E-news is an important tool to keep our parent community informed. Please call the main office at 425/837-5800 if you have any questions about our e-news.

August 29, 2014

Dear Newcastle Families,

Tuesday I finally got to meet with the staff team as a whole! I am very excited to work with such a great group of professionals who are so obviously committed to every child.

As part of our discussion we reviewed our policies and procedures and decided on some changes. I also changed quite a few of our documents to better reflect and communicate our approach to partnering with families and ensuring a safe and orderly school, focused on learning. Below are highlights of the changes, but I strongly encourage you to visit our new Policies and Procedures page and review the Parent Guide, Code of Conduct and Drop-Off/Pick-Up procedures that have been significantly revised as of 8/27.

If you have any feedback, we want to know your questions and your reflections so we can make sure we are reaching our goals of clarity and promoting positive partnerships. Feel free to email me any thoughts at mellishr@issaquah.wednet.edu.

Sincerely,

Rich Mellish

Important Dates to Remember

Aug 29th  Teacher assignments go live on Family Access beginning at 4:00 pm

Sept 2nd  Meet Your Teacher from 11:45-12:30. Remember to bring your school supplies
          Kindergarten parent orientation/curriculum night, 5:00 pm-6:00 pm
          PTSA Back to School Event following Meet Your Teacher (Principal, Rich Mellish, will be available to new families for a brief introduction to NC)

Sept 3rd  First day of school for grades 1st-5th
          Kindergarten screening

Sept 4th  First day of school for all kindergarten

Sept 16th Curriculum night, 1st-2nd grades: 5:30 pm-6:15 pm

Sept 18th Curriculum night, 3rd-5th grades: 5:30 pm-6:15 pm
          Picture day
What is New in Policies and Procedures
See http://connect.issaquah.wednet.edu/elementary/newcastle/about/policies-procedures/default.aspx

1. Our Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedure has changed! The main change is that we will use the entire drop-off/pick-up zone as designed. This includes the curbs marked in red and yellow. We hope this increases the flow of traffic, reduces back-ups and makes for a more efficient transition time. Please review the new procedure if you ever drop-off or pick-up your child by car.

2. Morning bells have changed:
   a. 9:00 Drop off begins, students arriving at the start of drop off will be asked to go to the undercover basketball courts.
   b. 9:05 Entry bell - students will learn from their teachers the class procedure for entering the building at 9:05 including their assigned entry door.
   c. 9:00-9:15 we ask all students arriving during the drop-off time to go to their assigned entry door (usually not the front door). This will disperse traffic and assist us in ensuring our best supervision.

3. Morning Recess. We have redistributed recess time. Students will have a 10 minute morning recess, 20 minute lunch, 15 minute lunch recess and 15 minute afternoon recess.

4. Lunch Changes. This year 1st grade students will have lunch and lunch recess with 3rd grade students, 2nd grade will pair with 4th grade and Kindergarten will have lunch and lunch recess with 5th grade buddies. Our hope is to encourage the older students to be lunch helpers with our sustainable schools “waste watchers” program and especially that our 5th graders can be excellent helpers with our Kindergarten lunch. On the first day of school, the admin team will be teaching 5th graders and kindergarteners safe recess practices when sharing the playground. Having experience with this configuration, I am excited about bringing this practice to Newcastle.

5. The School Handbook is now called the Parent Guide to Newcastle Elementary. Though this is mostly a title change and most of the information is similar to previous years, this reflects a renewed effort at a focus on mutually supportive partnership and communication. Think of the entire Policies and Procedures web page as our school handbook.

6. The Code of Conduct has been significantly revised to try to capture the very dynamic and complex process we will use to engage in a problem-solving first approach to social, emotional and behavioral issues at school. We believe in being proactive in promoting positive social interactions and that problems, even social conflict, are part of learning and growing as a child. Disciplinary actions or natural consequences may still be needed, but we will view conflict as learning opportunities as well.

ISD Free & Reduced Lunch Program
Please click on the following links to learn about this important program, 2014-2015 F&R and free reduced app 2014 2015.
ISD Non-Discrimination Statement

The Issaquah School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Parent/Volunteer and Employee/Applicant-Related Issues – contact Lisa Hechtman, Executive Director of Personnel Services; 565 NW Holly Street, Issaquah, WA 98027; 425-837-7060; hechtmanl@issaquah.wednet.edu

Student-Related Issues – contact Dennis Wright, Director of Career and Counseling; 565 NW Holly Street Issaquah, WA 98027; 425-837-7046; wrightd2@issaquah.wednet.edu