



FSD145

Freeport School District

February 12, 2021

Dear FSD 145 Staff and Families,

We had to brave the cold weather this week, but we made it through a full week of school. I sit restless on evenings when I hear about weather advisories and warnings. Obviously, the safety of students always comes first. But, I agonize over not having in-person learning the following day, particularly with all the school disruptions that our families and staff have had to endure for almost a year now. We are reaching the one-year anniversary of the Act of God Days. Let me express once again my gratitude to all of you for doing everything you can to support us in our work.

I'm sure everyone is ready for a 3-day weekend! In addition to the District being closed Monday, in observance of President's Day, there will also be a **Remote Learning Day for all students on Friday, Feb. 19**, as we focus on a second round of COVID vaccinations for staff throughout the day. The following Wednesday the 24th is also a remote 3-hour day for students as our staff engage in school improvement learning.

Death of Mrs. Pat Willging & Mr. Chauncey Wells

We were saddened last week to learn of the passing of two former Freeport School District employees, both of whom passed away on February 2.



Mrs. Patricia Willging began working for the Freeport School District as a girls' guidance counselor in 1960 and served in a number of guidance capacities until she retired in 1999. She was a gifted counselor who touched the lives of thousands of young people during her extensive career, many through skillful one-on-one guidance and many more through the innovative prevention programs that she organized to encourage healthy living and positive behaviors.

Mr. Chauncey "Bud" Wells moved to Freeport after graduating from college, and taught mathematics and coached football at Freeport Junior High School for 11 years. He then took on the challenge of helping establish a new type of learning environment at the newly built Carl Sandburg Middle School in 1969. Bud accepted the job of Assistant Principal, a position he held for 30 years until his retirement in 1999. He was a fair and steady presence at Carl Sandburg.



We extend our sympathy to both the Willging and Wells families. Thank you, Pat & Bud for the imprint you made as part of the Freeport School District family. We share along with their families and the community, the profound impact of their passing.



Congratulations to FHS Senior MacKenzie Marti

Last month MacKenzie Marti received a call with news that she has dreamed of since she was a little girl. The call was from U.S. Representative Cherie Bustos; the news was that MacKenzie received an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. Following in her older brother's footsteps has been MacKenzie's goal for many years, and her appointment to the Academy proves that she is doing just that. As a dedicated member of the FHS NJROTC, her hard work and determination have paid off. We are

sure that her family, and particularly her brother, is proud of this accomplishment. We want MacKenzie and her family to know that the FSD family is proud of her as well, in fact, we're ***PretzelProud!*** **Congratulations MacKenzie & thank you for your service!**

Black History Month

To continue our efforts in celebrating Black History Month in FSD145, the Equity Department shared this resource link with staff to recognize the contributions of African-Americans Past & Present each day in February. (This resource provides highlights of events that occurred on "This Day" in Black History".)

<https://www.blackfacts.com/#0208>. Follow us throughout the month on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) as we highlight daily, individuals whose achievements and contributions are worthy of note

Spotlight on Poetry



Gwendolyn Elizabeth Brooks (June 7, 1917 – December 3, 2000) was an American poet, author, and teacher. Her work often dealt with the personal celebrations and struggles of ordinary people in her community. She won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry on May 1, 1950, for "*Annie Allen*", making her the first African American to receive a Pulitzer Prize.

Throughout her prolific writing career, Brooks received many more honors. A lifelong resident of Chicago, she was appointed Poet Laureate of Illinois in 1968, a position she held until her death 32 years later. She was also named the Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress for the 1985–86 term. In 1976, she became the first African-American woman inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

🧧 Happy Lunar New Year - Gung Hay Fat Choy! 🧧

Lunar New Year or Chinese New Year is the most important holiday in China and Chinese communities around the world. It is also observed in many other Asian countries such as Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Celebrated for more than 3,000 years, Chinese New Year is just what it sounds like—the beginning of a new year in the Chinese calendar. The new year starts on the new moon nearest the midpoint between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, sometime between January 21 and February 20. ***Gung Hay Fat Choy*** is literally "wishing you great happiness and prosperity."

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Remote Learning By Choice (RLBC)

Families who wish to change their selection to or from RLBC should follow the processes below

- **In-person to Remote-** Sign up using the [Remote Learning by Choice](#) form.
- **Remote to In-Person-** Contact the ETC at 815-232-0580 or your student's school to request a return to in-person. Return dates are offered every two weeks for the remainder of the school year.

Placement depends on openings that take into consideration building capacity, staff availability and our ability to maintain social distancing in classrooms. Elementary students may be offered a spot in a different school building if their home school capacity has been met. This is a temporary solution.

The next deadline to request a return to in-person placement is **02/23/21**. Requests received by this date will begin in-person instruction on **03/01/21**, if capacity in buildings/classrooms allow.

Physical & Immunization Requirements

If your student is switching from Remote Learning by Choice to In-Person/Hybrid the required physical examination and immunizations must be on file. [Please click here to see for more information on what students require physical exams/immunizations.](#)

WEEKLY REMINDERS

IMPORTANT - Notification of Emergency Closings

In the event schools must be closed due to extreme weather conditions, notification will be sent to families by phone call and text message. **You may still opt in to receive text messages from us by texting Y to 67587.** Notification is also sent to local radio and news stations, posted on our social media sites (Facebook, Twitter), and our website www.fsd145.org. In the event that we have to close school due to inclement weather, all students will follow the full remote learning schedule. The [Remote Learning Quick Guide](#) is available on our website.

COVID Vaccination & Positivity Rate Updates from the Stephenson County Health Department

The overall 7-day rolling positivity rate is 4.2% in Stephenson County as of Feb.8, and 3.6% in Region 1. As of 02/11/2021, SCHD has notified us that there are 1 active student and 2 active staff cases in FSD. Information regarding our [COVID statistics](#) can be viewed on our website. Next week staff who received the first vaccination will begin receiving the second vaccination.

Grab-N-Go & Meal Delivery & Pick-up

For families signed up for **bus delivery** you will receive a delivery tomorrow, February 13. Also, tomorrow is the next pick-up date at **Carl Sandburg School (lower level parking lot, door O)** from 10 am - Noon, for Group A / Group B blended students and any remote choice learners who are not on the bus delivery route.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- President's Day Holiday - Monday, February 15, 2021 - District Closed
- Remote Learning Day for All Students - Friday, February 19, 2021
- 3 Hour School Improvement Day - Wednesday, February 24, 2021 - All students are remote.
- Spring Break - March 22-26, 2021

Feedback & Questions

If you have missed our weekly communications, you can read them here. [Weekly & Special Community Communications](#). Please call your student's schools with any questions or comments.

Send your positive pretzel thoughts up on Saturday as our FHS Speech team, who were last week's **2021 IHSA Sterling Individual Event Speech Regional Champions**, competes in the IHSA Sectional Tournament. We wish them well. **Go Pretz Go!**

Thank you again parent/guardians for all that you do. Have a wonderful 3-day weekend, stay warm and **Happy Valentine's Day!** 🍷❤️

With gratitude,

Dr. Anna Alvarado

Superintendent of Schools