FRIENDSHIP ACADEMY
OF THE ARTS
Where friendship and academic excellence meet

Dear Parent (s):

Welcome, Welcome, Welcome to all of our 2016-2017 Friendship Academy families!

It is with great pleasure to welcome all of the FAA families to the 2016-2017 school year. Our theme this year is ***"Nurturing Genius."*** We believe every child intrinsically obtains their genius.

The teachers and staff are very excited for the school year to begin. We have made lots of preparations to ensure this will be a very successful year.

First, some of the many things we have for you this year are:

- a grand remodeled building which adds more space for learning to happen. Expanded classrooms that are more spacious, brightly painted, equipped with innovative technology for the many SIOP and Thinking Map lessons, learning centers to accommodate differentiated learning, space for use to incorporate the arts and much more.
- an additional library space outside of the classrooms to check out books, to conduct research projects and write research papers.
- an intercom system for better communication and upgraded security system for the safety of our FAA family.
- many art enrichment activities such as Ballroom Dancing via Heart of the Dance, Choir, African Drumming, Spanish, STEM, SWAG, Fine Arts and many more art forms.

Secondly, with a 100% teacher retention the teachers and staff underwent additional training on various strategies and revisited and improved on SIOP and Thinking Map lesson plans and our Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system to help FAA remain a top school in Minnesota upholding our slogan ***"Where Friendship and Academic Excellence Meet."***

- created vision boards for their classrooms
- further Innocent Child Training
- connecting with families to establish and build relationships before school begins for the success of the student.
- PTA President and Vice Pres. working with a new Vista Program employee to help encouraging parent involvement, build a platform on FAA website for communication and helping FAA in other ways.
- an additional employee to our Special Ed Department.
- Changes in our staff which include Major Topps as our student advocate and Anna Nelson as our early intervention specialist.

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Lastly, we all as a team work together to ensure the success of the whole child for every member of our FAA families and this is done by the FAA staff and the support of our community partners.

- Minneapolis Foundation
- RKMC Foundation
- Target
- United Way
- Monitors Foundation
- MN Comeback
- Jay & Rose Phillips Foundation
- Angel Donor
- Prise
- Way to Grow
- Monitor's Foundation
- Greater Friendship MBC
- Individual Donors
- Business Partnership
- Minnesota Associations of Charter Schools
- Wells Fargo
- Minneapolis Southside Rotary Club

We at FAA know our success as an elementary school in Minnesota speaks loudly with the Minnesota Department of Education and we will uphold our slogan ***"Where Friendship and Academic Excellence Meet,"*** because it's not just a slogan but who we are and what we do.

We're looking forward to another great year. Again, welcome, welcome, welcome FAA families.

Your Friend,

Dr. Charvez Russell, Exec. Director
Friendship Academy of the Arts