

"When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece." Ruskin

August 19, 2011

Dear Dry Creek Families,

Welcome to Dry Creek Elementary and the 2011-2012 school year! I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new school year and provide you with important back-to-school information. Class lists will be posted on the front door of the schoolhouse on **August 25th**. The first day of school is **September 1, 2011 for first through sixth grade!** Kindergarten students attend orientation with their parent/guardian by scheduled appointment only on September 1st and 2nd. Kindergarteners will not be riding the bus these two days for orientation. Please call Mrs. Edwards or Mrs. Bradford at 457-5050 to schedule your kindergarten orientation appointment if you have not done so already. This will be a great opportunity for kindergarteners to see their classroom and meet their teacher. It is also an important time to meet the teacher and begin our partnership to support your child's education optimally. Half-Day kindergarten class begins September 6 (after Labor Day observance). Our school day begins promptly at 7:45 am for first bell and ends at 2:05 pm daily, except Tuesday release at 1:35 pm. **Early Release begins the Tuesday on September 13th**. Please make sure that children arrive to school on time. Regular attendance is vital to school success!

There have been some **staffing changes** over the summer I want to keep you updated on. Beth Backus has accepted a half-time position with the district as a Professional Development Coordinator. She has been a huge support for our students over her 30+ years of teaching. She will continue to support children as she supports elementary staff for the district. Wyndi Cole will now be teaching fifth grade. She is so excited to be moving up to 5th grade from 4th grade with the same cohort of students she worked with last year (her class make up will not be the same as last year). Gunnar Thomason will be teaching 4th grade! He has been a beloved 3rd/5th/6th grade teacher at DC. 4th grade will be no different! Kendra Lomax was hired to be a teacher in Sequim. This means we have posted a second grade teaching position and look forward to finding another great quality staff member to join our team. Lots of changes, but we are thrilled for the new year! We have an incredible staff at DC! We are fortunate to have such an amazing staff educating our children. DC was **awarded** in May 2011 as one of the top 56 elementary schools in the state of Washington for rapid MSP improvement! Early data is looking great for DC again for 2011 MSP data. Our scores are looking like we are ahead of the district average in 9 out of 9 content areas! This speaks to our wonderful partnership in our learning community!

Daily Schedule:

Class Time

K 7:45-11:00 A.M./10:45-2:05 PM 10:30-10:45/11:05-11:15 PM recess

Grades 1-5 7:45-2:05*

Grade 6 7:45-2:05*

***Tuesday Early Dismissal**

All students in elementary school will be dismissed 30 minutes early on Tuesdays, **beginning September 13th**. Our students will all be dismissed at 1:35. Please plan alternative arrangements for Tuesdays if your child will be going to a different place than the usual dismissal location after school.

Morning Arrival

Children being dropped off should not arrive before 7:15 a.m. Students must be in supervised areas for student safety. Thanks for your assistance with this. Students should not be in the halls before the first bell. They may be in the library, café, or playground when supervisor is on duty. Students should not be hanging out in the front entry area without a parent. **If you drive your child to school, they should be dropped off next to the curb (behind the painted line). Please do not double park and drop your child off in the lane of traffic. If you need to walk your child in, please park in a designated parking spot and not at the curb. Please enter through the crosswalk. Students should not be dropped off in bus area unless they are on a school bus. Please drive slowly. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN. Thank you for complying with this.**

Morning Routine

Also, we ask you to please be respectful of teachers' preparation time before the first bell of school. Please check in the office to see if your child's teacher is available to meet or schedule an appointment to speak with them.

Breakfast

Breakfast is served daily before school. Students are welcome to eat breakfast at school on any given day. We also serve a late breakfast during morning recess. Elementary breakfast is \$1.00 and \$.00 for reduced cost.

Lunch

You may send money for meals to cover one meal or many meals. This money will be deposited in your child's account and is available for use between now and the end of the school year. Money may be deposited on any school day. This eliminates having to send money for milk or lunch each day. When sending your student with lunch money please put it in an envelope with your child's name, teacher's name and school on it. The money is collected in the kitchen. You may also make payment on the internet at www.portangelesschools.org for Sodexo if you choose.

Applications for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

Children need healthy meals to learn. To apply for free or reduced price meals, please fill out the application that will be sent home with your child on the first day of school. **THESE FORMS ARE VERY IMPORTANT! They also support our school funding!** Application forms must be received by **October 1, 2011**. The office is happy to assist you if you need the application or if you have any questions.

Lunch-\$1.90 Reduced-K-3rd grade \$.00 and 4th-6th \$.40

Afternoon Dismissal- For your student's safety!

Students who are picked up must wait with the adult supervisor in line just outside the front doors of the school. Parents or approved adults will come to the student and check with the supervising adult **outside (the foyer gets crowded when classes are trying to exit)**. This procedure ensures the safety of your child. Students are never to walk through the parking lot without an adult. Please help us with this important safety practice since our parking lot gets busy and smaller children are difficult to see. When you pick up your child, please do not double park or park in the lane of traffic. If you need to walk into the office, please park in a designated parking spot and not at the curb. Please drive slowly. Also students should NOT be picked up in the bus zone unless they are riding a school bus. THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CHILDREN. Thank you for complying with this safety request!

Walkers

Students who are walking home wait with the adult supervisor until the buses have left. They are then dismissed to walk home. Please instruct your child(ren) on safe walking procedures.

Change in Plans

Occasionally you will have a change in plans for going home. Please call the office before **1:00 pm** to let us know of the change. This gives us time to deliver the pass to your child and check on any changes in busing for you.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

We want ALL students to have excellent attendance and to arrive on time!

Help us achieve this goal.☺

MISS SCHOOL-YOU MISS OUT! We can't teach you if we can't reach you!

If your child is absent or late, please call the school office at 457-5050. Getting to school regularly and on time is very important for your child's learning. A good part of important instructional time is missed if your child is tardy. Student absences remain unexcused on their permanent attendance record until the office receives either a phone call or written note.

Excessive absences or tardies, even though excused, can generate letters and/or filings to truancy court. Please limit your child's absences whenever possible (even excused). **We encourage parents to schedule their child's appointments outside school hours when possible.** Thanks for your assistance and partnership in your child's learning through communication and consistency with attendance! Our building goal is **95% daily average** attendance (this includes excused absences). We also want to reduce our TARDIES! Please help us reach our goal!

Excused and Unexcused Absences - PASD Policy 3122

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Students are expected to attend all assigned classes each day. Teachers shall keep a record of absence and tardiness. The following are valid excuses for absences and tardiness. Missed work assignments and activities may be made up in the manner provided by the teacher.

1. Participation in school-approved activity. To be excused, this absence must be authorized by a staff member and the affected teacher must be notified prior to the absence unless it is clearly impossible to do so.

2. Absence caused by illness, health condition, family emergency, or religious purposes.

When possible, the parent or guardian is expected to notify the school office prior to the absence. If not explained by a call, the parent or guardian should send a signed note of explanation with the student upon his/her return to school. A parent or guardian may request that a student be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday.

3. Absence for parental or guardian-approved activities. This category of absence shall be counted as excused for purposes agreed upon by the principal and the parent or guardian.

4. Absence resulting from disciplinary actions or short-term suspension. As required by law, students who are removed from a class or classes as a disciplinary measure, or students who have been placed on short-term suspension, shall have the right to make up assignments or exams missed during the time they were denied entry to the classroom.

Unexcused Absences

Following each unexcused absence the school will make an attempt to call the parent or guardian of the student.

Tardiness

Arriving on time to each class is an expected behavior. Tardiness may result in school-based disciplinary action and potential referral to the juvenile court.

Tardiness Procedures and Regulations

Tardiness will be considered by the school authorities as very detrimental to the welfare of the offending individual and a serious offence against the school government. The school will

attempt to inform the parents or guardian after it is known that a student's tardiness is excessive. Elementary students are considered tardy five minutes after the first bell rings. A pattern of excessive tardiness will result in notification to parents or guardians, and possibly disciplinary action, or referral to juvenile court.

Becca Bill

As stated in RCW 28A.225.010 the State of Washington requires compulsory school attendance. Letters of concern recommending developing a plan to improve attendance will be sent after **five** absences.

After school daycare NEW!

We will be able to provide after school child care with the COMFORT AND COZY LEARNING CENTER C & C Kids' After school Program at DC. Call 360-457-6277! They will provide this service on site if we can get 10 children enrolled in the program! Don't delay, call C & C today to arrange care/gather more information. They are also looking for enough A.M. KINDERGARTEN students to do an afternoon program for K. There are also several other daycares in our community that may be able to serve your family needs.

You are invited to Dry Creek PTO meetings

We love our parents to be involved at Dry Creek! Our first PTO meeting is on September 13, 2011 at 6:30 pm. We hope to see you there! They are usually the third Tuesday of the month. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to stop by the office. We really need more parents involved with our PTO. **I am hoping to see you at least one PTO event this year!** Please come! (Please note that we will be doing our Little Caesar's Pizza fundraiser). Laura Levine is our PTO president!

School Supplies (SOME SUPPLIES ARE FREE!) NEW!

We have school supply lists at Wal Mart or the portangelesschools.org web site. Shirley also has some in the office. We have some backpacks available if needed from Costco.

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2011-12 school year and look forward to seeing you soon. We are so thrilled to see you and your children! We are going to have a great year! Now is a great time to start the school sleeping routine! Another great idea is to have your child start selecting clothes the night before. It helps make the morning rush easier! We truly respect and value our partnership in your child's education. **MSP (formerly known as WASL) results** will be sent home shortly after school starts. We look forward to conversations with you about the data for fourth-sixth graders and how we can provide support for each child. We succeed together! See you on **September 1, 2011 for grades 1-6** for the first day of school! Kindergarten parents remember to schedule your parent/child orientation appointment for September 1st or 2nd. **HALF day kindergarten class begins September 6, 2011. P.S. If you know anyone that has not registered for DC yet, please urge them to enroll quickly for instructional planning. It just may mean we get another teacher at DC!**

Enjoy the remaining days of summer vacation. Here's to another award-winning year at DC...

Warmly,

Kate Wenzl, Ed.M.
Principal