



10 March 2017

Planning Ahead

Saturday, 11 March – **Time changes** overnight. Set clocks AHEAD one hour.

Friday, 24 March – **FJS 20th Anniversary Banquet**, 6:15 p.m., Shady Maple Banquet Center, Lancaster Co., PA. **Early dismissal**, 12:00 noon. NO LUNCH today.

Science Fair research paper due.

Wednesday-Saturday, 29 March-1 April – **U. S. Government Trip** to Washington, D.C. (to be confirmed)

Monday-Friday, 3-7 April – **Missions Week**, parents invited. **NOTE: This is a change of date.**

Friday, 31 March – End of 3rd Quarter

Science Fair experimental design or model plans due.

Thursday, 6 April – 3rd Quarter **Parent-Teacher Conferences**, 3:30-9:00 p.m.

Friday, 7 April – **Early dismissal**, 1:30 p.m.

3rd Quarter **Parent-Teacher Conferences**, 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Monday-Monday, 10-17 April – **Spring Break!** NO SCHOOL.



In Defense of PACES

Since the beginning of FJS, academic instruction has been a blend of classroom instruction and self-instruction. Classroom instruction was initially limited to Bible during worship along with art and gym, then math at all grade levels, followed by the full curriculum in grades 1 and 2. Later, at the high school level, science and social studies were included as classroom subjects. Specialized subjects in the arts, music, computers, English composition, public speaking are also taught traditionally.

However, English from grades 3 to 12 and some social studies subjects as well as other electives in high school are self-instructional using materials from Accelerated Christian Education. Each subject is broken into 12 study units or PACES which, all together, make one unit of work. Students work through the PACES on their own, scoring as they go. Teachers review their progress throughout the PACE, giving assistance as needed. At the end of each PACE students take a test over the entire PACE before going to the next PACE. A grade of at least 80% is required before going on the next PACE.

Similar systems of individualized instruction have been around for more than 40 years. In my junior and senior years of high school many years ago, my grammar was self-instructional – different publisher (not PACES), but same idea. While students sometimes complain that they "never heard of a school that uses PACES," and "we must be the only school in the world that does it this way," ACE has been producing this curriculum for 45 years and it is used in hundreds of schools and thousands of homeschools around the world. Lighthouse Christian Academy in Hendersonville, TN, uses ACE for its curriculum and is fully accredited by the same organizations that certify public schools and colleges.

PACES have several advantages for us as a small school. They allow us to offer a complete, quality curriculum in spite of having fewer students than larger schools. They emphasize reading and vocabulary, skills that many of our students need. While, admittedly, at the lower levels, much of the testing involves memorization to fill in blanks, at the upper levels, students need to be able to take notes on the PACE and rephrase ideas to answer many of the test questions. Setting goals and managing their time to complete a certain amount of work within a given period of time is, perhaps, one of the most important lessons learned in the PACES, a skill which is highly beneficial when preparing for college.

There are also ways classroom instruction provides significant advantages that PACES do not. Use of both at FJS allows us to provide a complete curriculum that fits the needs of a wide variety of students in a small school setting.

James E. Gochnauer, Principal