

Stonegate Elementary School

Sharks...Riding the Waves of Success



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Office of the Principal

August, 2010

Dear Stonegate Students and Families:

We are very excited about the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year! Throughout the summer, the staff has been working and planning for the upcoming school year. To ensure a great start for each child, we've spent time learning about our students, analyzing student performance data, and meeting with parents. As a result of our discussions, we will focus this year on continuing our acceleration efforts in reading and math, supporting students with special learning needs, and developing cultural competence and differentiation strategies as ways to better meet the learning styles of our diverse learning community. We will also be continuing our work to strengthen our existing writing program as we teach students the skills and processes used in drafting a variety of written pieces. In addition, we have met together to develop schedules, to review and update school policies and procedures, and to build professional relationships among the staff.

We have experienced a few staff changes this summer.

- It is with sadness that we say *goodbye* to Karla Lopez, 3rd grade teacher. Ms. Lopez will be getting a little closer to home as she teaches 5th grade at Washington Grove Elementary. She will be missed!
- We also say *farewell* to our friend and colleague, Shauna Jorandby. Mrs. Jorandby will be putting to use her new ESOL certification as she supports English Language Learners at Cannon Road Elementary and Colonel E. Brooke Lee Middle School. Her departure is a great loss for all of us. We wish her all the best.
- Thi Ha will *leave Kindergarten to join our third grade team*. She is looking forward to the challenge and excited to begin!
- Jenny Ficco will move from room 3 into room 1.

We would like to *welcome* the following new staff members to our school:

- As noted earlier, Nicole Simpson joins our staff from Cloverly Elementary. Mrs. Simpson was originally hired as a member for our 4th grade team, but will now serve as a third grade teacher. She previously taught third grade and is excited to continue her work here at Stonegate. We welcome Mrs. Simpson to our Stonegate family!
- We are excited to welcome *back* Elizabeth Summers. Mrs. Summers came to us from Farquhar Middle School last year to serve as a part-time math support teacher, and was subsequently transferred due to a loss in allocation. She returns this year as a *full-time* teacher joining our 4th grade team. We are thrilled to have her back on board!
- We are thrilled to have Erica Jackson as our new kindergarten teacher. Ms. Jackson comes to us from Montgomery Knolls Elementary and has a great love for kindergarten aged-students and a desire to build strong, positive relationships with students, staff, and parents.
- We also welcome Carly Ziegler as the newest teacher to our Learning for Independence program! Ms. Ziegler is a recent Masters graduate with rich experiences in supporting students who have severe cognitive disabilities. Her work with students in a variety of special education settings makes her a great match for our children and our school!

- We welcome Shykia Anderson as a new special education paraeducator, and Laura Liebling, as the psychologist assigned to our school.
- We are happy to have Piyanka Warnakulasuriya as our new Cafeteria Manager. Mrs. Warnakulasuriya comes with rich experiences and is excited about creating a warm and welcoming environment for students and staff to find nutritious meals!

Finally, we welcome Carla Glawe, our new Principal Intern. Mrs. Glawe was a former teacher at Stonegate ES, and most recently served as a Consulting Teacher and an Assistant Principal. Mrs. Glawe will serve a dual role as she supports Stonegate as our assistant principal and our intern. As an intern, Mrs. Glawe will be learning and refining her skills to become an elementary principal in MCPS. Part of her training will include a period of take-over within the building. During this time, I will leave the building to work on a project at Central Office, and Mrs. Glawe will assume the total responsibilities of the principalship. An acting assistant principal, usually a retired principal, will be assigned to support her during those couple of months. I will then return at the conclusion of the 8-9 week take-over period to continue serving as trainer and mentor. At the conclusion of the year, Mrs. Glawe will be eligible to apply for open principal positions within the county. Please find an enclosed welcome letter from Mrs. Glawe in your summer packet.

Included with this letter you will find several important documents. A parent information sheet is attached to provide you with a variety of important school information. Please read through it carefully and know that we are here to make a positive difference for every child through the cooperative efforts of home and school. Keep this informational sheet for reference throughout the 2010-2011 school year, and don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or me for more information. A current recommended supply list and calendar are also included. You will also find the updated bus list for arrival and dismissal. Finally, information on the computerized school lunch account system, SNAP, and the county's medication policy are attached as well.

Continued and consistent communication will occur through the Principal's Newsletters which are printed on yellow paper, produced every other week, and sent home typically on Fridays. If you do not receive a newsletter on a regular basis, please remind your child to bring one home. Extra copies are available in the school office. I also encourage you to become a member in our PTA. Your attendance at PTA meetings is an important part of learning about our school. PTA newsletters also come home once a month and detail important information regarding programming and events.

Parents and students are invited to attend our **Open House on Friday, August 27. Grades K-5** will visit from 2:00-3:00 pm. This will be an advance opportunity for your child to meet his/her teacher, other Stonegate staff members and students, and tour our facility. Our Open House is designed to reduce beginning of the year anxiety and to help your child prepare emotionally for the start of school and enjoy the excitement of a new start! *Our Open House is not like Back-To-School Night.* Teachers are still busy preparing and planning for the opening of school. It is not a time to conduct a conference with teachers. Instead, enjoy a walk through the school, a brief visit to your child's classrooms and casual conversation with staff about the coming year. Class lists will be posted on the front windows of the school on Thursday, August 26, at 4:00. I am happy that many of the children will want to see their teachers that day, but as there is little time for teachers to prepare classrooms, I am asking that there be no visitors in the building until the scheduled Open House on Friday.

Our Back-to-School Nights will be held in September. Back-to-School Night for parents of students in **kindergarten, first and second grade, and LFI classes, is scheduled for Tuesday, September 21, 2010.** Back-to-School Night for parents of students in **third, fourth, and fifth grade is scheduled for Wednesday, September 22, 2010.** Parents will have an opportunity to visit both the homeroom classrooms and the specialists. On both evenings, parents are encouraged to attend the general session from approximately 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. in the All-Purpose Room. During this time, staff members will

be introduced and a variety of school-based initiatives and data will be shared. After the general session meeting, parents will be invited to visit classrooms.

The first day of school for students is **Monday, August 30, from 8:50-3:05**. On the first day of school, students will proceed to their morning line-up locations. Our staff will be on duty to help children locate their line-up positions and answer questions. We want to ensure that students, parents, guardians, grandparents and all well-wishers get off to a terrific start. Parents of incoming Kindergarten students are invited to walk students to their classrooms and then to join us at the 'Kinder Café' in the Staff Lounge for doughnuts and juice from 8:45-9:15. This time will allow you to meet and greet other kindergarten families and to share this special day with others.

On behalf of the Stonegate Elementary School staff, we want to welcome you and your child to a brand new school year. Please know that we are committed to the education and success of each child and to establishing a strong partnership between home and school.

Respectfully,

Audra M. Fladung
Principal

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Attachments