



September 6, 2016

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Link Letter

Principally Speaking

Welcome to our first day and week of school. Whether you are a new family, or have been with us before, I hope you feel the excitement of a brand new school year and being in community again. We have lots of great adventures and growth ahead of all of us. As Kid President would say, "Make this year awesome!" (<https://youtu.be/GQOcEDD5hR8>)

New Team Members

We have a couple new team members joining or re-joining us. Kristina Peterson will be re-joining us, serving as a Cafeteria Server after previously joining us in Discovery Care. Carolyn Thompson will be joining us as an Interventionist. Please welcome these new team members when you see them!

Don't Forget - Early Dismissal Wednesdays!

Every Wednesday school dismisses early (earlier than last year as well) at 1:10 pm. This gives our staff time to collaborate, and better support all students.

Afternoon Meeting

Our Afternoon Meetings continue on Fridays this year. They are a great opportunity to join in community. We also sometimes have guest speakers, presentations by students, and celebrate birthdays. Parents are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you Fridays during the school year, starting this week. Join us in the gym, 3:05-3:15 pm.

New Pick Up and Drop Off Procedures

Mrs. Rachel made a great video (<https://youtu.be/i9qDL6XE3ml>) to help everyone learn our new pick up and drop off procedures. The process will be a learning opportunity for all of us, and may need some tweaks during the year. It will also give us a great chance to practice what we ask of everyone in our community, "Be Kind!" Please remember to practice kindness in and out of school, all year long.

Healthy Habits

For the health of everyone in our school community, please remind your children about healthy habits. This includes things like when and how to wash their hands, and sneezing/coughing into the crook of one's elbow. It also includes avoiding head to head contact. This helps prevent head lice. If you have any questions about healthy habits or how to teach them to your children, be sure to reach out to us.

Explore Kenai Fjords, Alaska USA!

Why not cool off this week with our national parks! Rappel into a crevasse, kayak through icebergs, and watch a glacier recede. Explore the Kenai Fjords, Alaska USA!

<https://artsandculture.withgoogle.com/en-us/national-parks-service/kenai-fjords/exit-glacier-tour>

Here's to an awesome year!

John Robinson, Principal/Executive Director/Superintendent
robinsonj@grcdc.org

DON'T FORGET!

**Every Wednesday school dismisses at 1:10
Starting this Wednesday, September 7
Arrival 8:00 AM—Dismissal 1:10 PM**

Please arrange for your child to **arrive at school between 7:45—8:00 am.** Please sign your child in at the office if arrival is after 8:05 am.
Dismissal is 3:15 pm M, T, Th, F and 1:10 pm on Wednesdays

Important Year Start Info

School Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:00 AM-3:15 PM
Wednesday: 8:00 AM—1:10 PM

Building Entrance

To gain entry to the school building during the day, please ring the doorbell on the door off Lafayette Ave.

Breakfast

Breakfast starts at 7:30 am in the Dining Room. Please walk your students into the Dining Room in the morning. The students will stay in the Dining Room until 7:50 AM. At 7:50 AM, the students will be released to the playground for classroom line up. Parents are welcome to stay in the Dining Room with their student(s).

Arrival

Students may arrive starting at 7:45 am. The teachers will be on the playground starting at 7:50 AM. The students will line up by class and the teachers will lead the children to the classrooms. If you arrive after 8:05 AM, please sign your child in at the office and accompany them to the classroom. After 8:05 am, a student is marked tardy in the attendance record. **With the exception of the breakfast students, no student should be on campus with out an adult before 7:45 AM.**

Pick Up

The teachers will bring the students outside to the pick up line and will stand in a designated spot on Cass Ave. Any person who is picking up a student needs to check out with the teacher. A student will only be released to a person who is listed on the Pick Up Authorization Form. If you did not get this form during Orientation, please pick up a form at the office.

School Pictures

Picture day is Thursday, October 6. All students will be photographed for school records. You may also purchase pictures. We will send pricing information home soon.

E-Link

The E-Link is the electronic version of the weekly Link Letter that is sent home on the first day of the week. In an effort to conserve paper and to communicate efficiently, we will send the E-Link to families that have provided us with an email address.

If you want to be added to the E-Link list, please email Mrs. Rachel : harthrac@grcdc.org

We will send a paper Link Letter home to everyone for a couple of weeks, just to make sure everyone is in the loop. If you have questions, please contact Mrs. Rachel.

Calendar

The calendar also available at grcdc.org

9/7	Early Release, 1:10 Dismissal
9/12	GRCDC Board Meeting, 6:00—8:00 PM
9/13	Family Team Meeting, 8:00 am
9/20	Discovery C & D Parent Info Night, 5:30-6:30 PM
9/21	Discovery A & B Parent Info Night, 5:00—6:00 PM
9/27	Discovery E & F Parent Info Night, 5:30—6:30 PM
10/6	School Picture Day

The Philosophy by Sarah Cooper

Welcome to the 2016-17 school year! The joys of the new year are everywhere: Seeing an old friend, new school supplies, meeting a new teacher, stepping foot in a new Discovery and parents connecting over coffee. For new and returning families alike, the first days of school offer opportunities to reconnect and form new relationships.

As we join together this year, consider the following:

“Our goal is to create an amiable school that is a school that is active, inventive, livable, documentable, and communicative. Our aim is to make a school that is a place of research, learning, revisiting, reconsideration and reflection. We strive to create an amiable school where children, teachers and families feel a sense of well-being; therefore, the organization of the schools—contents, functions, procedures, motivations and interests—is designed to bring together the three central protagonists—children, teachers and parents – and to intensify the interrelationships among them.” -Loris Malaguzzi, the founder and former director of the Department of Early Education in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Malaguzzi articulates the primary goals of the Reggio Emilia approach and outlines priorities to drive decision making in our context. The Reggio Emilia approach, often referred to as, “Reggio,” originated in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

After World War II, the philosophy was founded as a community response to educating infant through preschool age children in northern Italy. Rather than copy the Italians, we consider ourselves a Reggio inspired school because our age group, demographics, politics, funding and location are all different. In 2000, Grand Rapids educators, community members and families designed the GR CDC to honor the Reggio Emilia principles while satisfying all state and federal requirements of American public schools. The negotiation between these two worlds is continually evolving, requires our constant reflection and adjustment to systems. It is the innovative work of all children, families and staff. Your theories, questions and observations of our school can inform how we learn and collaborate to create a culture that supports families and educational reform in our community.

I am very fortunate to be the pedagoga (ped-a-go-gee-sta), a role intended to keep the philosophy in the forefront of instruction, staff development, program decisions and community outreach. The pedagoga upholds the mission and vision of the school while connecting the parts of the system. In the daily life of the school, I observe in classrooms, reflect with teachers and collaborate in meetings with the Principal, Family Team and the Board of Directors. I partner with the Principal, Mr. Robinson to help lead the school and manage the work related to instruction.

Pedagoga goals include strengthened teaching practices, increased student achievement for ALL children and deeper understandings of the Reggio Emilia approach. Our dedicated teachers are working as innovators in the field of education and my job is to help identify instructional program goals, offer individualized support, collaborative reflection, and school wide instructional planning and teacher evaluations. If you have questions about curriculum and instruction, please start with your child’s teacher, but know that I am available to join the conversation too!

I will use this column, Family Team meetings and Board meetings to communicate how the GR CDC marries the K-5 public school requirements and the Reggio Emilia principles. But, my job will function better with your feedback, questions, and opportunities to discuss our work together.

I am eager to connect with you!

Sarah Cooper coopesar@grcdc.org

Grand Rapids Nutrition Center

The full menu is available on our website:

childdiscoverycenter.org/be-connected/link-letters/

Breakfast (\$1.50):	Lunch (\$2.75):
T— Cereal	Cheesy chicken quesadilla
W— Turkey bacon & egg	Chicken nuggets
Th— Scrambled egg, muffin	Cinnamon toast, potatoes
F— Egg, cheese, sausage slider	Chicken fajita
Milk: \$0.50	

Breakfast time: 7:30AM—7:50 AM

Discovery A & B

Lunch 11:55 AM—12:15 PM Recess 12:15—12:40 PM

Discovery C & D

Lunch 10:55 AM—11:15 AM Recess 11:15—11:40 AM

Discovery E & F

Lunch 11:25 AM—11:45 AM Recess 11:45 AM—12:10 PM

School Meals Info

Please see below for the answers to most of your school meals questions. Please be assured, we will not let a child go hungry! Each classroom takes the lunch counts in the morning so if you want your child to have a school lunch, please make sure your child tells their teacher.

Q: Where do I apply for free or reduced price school meals?

A: Go to grss.mealapp.org

Q: When will families be informed if they qualify for free or reduced school meals?

A: Families will mailed letters at the end of this week.

Q: What is my student’s ID number?

A: For returning students, check your Orientation paperwork for your students number or call the school office (459-0330) We are still waiting to get numbers for our new students.

Q: When will the online payment system be active for our students?

A: The website is mypaymentsplus.com It is ready for returning students with a student ID. First you will register for a new account. You will choose “Grand Rapids Shared Services”, enter your student’s ID, and the student’s last name. Your student’s name should appear at the bottom. Some students are labeled as inactive, and that is OK. Please click on “next” to continue setting up your account. If you have trouble, please call Steve Slabbekoorn at GR Food Service: 819-2135. New families, we will let you know when this is ready for you.

Q: What do I do if I made an error on my online school meals application?

A: You may resubmit a meal application any time you have an income change (including making an error).

Q: What should I do if I had trouble with the online school meals application?

A: Please call Steve Slabbekoorn at GR Food Service: 819-2135.

Q: I think my child qualifies for free or reduced meals what do I do?

A: If you do the application TODAY, you do not need to send money to school. We will feed all students. If you end up not qualifying for free or reduced school meals, your child will have a balance due. Unfortunately, GR Food Service will not refund money paid for students who end up qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

Also, if you are sending cash or check to the school to pay for lunches until the online system is ready, please make sure your child’s name is attached to your cash or check. The school can not give change. Any money you pay for lunch will be a credit on your student’s lunch account.

Please arrange for your child to arrive at school between 7:45 - 8:00 a.m. Please sign your child in at the office if arrival is after 8:05 am. Dismissal is 3:15 pm M, T, Th, F and 1:10 pm on Wednesdays