



THE BULL HORN

SEPTEMBER 2018

Stepping Stone School



Bull Horn Welcoming Letter and Back to School Edition 2018-2019

Welcome back! We are happy and excited to prepare for a new school year and welcome you and your child back to Stepping Stone. If you are new to us, you will be impressed with our dedicated staff, instructional programs, and events we offer.

We know that in order for students to achieve their best they need to attend school consistently ready to learn when the school day starts. We work hard every day as a process to address the academic, social and behavioral needs of each child. It is equally important that they feel welcomed and safe in our school. As a staff we begin our greeting as your child walks off the bus and this continues through the hallway and upon entering the classroom. At the end of the day your child is sent off with a farewell for the evening and/or weekend. Over the past three years, and 6 out of 7 years, our data indicate that student attendance has increased progressively and student incidents have decreased. This is a significant indicator of student success, your support, and your child's willingness to learn. This year we look forward to strong parent support towards the school's goals of improved school safety, attendance, and program updates. I encourage you to support our goals and help us increase public awareness about Stepping Stone School guiding eager learners and enhancing their experiences so all of our children can succeed in school and life.

I am thankful that we have such a talented and dedicated staff. Stepping Stone is a wonderful place to be and I appreciate our staff choosing to work at our school, and to you, for sending your child to our school. Together I know we will continue to make strides and make a difference for your child. Thank you.

Many of you who attended the Awards/Graduation night learned that after 28 wonderful years, Margie Harrison, our school secretary, would be retiring on August 15th to devote more time to her grandchildren. Margie has been a mainstay for all of us and has been a true asset to the Stepping Stone School. Her pleasant phone voice and reassurance to nervous students and parents, not to mention Child Study Team members, has been rewarding for all that have come in touch with her. We will miss Margie and all the wonderful attributes she brought with her each and every day.





At the end of the last school year I attended a four day mandatory School Safety and Security meeting with presenters from numerous law enforcement agencies and Department of Education representatives. While school safety and security specifics cannot be revealed, I ask that you remain vigilant with whom your child is with as well as his/her access or possession of harmful materials/weapons. Allow this to be a reminder that while a police officer requires Probable Cause, school employees only require Reasonable Suspicion to search a student and or his/her belongings. This includes clothing, backpacks, desks, lockers, lunch bags, etc. (strip searches are strictly prohibited). While this is not to be interpreted as anything more than information for your knowledge, it is necessary to monitor what your child brings to school and has access to.



This past year we were fortunate to fund several program initiatives and building improvements as discussed in this newsletter. However, each year the state modifies our budget and tuition rates and they have considerably reduced our current year budget. Therefore, it becomes crucial that our fundraising and donations are ever more important this year. Each year we announce fundraisers for the school year. We will have our fourth annual Tricky Tray during the spring which we all look forward to, but this simply does not sustain our needs. Donations are always welcomed in helping to provide needed resources for the students and staff. We accept new products/gifts towards program and building improvements as well as donation of services, and of course monetary contributions. We look forward to exceeding last year's donation totals to benefit our students, but need your help to do so. If you have an idea, or are willing to spearhead an event, or have access/contacts to a charitable person/foundation, we want to hear from you!



As part of our "Super Seniors" program we are developing an Ice Cream curriculum which will entail practical experience of running a business. The proposed curriculum will entail all of the same attributes and expectations a student will find in any work environment. This includes business planning, finances and bookkeeping, ordering supplies, display boards, marketing, procedures, daily maintenance/sanitation, time management, equipment use, customer service, recipe development, and the making of our very own Stepping Stone ice cream, Gelato, non-dairy, and Italian ice! The practical application experienced here will provide our students a "leg-up" opportunity of real life experience in the workforce. Donations towards this initiative are appreciated.



The first day of school for all students at Stepping Stone is on Wednesday, September 5th. Student arrival time is at 8:15 a.m. and dismissal at 2:15 p.m. Transportation information will be forwarded to you by your child's sending district. Stepping Stone does not set the pick-up times. If you have not heard from your district by the time you receive this letter, you may want to give them a call.

Looking forward to a wonderful and rewarding school year!

Sincerely,
Dr. Randy Pratt
Executive Director

September 3 – Labor Day—school closed

September 4 – Teachers/Staff Only Report, In-service

September 5 – Students Report, First Day of Classes, Welcome Back

September 27— Early Dismissal at 12:15 p.m. Back To School Night 7 p.m.