he worked at Fraser School in 1977. The Fraser family expressed gratitude and appreciation for the staff members that carry on his grandmother’s legacy. They also loved to see the many children that greeted them and gave them unsolicited hugs as they toured. It

is wonderful to see that family’s dedication to our mission continue.

Finally, I wanted to report on the outcome of our newly restructured Fraser School Program Committee. We have a wonderful assortment of community representatives, parents, and Fraser staff. On the committee is a teacher from Richfield Public School’s Early Childhood Special Education Program, the quality improvement manager from Child Care Aware of Minnesota (formerly known as Child Care Resource and Referral), and a nurse from Health Consultants from Child Care. In addition, there are two parents, one with a toddler and the other with a prekindergarten-aged child. Finally, we have a liaison from the Fraser Board of Directors, Fraser’s Chief Operating Officer, a Fraser School teacher, and me. We had great discussions regarding Universal Preschool and on teacher trainings. I think this group will give great insights into Fraser School’s role in the community at large.

Thanks for sharing your children with us,

Deedee Stevens-Neal
612-798-8319

Deedee.Stevens-Neal@fraser.org

Inside This Edition

Things to Know about the Flu Vaccine.....	2
Get Smart about Antibiotics.....	2
Benefits of Inclusion.....	3
Illness Reminders.....	3
Schedule of Events.....	4
Gym Use.....	4
Music in the Gym.....	4

10 Things for Parents to Know About the 2017-2018 Flu Vaccine

(continued from November 2017 newsletter)

By: Kathleen Berchelmann MD, FAAP (in healthychildren.org: the website of the American Academy of Pediatrics –continued from the Fraser School November newsletter)

6. If you catch the flu and are vaccinated, you will get a milder form of the disease.

We know that flu vaccines are about 60% effective--yes, we all wish that number were higher. The good news is that vaccinated people who get the flu usually get a mild form of the disease, according to a [study](#). People who are not vaccinated will likely be in bed with fever and miserable and even could develop a complication.

7. There should be plenty of vaccine for everyone this year.

For the 2017-2018 season, manufacturers have projected that they will produce between up to 166 million doses of flu vaccine.

8. The influenza vaccine doesn't cause autism.

A robust body of research continues to show that the influenza vaccine is safe and is not associated with [autism](#).

9. The flu vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines.

The flu vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines, but at a different place on the body. It is also important to note that children 6 months through 8 years of age may need two doses spaced one month apart to be fully protected. These children should receive their first dose as soon as the vaccine is available in their community. Live vaccines (like the MMR and chickenpox vaccines) may be given together or at least 4 weeks apart.

10. Children with egg allergy can get the flu vaccine.

Children with an egg allergy can safely get the flu shot from their pediatrician without going to an [allergy specialist](#). Even those with a history of severe egg allergy don't have to treat getting the flu vaccine differently than getting any other vaccine, because these people are not likely to have a reaction to the flu vaccine.

Get Smart About Antibiotics

(from healthychildren.org)

Antibiotics do not fight viral illnesses like colds. Taking antibiotics for colds can be harmful to your child's health—in fact, unnecessary antibiotics can make future infections harder to treat. Work with your child's pediatrician to find the best treatment for your sick child.

Get Smart About Antibiotics Week 2017:

During Get Smart About Antibiotics Week, observed November 13-19, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) joins the health care community to raise awareness of the threat of antibiotic resistance and improving antibiotic use in health care settings.

Overprescribing antibiotics in outpatient settings puts children at risk of serious adverse effects and is the leading source of pediatric *Clostridium difficile* infections.

By 2020, the U.S. aims to reduce such inappropriate use of antibiotics in outpatient settings by 50%. Reaching this goal requires a significant reduction in unnecessary antibiotic use for acute respiratory conditions, which account for 44% of outpatient prescriptions. Half are unnecessary prescriptions.

The AAP encourages pediatricians and families to participate in the week by implementing recommendations on antibiotic use.

The Benefits of Inclusion for Families of Typically Developing Children

As we were talking during our recent Fraser School Program Committee meeting, one of the parents stated how awesome it was that her typically developing child was able to blossom at Fraser School. The child is able to take on a leadership role in the classroom that may not have been possible in another early childhood setting. This blurb is in the Fraser School Staff Handbook, which, of course, parents cannot access. I thought it was worth sharing, though.

“Children who do not have special needs continue to learn and grow in the same ways they did before they had classmates with special needs. In addition, they have opportunities to learn about differences in human growth and development. They learn to accept people who are different from themselves as they learn to work and play with children who have a wide range of abilities.

For families of children who are typically developing, the inclusive setting provides a concrete opportunity for teaching their children about differences in growth and development. Families might develop a greater understanding of people with special needs, become more sensitive to the needs of families with children who have disabilities, and become advocates for community integration.”

One story that is a great example of the benefits of inclusion involves three preschool-aged children. One child had autism and the others were developing typically. As the child with autism vocalized loudly, another child said that he wished it was not so loud. The final child simply stated that not all children learn the same and the child with autism just learns differently. This is why we practice inclusion.

Illness Reminders

As the weather gets colder, illnesses tend to spread. Here are some reminders to help us prevent and contain the contagious illnesses:

- Handwashing is the most effective way to stop the spread of germs. Please wash your hands and your child’s hands thoroughly and often.
- Keep your children home if they are exhibiting symptoms of illness. Your child needs to stay home from school until he/she is symptom-free for 24 hours. Symptoms include vomiting, fever, excessive coughing, and lethargy. We know that this can be problematic for working families; however, it is essential for us to isolate sick children in order to curb the spread of illnesses.
- If your child is diagnosed with a contagious illness, please call the front office (612-861-1688) to report the absence and to alert us about the diagnosis. We can then inform other families if their child is exhibiting similar symptoms.
- If you are called to pick up your sick child, please do so promptly. Our policies state that you must arrive within one hour of the initial phone call.
- Please ensure that your authorized contact list is current. If you cannot pick up a sick child, we can call others on your authorized pick up list and they can get your child.
- Please don’t mask your child’s symptoms with medication (e.g. fever-reducing medication) in hopes that your child can stay at school for a period of time before the symptoms return. Your child is still contagious while on the medication and the illnesses will continue to spread.

This month's events

> **No School**

December 25 & 26, 2017
Winter Break

> **No School**

January 1, 2018
New Year's Day

Upcoming events

> **Family Fun Night**

Thursday, January 18, 2018
6:30-7:30 PM

Gym Use

Now that winter has arrived and we are using the gym more for our gross motor play, we need to enforce our policy that families not use the gym as they are dropping off and picking up their children. Some families use this as a transition time for their child, which has been workable since the children have been outside most of the time. Now that the classrooms will be using the gym on a regular basis with cold weather and less sunlight, we need that space to be used by the children still in the school's care.

It is difficult to keep accurate counts of the children when we have a mixture of children that are and are not officially signed in on the attendance sheets. It is also difficult when families linger for their child to keep playing because it is unclear to the child (and sometimes to us) who is enforcing the rules of the gym. It can be awkward for school staff members to remind children of the gym rules when the parent is standing there watching. It is also confusing to the child because their families may allow them to do things in the gym that the school staff does not allow.

New Metallophone

I hope that families have noticed the new musical instrument in the gym. The money for this new metallophone was donated by the Edina Rotary Foundation. The Foundation donated the money last spring and I ordered the instrument but it has been on back-order and finally arrived! It is designed to be outdoors but I thought it may be fun to have in the gym for a while.



In the original playground design, the gazebo was planned to be a music and movement area. Unfortunately, we had to make some tough budget decisions and decided to postpone the addition of musical instruments to the playground until we could generate more funding. We hope the metallophone will be the first of several instruments that we add in the coming years.