

Dan Shelton, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Mariellen Taraboletti
Principal

August 3, 2023

Dear Keene Families,

Welcome Back to School!

We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health and high spirits. As we embark on another exciting academic year at Keene, we want to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to all our returning families and those joining us for the first time.

We are thrilled to have each of you as part of our vibrant school community, and we are looking forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and new adventures. As always, our mission remains dedicated to fostering an inclusive and nurturing environment that encourages every student to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially.

Throughout the summer, our faculty and staff have been hard at work preparing for the new school year. We are eager to introduce you to our dedicated team of educators who are committed to providing an exceptional learning experience for your child.

Here are a few essential details to ensure a smooth start to the school year:

Take a Look: Thursday, August 31st from 4:00-5:00. Families are invited to tour the school, visit the classroom, and meet their child's teacher. A food truck will be here if you are interested in grabbing some dinner.

First Day of School: The new school year will begin on Tuesday, September 5th for all students in grades 1-5. Kindergarten students will have an Orientation on Tuesday, September 5th from 10:00-11:00. This will take place in the Keene cafeteria. Bus transportation will NOT be provided for kindergarten on Tuesday, September 5th, so parents are required to transport students to and from orientation. The orientation will provide parents with the opportunity to meet the classroom teachers and to discuss important information regarding transportation, school supplies, and other kindergarten specific topics. All Kindergarten students will have their first day of school starting on Wednesday, September 6th.

School Supplies: Attached to this letter is the list of school supplies your child will need for their grade level. Please ensure they come prepared with the necessary materials on the first day.

Cell phones: Please refrain from bringing cell phones to school. While we understand that cell phones can be helpful tools, they can also be a distraction in the classroom and disrupt the learning

environment. Keeping phones away during class time helps us all stay focused and engaged, ensuring a productive and enriching educational experience for everyone.

Health and Safety: The well-being of our staff and students remains a priority, and as guidance changes, we are prepared to pivot to maintain a safe environment. For more information and updates, visit www.christinak12.org.

Student Birthdays:

- Student birthdays will continue to be announced in the morning. Students will be called to the office to receive a birthday book.
- NO FOOD will be accepted for birthday celebrations. You can bring a special lunch for your child. Please note any food sent in for the class will not be distributed.
- If you would like to do something for your child's class, here are some ideas:
 - Stickers, tattoos, pencils, pencil grippers, or erasers.
 - Request a short dance party or fun exercise time that the birthday child can lead.
 - Send in a special book that the parent, teacher or child can read to the class.
 - Send in a special item for show and tell by the birthday child.

Bus Information: You will be receiving a separate mailing from the transportation department with your child's bus information. All daycare/childcare forms are purged each year, so please make certain you have filled out a NEW 2023-2024 daycare form. Please make sure that the pickup and drop off information is correct. If you have any questions regarding bus transportation, please call the Transportation Office at 454-2281. Please remember, pickup and drop off times are not exact so it is recommended to be at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the assignment times.

School Hours of Operation: 8:50-3:50. We will open the doors at 8:50 a.m. with instruction beginning promptly at 9:10. Please do not drop your child off prior to 8:50. If your child arrives after 9:10, a parent/guardian must sign them in at the office.

Arrival: If you are driving your child to school in the morning, you will enter the parking lot and form a "line" along the curb. A staff member will be on duty to direct you through the circle directly in front of the school and to meet and greet your child as they exit the vehicle. It is imperative that we keep the line moving in a single lane through the circle. We ask that if you need to help your student exit the vehicle that you either park in the lot and walk them to the front doors or wait and pull all the way up to the cone at the front of the line.

Dismissal: We will begin dismissal at 3:50 with car riders followed by bus riders. If your child is a car rider, please pull into the circle and display your child's identification card on your rear view mirror. These will be given out the first day of school. You must bring photo identification with you every day. Your child will not be released to you without proper identification. Anyone that you wish to be able to pick your child up must be listed on the emergency card and bring proper identification.

Information: Information will be shared using Class Dojo and/or emailed out via Peachjar so please make sure that we have your correct email address and phone number. Keene also utilizes our website to share information, <http://www.keenees.org>. Additionally, we have a Twitter account

(@KeeneElementary) and a Facebook page (Keene (William B.) Elementary School) that we will use to send out updates and quick announcements as we go through the school year.

Upcoming Calendar Events

September 11th: Patriotic Day-wear red, white, and blue

September 22nd: No School

September 25th: No School

September 26th: Formal Open House grades 3,4 and 5 from 6:00-7:00 (adults only)

September 28th: Formal Open House for KN, 1st, and 2nd grades from 6:00-7:00 (adults only)

We will continue to use our Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program and Restorative Practices at Keene. We have had great success with both. PBS emphasizes that all students stick to the Four Keene “Koalaty” Principles: Show Respect – Follow Directions – Act Responsibly – Always Do Your Personal “Koalaty” Best. We will also be heading into our third year as a Leader in Me school. Leader in Me is an evidenced based, comprehensive school improvement model-developed in partnership with educators and Franklin Covey-that empowers students with the leadership and life skills they need to thrive in a global community. Leader in Me is about empowering your child to reach their full potential while ultimately finding their voice. As a school, the staff in this building have made five core commitments to your child. We call these our Core Paradigms. In these paradigms, you will find the belief and way we view all students. At Keene, we see that:

Everyone is a leader

Everyone has genius

Change starts with me

We empower students to lead their own learning

Educators and families partner to develop the whole person

Together, we can make this academic year a truly memorable and enriching experience for all our students. We are looking forward to working hand in hand with our families to create a supportive and positive learning environment.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We are honored to be partners in their journey of discovery and growth.

Let's make this year the best one yet!

Sincerely,

Mariellen Taraboletti

Principal

Heather Buchanan

Assistant Principal

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