

Dear Island Park Families,

Welcome back to school!

I hope you are enjoying a wonderful summer. I also hope you are relaxed, recharged and ready to start a new school year. I am so delighted that you are part of our amazing learning community. I welcome and value your positive energy and dedication to excellence in education, and I look forward to working with you and your children.

All signs point to another incredible and productive school year. Our skilled and devoted staff is already planning and preparing for your child(ren). Our enthusiastic office team is registering new families, ordering needed materials and updating student files. Our hard working and conscientious custodians have spent the entire summer thoroughly cleaning the facility. And, our much-appreciated PTA is gearing up to welcome families, provide volunteer opportunities, and offer other exciting events and programs. We are indeed a joyous and caring community with the common goals of nurturing responsible, caring students and promoting high-level learning.

New Staff

Each year brings positive change. This includes a few additions to our staff. We are delighted to welcome Bradley Budrow, our new health room nurse. Bradley brings a solid skill set and a gentle, sensitive approach to meeting children's health and emotional needs. We are fortunate to have health room para-pro Jane Dieckman return to help out on Thursdays. Welcome Bradley.

Facilities Update

If you drove past the school or utilized our outdoor playing spaces this summer, you may have noticed numerous maintenance and construction projects. First, we repainted our parking lot area to better delineate parking, drop-off and student walking spaces and lanes. I am especially pleased with the additional diagonal stripes painted across the front sidewalk that serve to remind students to stay away from the parking lot curb as cars pull up for drop off or pick up. Thank you for reminding your children to walk only portions of sidewalk that do not have stripes.

Last year's district-wide safety and security review generated a recommendation that additional surveillance cameras be added to our schools to better monitor ingress and regress. Installation of interior and exterior cameras was completed this summer enhancing our ability to record who is on our campus at all times.

To accommodate space and program needs in the main building, an additional portable was installed that will house two fourth grade classrooms. This year, all of our third and fourth grades will be in portables.

Finally, a construction project was completed that created a new changing room/bathroom facility for our Personalized Learning Program. The program has successfully grown to a point where it needed a larger space and its own specialized restroom to meet the mobility and instructional needs of children. We are so appreciative of the new accommodations.

Student Placement

A great deal of time, effort and thought has gone into the process of student placement for the 2013-2014 school year.

Careful consideration was given to input from staff and families as well as student learning styles. Classrooms have been balanced academically and socially. Our class lists are structured to provide equitable class sizes at each grade level. Moving students is difficult without causing imbalances and inequities.

Thank you so much for being positive with your child and helping him or her understand that it is impossible to place all students with a preferred best friend or teacher. ALL of our staff works hard to make school a positive experience for ALL students. Island Park is eagerly looking forward to enriching your child's life. Thank you for understanding that it can take a few weeks for a child to acclimate to a new grade, peer group and teacher.

Thank you to all who are helping prepare for the new school year. Your commitment to insuring that Island Park remains a celebrated and successful school is awe-inspiring. I eagerly look forward to greeting students and families again. It remains an honor and privilege to serve as your principal. Please stop by and say hello. Together, I know we will make this school year one of growth and achievement for all children.

Warmest Regards,



David Hoffman
Principal
Island Park Elementary