

The PATRIOT PRESS

Patriot Oaks Academy Newsletter

August 8, 2015



Principal's Post

Dear Families,

What a wonderful start to a new school year. It was a pleasure seeing so many smiling students and families at our orientation events. As we started out our orientation events, I reflected on my own school experiences. As a child, I never attended an orientation... I just showed up on the first day with my parents and my supplies. My mom dropped me off and my day began. Orientation has now become a great way to bring the community in to the school. It is an opportunity for families to meet a person, your child's teacher, and reach out to establish a connection that can be nurtured over the course of a school year. It is also an opportunity for families to find ways to strengthen their own child's experiences in school. If your child's teacher is new to the school, it is an opportunity for our families to welcome the teacher to our wonderful school and community.

As an administrator, and as a parent, I spend time over the summer doing many activities to prepare for the upcoming year, but most importantly I work on recruiting and hiring the best. That is where the culture of a school starts. However, it doesn't end there. It is impossible to know exactly how each day will be spent, and how each relationship will be developed, in one brief meeting. It takes time for students to get to know their teachers and for teachers to get to know their students. If a teacher is new, it takes him/her time to become acclimated to the environment and culture of the school, time to obtain supplies, a computer, access to the curriculum, etc. But it does happen and thus far, has happened quite successfully.

As a new and growing school, we are fortunate to be able to welcome new families and new staff to our school. Our school has the opportunity to establish the culture we desire. Furthermore, we are still in a flexible and fluid growth mindset pattern; Meaning, our teachers are eager to see the world through their student's eyes and to prepare them for THEIR futures, not our pasts...

Our teachers are professionals. They engage in cutting-edge professional development that is designed to enhance student achievement through research based strategies, through differentiated and tailored instruction, through collaboration and through the promotion of individual goals. Similar to my lack of an orientation experience as a child, today's instruction and assignments for your child will, and should, look different to you. We cannot prepare our students for tomorrow if we are not willing to be innovative in our approach today.

We appreciate that our community has embraced our positive staff and progressive nature. So many parents write to tell of their positive experiences at Patriot Oaks Academy. When they offer suggestions for improvement, we take those suggestions seriously because, as professionals and as caring members of this great community, we want to constantly improve.

Again, we are looking forward to another great year!

Your lead learner,

Mrs. Harrison

Updates and Reminders:

We continue to enroll students daily. As we grow, there may be a need to exceed the class size law and add associate teachers accordingly, adjust schedules or even divide classes. Every effort is made to limit disruption to a student's schedule. We currently have open positions due to growth and we are making every effort to fill those positions efficiently, but with care.

Approved volunteers, please help out the first week of school... please sign up through the PTO sign up genius link. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f054fa4af2da4fd0-first>

Middle school requested schedule changes are prioritized. Core classes come first and electives are secondary. The guidance department will process requests as efficiently as possible.

VERY IMPORTANT... In the morning parent drop off car line, your child must be prepared to exit the car at the designated stopping point. Backpacks and materials should be ready in advance of stopping to exit the car. Please say your good-byes and give your loving kisses before the stopping point. Please pay attention to the person directing traffic as well as the car in front of you. Please do not get out of the car. Please have your child exit from the passenger side of the car. Please do not wave good-bye as you drive away. Doing so creates hazardous driving conditions and prevents your child from watching where they're going! Do NOT drop your child off in the parking lot or before the designated drop off area.

Unless you have business with the school, please do not park and walk your child to the school. This slows the drop off line down when you then try to back out of your parking space. (For the first week, kindergarten parents may park and walk their child in, after next Friday, please discontinue this practice.)

Bikers and walkers- During the first few days of school, parents may walk their children up to the school. Only younger students may be escorted to class. We have volunteers to assist students in finding their classes as well. After the first few days, parents will be asked to remain outside of the gate.

After the first week of school, parents are NOT allowed in the building unless they have preapproval and they are signed in as an approved volunteer. Parents must sign in and be an approved volunteer in order to have lunch with their child. You must have a government issued photo I.D.

Please be patient the first TWO weeks of school. New parents and kindergarteners take time to adjust to new routines. If you need to be out of the car line early, then arrive early. Please do not pull into the car line late and expect your child to make it to class on time.

For parent pick up, it may be helpful to know that MIDDLE SCHOOL students are dismissed first. Having the first few cars in line pick up middle schoolers will definitely help the line move faster.

PLEASE make sure your child knows their dismissal routine. It is helpful to practice biking/walking to school in advance. If you MUST make changes to a dismissal procedure, please call the school and send an email to the teacher well in advance. It is difficult to communicate changes later in the day. If you are meeting your child at a school access point, be prompt. Students who are not picked up at access points are escorted back to the front office.

Thank you for your help as we kick off a new school year!