

Welcome Back!



July 20, 2022

A Message from Dr. Tufts

Dear Families,

Welcome back to school! We are just finishing up the fastest summer in history. School is starting on August 10th. This feels way too soon. I hope this letter finds you well-rested and more importantly, I hope the students are eager to come back to school.

COVID-19 protocols have adjusted once again. School districts will no longer offer PCR tests. We will be relying on antigen tests. Students are to self-test prior to returning to school. Therefore, we will be providing home tests for all students. Please plan on driving by the school the first week in August to pick up these tests. In addition, masks will be optional this year.

We will be able to welcome all volunteers this school year.

We have updated our enrollment papers. You will find these in this packet, along with the school calendar and daily schedule.

Our drop off and pick up procedures will remain the same. Students may be dropped off at 8:00 and school will begin at 8:30. The kindergarten day will be extended to 1:30 and grades 1-8 will be dismissed at 2:35. The kindergarten teachers will escort their students to their cars after school. In order to expedite this process, please remain in your vehicles. It is most helpful to line the cars along the red curb. For student safety, please keep the crosswalks clear of traffic. We will be escorting all students who are walking or biking across these areas.

Summer Projects

Our plan is to have the upper blacktop area re-surfaced prior to school beginning. We will be installing new basketball hoops as well. As you are aware, these projects are long over-due. Along with the new fixtures, we have purchased new playground equipment. It truly will be a fresh beginning. And, our greenhouse will be built the week of August 15.

New Employees

Join me as we welcome several new staff to Howell Mountain Elementary School District.

Mrs. Megan Cadigan will join us as a 7th/ 8th grade teacher. Mrs. Cadigan is a community resident and former high school math/ science teacher. Mrs. Cadigan is a great fit for our school culture. Ms. Sarah Brink will join us as a 5th/6th grade teacher. Ms. Brink is an established teacher, who grew up in Saint Helena. She brings many skills to the district, including restorative justice, which aligns with our discipline philosophy.

Mrs. Lori Schupp will join us as one of our kindergarten teachers. Mrs. Schupp completed the long-term substitute position for Mr. Rothwell last school year. Mrs. Schupp will be teaching kindergarten and possesses an early reading specialist credential. Mr. Luque and Mrs. Schupp will be partnering with Mrs. Story, formerly known as, Ms. Galas, who will remain on staff as our Teacher on Special Assignment. Mrs. Story will be supporting kindergarten and transitional kindergarten.

We also are welcoming Ms. Pricilla Rodriguez as a full-time para-educator for transitional kindergarten. Ms. Rodriguez will be supervising students during the day and will be offering an after-care program for the transitional kindergarteners.

With all this change, comes great possibilities!

Back to School

Our annual Back to School Night will be held on August 25 at 6:00 pm. During this evening, parents will have an opportunity to meet your child's teacher and learn about our academic programs. Please consider signing up as a room- parent and join our parent group, The Wolf Pack! We are ready to reinvigorate our parent program.

Kindergarten Orientation

Kindergarten orientation will be held on August 2 at 6:00 pm. This will be an informal ice cream social that is intended for students to meet their teacher, as well as their friends.

Grants and Celebrations



Our district has much to celebrate! We received a three-year grant to support our food service program. This means, students may eat for free the next three years. We also have contracted with Calistoga to provide all of our meals.

The Trincherro Family Foundation will be gifting us multi-year grant to support Art/ Music for the next three years. This is so generous, and we are very grateful for this donation.

In addition, we have received a Community Partnership Grant that will support student mental health, community partnerships and parent outreach.

Important Dates:

August 1-5: Antigen Tests Pick Up

August 2: Kindergarten Orientation

August 10: First Day of School

August 25: Back to School Night

September 5: Labor Day

