August 5, 2019

Dear Middlefork Parent:

Sixty years ago this month, the Village of Northfield, Illinois, population 4,000, anxiously awaited the opening of its newest jewel, Middlefork Primary School. The year was 1959. President Dwight D. Eisenhower declared Alaska and Hawaii our 49\textsuperscript{th} and 50\textsuperscript{th} states, LifeSavers cost 5¢ a roll, the first Barbie dolls appeared in stores, Tarzan, the Ape Man debuted in movie theaters, and 90\% of American households were watching Lassie, Leave it to Beaver, and Dennis the Menace on their own home television sets. In that era, 245 kindergarten, first and second graders walked through the doors of Middlefork School for the first time. Six decades later, on August 28, 2019, Middlefork School will once again be alive with the giggles, grins, and bright eyes of Northfield’s youngest students, and while it’s not an entirely new building, there are many exciting renovations and upgrades to see! From our new front doors and security enhanced entrance, to new floors, lighting, small group instructional spaces, and a totally reimagined 21\textsuperscript{st} century Learning Center, we are poised to educate the hearts and minds of our primary grade students for another sixty years!

\textbf{Back-to-School Information Packet - Please Review!}

All of the information you need for a smooth start to the new school year can be found in the Middlefork School Information Packet, which is posted on the Middlefork News page \url{https://sunsetridge29.org/schools/middlefork_school__k-3__} and under the PARENTS tab of the District website \url{https://sunsetridge29.org/parents}. Please review this critical information regarding school schedules, student drop-off and pick-up, food and allergy practices, safety and security measures, student activities, bicycle riding, before/after school care options, and much more.

\textbf{School Hours, Schedule, In-Take Conferences}

The first day of school is a full day for all but our kindergarten students. Kindergartners attend for two hours on the first day (8:30-10:30) and a parent or caregiver is invited to stay at school for a reception and presentation during that time. A letter from the kindergarten teachers explaining the first day’s proceedings will be mailed to homes in mid-late August. It will also explain the timing and procedure to sign up for an in-take conference with the classroom teacher. Our kindergarten team looks forward to hearing more about your child from you during this meeting. With the first day under their belts, the kindergartners' schedule follows the gradual extension from three to four to five hours, August 29 through October 7.
The hours also vary a bit for first graders during the initial days of school. As they acclimate to the longer school day, we take the opportunity to schedule parent-teacher in-take conferences for them as well. This affords parents some 1:1 time with the teacher to share pertinent information about their children. In other words, parents talk and we listen!

**Kindergarten dismisses at 11:50 a.m. on October 31, 2019**

**Middlefork Staffing**
I am delighted to share that Ms. Julia Kisiel will join Mrs. Misty Bell and Ms. Paige Dempsey on the Middlefork kindergarten teaching team this school year, filling the position vacated by Mrs. McGuire, who announced her retirement in mid-July. Ms. Kisiel comes to us from John Muir Literacy Academy in District 54, where she gained experience teaching in grades K-3, both as an interventionist and as a classroom teacher, most recently in kindergarten. We wish Mrs. McGuire well and welcome Ms. Kisiel to the Middlefork family!

**SLE Classroom**
This past Spring, the D29 Board of Education supported the decision to integrate a North Suburban Special Education District (NSSED) classroom into the Middlefork School program. As members of the NSSED cooperative, our own District 29 students have benefitted from participation in such classes located in other North Shore member districts’ schools. Beginning this school year, District 29 will be able to provide that same opportunity within our own district boundaries. We are delighted to welcome the NSSED team and SLE (Supported Learning Environment) classroom to Middlefork!

**School Supplies**
For those who ordered school supplies through the PTO’s program on or before June 15, your school kits will be delivered to your child(ren)'s Middlefork classroom(s) in time for the first day of school. If you ordered after June 15, the kit(s) will be shipped to your home. And for those who would still like to order, it's not too late! Go to www.shaneskits.com (Enter code: SRSD29) and order your school kit for home delivery. There is a $6.95 flat fee for all home deliveries, and ordering remains open until September 1.
Happy 60th Birthday, Middlefork!
Sixty years ago, Superintendent Harry Collins and the residents of Northfield bucked the popular trend to construct a middle school and instead designed a space specifically for the village’s “little ones.” Plans are in the works for multiple ways to celebrate this noteworthy Middlefork anniversary with the children throughout the school year. One of them - 1959 Day - may require students and families to don their dancing shoes! How fortunate I feel to be at the helm of Middlefork School and to usher in another decade of early childhood learning in this wonderful community.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and we will see you on August 28th in the land of giggles, grins and of course, dolphins. The first day of school is truly one of the most joyful days of the year!

For your children,
Mary Frances Greene, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent/Principal

P.S.
Class lists will be posted to the website and emailed to parents on 8/9/19. The class list webpage will only be accessible to parents who are registered on the website. If you’ve not registered, go to www.sunsetridge29.org, click "Login" in the upper right hand corner, and select "SIGNUP." Once your registration is accepted by the Tech Dept., access the class lists on the website under the PARENTS tab. Contact Sheri Styczen (styczens@sunsetridge29.org) with questions.