

Frontier Academy Executive Committee
Frontier Academy Elementary School
Frontier Academy Secondary School
Greeley, CO

April 11, 2005

Dear Families of Frontier Academy:

This letter is to communicate two changes that will occur during the 2005-06 academic year. **The first change is that the 2005-06 6th graders will attend classes in the secondary building on 6503 W. 16th Street. The second change is that the week class schedule for the secondary program will change to a Modified 4-5 Day Week Class Schedule.**

To improve Frontier Academy's financial stability, we plan to increase our enrollment for the 2005-06 school year. In public schools, increased enrollment means increased revenue to growing schools from the State of Colorado.

To accommodate the increase in our student population, we have decided to add a class to each of the K-8 grades. Each grade level in the K-8 program will have 4 classes for the 2005-06 year. This increase means we need an additional classroom for each grade. Our current buildings for the K-6 program do not have the classrooms to accommodate this need. **We have to move our 6th grade program to the secondary building for Fall 2006. The secondary building has available space for the 6th grade program.** By placing our 6th graders in our secondary building, they will be connected to a true middle school environment – Core Knowledge academic program and extracurricular activities.

With feedback from K-12 parents, K-12 teachers, and K-12 administrators, the Executive Committee voted on April 7 to accept the Secondary School Administration's proposal to move their current week class schedule to a Modified 4-5 Day Week Class Schedule for 2005-06. During the month of March, the Executive Committee had 4 open meetings with information presented by our Secondary School Administration. Teachers and parents were in attendance. The administration presented information on how a modified schedule benefits the secondary program.

The phrase *Modified 4-5 Day Week Class Schedule* is used because there are approximately 18, 4 day weeks; 8, 5 day weeks, and 12 weeks that have 4 – 2 day/weeks due to holidays, parent and teacher conference days, and in service days. This modified schedule meets the State of Colorado's requirement for 1080 instructional hours/year.

It is important to note that the administration of the elementary and secondary programs are working together to insure that *days off* are the same for each program. Also the scheduled half days for the elementary program will be the same as the day off for the secondary building.

Benefits of the Modified 4-5 Day Week Class Schedule for Frontier Academy Secondary School:

- Provides more class offerings – e.g., electives and AP courses
- Effectively aligns middle school (6-8) staff teaching assignments with schedule
- Reduces absenteeism of students and teachers. This information was from research noted in the publication, “The Four Day School Week”, by Colorado Department of Education (CDE).
- Reduces discipline referrals, (CDE).
- Improves morale of teachers and students, (CDE).
- Provides professional development time for teachers when 5th day has no classes.
- Provides field trips and other learning opportunities for students when 5th day has no classes.
- Provides time for employment opportunities for eligible students when 5th day has no classes.

With the support and coordination of Rebecca Dougherty, Harlan Ptomey, teaching and administrative staff, the transition of 6th graders to the secondary building and the implementation of the modified schedule program will go well. They will insure to maintain the integrity of our K-12 academic program.

If you have questions, please speak with Rebecca Dougherty (330-1760) or Harlan Ptomey (339-9153).

You are also invited to attend the Executive Committee meetings. The meetings are on the FIRST THURSDAY of the month at the Secondary School, and the THIRD THURSDAY of the month at the Elementary School.

IMPORTANT DATES – mark your calendar

MAY 10, 2005 - ORIENTATION for 2005-06 6th -8th Grade students at the Secondary School (Details will be sent to you soon)

Sincerely,

Lori Reinsvold, Chair, Frontier Academy’s Executive Committee