

# WEST RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*"Growing and Learning Together"*



August 18, 2017

Dear Kindergarten Parents,

As you are happily anticipating your child's first day of kindergarten, the staff and I are eager to welcome your child to West Ridge. This past spring our teachers were already making plans to make sure that your child will have a wonderful year. West Ridge teachers have planned many exciting activities for students, including field trips, assemblies, concerts, and many special events as appropriate to meet your children's developmental and learning needs in kindergarten. Your involvement in many of these events is welcomed. Our goal at West Ridge is to provide a rich learning environment where children are able to reach their fullest potential. We focus on kindness, courtesy, manners, and respect throughout the school year, which helps everyone become part of our "West Ridge Family". We also have many school-wide activities, which involve all of the children in literacy and math activities.

We look forward to welcoming you and your kindergarten child to West Ridge with an **Ice Cream Social on Friday, September 1, 2017 from 12:30 until 1:00**. Please come to your child's classroom for a short tour of the room and then we will all move outside to our courtyard for ice cream. Bring your child's supplies with you to drop off on September 1<sup>st</sup>, so your child does not have to carry them in on the first day of school. It will be great to get to know everyone!

**\*\*\*\* Important! During the first two days of school, the kindergarten schedule will be different from the rest of the school. The kindergarten schedule for the first two days is:**

- **Tuesday, September 5, 2017 – 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**
- **Wednesday, September 6, 2017 – 8:35 AM – 2:00 PM**

On **Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>**, kindergarten student **arrival** is at **9:00 AM**, after the students in grades 1-6 have settled into their classrooms. Please bring your child to the Multi-Purpose Room. I will be there with the kindergarten teachers to greet you and your child. Once the group is assembled, your child's kindergarten teacher will walk all of the kindergarten children to their classrooms. I will remain in the Multi-Purpose Room for any questions that you may have about kindergarten or about West Ridge. **Dismissal on September 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>**, will be at **2:00 PM**, from the kindergarten-gated courtyard. Each day at dismissal during the entire school year, the kindergarten teachers will walk the children out to this side gate by the kindergarten classroom. You must pick up your child directly from the kindergarten teacher. **Beginning on Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, dismissal time will be at 3:20 PM, which is the same as the entire school.**

Starting on **Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>**, and for the remainder of the school year, kindergarten students who arrive **before 8:30** will always begin their day in the Multi-Purpose Room. There will be teacher supervision in the Multi-Purpose Room starting at 8:15 every day. The outside doors of the Multi-Purpose Room will be open between 8:15 and 8:30. We ask that you park your car in the lot and walk your kindergartener to that door to drop him/her off. Do not park or stop in the drop-off circle if you are getting out of the car to help your child. If you have an older child in the school, he or she may walk the kindergartener to the Multi-Purpose Room from car drop-off. A staff member will pick up kindergarten students in the Multi-Purpose Room at 8:30 to walk them to the kindergarten classrooms. Kindergarten students who arrive after 8:30 will enter through the main door and walk down to their classroom. At that time, there is both adult supervision and safety patrol supervision in the hallway to help the kindergarten children get to their classrooms. Kindergarten students will **not** be entering through the primary hall entrance to school.

## A few important items to note for the beginning of the school year are:

- While it may be difficult for you, it is important for your child to know that you are confident in his/her ability to be independent and successful in kindergarten. Please give your child a kiss and a pat on the head and send him/her off to school with confidence. If you openly worry, your child will also worry. Please be assured that we understand kindergarten children and we will cherish your child each and every day of the year. When you drop your child off the first few days of school, please do not linger outside of the drop off area. We will contact you immediately if your child has difficulty those first few days of school.
- Lunch/Recess will be from 11:30-12:25 every day. Students often go outside for recess, so please dress your child accordingly. Kindergarteners will have lunch in their classrooms until spring when they will transition to eating in the Multi-Purpose room with the other students.
- If your child is ill and is not able to attend school, please call **201-573-6000 ext. 3444** and leave a message on the voicemail. Please remember to send an absence note (required by state law) when your child returns to school. Mrs. Bianchi is our school nurse and she will be able to help you with any questions that you may have regarding your child's absences. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time. Lateness will significantly affect your child's success in school and often makes a child feel uncomfortable when he or she walks into their classroom late. Learning to be on time for school begins in kindergarten.
- Safety and security are very important to all of us, therefore when entering the building; you must always sign in the front office. You will find the front door to the lobby locked as well as the office door. There is a bell to press at each location.
- Parking is at a premium and numbered spaces are assigned to teachers and staff members. If one of the numbered parking spaces looks as if it is available, please do not assume that a teacher will not be using it during the day or even in the next few minutes. Some staff members have varied working hours and other staff members travel from building to building and need to have a parking space available to them because their schedules are often tight. **Additionally, please do not park (or stop) in the front drop-off circle in front of school between 8:10 and 8:50.** This area is used for student drop off and it must be clear of all cars so that traffic is able to flow smoothly in front of the building. We will not be able to move approximately 340 children into school in a timely manner if this area is blocked. Please do not take offense if you are asked to move. Keeping this space clear of parked cars is a traditional expectation of all West Ridge parents and staff members. Please park in the parking lot if you plan on walking your child into school. As mentioned previously, kindergarten children are often not ready for "drop off" and will need to be walked to the Multi-Purpose Room, therefore; the parking lot is your best option.
- **Picture Day** is September 11<sup>th</sup>. The first **PTO meeting is Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**, and it begins for "Newcomers" at 6:30. "**Back to School Night**" is **Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>**. We look forward to seeing you at these events.

West Ridge is a close-knit school community built on a shared vision of learning and love for the students. I am often in classrooms visiting and observing, as well as reading to kindergarten classes. I am excited about getting to know your child and learn about his/her abilities and interests so that we will be able to build a special bond together through the year. I look forward to seeing both you and your child very soon and working with you through the 2017-2018 school year! **Please contact me at [christinemccaffery@parkridge.k12.nj.us](mailto:christinemccaffery@parkridge.k12.nj.us) or at 201-573-6000 ext. 3000** if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Christine McCaffery  
Principal

