

# Oradell Public School

## 2016-2017: *The Year of the Butterfly*

AUGUST 2016



*To exist is to change. To change is to grow. To grow is to become the butterfly you were always meant to be.*

### Principal's Welcome

Last year, I encouraged each of us as individuals and as a community to reflect on our journey, to celebrate our accomplishments and to dream. This summer, as I watched Olympians run, jump and tumble their way to the medal stand, I realized that while dreams are important, the actions we take to achieve our dreams are even more important.

Making decisions about what we want to achieve and creating a plan for achieving our goals will be a focus of the 2016-2017 school year. We will talk not just about dreams but also about actions. We will learn to see change and challenge as a natural part of the learning process.

Without change and without discomfort, we cannot grow. We need to model working through discomfort for our children. We need to teach them

it is okay to not succeed at first. We need to talk about that when they feel butterflies in their stomachs, it does not mean to give up. It means to keep going. Embracing change and persevering through discomfort is what creates strong individuals and a strong community. It creates grit.

We often hear that we are preparing students for a world we cannot envision. We are preparing them for jobs that may not even exist today. It is for this reason that important 21<sup>st</sup> century skills be woven into our classrooms, our homes and our lives. Skills such as problem solving, collaboration and communication are just as important as reading, writing and math.

You will hear quite a bit this year about developing socially and emotionally competent

students --- students who have the skills to tackle any challenge. Students who see challenge as a chance to grow.

As a first step, I encourage each of us to have conversations with our children as the first day of school nears. Ask them to identify their short-term and long-term goals. What do they want to accomplish the first week of school? The first month of school? This year? Most importantly, help them create a plan of action for achieving their goals. As time passes, assess how the plan is going and talk about revisions. What needs to change? We can't just celebrate the accomplishment of a goal. We also need to recognize the journey. Let's learn to embrace change and develop children who have the skills to fly!

--- Megan Bozios

**Please send your child to school with one pair of "ear buds" to be used with classroom computers. Attach a piece of tape to the cord with your child's name and place in a Ziploc bag.**

**A new phone system has been installed at OPS. While the main line remains the same, all extensions have been changed.**

### PREPARING FOR SEPTEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> . . .

Please complete the school information forms listed below in paper form. Forms can be found on *our* school website at [www.oradellschool.org](http://www.oradellschool.org).

\*Student Emergency Card    \*Annual Health Update

The following forms need to be completed in the parent portal:

\* Dismissal Form                      \*Media Release

\*Student Handbook Sign-Off Form

## Meet the Newest Members of the OPS Community . . .

As always, a new school year brings new faces and names to our OPS family. We are excited to announce that OPS has hired an elementary school guidance counselor. Ms. Melanie Bieber joins us in that role. Ms. Bieber will work with teachers and administration to design and implement programs that will assist in addressing students' social and emotional development, including social skills groups, classroom lessons and other whole school initiatives.

We also have several new teachers joining us on staff for part or all of the school year. Ms. Karen Marron will be teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade after teaching that same grade level within the Wyckoff and Ridgewood public school systems. Ms. Taylor Stecher is a familiar face at OPS as she served as a leave replacement and substitute teacher last year. This year, she will be at OPS through December, filling in for Ms. Cristofol. Lenna Kesenci is also a familiar face to many. Ms. Kesenci is not only a former OPS aide and substitute teacher, she is also a proud OPS graduate. Ms. Kesenci will be replacing Ms. Amoroso while she is on leave. Also on leave for the beginning of the year is Ms. Kruczek,

and we are very excited to welcome Ms. Courtney Sweet to OPS as she fills this position.

You may also notice several new names on the OPS website as several OPS teachers will be going by a different name this year after their recent nuptials. Ms. Hughes is now Ms. McGrath. Ms. Pestrichella will now be known by her students as Ms. Velardi, and Ms. Rudolph will be going by Ms. Garrido.

We are so excited to welcome these new members, as well as our new Instructional and Lunch Aides, to our OPS family.

## Developing Responsibility, Preserving the Learning Environment and Creating a Safe Community

Please remember that we will not call the classroom if you drop an item off for your child. Additionally, children should not be using their personal cell phones during the school day, especially to call home for a forgotten item. Every classroom has a phone. If a teacher believes it is important to allow a child to call home, they can do so from the classroom. Children who use their phone during the school day, without permission, will have their phone held by an adult. They will have it returned at the end of the school day.

## AN IMPORTANT CHANGE

As you know, balance is the key to most situations. Therefore, we will be instituting a new protocol at OPS to create a balance where our students with severe peanut and tree nut allergies can feel safe, and we can all also help students to develop routines for when they are around dangerous allergens.

**All classrooms in grades 1-6 will be peanut and tree nut free environments.** Nuts will continue to be allowed in the lunchroom, and we will continue to utilize the safety protocols in the MPR. Please refrain from sending your child with a morning snack that has peanut or tree nuts in it. They will not be allowed to eat that snack in the classroom.

## OPS NEWS

- Our 5<sup>th</sup> graders will be one-to-one with laptops during the school day.
- Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders will continue to be one-to-one with laptops; however, they will be working with new computers.
- Our teachers have also each been provided with a laptop to help them integrate technology more seamlessly into the classroom.
- Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders have a brand new science curriculum and resource this year aligned to the new state standards.
- We will be more comfortable in our classrooms this winter as new unit ventilators have been installed in many of our classrooms.

## REMINDERS

- We utilize an A-F schedule. The letter is always on the front page of the website, and your child's teacher will inform you of the special area class they go to each day.
- Our Kindergarten students will have half days the first week of school so individual student data can be gathered during screening appointments.
- Don't forget to sign up for the PTA at [oradellpta.org](http://oradellpta.org). It is a great way to stay informed.