

August 4, 2014

Dear Greenvale Park Staff,

With this letter I would like to officially begin our school year and welcome you once again to an exciting opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life.

Now starting my eighth year at Greenvale Park, I would also like to use this letter to tell you why I am so pleased to be part of this district. Northfield's schools are considered to be among the finest in the nation. They are routinely recognized for educational excellence. Such recognition doesn't occur by chance. It is the result of two things: motivated students and dedicated staff members. I believe that the real strength of the Northfield Public Schools lies in the collective talents of an exceptionally well-trained and dedicated teaching staff.

As a faculty/staff member, you have a very important job in an outstanding school system. While I publicly proclaim the classroom teacher's role in the successful schooling of children, anyone who has worked in a public school knows that parents, volunteers, office support staff, child nutrition staff, teacher assistants, custodians, and bus drivers play vitally important roles in creating a school environment that is safe, clean, and conducive to student learning. In Northfield, all jobs are important and each of us contributes directly to the welfare of our children. Please keep this in mind.

We will soon be gathering together from 7:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. on August 25, 2014 for our first staff meeting. ***We plan to have a pot luck breakfast so please plan on bringing a dish or drink of some sort to share with the staff. Call Donna Hall at 507-645-3501 to find out what we need.*** When you arrive you'll find new faces. Hourly employees can use Time Clock Plus for these two hours.

To assist you in finding your way around the rest of the Greenvale Park staff assignments, I am including a personnel roster as one of the on-line documents you will find on the district web page. On August 16, 2014, I will be mailing letters to parents regarding classroom placement with information on the Ready, Set, Go date of August 28th. Classroom teachers will also receive their class lists along with their Ready, Set, Go day schedules.

Something New Items for the Beginning of the Year:

1. *Anti-Bullying Training will be an online component with Infinitech.*
 - a. The 2014 MN Legislature passed significant changes to the laws governing bullying. One item included is that ALL school staff must complete training about bullying.
 - b. Northfield Public School District has partnered with Infinitec to provide online training for all staff. Infinitec provides an online 11 minute video followed by a short quiz. A participant must earn 80% on the quiz in order to complete this requirement.
 - c. On Tuesday, August 5, staff members will receive an email from Infinitec Web Support with user name and password for the Infinitec web site as well as detailed instructions for accessing the video and completing the training requirement. This training can be done at your convenience before or during workshop week. However, the training must be completed by 3:30 pm on Thursday, August 28.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. I'd be would be happy to help you.

2. The Devereux Students Strengths Assessment-Mini (DESSA-mini)

- a. On Ready-Set-Go! Day, Northfield Promise will ask all parents of children entering kindergarten through 5th grade will be asked to complete a short survey (DESSA Mini) to help us understand what our children's strengths are related to social and emotional skills. The survey should take about one minute to complete and will be available on an ipad or paper.
- b. Teachers will not be responsible for this survey. They need only to ask parents to meet with the folks from Northfield Promise out in the hallway.
- c. Northfield Promise is a community wide effort to ensure that all Northfield children achieve their full potential. One of the areas we want to learn more about is how to support children in developing their social and emotional skills.
- d. The DESSA Mini is a series of four, equivalent, 8-item behavior rating scales accompanied by an innovative Ongoing Progress Monitoring Form. The DESSA-mini can be used to screen for and monitor progress in the acquisition of social-emotional competencies. Like the DESSA, the DESSA-mini can be completed by teachers or staff at schools and child-serving agencies, including after-school, social service, and mental health programs.
- e. Information from the survey will be shared with your child's classroom teacher. Northfield Promise will only use survey data with identifying information removed and will only report on large groups of students (e.g. all 5th graders in Northfield). Northfield Promise staff/volunteers will be available to answer any questions you might have about the survey at Ready-Set-Go! Day.

I do hope to see all Greenvale Park Staff (teachers, educational assistants, custodial, office support staff, child nutrition, KidVentures) at our brunch/first staff meeting on August 25th, 2014!

David Craft, Principal
Greenvale Park