



Johnson Elementary School
99 South Main Street Natick, MA 01760
508.647.6680 FAX 508.647.6688

Barbara Brown, Ed.D.
Principal

Happy New Year!

August 31, 2007

Dear Johnson School Families,

I am delighted to report that “opening day” was a very positive experience at our school!!! The faculty was exceptionally well coordinated and prepared to welcome students and to begin the process of building a respectful community and establishing routines for learning with students. Most impressive were the positive tones and abundant energy that permeated the school.

Our kindergarten students and their parents/guardians joined us for an Open House on Wednesday and have been attending on a staggered transition schedule these past two days. All 65 incoming K students have transitioned well! Thank you K parents for preparing our students for this milestone and for respecting our practice of not having you enter the building with your children in the morning. We are working hard to establish routines with the K students and to make for an efficient entry to classrooms, thus parents are asked not to enter the school building at drop off time and allow the teachers to transition students to the classrooms. Tardy families need to enter via the front door and sign their child in at the main office. The back doors are closed (and thus locked up tight) after the 8:35 AM bell.

Our school opened with 243 students! (A 10% increase over last year.) While other towns are experiencing slight drop-offs in enrollment, Natick is holding steady as so many young families recognize what a desirable community this is to live in. Across the five elementary schools, we added four new sections of kindergarten this fall to accommodate a mini baby boom. Johnson has (3) kindergarten classes and (2) classes each at grades 1-4.

Welcome to our new faculty members:

- Erin Murphy, Kindergarten Teacher
- Diana Beckley, Kindergarten Teacher
- Paul Tagliapietra, Special Education Teacher
- Linda Berg, Library Assistant (on Fridays)
- Leann Barczi, Speech & Language Pathologist
- Sara Kennedy, Counseling Intern
- Brenda Cunningham, Student Teacher in 3/K
- Lindsay Bernard, Student Teacher in 4/B

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Johnson School Council (JSC) groups serve as excellent compliments to the faculty’s work to improve teaching and learning opportunities at our school. Our first PTO meeting is next Wednesday evening (September 5th) at 7:30 PM in the Art/Music Room. The School

Council continues its charge to serve as an advisory to me as we work toward our goals for school improvement. The *Johnson School Family Guide* will be issued in the very near future (delays at the town copy center, sorry). It details general information, students' rights and responsibilities, academic programs, and opportunities for parent participation. In addition, much information about curriculum, instruction, and assessment can be found on the district website (www.natick.k12.ma.us). Our much coveted *Family Directory* will be distributed at the end of the month providing class lists and family contact information. The School District's web sight had a much needed overdue makeover. Our school web pages that link off the district page are next in line for makeovers and will be updated for improved organization and relevant information.

The Natick Schools and the Police and Fire Departments have been working to improve our crisis intervention and response plans to improve safety. It is imperative that anyone who enters our school sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge. While our small school climate lends to a casual, friendly environment, I must ask you to respect this practice so that we can monitor visitors for reasons of safety and to minimize distractions for teachers and students. It is not appropriate to "pop in" to your child's classroom unannounced as it disrupts the learning process. All Natick Schools will be practicing hazard drills throughout the school year (evacuation, shelter-in-place and lock down drills). We will prepare our students in advance and keep you informed.

I continue to be highly enthused with the school district's goals and initiatives that are underway to improve learning outcomes for our students and enhance the professional community as we work together to develop and refine our practices to accelerate learning for all students.. Our continued charge this year is to forward our momentum to becoming a highly collaborative, standards-driven learning community and I am confident that the Johnson School community is poised for those next steps. A new Report on Student Progress (a.k.a. report card) is being launched this year and will afford parents clearer information about their child's progress toward the grade level learning standards at each grade level.

Please join us the evening of Thursday, September 20th at the Johnson School Curriculum Night to meet with your child's teacher and learn about the expectations for teaching and learning.

- Kindergarten session - 7:00-7:30PM
- Grades 1 and 2 session – 7:30-8:00PM
- Grades 3 and 4 session – 8:00-8:45PM

Our school is making a culture shift to promote healthy nutrition. Please send a healthy snack to school for your child each day. Each teacher will determine the extent of class celebrations involving food, celebrating birthdays, issuing treats or rewards, and the like. A general rule is that students will NOT be permitted to transport food around the school from door-to-door (i.e. sharing birthday cupcakes around the building) to eliminate the risk of food allergy emergencies and to minimize missed instructional time. Our kindergarten team, because they are inducting a whole new group of students, has made the decision to eliminate food treats used to celebrate birthdays. Students will be honored and celebrated in other ways among their classmates. Thank you for helping us to promote healthy habits! I personally will be glad to forgo the temptation of the 200-plus birthday cupcakes delivered to my office each year!

I remind you that I am readily available and accessible should you want to provide feedback or offer suggestions at any time. I ask that you please communicate with your child's teacher as a very first point of contact should you have questions or need to seek clarity for anything that may arise with regard to daily operations. It is a pleasure to serve as the principal of Johnson School! I look forward to collaborating with you about matters promoting the best interests of our children.

With fond regard,
Barbara Brown, Ed.D.
Principal

A few reminders...

School starts at 8:35AM. Students should NOT arrive to school prior to 8:20AM as there is no supervision. (Except in the case of our breakfast program, which starts at 8:00AM). Many students trickle in well before they should and this poses a safety risk.

Dismissal from school is at 2:35PM. Our busses are loading and departing until about 3:00PM and no one should be playing on the hardtop area until all busses have departed.

Parents who are driving students to school in the morning should please refrain from parking in staff spots. The rear parking lot is for parent parking (not the spots that abut the building).

Changes in your child's dismissal from school routine should be communicated in writing to the teacher. Last minute calls to the office pose great chaos.

All parents/guardians MUST sign in at the office when entering the school during business hours. No one should be escorting their child to class or dropping by the classrooms unannounced.

Please promote healthy snacks at school.

Cars are not permitted to pass on the hard top in front of the school 8AM - 3PM

The school building is locked up at 4PM when the custodians leave. For safety and security purposes, the public is not permitted to enter the school building after hours (except, of course, in the event of special school and PTO events).

Seeking:



Lunch Monitor at Johnson School

M-F 11:20AM – 1:10 PM

\$11.15/hr.

Contact the school office if you are interested!