



Livingston PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mt. Pleasant Elementary School
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August 2019

Dear MPE Families

Welcome to the end of the summer! I am so excited for everyone to return to MPE on September 4th. We have such a wonderful learning community!

Over the summer, our staff members have spent countless hours getting ready for the 2019-2020 school year. Our caring, dedicated teachers continue to prepare their classrooms and lessons in order to give our children exceptional learning experiences. The building looks spectacular due to the efforts of our hard-working maintenance and custodial teams. Our school nurse is here most days carefully checking over all of the health records to make sure we are healthy and in compliance. Thank you to the PTA for all of their efforts as they plan exciting events for our students. I am happy to announce that we have a newly renovated media center full of beautiful furniture and enriching books.

Class placements become available to parents in the Genesis portal after 3 pm on Thursday, August 22nd. The formation of each class has been carefully considered with an enormous amount of planning to ensure the success of each student. We are fortunate to have such a talented, nurturing staff. Therefore, class placements are final. I thank you in advance for your cooperation and support as we strive towards the same goal, which is to make sure each child is learning, growing and thriving. I look forward to working with you as we embark on an amazing new school year. Below is the list of new staff members, as well as the grade level teams. I have also included upcoming events and arrival/dismissal procedures.

New Staff:

5th Grade Social Studies (Maternity Leave Full Year): Mrs. Katie Carlin

5th Grade Science (Maternity Leave Full Year): Mrs. Laura Almgren

2nd Grade (Maternity Leave Full Year): Ms. Mary Dyer

1st Grade: Ms. Hallie Yula

Special Education: (Maternity Leave for the beginning of the year for Mrs. Kim Withers):
Ms. Ashley Addison

Health & Physical Education: Mr. Raz Blau and Ms. Jacqueline Gronek

Art: Ms. Jordan Montgomery

Music: Mr. Brian Seltzer

Their letters of introduction will be attached at the end of this email.

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Teams:

Kindergarten: Mrs. Alterman, Mrs. Fiore, Mrs. Raje

First Grade: Mrs. Perry, Mrs. Lynn, Ms. Yula

Second Grade: Ms. Dyer, Mrs. Geltzeiler, Ms. Monaco

Third Grade: Mrs. Chang, Ms. Roth, Mrs. Whipple

Fourth Grade: Ms. Bannon, Mrs. Szostak, Mrs. Triana

Fifth: Mrs. Almgren, Mrs. Barbag, Ms. Carlin, Mr. Darst

Special Education: Ms. Addison/Mrs. Withers, Mrs. DeMiceli, Ms. Rogalsky

Fifth Grade Rotation Schedule:

Fifth grade students will rotate between four teachers this year. Mr. Darst will teach reading and writing, Mrs. Carlin will teach social studies and writing, Mrs. Almgren will teach science, word study and calendar math, and Mrs. Barbag will teach math, word study and calendar math.

Please mark your calendars for the following events:

9/4	First Day Back (See information below)
9/6	5th grade cupcake sale after school
9/13	5th grade pretzel sale after school
9/15	Car Wash
9/19	SE PAC Back to School Night 7:00 p.m.
9/20	New Family Meet and Greet - 5:00 p.m. School Picnic and Apparel Sale - 5:30 p.m. 5th grade Clothing Drive Spirit Day
9/21	5 th grade Clothing Drive
9/24	Class Parent Meetings - 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
9/26	Back to School Night - 7:00 p.m.
9/27	5th grade Used Book Sale

10/11	Walk-a-thon – <i>Rain date - 10/16</i>
10/17 & 10/18	BNL School Picture Days
10/29	General PTA Meeting - 7:30 p.m.

First Day Back!

September 4th is the first day back for students! The MPE School Website lists all of the supplies needed. On the first day of school, signs will be posted with the names of homeroom teachers on the side of MPE closest to the small playground. Students will line up near their homeroom teacher’s sign and will be greeted by their teacher when the bell rings. Parents/guardians are welcome to stand outside with their child while they wait for the teacher to gather their students. Remember, this is only the first day of school. For the rest of the year instructions, please read the reminders below regarding student drop-off each morning.

Pick up and Drop off after the First Day

- Morning supervision begins at 7:35 A.M. each morning.
- All students line up inside of MPE. Kindergarten will line up in the Media Center, Grades 1 and 2 in the small gym and Grades 3, 4, 5 in the big gym.
- Please use the drop-off lane located on the right side of the MPE driveway. The left side is for staff only and will create unsafe conditions if students are dropped off on that side (the side furthest from the MPE entrance). Students should always exit curbside.
- If you are going to drop off on Broadlawn, it must be beyond the driveway entrance by the path leading to the crosswalk.
- Please take care to drive slowly during drop off and pick up so that all students are safe at all times. Pull through the driveway entrance as far as possible so that staff can safely exit your child(ren) from the car.
- If childcare plans have changed for the day, please contact the MPE Main Office as early as possible so we can contact the teacher in time for dismissal. Please do NOT email your child’s teacher as they do not check their emails during instructional time.

To our new Kindergarten parents, the only “supplies” your child will need for kindergarten are an art smock (an old t shirt is perfect) and a snack each day. They do not need pencils, folders, etc. We supply them. Kindergarten students are encouraged to bring their favorite stuffed animal on the first day of school.

I look forward to seeing all of you on September 4th!

Thank you,

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Lorena Dolan
Principal of Mount Pleasant Elementary

Meet our new staff:

Mrs. Laura Almgren: This is my fourth year working at MPE. I enjoyed teaching fourth grade last year and am super excited to be teaching 5th grade science this year. Prior to coming to MPE, I had taught for the Morris School District before leaving to raise my two children. My daughter Reilly is 17 and a rising high school senior. Robbie, a junior, is 16. Both play multiple sports, so my husband Bob and I spend much of our free time attending their games and cheering them on! I also enjoy spending time at the beach and taking long walks with Winston, our Old English sheepdog. lalmgren@livingston.org

Mr. Raz Blau: My name is Raz Blau and I am the new Physical Education teacher at MPE. I cannot wait to get started! I taught Kindergarten through 8th grade for 8 years in Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ after graduating from Kean University with a bachelor's degree in Health and Physical Education and a Master's degree in Curriculum and Teaching Physical Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. I plan on sharing my passion for a healthy lifestyle and physical activity through dynamic, engaging and fun activities this year. I look forward to helping your children learn, grow and be active and healthy all while having a blast! Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at rblau@livingston.org.

Ms. Jackie Gronek: I will be a part-time Physical Education teacher at MPE. I have been teaching Physical Education for the past five years and I am excited to be joining the wonderful staff here at Mount Pleasant Elementary School. When I am not teaching Physical Education, I enjoy dancing, cheerleading and spending time with friends and family. I look forward to a fun-filled year of teaching and learning with the children I will be teaching. Together we will explore physical literacy in order to live a healthy and active lifestyle. jgronek@livingston.org

Ms. Mary Dyer: Hello! I am so excited to teach 2nd grade this year. To tell you a little bit about myself, I am a Montclair State University graduate with a degree in Family Science and Human Development and a certification in teaching grades K-6. As a lifelong Roseland resident, I am very familiar and comfortable with the Livingston community and all of the wonderful things it has to offer! I absolutely love to teach and I look forward to meeting you and your child. mdyer@livingston.org

Ms. Jordan Montgomery: Like any good art teacher, I love all things art- drawing and watercolor are my two favorite mediums. What you might be surprised to learn is that I hold a Master's Degree in Art Therapy, which I earned all the way across the pond in Ireland. While studying art therapy I was able to do some very rewarding work with children of all ages. I was also able to travel during my studies, seeing some beautiful art

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work throughout my travels! Before going to Ireland, I received my Bachelor's Degree in Art Education from Elizabethtown College in Elizabethtown, PA. I can't wait to welcome you to my Art Class! jmontgomery@livingston.org

Ms. Ashley Addison: I am very excited to be a Special Education Teacher here at Mount Pleasant Elementary while Mrs. Withers is on maternity leave. Before studying education, I attended Molloy College in Rockville Center, Long Island and received my BA and MA in Criminal Justice. I have worked in a special education setting for the past three years and completed my teacher certification. After school, you can find me on the basketball courts! Basketball is a big part of my life. For the past three years, I have been the freshmen girls' basketball coach at Livingston High School. I am looking forward to meeting all of you. aaddison@livingston.org

Ms. Hallie Yula: I am a first grade teacher at Mt. Pleasant Elementary School. My qualifications include a BS in Elementary Education K-6 and English from The College of New Jersey as well as 5 years of teaching experience. It has always been a belief of mine that teaching is much more than the academics, it is about the relationships you build with students. I take my role as an educator very seriously as I believe that I also serve as a role-model, motivator and mentor to help guide and mold each child into the person they will become. Each day I enter the school building excited about working with my students and I strive to nurture, empower and motivate each child in order to help them excel and grow into lifelong learners. hyula@livingston.org

Mrs. Katharine Carlin: I am incredibly honored to be joining the Fifth Grade Team at Mount Pleasant Elementary. This year I will be teaching four social studies courses and two writing courses. This is my fourth year teaching, and my third year teaching fifth grade. I received my Bachelor's degrees in Journalism and Sociology from New York University, and received my Master of Education from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. Both social studies and writing have been passions of mine since I was in elementary school. One of my goals for this year is to make history come alive for your children in engaging, thought-provoking ways through hands-on activities that encourage collaboration and research projects that build critical thinking skills. It is my hope to foster a lifelong love of history with my students, in the same way my fifth grade teacher did for me. kcarlin@livingston.org

Ms. Dina Meixner: I am both honored and ecstatic to be stepping in for Ms. Kathleen Llano, Mt. Pleasant's behaviorist, during her maternity leave for this 2019-2020 school year. I am happy to be joining the Mt. Pleasant team and look forward to supporting and meeting the behavioral needs of our students to help ensure their success in all aspects of their educational experience. I believe that each child is a unique individual and requires their own recipe for success! For ten years, I have been working with and assisting the special needs of students, ranging from preschool through adolescence. Since 2018, I have worked as an ABA Discrete Trial Teacher Assistant at Burnet Hill Elementary School and recently completed my Master of Science in Psychology with a specialization in Applied Behavior Analysis. I am eager to start this new venture and proud to be a part of the Livingston School District. dmeizner@livingston.org

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