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.

October 1, 2015

Upcoming Events
Oct 2nd Site Council Meeting, 8:00 am
Oct 6th Chess Club, 3:40 pm
Oct 7th Chorus, 8:00 am
Great Kids @ Lunches
Lego Club, 1:30 pm
Oct 8th Vision & Hearing Screening

Lunchroom Changes and Reflections
Every year for the first month of school I hear from parents about, and watch closely, the students who don’t finish lunch. I eat lunch with students once per week at the student table to get close to what is happening. And each year we ask ourselves, “How can we streamline our routines to best use the limited time we have for lunch?”

A little context. With the elementary schedule we have 1 hour for lunch and recess throughout the day. To preserve other recess times we give a 20 minute lunch after lunch recess and 40 minutes of recess throughout the day. To extend lunch time we have to take away recess time. About 10-15 years ago there was a national movement to put recess before lunch. The concept is that being active builds appetite and leads to healthier eating.

Given this context I thought it was time to report what I see, hear, have done and am considering. First, I see that most students now know their lunch numbers (that really makes a difference in time spent in line) and realize they need to eat first, socialize second. As I sit with students, often with the last to go through their line, I find that those who get straight to eating finish their lunch without overly rushing. Yes, our slow eaters and social eaters are still struggling to finish their lunch, but the number of students finishing their food (meaning eating the main dish and whatever else they want to eat) appears to be steadily increasing as in past years.

To help expedite the line we are changing the sanitizer line, which was a bottle neck in the transition to lunch. Two changes are happening. One, we will have 3 different lines for the transition rather than what was essentially 1 line. This should significantly streamline the transition. Two, we will no longer be able to guarantee every child uses the sanitizer because we cannot monitor 3 lines. So please reinforce with your child the expectation that they use sanitizer before eating. Some have even put sanitizer in their child’s lunch box.
Finally, for the NEXT school year we will reconsider the recess/lunch schedule. Recess after lunch offers both more leeway for slower eaters to have more time and gives an incentive to finish lunch. There are a few other advantages to recess after lunch, including burning off some of that sugar they just ingested and easier logistics and supervision. But there were good reasons for our current schedule so we will consider this change carefully.

I want to thank Mr. Neugebauer and our creative EA team that is relentless in trying to improve our lunchroom. I also want to thank all the volunteers and parents who have taken an interest in our lunchroom. By continually seeking improvement we will promote healthy eating and a well-managed, positive lunch experience for all students.

Rich Mellish, Your Principal

**Vision and Hearing Screening**

Vision and hearing screening is on Thursday, October 8th. If your child wears glasses, please be sure that they bring their glasses to school on screening day. If you would like your child to be excluded from the screening, please send a note to your child’s teacher specifying if your child is to be excluded from all or part of the screening. Students failing the initial screening will be re-screened by the school nurse before referral notices are mailed home. The screening process usually takes at least several weeks to complete.

Thank you, Karen Herring, RN, School Nurse

**Parent Education**

Introduction to the American School System: Who Are We in Issaquah? Thursday, October 29th at 6:30 pm at Issaquah Valley Elementary School. District parents and staff will share information and answer questions. Free childcare and snacks provided. Interpretation available in Mandarin, Spanish and Korean. If you need interpretation for another language, please contact Rosann Rankin by October 15 at RankinR@issaquah.wednet.edu.