

September 6, 2017

Dear Armatage Families,

### **WELCOME BACK**

Welcome back to the 2017 - 2018 school year! I hope you have had a wonderful and relaxing summer; I cannot recall a more beautiful one, the weather was fantastic!

We have completed two weeks of school. It looks and feels like routines are now solidly in place and the kids have acclimated to being back in school. It is so much fun having them back in the building. The other day, one of the 2<sup>nd</sup> graders came up to me in the hallway and smiled looked up at the ceiling with the hanging lights and said, "I like what you've done with the place over the summer." How precious!

### **CURRICULUM NIGHT**

Next Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, we are inviting parents/ guardians to the annual curriculum night. This is an opportunity to hear from your child's teacher/s about the rituals & routines, curriculum and miscellaneous information pertinent to the classroom. The pre-k - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers will present from 5:00 p.m. - 5:50 p.m. and the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers will do the same from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. **This is for adults only.** Day care will not be available, so please arrange for a sitter to stay with your children. We want this to be a chance for the adults to have an open communication with the teacher.

### **CONFERENCES (Change in dates)**

We are quickly discovering that flexibility is a critical element to everything we are doing this year due to construction. On Wednesday, October 18th through Friday, October 20th, the construction crew will be pouring tar on the roof as well as placing the air conditioning units above each classroom. It would not be prudent to have adults in the building smelling the fumes and sitting below a crane placing equipment on the roof. Therefore, we are going to move the Armatage **conferences to**

Wednesday, Nov. 1st from 2:30 - 7:00 p.m. and Thursday, Nov.2nd from 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars with this important scheduling change. There will be conference sign-up information forthcoming.

### CONSTRUCTION

Construction is well under way! The old administrative wing is gone and the builders are now preparing the ground for the installation of footings sometime this fall. It is definitely a work in progress. For those of you new to Armatage, we are doing a major renovation to the main office, health office, staff lounge & workroom, lunchroom and art room & music rooms. In addition, by next fall, the building will be air-conditioned. As you can imagine, every inch of is being impacted. All of this to say, things will look and feel different this year as we move through the construction project. However, in the end, we will have an updated and beautiful school for the children.

### NEW STAFF

Over the summer, we had several staffing adjustments due to job changes, relocation of spouses and leaves of absences. Below is a list of new staff joining us this year. I am happy to welcome:

ESL - Megan Lee

Band - Katy Linne

Psychologist - Jessica Anderson

Technology - Katie Stobb

Grade 3 - Jennifer Dahnert

ECSE - Avis Larson

ECSE - Hannah Zapchenk

Speech - Anne Klees

Speech - Amy Andrzejewski

A.E - Paul Baillos

A.E. - Alex Hilden

S.E.A.- Genevie Luckman

### DROP OFF PROCEDURES

On the Armatage website is a construction update that shares information about the drop off procedures for students in the morning. Due to construction, there are some door changes. It is important to note that families may not drive into the front of the school and drop off kids, as it is a construction zone. Please use door #15. The front of the building driveway will be for special education buses only. Any student arriving after 7:35 a.m. must come to the front of the building and use door #2. This will be our main entrance during construction.

The week of September 11 - 15<sup>th</sup>, we are asking that only pre-k parents walk their children to their classroom. By now, the kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> graders should know where their classrooms are and how to get to them without assistance. One of Marie Montessori's famous quotes is, "Don't do for children what they can do for themselves." We want the children to learn skills they can use throughout the rest of their lives; demonstrating independence is one of them. Starting the week of September 18<sup>th</sup>, all children will be exercising their independence.

### **MINNESOTA SCHOOL of EXCELLENCE**

A few weeks ago, I was contacted by the Minnesota Elementary Schools Principals Association to share with me that Armatage is being recognized as a Minnesota School of Excellence. I am so proud of our students & staff who have worked so hard over the years and are being recognized for their successes. We will be receiving a banner that will hang on the outside wall of the little gym facing 56<sup>th</sup> street, receive publicity by the media and an award in February at the Principal's Winter Institute. Congratulations to our staff, students and community for making Armatage Montessori School a great place for children to learn and grow!

I hope your children have had a wonderful beginning to the school year! Please feel free to contact the school if we can be of any assistance to you. Again, welcome back to what promises to be a great year at Armatage Montessori School.

Sincerely,

Joan Franks, Principal

