

Col. John Robinson Elementary School

Shaping the future one child at a time

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September 8, 2017

Good Afternoon,

The Robinson School became complete this week as we welcomed our kindergarten students. On Tuesday morning we welcomed our new friends to Robinson School. There were students whose excitement was easy to observe while others entered with a little apprehension and even some nervousness. By day's end our kindergarten students could be seen skipping down the hallway, smiling, and jumping into their parents' arms. It is our goal from the time students arrive at Robinson that their experience is a positive one. We want them to feel safe so that they can be successful members of our special community. I was proud of our second, first, and pre-first students who did a wonderful job transitioning to school last week. They have become role models for our youngest students as they learn our I-Care Rules and ways to be a good friend. Each day as I walk through the building I'm in awe of how quickly students learn the new routines. The first six to ten weeks of school is a critical time for developing a classroom environment that is both warm and nurturing. Our teachers will use this time to implement activities that foster positive relationships so that each student can reach their full potential.

The Things Kids Say/Do

- Every year I introduce myself to the kindergarten students and tell them that I am the Principal. Next, I ask them if they know what a Principal's job is. As you can imagine I have heard some great answers over the years. Here are a few responses from our new kindergarten students:
 - Student 1: "You are the boss of the teachers"
 - Student 2: "You unlock the doors to the school everyday"
 - Student 3: "You keep everyone safe"

Attendance

Establishing consistent patterns of attendance is important in the early elementary years as it fosters good attendance in later years. Also, children who are frequently absent or tardy often miss out on important events and being a part of classroom routines. According to the Parent Institute (2003), "Attendance patterns are formed early in life. Children who develop good attendance habits in the early grades will be more likely to continue them throughout their school career." Therefore, in the primary grades establishing the importance of education and regular attendance is important.

School administrators are tasked with monitoring the attendance of students during each school year. Massachusetts General Law provides school districts with clear expectations regarding attendance as it pertains to absences and tardies. Therefore, it is our obligation as administrators to notify families when absences or tardies exceed seven days. As a parent myself, I recognize the challenges of determining whether my own children are well enough to attend school and also struggle to schedule appointments outside of school hours. Please know that communication you may receive throughout the school year regarding your child's attendance is meant to bring awareness to the number of days he/she has been absent/tardy and to work together to develop a plan of action, if necessary. If you ever have any questions or concerns regarding the attendance of your child please contact me immediately.

Curriculum Night Schedule

Curriculum Night is a wonderful opportunity to meet your child's teachers and to learn more about the curriculum specific to each grade level. *Families of kindergarteners and pre-first are encouraged to bring their children with them. Our first and second grade curriculum nights are for parents/guardians *only*.

Community • Acceptance • Responsibility • Excellence

This year Robinson School is planning to offer childcare during the first and second grade curriculum night on Tuesday, September 19th. The cost of childcare would be \$5.00 per child and would be available only for children who currently attend Robinson School and their siblings who attend Crisafulli. Unfortunately we are unable to provide care for younger siblings who are not yet of school age. Childcare would be available 15 minutes prior to the start of the curriculum night presentation for which you plan to attend and conclude 10 minutes after the presentation. In order for us to determine the level of interest for childcare we are requesting that you complete this [form](#) by Wednesday, September 13, 2017 by 3:30. We will notify families on September 14th whether there is enough interest to offer this service.

Curriculum Night Schedule		
<u>Kindergarten</u> Antonelli: A.M. Kindergarten Boynton: A.M. Kindergarten Cecere: Full Day Kindergarten	Thursday, September 28, 2017	6:00-6:30 P.M.
<u>Kindergarten</u> Antonelli: P.M. Kindergarten Renaud: Full Day Kindergarten	Thursday, September 28, 2017	6:45-7:15 P.M.
<u>Pre-First</u>	Thursday, September 28, 2017	6:30-7:15 P.M.
<u>First Grade</u>	Tuesday, September 19, 2017	7:00-7:45 P.M.
<u>Second Grade</u>	Tuesday, September 19, 2017	6:00-6:45 P.M.

Safety Drills

Every year we hold several safety drills to ensure that students and staff know what to do in case of an emergency. On Tuesday, we had our first Fire Drill. Prior to the drill staff showed students where to go and what to do in the event the fire alarm sounds. This preparation was essential to the success that I observed on Tuesday. Despite the loud alarm, students quietly and carefully exited the building to the identified location outside and waited for further direction from the classroom teacher. The entire drill including the time it took to exit the building and return back to the normal school day was approximately five minutes!

New Students

This summer we registered nearly forty new students to Robinson School! New students will meet with Mrs. Rivet approximately three times in September in small groups to ensure a smooth transition for our new Robinson friends. She will cover topics such as our I-Care Rules, I-Care Coupons, and identify who the “helpers” are in our school.

Picture Day

Picture Day for all students will take place on October 4th and Picture Retakes will occur on November 1st. More information regarding the process for ordering pictures will be sent home in backpacks in the coming weeks.

Playground

Please remember that the Robinson playground is meant for students attending Robinson School during the hours of 9:05-3:10. Occasionally, families with older siblings allow children to play on the playground as they wait for our school day to end. While this seems appropriate it can be disruptive to the supervision of Robinson students who often use the playground until 3:10. Furthermore, we have seen students running in between cars as parents wait to pick their children up. Please know that we want to foster a welcoming environment that is also safe. Thank you for your cooperation.

Student Absences

IT IS IMPORTANT for us to know if your child is going to be absent from school. Please call 978-692-5587 (ext. 1) by 10:00 A.M. to report absences and late arrivals. If we have not received a call regarding your child's absence by 10:00 A.M. we will attempt to contact you by phone. If we are unsuccessful in reaching you we will attempt to reach those listed as emergency contacts.

If your child is sick please *also* leave a message with Mrs. Kennedy our school nurse. She can be reached at 978-692-5586 ext. 4 or email at ckennedy@westfordk12.us.

Arrival/Dismissal

YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY is our primary concern. Your cooperation and support with the following procedures are greatly appreciated.

- Students will begin to exit buses and cars at 8:55 AM when supervision is available.
- All students who ride the bus must have a bus pass. Students may only ride the bus to which they are assigned. Exceptions will only be made in an emergency.
- Students must be able to enter and exit the vehicle independently. If students require more assistance to independently enter and exit the vehicle it is requested that families park their vehicles and walk students to the front entrance.
- Students must exit the vehicle on the side closest to the curb. Students **may not** cross in front of or behind any vehicle.
- It is essential that you remain in the car at all times to ensure that the flow of traffic moves smoothly.
- To ensure the safety of the students, it is critical that cars not pass during drop off and pick-up, unless directed to do so by Robinson School staff.
- Please remember that the speed limit is **15 mph**.
- For more information regarding the drop off process, please see the map located on the front of our webpage at: <http://rs.westfordk12.us/pages/index>
- If your child is late to school, an adult must walk them in to school and follow the proper sign-in procedures.

School Advisory Council

TWO PARENT VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED! The council, made up of parents, staff, and community members, acts as an advisory board to the Principal. Currently, the meetings take place on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00. The first meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 20, 2017. If you are interested in filling one of these positions please complete the School Advisory Council Candidate Form included in this mailing. If more than two volunteers come forward a vote is required in order to appoint council members.

School Committee

The School Committee welcomes parents and community members to attend [School Committee meetings](#) which are held on alternate Monday evenings at 7:30 in the Millennium's Conference Room B. Meeting agendas and supporting documents are posted online the Friday prior to a meeting via the town's Document Management System.

Helpful School Committee Links

- Westford School Committee website: <http://www.westfordk12.us/pages/sc/index>
- School Committee meeting schedule: <http://www.westfordk12.us/pages/sc/schedule>.

Meeting Agendas and supporting documents: HYPERLINK "<https://www.westfordma.gov/767/Document-Management-System>"

***** 2017-2018 SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL INFO* *****

Dear Robinson School Families,

The Educational Reform Bill signed into law in July 1993 requires that ALL schools create School Advisory Councils. These councils consist of four parents, three teachers, the school principal, and a community member. Meetings are held at Robinson School and will be in the afternoon (4 PM) unless changed by consensus decision of the council. The PTO is required to oversee election of the parent representatives to the councils.

School Advisory Council (SAC) parents are required to attend and participate in all SAC meetings as representatives of all parents of the school. As such, you will be responsible for keeping parents informed and soliciting their input in matters of the educational needs of the students. The parent representatives are also asked to update the PTO of School Advisory Council progress at the meetings and through the Newsletter (members are not required to attend all PTO meetings).

The time requirement needed is approximately 2 hours per month with the first meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 4:00 PM. This fall, the Robinson School Advisory Council has two two-year parent seats available. The term for these positions will run from 2017-2019 school years. Any parent/guardian interested in running for a seat on the School Advisory Council should fill in and return the attached candidate form by September 13, 2017. You must have a child in the school for the full length of your term of office. Should voting be required to determine the seats, this will occur via online survey between September 18th and September 20th.

Timeline

9/13: Candidates submit the SAC Candidate Form

9/18: Voting commences (if necessary)

9/20: Voting concludes (if necessary)

9/20: Results announced

(Candidates will be notified of results via email or phone)

If you would like more information, feel free to contact:

Kevin LaCoste
Principal

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORM

(RETURN BY September 13, 2017)

Col. John Robinson School

NAME: _____ CHILD'S GRADE(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE#: _____

Remember: You must have a child in the school for the full length of your term of office.
Candidate for (check only one):

_____ Parent Representative: two-year position **(two seats open)**

Please print or type your answers to the following questions in the space provided. This form will be available to all voters at the school (without your phone number or address).

To assist voters in making an informed choice, please answer the following questions.

1. Why do you wish to serve on the Robinson School Advisory Council?

**2. What experience will you bring to the Robinson School Advisory Council?
(Include any school, PTO, work-related background or interests, which would help the council.)**

Return to teacher or office on or before September 13, 2017