



FEDERAL HILL PREPARATORY SCHOOL
PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION
1040 William Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21230

Dear Parents:

In the heart of Federal Hill, a community has come together to provide outstanding academic opportunities to a diverse group of students. Talented teachers and experienced administrators work side-by-side with parents committed to participating in their children's education. Businesses and community groups supply volunteers and financial support. Even neighbors without children feel invested in the effort.

This is Federal Hill Preparatory School (FHPS), a remarkable success story in public education. At a time when many think of public schools as failing, FHPS is succeeding – not just in helping students pass standardized tests, but in preparing children for a lifetime of learning. Drawing on proven instructional methods from around the world, FHPS gives its students the knowledge and skills they need to be good citizens today and community leaders tomorrow.

Reading by 9? How about 6?

Early education teachers at FHPS use an accelerated reading curriculum that yields tremendous results: for the 2009/10 school year, 85% of students in last year's kindergarten entered first grade reading at or above grade level. Every student receives instruction appropriate to his or her reading level, and advanced readers are encouraged to move ahead into higher grade level reading groups.

“We were pleasantly surprised and shocked when our son was reading level 3 books without help by the end of his kindergarten year. We are now amazed to see him read 200 page chapter books without help in second grade for fun.”

The City's Only Advanced Academic Classes in Math & Science for Elementary Students

The teachers, administrators, and parents of FHPS recognize that the world of today demands strong skills in math and science. That's why the school offers Advanced Academics in Math & Science, a program originally developed in partnership with the Ingenuity Project, to challenge capable students with Singapore Math and hands-on science classes. At FHPS, all students attend a science class every day of the week, from first grade onward.

“With the U.S. falling behind other countries in math and science, I was excited to see FHPS offered Singapore Math and a 5-day-a-week hands-on science program. After five years at FHPS, my 4th grader is doing algebra, and last week she dissected a heart in Science class! When asked, she says her favorite subjects are math and science, and best of all, she LOVES school.”

Core Knowledge Taught with a World View

At some schools, the importance of content has been lost to an emphasis on the process of learning. Students at FHPS learn not just how to read, but how to read about past civilizations and the history of our own. Whether they are studying ancient Mesopotamia, world religions, or the route of the Pony Express, FHPS students are constantly exposed to the great global lessons of mankind. Our nationally recognized Core Knowledge curriculum builds on the idea that the earlier students are exposed to new concepts and vocabulary, the more they will learn as they move through the school. FHPS is the only school in Baltimore to embrace this approach everyday in multiple subject areas: social studies, science, language – even music and physical education.

“Our first grader is learning about advanced subjects such as Mesopotamia that I did not study until my second year of college! Having a solid understanding of history inside and outside our borders is a powerful tool in a world that increasingly requires an appreciation and understanding of other many cultures.”

Learning to How to Spin, to Sculpt, to Sing, and to Castle

Much of what children should learn can never be measured by a standardized test. That's why the staff of FHPS includes full-time, professionally-trained teachers responsible for physical education, art, and music. There's even an after-school chess program to teach students from all grades one of the world's most challenging strategy games.

“The holiday program this year included ALL pre-K through 5th graders, singing, acting, stage sets, a string quartet, in a play written and directed by our Peabody trained music teacher. All this from our local public school. WOW!”

All of this instruction takes place within an environment that emphasizes small classes (averaging 16 students per teacher in the 1st through 5th grades during 2009/10) made up of students grouped according to their demonstrated academic abilities. Children who face extra challenges in learning are given special attention.

Classes meet inside a building that offers a full range of facilities: an auditorium for performances and events, a gymnasium for games, two computer labs, two science labs, a library, and a fine arts workshop, in addition to plentiful classroom space. Outside, students enjoy the benefits of a playground, playing fields, a recently renovated blacktop play area, and a reading garden.

Federal Hill Preparatory School is a product of its community – teachers, administrators, parents, and partners working together to create a community school with a world view. We invite you to attend an Open House to learn how you and your family can become part of that community, and how you can take advantage of the outstanding academic opportunities that FHPS has to offer.

Sincerely,



Hugh Bethell, President
Federal Hill Preparatory School PTO