

Dear Academy Parents and Students:

Can you believe we have already turned our calendars over to the month of November? This fall has passed so quickly, and so too, has the first quarter of this school year. As I reflect back on the first ten weeks of this school year, I am amazed at what God has done in the life and ministry of our school.

Having not written to you for several weeks, be forewarned that this letter is fairly long. For this I am sorry, but I feel compelled to share several things with you. Hopefully, the bold type will help serve as headings.

What a joy to see each and every student and family at FCA! During the earlier part of the summer, I was concerned that we might not reach our enrollment goals, but as the summer went on, we saw the enrollment numbers increase to the point that we ended up only a few students short of our anticipated fall enrollment projections. We currently have 715 students from 450 families attending FCA. Our students in the academy division come from 20 different school districts, with the largest districts being: Lancaster (53%), Bloom Carroll (16%), Pickerington and Canal Winchester (6% each), Fairfield Union and Amanda Clearcreek (5% each), and the remaining students (9%) come from the remaining districts. When I reviewed our student data, I saw we had 108 different churches represented by our academy families, with 40% of them attending Fairfield Christian Church. What a phenomenal ministry outreach we have in central Ohio, and what an awesome responsibility before us to partner with parents in educating and ministering to our FCA students.

I am also very pleased to report to you that **Fairfield Christian Academy is on a sound financial footing this year.** As you well know, many people joined together last spring and committed to making the sacrifices necessary to put FCA back on track financially in order to accomplish several goals over the next three years. FCA parents, I thank you for your sacrifice to enroll your children again this year even though paying an additional \$200.00 in tuition. I thank students, parents, staff, FCA School Board, and Fairfield Christian Church leadership in making the adjustments necessary to permit us to “right size our staff,” reduce expenses, and restructure our organization into a leaner, more efficient operation. I particularly wish to thank the staff, but also local pastors, grandparents and others who were affected by reductions in tuition discounts. There are so many others to thank as well, but mostly I thank the Lord who has led us all through these hard decisions, who has put an awesome financial team together, who has guided us all through the past several months, all of which has resulted in having a budget this year that permits me to say that FCA is on track to end this fiscal year in the black, with adequate overhead to retire a portion of our past financial obligations.

Some **special highlights** and activities for this fall include the following:

- FCA received the Governor’s Thomas Edison **Award for Excellence in STEM Education** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). We were one of only five schools in Ohio to receive the maximum points that could be earned for this prestigious award. Thanks go to Mrs. Hopple, Mr. Hawks, Mrs. Rauch, and Mr. Carpenter for their foresight and hard work that made this accolade possible.
- FCA had a tremendously successful **“Day of Service”** during our Believathon/Frogathon weekend. Student, staff and parents from all grade levels offered gifts, services, and honor to several groups, local and far away. Our projects included Operation Christmas Child, Ronald MacDonald House, Operation Evergreen (still going on), Gift Boxes for Grace Haven, Food Supplies to Fairfield Foundation Shelters, COLE’s Foundation Send-a-Smile Project, Operation Paperback and other Military Care Packages as far away as Afghanistan and Iraq, and some made visits to all of our local fire houses and helped clean around the fire house. What a great day of service outreach!

Mrs. Heather Keener, FCA's Director of Institutional Advancement, received thanks from some of our local ministries - COLE's Foundation is very grateful for our students' love and attention to sick kids. They are very excited to mail out our letters and look forward to working with us "anytime we have the time." The Foundation Shelter, likewise, asked me to pass along their appreciation for our donations. The fifth grade was so diligent and thoughtful in their preparation of "shoeboxes" for the homeless, Mr. Clum was almost speechless. He was very grateful and mentioned that those boxes would take care of them for "a long time" ...especially with the winter on the way. Thank you FCA students for serving and blessing others through this ministry opportunity.

- **Pumpkin Chucking Day** at FCA was a rousing success. Our FCA high school science club demonstrated how powerful their catapults and trebuchets were by holding a pumpkin throwing contest. The whole student body went outside to see this contest against the science club teams. You may have seen the article in the Lancaster Eagle Gazette covering this activity. It was a great time for all.
- **The National Honor Society (NHS), National Junior Honor Society (NJHS), and Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society Assembly** was a sight to behold. There is no doubt that FCA has hard-working, quality students who focus on academic achievement. The awards assembly held on Friday, Nov. 4th was awe inspiring. Our current NHS and NJHS have 50 student members, which is a very high percentage of our student body when compared to other schools in our area. On November 4th, an additional 51 students were inducted into NHS/NJHS for a total of 101 students currently in these honor societies. This represents an astounding 36% of our students in grades 7-12 / or 45% of our students 8-12. During the assembly, we also inducted 28 charter members of Mu Alpha Theta. I was so impressed with the accomplishments of all of these students, and I congratulate every new member on being inducted during this assembly.

I'll bet you wish you could have been there. May I offer you the opportunity to watch the assembly? Thanks to our FCA Media Team, under the direction of Mr. JT Burcham, you will be able to watch the FCA National Honor Society Ceremony at this link – http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FHuF_Q1YZk . If this link doesn't work, simply go to YouTube, and search for "FCA – 2011 NHS Ceremony."

This year's **fundraising efforts** got off to a very strong start! Even though we are currently around \$15,000 short of our overall fall fundraising budget, we still express thanks for a very successful first-year selling of Entertainment Books, from which we have received over \$13,000 in profit, directly benefitting the school's budget. We enjoyed a beautiful sunny day during the F.R.O.G.-a-Thon with tons of fun and fellowship! And, even though it rained during our golf outing, the golfers enjoyed our new venue at Lancaster Country Club. Our Believathon letters continue to garner some income because of those folks who have a heart for giving to FCA. To date, over \$41,000 has been received from our generous donors! If you were part of the 50% of our families who sent out Believathon letters, we sincerely thank you. Because of you, the Lord blessed FCA and permitted us to exceed our Believathon goal. In light of the current economy, we were so pleased to receive each and every donation. This year's Believathon donations came mostly from small donations, with \$25.00 being the most often donated amount. During the holiday season, you may know of other potential donors who are seeking a year-end tax deduction right about now. May we encourage you to invite those people to consider a donation to FCA? Every additional donation will help us tremendously.

FCA continues to work very hard on being good stewards of God's resources, for which we are very grateful. If you are interested in volunteering, participating in, or sponsoring our program, we are ready to talk to you about

our needs and our future plans! Holiday opportunities are available, as you can see in the calendar below such as the Christmas Shop Vendor & Craft Fair and the Children's Christmas Gift Shop!

If you would consider helping FCA out further in their fundraising during this holiday season, please don't forget that you can bless FCA by purchasing your **gift cards through SCRIP!** Order your gift cards at www.shopwithscrip.com and FCA will receive a nice donation back from SCRIP for your purchase. Some retailers pay us as much as 15% when you buy their gift cards from SCRIP. The FCA school code is **75ABL6CA1L681** if you have not yet setup your account. All you have to do is place your order online and then when Mrs. Heather Keener delivers your cards to you, hand her your check made out to FCA. It is that simple!

There are 2 delivery dates before Christmas Break!

Place your order by Thursday, November 10 for delivery on Tuesday, November 15. (For those of you who celebrate Christmas at Thanksgiving with the in-laws!)

Place your order by **Tuesday, December 6** for delivery on **Monday, December 19**. (Their processing center is VERY busy in December so we need a few extra days.)

If you have trouble at that website, you can also just email Mrs. Keener with your order and she will put it in for you. Her e-mail address is hkeener@fairfieldchristianacademy.com.

Please note these **matters of interest:**

As you probably have already heard, **The School Closet uniform store is closing the Lancaster store** effective November 22nd. During our parent/teacher conference week, we took a poll of some of our parents to determine the impact this closing will have on FCA families. The poll shows that 62% of our families usually purchased their uniforms at the Lancaster School Closet. Therefore, this will impact greatly the purchasing habits of over 200 families. Since we have lost the convenience of a Lancaster store, I will consider our options on how to serve your purchasing needs in light of this news, and report back to you in the very near future. Thank you for participating in the poll and for offering your suggestions on options to consider. I plan to meet with our other approved vendor, Educational Apparel, to see if we can work out easier ways to purchase our uniforms from them. I will report back to you as soon as I have any credible options. You may still purchase School Closet uniforms at their Bexley or Gahanna store, or online at <http://schoolcloset.com/private-school/fairfield-christian.html>.

We have also received word that **Sweetman Music has ceased retail operations** at their Lancaster store. This news might impact those families who are currently renting band instruments from Sweetman. Mr. Miller has been in touch with the owner and confirmed that he intends to release a letter to each family account with more information regarding this matter. We will keep you informed of any further developments or noteworthy information that we receive.

For a sneak peak at yesterday's Lancaster Eagle Gazette article regarding FCA students who are taking a history class (**Holocaust**) offered by Mrs. Teresa Seaman, click this temporary link -

<http://www.lancastereaglegazette.com/article/20111109/NEWS01/111090306/Class-allows-students-study-reflect-upon-Holocaust>.

I offer my thanks to all drivers who are cautious and cooperative when driving at our property. Your cooperation has been greatly appreciated. The **traffic management team has recommended I address two concerns** though:

- Right-hand turns (toward the barn) at the main cross walk cause both traffic congestion and creates safety concerns for people walking across the parking lot. Therefore, we ask that you go to the second exit before turning right. Cones have been placed across the first traffic exit so a right turn can no longer be done there. Please drive forward to the second exit before turning right.
- A few families try to park against the building at door “B” (these are the handicapped parking spaces) to take their child into the building. When departing, you then try to back out into the heavy traffic, which causes traffic congestion, but the managers are really concerned about backing up where people are walking away from their cars. Therefore, please do not park against the building and take your child inside anytime from 7:45AM – 8:15AM. During this brief time, the traffic is usually very heavy, and safety for our children can be jeopardized when you back out. In the afternoon, the traffic is not as heavy, so we will still permit cars to use these slots. However, it would be much safer if you would back into the slots, so you can simply drive forward, turn left and exit with the rest of the traffic when you leave.

We need writers! Are you a writer? **Could you help us write some articles for our FCA website?** Our FCA website is designed to be informative for students, parents, and the community which we serve. You may have noticed that we have seasons where the information needs to be replaced or new article added. However, with the restructuring and right-sizing of our staff for this year, we have fewer people to write the articles we wish to put on the website. I currently have 5 articles that I would like to have online, but too few people to write them up. Could you consider helping us by writing articles for us? We would like to enlist the help of a few writers to whom we could supply basic information about things, and have you write the content for the article, e-mail the article to us, and we would then upload it onto our website. If you might be interested, please email me at ereck@fairfieldchristianacademy.com.

Upcoming events and activities:

Nov. 23 – 25	Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 28 – Dec. 9	Christmas Shop Vendor & Craft Fair (8 – 4 each day) Reserve your table via email to hkeener@fairfieldchristianacademy.com by Nov. 21 st .
Nov. 28	1 st Girls’ Varsity Basketball Game @ Miller High School
Dec. 1 – 2	Madrigal Concert and Dinner (including High School band & choir)
Dec. 2	1 st Boys’ Varsity Basketball Game @ Home – Gahanna Christian
Dec. 8	Christmas Shopping / Date Night – sponsored by our Sophomore Class
Dec. 9	Pre-School & Child Care Christmas Program
Dec. 12 – 16	Children’s Christmas Gift Shop! Would you like to volunteer to help the little ones shop? E-mail to hkeener@fairfieldchristianacademy.com .
Dec 15	Strings and 5 th Grade Band Concert

Lastly, **I wish for you a very blessed and Happy Thanksgiving Season.** For the next couple of weeks, I encourage you to express your thankfulness to those who love you, and to those you love. I encourage you with the words Paul wrote to the church at Colossae from chapter 3,

¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.** ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

As we take time to offer our thanks to God for His abundant provision in our lives, let also take time to express our thanks:

Parents - to our children, for being such enrichment to our lives;
Children - to our parents, for providing us with a safe, secure, loving family environment;
Families - to our pastors, for teaching and leading us in the paths of righteousness;
Parents - to our grandparents, for passing down their Christian heritage to our generation;
Children – to our childhood friends, who bless us with their friendship and support;
Families – to our neighbors who come to our aid in time of need;
For all – to our LORD for salvation by grace through faith in His Son,
for sustaining “live” within our bodies,
for guiding us daily through His Word,
for empowering us through His Holy Spirit,
for giving us “our daily bread” and all provisions, and
for protecting us from the attack of our enemy.

God bless you all! I am thankful for you,

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Ed Reck, Superintendent