

August 3, 2009

Before you do anything else this summer, please sign up for the PTO newsletter and the District newsletter at laurelpto.org and mpcsd.org respectively. These newsletters are for communications - we depend on them to release pertinent information and also to reduce the amount of paper we consume.

Dear Laurel Families,

I am thrilled to have the honor of stepping into the Principal role at Laurel School. I have extensive and varied experiences in elementary education, all of which have well prepared me to be Laurel School's instructional leader. I taught in first and second grades for eight years, was a summer school principal for four summers, was Laurel's Assistant Principal for three years, and tackled numerous special projects for the Menlo Park City School District.

The beginning of school is quickly approaching and we are working to prepare Laurel to behold one fantastic year for your children (and you!). One change you will quickly notice is the lack of eight portable classrooms and the portable bathroom. Construction crews are behind the scenes building a new five-classroom pod for the 2010-11 third graders and three additional classrooms intended for art, science, music and a mini-multi, plus a new kitchen. Another exciting transition for Laurel is the launch of two Spanish Immersion kindergartens. We welcome Benjamin Velasco and Angela Vereau to our teaching team. Benjamin and Angela are experienced in immersion programs and using strategies to enhance second language acquisition. We are very fortunate to have them join our teaching team. Also, Judy Fairbrother returns to Laurel as a first grade teacher. Judy previously worked as a reading specialist here at Laurel, and before that as a classroom teacher. She brings her expertise around reading and literacy to the first grade team.

You will receive communications from me bi-weekly through the PTO newsletter and additional emails as needed. Every month I will hold "Principal Chats," during which we will discuss current issues in an open format. Throughout the year, I will maintain an open-door policy for you to ask questions, and offer ideas and suggestions. Collaborative leadership is very important to me, so please make an appointment to see me if you'd like to chat.

Your children will also quickly get to know me because I will be in the classrooms and on the yards often. Your children will receive praise from me as they **work hard**, are **responsible** and **respectful**, and show evidence of **learning**. Because this is a financially tight year, we will focus much staff development on teachers learning from teachers at Laurel and local schools. I believe our staff is vastly talented, so bringing learning to a local level is truly a fortunate byproduct of the financial situation. After school on early release Thursdays, teachers will focus on sharing best instructional practices and how to differentiate instruction so all students successfully achieve high academic standards.

Class lists will be posted on Friday, August 21st, at 4:00 pm in the office window. Each grade level will hold a brief "**meet and greet**" on **Monday, August 24th** so your child can meet his/her teacher and (re)familiarize him/herself with Laurel.

I look forward to a wildly successful year and am so delighted your families will be part of it!

Kind regards,

Linda Creighton
Laurel School Principal
lcreighton@mpcsd.org

Grade	Start Time	M, T, W, F End Time	Thursday End Time
K – First Session	8:25	12:25	1:40
K – Second Session	10:20 (Thurs.: 8:25)	2:55	1:40
K Immersion, 1, 2	8:25	2:55	1:40

Laurel School Teaching Staff 2009-2010

Kindergarten

B1 Maribeth Andolina
B2 Brynn Cahill
B3 Angela Vereau
B4 Christen Snyder
B5 Kristen Foley
C4 Benjamin Velasco

First Grade

C1 Whitney Argyres
C2 Mia Henry
C3 Judy Fairbrother
C5 Courtney Shackleton
F3 Stacei Santana

Second Grade

C1 Priscilla Seely
C2 Steffany Cressey
C3 Jeriann Hirsch and Andi Dehne
C4 Sandra Horwitz
C5 Andrea Mazzoncini
F1 Ruth Peterson
F2 Sue Booth
F5 Emily Smith (formerly Emily Mathews)

Support Teachers

Bets McKnight, Reading Specialist
Claire Dikas, Resource and EL Teacher
Margie Rubin, Inclusion Teacher
Dawn Edgren, Speech and Language Teacher
Robyn Watts, Counselor
Lisa Walton, School Psychologist
Brie Weinand, Occupational Therapist

Specialist Teachers

Library Gail Bradley, Librarian
F4 Anna Herzlinger, Art
F4 Stephanie Noon, Art
Multi Amy Gee, P.E.
Multi John Ashfield, Music, 1-2
Multi Bob Crabb, Music, Kindergarten
Mary Beckstrom PTO Sponsored Music, K-2