



BUILDING BASIC FACTS AUTOMATICITY

Dear Parents,

Research has shown that long-term success in mathematics is closely tied to strong number sense, including fluency with basic facts. Addition and subtraction of larger numbers will be much easier to master, and multiplication and division are easier to learn with the support of addition and subtraction fluency. Even algebra will be easier to learn if your child does not have to use mental energy counting to solve addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts.

This year, all students in Frederick County Public Schools are going to be spending time daily learning and practicing math facts. It will only take a few minutes each day, but students will keep working until they have mastered all the facts. A fact is mastered when it can be answered instantly, without pause.

The ability to recall items is enhanced when understanding is connected to the task. During instruction students will move through three phases: constructing meaning and counting strategies (Phase 1), reasoning strategies (Phase 2), and working toward quick recall (Phase 3). Students who simply memorize facts miss a prime opportunity to expand their understanding of equations. Problem solving is a classroom focus and to be successful students must not only compute accurately, they must be able to figure out how to build equations for problem situations.

Learning all the facts in a given operation is a lot of work, but future success in math is dependent upon fact automaticity. Especially in a world of calculators, being able to compute math facts mentally is needed just to know if the calculator answer is correct. You can help by sharing with your child the importance of learning math facts and supporting daily practice. Thank you so much for your support of this critical learning goal. I will keep you notified of your child's success in this important task.

Sincerely,

Ms. Helman