

12th February 2010

Dear Parents/Carers

Another half term has flown by, and I write to you just with some brief updates about the Academy.

#### Snow

It's fair to say I never want to see anymore snow for quite a while! Like many other schools, the pendulum of open and shut seemed to continue for far too long in January, but I thank you for your support in the decisions taken and the very positive feedback we received from parents and students about the work that was available for students via our website. I would also like to thank you for your immediate support on attendance following my letter in January after only 60% of students attended school following two closure days because of the snow. Attendance immediately jumped up to over 93% the following week and it has been phenomenal ever since – well done to you all!

#### Newsletter

All our interim news for this term was included as part of the 'What's On' focus feature in the Watford Observer which your son/daughter should have brought home to you last week. If you didn't receive this you can see the whole insert via our website [www.franciscombeacademy.org.uk](http://www.franciscombeacademy.org.uk) and follow the news links.

#### Parents' forum

I believe that the views of parents are vital to our success, and whilst we do carry out many evaluations throughout the year on events, performance, as well as our annual Kirkland Rowell survey, I also feel that parents have a key role in helping us directly to drive up standards and expectations. I therefore would like to set up a forum for parents to meet with me on a regular basis to discuss Academy issues and priorities. I am suggesting that these meetings are held once per month here at the Academy. Our parent governors would also attend. The two dates I am suggesting for next half term are:

- Tuesday 2nd March 7pm
- Tuesday 30th March 7pm

If you would be interested in becoming part of this key group, please could you email: [head@franciscombe.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@franciscombe.herts.sch.uk) or telephone my PA Mrs Chorley, 01923 665870. The framework of the group would be:

- to raise issues or concerns that you are aware of via your sons/daughters or from the local community
- to discuss and be part of consultation of any policies that directly link to students (eg. Behaviour Policy)
- to link in with the work of the student council

## Maths

Many of you are aware and have been in contact with us with concerns about staffing and quality within Maths. It is fair to say that it has been a turbulent few months for the Maths team and I apologise for the impact this has had on some of our students. We have made some key alterations to staffing which will commence after half term which should have an immediate impact on the quality of teaching and learning in Maths. Please do continue to keep us informed if there are any issues that you feel need bringing to our attention by emailing Miss Warwick-Wilson using the email address below

d.warwick-wilson@franciscombe.herts.sch.uk

## Build update

Our new build design is currently going through the various stages of planning. As previously shared with you, the start of the build is slightly delayed, and we are looking at a June/July start. Exams will not be affected. Again, as previously informed we must have zero access onto the school site by parents picking and dropping off students. A detailed plan to reduce both parents and staff parking on site will be introduced next half term. I therefore ask any parents who do currently drive onto the school site to find alternative and legal areas to park with the expectation being that your child will have to walk for some of their journey.

And finally...

I know that many students in year 11 and sixth form will be in during the half term week working with various teachers in preparation for their summer exams so a big well done to all those involved in this.

I do hope that you all enjoy a lovely half term.

Yours sincerely



Nicky Williams  
Principal