



West Parish Elementary

The Gloucester Public Schools

Our mission is for all students to be successful, engaged, life-long learners

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Dear New and Returning West Parish Families,

Welcome to a New Year at West Parish! I have heard so many kids and adults say they can't wait for school to start this year; I love the excitement for learning and growing! I am so looking forward to seeing West Parish students, new and returning next week.

New families, my hope is that you will quickly come to love and become involved in this school community. When asked, "What makes West Parish special?" invariably the answer is "The People." The entire West Parish staff (teachers, support staff, cafeteria and custodians) do SO many things above and beyond their job descriptions to support the students and each other. In addition we have a tremendously supportive and active parent community who seek out opportunities to enhance student learning and life experiences. The West Parish School community is a truly special place for both children and adults!

One of the exciting changes this year is that West Parish staff, students, and families will be involved in our PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) initiative. This summer a newly formed PBIS team of 12 staff members had three days of training where we developed a purpose statement that guides our school's approach and actions in teaching behavioral expectations and discipline. **"West Parish is a community of life-long learners. We respect and take care of ourselves, others, and the environment. We strive to do our best in all that we do."** We also developed behavioral expectations for 5 common areas of the school; Hallways, Bathrooms, Arrival, Cafeteria and Recess. During the first week of school, team members will explicitly teach the procedures and expectations of each area to students and staff. We are excited to enhance how we meet the social, behavioral, and emotional needs of our students as thoroughly as we do the academic areas. Often as adults, we think students know what is expected of them behaviorally and we can be guilty of jumping to discipline and consequences prior to ensuring that we have been clear in teaching what is expected. We will share more with you at our Curriculum Night (Parents Only) on September 26, 2019.

Thankfully this summer was not quite as eventful as the previous summers! I am truly thankful for Gloucester DPW, our custodians and Leaman Landscaping for making our school clean and beautiful inside and out! Teachers' have been in throughout the summer organizing their instructional spaces into warm, welcoming and safe environments for your children. A special thank you goes to Lois Lane, our school secretary and again our four custodians who have ensured our school looks fabulous and is ready for our students to arrive. As always, West Parish teachers were busy learning this summer and are ready to bring their learning and planning each day to meet the diverse learning needs of all of your children.

We have had a few staff changes this summer. Interview teams, made up of teachers and support staff, worked with me to identify new staff members who will help West Parish Students become well-rounded, confident learners who strive for and achieve academic excellence! I am pleased to share with you our new staff members:

Sarah Waitkus Gr. 3 Teacher
Teresa Leaman, Cafeteria

Marion Wolter, Music Teacher

Jennifer Johnson, Noon Supervisor

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will ease into the school year. Starting with a Popsicle Party Tuesday, Sept. 2nd from 3-4 PM, families may drop off their school supplies in the classroom on the way to the party in the Science Park. Half of the Kindergarten students come to school on September 5th and the other half will come on September 6th. This allows teachers to build relationships with each child on their first day and introduce students to the routines of school in a small group. All students attend school on September 9th! For any families who did not participate in the Kindergarten screening in May your child should be scheduled for a screening appointment on Wednesday, September 3rd at 9:15 or 10:15 AM. If you have questions please call the office on Tuesday (978) 281-9835.

Arrival and dismissal procedures have changed please see Dr. Safier's letter and the enclosed transportation letter from me for details. Having students take the bus to and from school is highly recommended. It is very important that you make every effort to have your child arrive at school before 8:50 as this is the time when we will be bringing students to their classrooms. **If you arrive at or later than 9:00 you will need to park and bring your child into the school building to sign them in.** Please note that there is no parking in the school parking lot during arrival and dismissal. (Please see the transportation letter for more details and Please share transportation information with any family member or adult dropping off or picking up your child.)

In conclusion, I would like to thank our Parent Teacher Organization for their work in supporting students and staff. The officers are as follows Rachel Refalo, President; Sally Bertolino, Vice President; LeeAnne Ciaramitaro, Treasurer and Stacey Pawson, Secretary. We have so many volunteers working with our students and teachers that were I to try and list them all I would definitely miss MANY, therefore thank you EACH for your work it makes West Parish the community we all love!

I am looking forward to a wonderful year, please contact me at any time with ideas, questions or concerns or just to introduce yourself!!

Warmly,
Dr. Telena Imel
Principal

PS. If you are in need of specific information, (Transportation, School Lunch, Before School Program, etc.) please check the district website or the "Back To School" page on the West Parish website.