



Falk

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Volume: Issue:

Sunday, February 11, 2024



Third-grade students sort dominoes in Playlab, a class led by Tegan Ambrose that expanded this year from Kindergarten to include third grade classes. ([Read more below.](#))

FalkLife for February 12–16, 2024

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Important Upcoming Dates

- **Wednesday, February 14:** Early dismissal (at 1:30 p.m.).
- **Monday, February 19:** School closed (Clerical Day).
- **Thursday, February 22:** Parent conferences (grades K-5 & 7, evening only).
- **Friday, February 23:** School closed for parent conferences (grades K-5 & 7).
- **March 11–15:** School closed (University spring break).
- **Monday, March 18:** No Extended Day program (Falk hosting visiting accreditation committee).

The full academic calendar can be viewed [here](#).

New Mad Science Classes Offered during Extended Day



Two new [Mad Science of Pittsburgh](#) classes are being offered during the Extended Day program beginning this **Thursday, February 15**.

- **Science Surprise** is for grades K-1
- **Brixology** is for grades 2-5

Families can find additional information for these classes, and register, through the Extended Day group tab in your MyFalk parent portal. (After selecting "Extended Day" from the pulldown Group menu, click on "Topics" to view Mad Science and other class offerings.)

Welcome to Falk's New Primary Learning Specialist



Welcome to Maggie Pothier, Falk's new Primary learning specialist.

Maggie Pothier's teaching career began in Denver, Colorado where she worked as a special education teacher for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. She received her bachelor's degree in applied psychology and human development from Boston College and master's degree in curriculum and instruction from University of Colorado Denver. These experiences cultivated her passion for learner-centered education and teaching reading. She recently moved to Pittsburgh to live closer to family. She is excited to join the Falk School community as a K-2 Learning Specialist! Outside of school, Maggie loves trying new recipes, spending time outdoors, and reading a good book.

White Whale Book Fair on Monday, March 4



Falk is excited to once again host a book fair with [White Whale Bookstore](#) on **Monday, March 4**. Last year's sale raised over \$3,000.

Students will have a chance to visit the fair and purchase books, and the fair will remain open until **5 p.m.** to allow families to visit the fair.

The Book Fair will be held in the Falk Laboratory School library.

Books can be purchased using cash, credit cards, or through [Squareup](#), which is essentially an electronic gift card—details are below. State tax will be added to each purchase.

We recognize the dynamics of households, and if you would like to explore support for your family, please reach out to Nomi Marcus, Director of Administrative Operations (nomijoymarcus@pitt.edu).

If you choose to use Squareup, you can load any amount onto your child's account through this link: <https://squareup.com/gift/X97GQBGJPSQAC/order>.

- "Your details" should be "Guardian Name" + "guardian email"

- "Delivery details" should be "Student Name" + "events@whitewhalebookstore.com", NOT the your email address and NOT your child's email address
- White Whale will keep track of the cards and load up student accounts
- Please purchase gift cards by **Friday, March 1**, so that we have time to load them up over the weekend.
- All orders should have a personal note reiterating the student name, the grade, and their homeroom/advisory
- NOTE: we will not be able to refund any unspent money from these Squareup electronic gift cards. Unspent money will be donated to the Falk Library for developing the collection.

Dr. Sarada's State of the School Address



It was a pleasure to welcome members of the Falk community for the State of the School address this past Wednesday, January 31, and to connect with Falk families in person.

If you were unable to attend the address, you can now listen to an audio recording of the presentation and access Dr. Sarada's slides, along with a number of additional resources providing additional details on many of the topics she covered in her presentation.

[Visit this page for audio, slides, and more.](#)

Select a T-Shirt Size for Falk Field Day 2024

Deadline Extended to Wednesday, February 14

We are pleased to announce that Falk Field Day 2024 will take place on Friday, May 10. This is an exciting and unique community-wide event, during which students, faculty, and staff will be placed onto teams to take part in a daylong schedule of cooperative challenges, relays, hilarious team games, and much more, led by our eighth-grade students.

To help us prepare for a day of fun, we're asking families to select a t-shirt size for their child(ren).

The deadline to select your t-shirt size has been extended—lease complete the form below by Wednesday, February 14.

[Click here to fill out the form.](#)

Note: Due to the design of the t-shirts, the smallest size available is Youth Medium.

Sarris Candy Fundraiser



Just in time for the Easter and Passover holidays, eighth-graders are running another online Sarris Candy sale. Now you can purchase gifts and sweet treats and help Falk students have a memorable class trip to Cedar Point at the end of May.

To make a purchase and support Falk eighth-graders, visit this link

[Sarris Candy Online Fundraiser](#)

and be sure to use **Group ID# 10-4084.**

If you have any questions, please contact Eileen Coughlin at emc981@pitt.edu.

Mark Your Calendars: Tuesday, February 27 Is Pitt Day of Giving



On **Tuesday, February 27**, Falk will be participating in Pitt Day of Giving (PDoG), a university-wide fundraising initiative that provides critical financial support to schools and departments across the University of Pittsburgh.

Click on the image above or [visit this link](#) for a video by staff member Tim Doyle, in which he asks students about the value of giving.

We will provide regular updates on Falk's Day of Giving campaigns, which will include everything from scholarship funds to a continued campaign to raise funds to build and furnish a shade structure on Falk's second-story terrace.

If you'd like to help support Falk's Day of Giving efforts, consider becoming a social media ambassador. Pitt Day of Giving Ambassadors champion Falk's campaigns through social networks, selecting a fund they would like to personally promote. A team of dedicated PDoG staff will provide graphics and suggested posts to help

make the process easier. Most importantly, ambassadors have an opportunity to win additional prizes and challenge money for their selected funds.

To learn more and to sign up, visit <https://pittdayofgiving.com/pages/get-social-pdog>.

Learning Resources for Parents and Caregivers

Falk is proud to share with parents and caregivers a number of resources for learning, enrichment, and reflection.



"Talking to Youth About Heated Topics" Tuesday, February 13, from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Young people bear witness to challenging or traumatic events in current events, media, and our local communities. They are often trying to process thoughts, feelings, and reactions without our explicit help and guidance—thereby increasing their confusion and anxiety. We adults have a natural instinct to protect our children from harsh realities while also preparing them to navigate this complex world—is it possible to do both? What are ways to talk about identity, difference, and justice in age-appropriate ways? How do you reinforce your family's values without instilling disrespect for other perspectives? How do you coach them toward authentic and respectful dialogue across difference? Engage in these questions and more. There will be time for Q&A.

Led by Rosetta Lee, an outreach specialist at Seattle Girls' School, this webinar will focus on grade K-8 but will be applicable to all.

For additional details, please visit the [PAIS/ISACS Parent Series page](#). We will share registration information once it becomes available.

Recordings of Prior Presentations:

You can also access recordings of three programs offered as part of the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) and Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) Parents Series:

- ["A Tour Through Your Child's Brain: Development, Technology and Learning";](#)
- ["Voice Lessons for Parents & Caregivers";](#) and
- ["How to Raise a Self-Driven Child"](#)

Note that you must have a Zoom account in order to watch the recordings; you may be prompted to create an account. PAIS/ISACS recommends logging in to your Zoom account before clicking on the links above. These recordings will be available until June 30, 2024.

For more information on the PAIS-ISACS Parent Series, including upcoming events, click here:

<https://www.paispa.org/parent-series>

Community Bulletin Board

Support for Falk Alumnus

Falk alumnus Rick Hritz suffers from Autosomal Dominant Polycystic Kidney Disease (ADPKD) and is in need of a new kidney. His sister, Laura (a fellow Falk alum), has set up a GoFundMe page to support Rick's care and recovery.

Visit her [Facebook post](#) for more information and access the [GoFundMe page here](#).

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Falk's Community Bulletin Board is a space where we will share events and opportunities offered by members of the Falk community or those of special interest to the community. It is intended as another way to bring Falk families together.

Submit Community Bulletin Board events and listings to [Adam Reger](#), Falk's communications coordinator.

Playlab for Third-Graders



Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, Falk Laboratory School is extending Playlab to third-grade classes in addition to Kindergarten.

Third grade has been a learning experience, says Playlab instructor Tegan Ambrose.

"It's been particularly interesting to see how different third-graders' interests are from Kindergarteners," she says.

Extending Playlab to third grade has created an opportunity for Ambrose to support students' broader learning in ways that weren't possible when the class was focused solely on Kindergarteners.

"How can I help them in their complete journey at Falk?" Ambrose asks.

One answer to that question might lie in providing invitations (Ambrose also sometimes calls them "provocations") that complement the work students are doing in other classes. When students were creating zines and sewing in WonderLab, for example, Ambrose made those options available in Playlab. And as third-graders created "monster gardens" in art class, she offered space in Playlab to read books and poems about monsters, or to craft signs and trees to decorate their monster gardens.

[Read more on our website.](#)

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