

Burr Elementary School

Jason Bluestein, Principal
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Phone: (203) 255-7385 Fax: (203) 255-8244



August 24, 2016

Dear Burr Parents,

Welcome to the 2016-2017 school year at Burr Elementary School. I hope that the summer months brought you a nice view, a cool breeze, and a good book. This summer I biked the Golden Gate Bridge, watched the US Open of Surfing in Southern California, and enjoyed the rhythms of life.

Like last year, class placements are being communicated to parents through Infinite Campus (IC). Below is the link to the parent portal. Please be aware that you need an activation code in order to create a user name and password. For new families, this should have been provided during registration. If not, Burr's main office can provide you with an activation code. Below is a link to IC's parent portal. Please note that the parent portal will open on **Wednesday, August 24**, so you can access your child's class placement.

<https://campus.fairfieldschools.org/campus/portal/fairfield.jsp>

An Infinite Campus account is very important. Throughout the school year, much of the communication we do is done electronically through IC. Below is a link to a manual that offers suggestions on how to set up your account. I would recommend that you include e-mail and text as contact preferences. Links (such as school letters or newsletters) are only accessible through e-mail.

http://fairfieldschools.org/parent_resources_infinite_campus.htm

Also, please be aware that Burr uses IC for contact information and the acceptable use of technology in school. It would be very much appreciated if you could update contact information (if necessary) and check the box that you agree with the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP.) This will allow us to use different technology tools with students including Google Docs.

The first day of school is Thursday, September 1. Students in **grades K-5** will begin at **8:55 AM and be dismissed at 3:30 PM**. Bus service to and from school will begin for all children on the first day of school. You can access your child's bus number through Infinite Campus. Please be sure to consult the bus schedule on the Fairfield Public Schools website to locate your child's bus stop and time. Please have your child at the stop at least five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time. Also, please be aware that the bus routes are notoriously late the first few days, as the drivers become more familiar with their routes.

As a reminder, all students taking the bus are to enter Burr through the *rear entrance of the building* where the bus drops them off and walk directly to their classrooms. If you are driving your child, please be sure to use the *student drop-off area in the front of the school (to the left when you enter Burr's driveway)*. Staff members will be at both entrances to greet students and help them find their classrooms. Students begin entering the building at 8:45. For safety reasons, Burr's doors are locked until 8:45. Also, students who are driven to school are considered tardy if they enter the building after 8:55.

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If you plan to pick up your child during the school day (and it is not an emergency), we would greatly appreciate it if you could do so before 3:00 and sign them out at the front desk. Please be aware that secretaries will ask any visitor to Burr a few basic questions to ascertain why they are visiting our school. Please be patient with them. This is a safety procedure implemented at all of Fairfield's schools and is not meant to prevent parents from accessing Burr. Additionally, if you are picking up your child at our dismissal time of 3:25, please be sure to send the teacher a note ahead of time, park your car, and meet your child in the cafeteria. If your child is a permanent pick up, please provide their teacher with a note, and we will give them a permanent pass that they can keep in their backpack. For safety reasons, the doors to the cafeteria are kept locked until 3:25. Staff members are in the cafeteria to greet parents and check notes.

Students at Burr are expected to read throughout the summer. Thank you for the work you did this summer to help build your child's reading life. Our school goal was for students to log 100,000 minutes on the Fairfield Public Library's website. As this letter goes to press, we are very close, so please keep logging those minutes.

There have been some changes at Burr this summer, so please join me in welcoming new staff. Natalie Ciancetta will be joining Burr as a third grade teacher. She did an amazing job as our intern last year, and I am so excited to have her join our team. Kelsey Hegarty is joining Burr's kindergarten team after having interned at Sherman last year. I am excited to welcome her to Burr. Rebecca Campbell will be Burr's new social worker. She comes to us with both clinical and school based professional experience. She will be splitting her time between Burr and Stratfield. Our building sub for the year will be Elaine Malone. Elaine most recently taught fifth grade at St. Teresa's School in Trumbull. She will be substituting for Mrs. Beno while she is out on maternity leave. I am also pleased to welcome Rebecca Rivera and Amanda Levy as new paraprofessionals at Burr. Finally, Alexandra Rosati, a student at Fairfield University, will be our intern during the upcoming year.

Congratulations to the following staff who have moved on to new endeavors for the 2016-2017 school year. Kindergarten teacher Stacie Vigeant will be teaching Pre-K at Dwight. Third grade teacher Brianna Lauria went back to the school in Trumbull where she student taught and interned. Laura Craighead is now working as a social worker in the New Canaan Public Schools. Laura Alderucci got a full time teaching position in the Westport Public Schools.

In summary, grade level assignments are as follows:

Pre-Kindergarten – Susan Totilo - Smith
Kindergarten – Lori Thompson, Kate Schallau, Kelsey Hegarty
Grade 1 – Julie Sherwood, Alison Taylor, Karen Musante
Grade 2- Susan Cinquegrana, Olivia Zaleski, Kristen Kurimai
Grade 3- Mei Ling Uliasz, Breda O'Sullivan, Natalie Ciancetta
Grade 4- Nicole Passero, Nancy deRegt, Lauren Noonan

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Grade 5 – Brian Jasgur, Karis Beno, Sabrina Phillips

This past year we started a career symposium for our fourth grade students. This was an opportunity for parents to come to Burr and speak with students about their careers. It was a great opportunity for parents to spend time at Burr, and it was an important chance for students to make real world connections to the work they do at school every day. While most students are years away from knowing what they want their careers to be, this is a great first step to build excitement and a sense of possibility about their futures.

If you are interested in sharing what you do for a living, please send me an e-mail at jbbluestein@fairfieldschools.org We would love to have your participation! Your commitment would involve approximately 30 minutes sometime during the school year, and we have flexibility to work around your schedule. While it is not necessary to prepare a formal presentation, anything “hands on” you can do with students would definitely be engaging to them.

I am also interested in getting your feedback about Burr. Below is a link to a Google Survey that offers you an opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and help us continue to improve our school. If you have a few extra minutes, I would really appreciate your thoughts.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1tOPhVsntJJl_apkSRZmInBvITluPoN1Rq-yhOzFekbU/viewform

As a reminder, staff members will be attending a number of meetings on August 29th, August 30th, and August 31st and will be unavailable for classroom visits. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding as they prepare for the new school year. Pre-K warm up is scheduled for Wednesday, August 31st. The AM session will be between 10:30-11:30 and the PM session is scheduled for 11:45-12:45. Kindergarten warm up will occur between 1:00-2:00 on Wednesday, August 31st and will be followed by an informal play date for all kindergarten students on Burr’s playground. An orientation for Burr’s new families will also occur on Wednesday, August 31st – starting at 10:30 in the library media center.

All parents are invited to join the members of the PTA Executive Board and me in the Cafeteria for a welcome-back reception, "Tears and Cheers," beginning at 9:15 AM on the first day of school. See you then, and have a wonderful last few days of summer!

Warmly,

Jason