

August 2018

Dear Parents and Families,

Welcome back! It is my great pleasure to be a member of the Cos Cob Team and both principal, Schmidt, and I are looking forward to a successful and productive year. I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some information that may be helpful to you this year.

### Staffing

We have a talented and caring team of professionals in the Pupil Personnel Services/Special Education department, which consists of our special education teachers: Kelli Cittadino, Ann Gieparda and Melissa Rogers; speech and language therapist, Sarita Bordon; and our psychologist, Alison Philips. In addition, we welcome Marisa Love who will provide occupational therapy; and Genice Mark as our physical therapist. Our school is also supported by our school nurse Leslie Vandermeer.



**Sarita**



**Kelli**



**Ann**



**Alison**



**Melissa**



**Leslie**



**Mike**

We are also very lucky to have a dedicated team of professional assistants who will be working in our classrooms supporting the students. They are assigned either to a specific grade, student or teacher for most of the day. For 2018-2019, our professional assistants are: Maria Chiappetta, Nancy Curcio, Carmela English, Samantha Evangelista, Rob Horn, and Kimberly Mirabella.

### **EDS – Educational Differences Subcommittee of the PTA**

This subcommittee of the PTA focuses on the needs, issues and concerns of the families of students with disabilities. The representative from our school for the EDS committee is Doreen Conte. Together we will be planning and hosting several important and exciting events throughout the year. The central office will send out notices and reminders using the email address you provided when you registered. If this is not the best email to use, please call the school office and give the staff your preferred email for school/district communication.

For the 2018-2019 school year, the co-chairs of the EDS subcommittee of the PTA are:

Elizabeth Ann DeHaven, [mendelsohne@gmail.com](mailto:mendelsohne@gmail.com)  
Audra O'Donovan, [Audracmd@aol.com](mailto:Audracmd@aol.com)

### **IEP Annual Review Meetings**

Again, this year, we are attempting to lessen the impact of PPT/IEP meetings on the instructional day wherever possible. You will be contacted shortly to schedule your Annual Review. By scheduling meetings in advance, we are decreasing the time that staff will be pulled from classrooms and services. You will receive a reminder of the meeting approximately 10 days prior to the meeting but we are asking all families to make arrangements in advance to attend the scheduled meeting. If you know now that this date and time will not work for you, please call the office now so we can reschedule. Please call Deborah Jezierski at 203-869-4670 to request a rescheduling of your meeting. While we understand that there may be a need for an IEP meeting in addition to the Annual Review, our goal is to keep to the schedule as closely as possible to decrease the impact on instruction.

## **General Communication**

Open communication between families and school staff is critical to the success of all children but particularly crucial for students with disabilities. We continue to work with our parents to promote communication strategies that are effective but result in minimal impact on teachers' instructional time with students. We ask you to use the following communication strategies in your contact with your child's teachers. Please remember that the communication books and emails are considered educational records and may be shared with other school staff for legitimate educational reasons

### **➤ Routine information**

The most effective way to communicate routine information with teachers is by email (for example, a sweater that was left in school, a note in a backpack). All such emails will be addressed promptly, typically within a school day. In some cases, additional time may be needed and if so, your child's teacher will let you know if this is the case. In response to some communications, the staff will offer to speak with you directly about your concern or question. Email is NOT the best way to communicate serious questions or concerns about your child or your child's program.

### **➤ Questions or Concerns about IEPs/Services/Instruction**

Questions about your child's IEP, including accommodations, services, etc., are best addressed directly with your child's teacher and/or special education monitor. As a school district, we value personal connections and communication with students and families. For this reason, we encourage parents and teachers to communicate in person or by telephone regarding questions or concerns about IEPs, services instruction, etc. In some cases, the monitor may need to follow up by email with parents or other members of the school team. In some cases, the monitor may need to schedule an IEP meeting to discuss any changes to your child's program - no decisions can or will be made about the IEP outside of a IEP/PPT meeting unless the school has your written permission to do so.

## **Bus Concerns**

Any issues with the bus should be reported to the district transportation office through the use of their on-line system. Go to the district web site ([www.greenwichschools.org](http://www.greenwichschools.org)) and under the "Quicklinks" section on the left hand side of the home page, click on the heading, "Report Bus Issues."

## **General Issues and Concerns**

Please follow the process of "chain of command" when dealing with issues and concerns. Your first contact should be the general or special education teacher, depending on the nature of the concern. If you are unable to reach resolution through your contact with the teacher, you should contact Michael Reid, Cos Cob Assistant Principal. If you are still not satisfied with the solutions/response at the school level, you may contact the Special Education Administrator for our cluster of schools, Karen Vitti. The next level of problem resolution would either be Mary Forde, Chief, PPS or Ann Carabillo, Deputy Superintendent. Please follow this hierarchy in attempting to resolve any concerns or issues you may have with your child's program. This will allow the staff who are closest to the problem the opportunity to solve the problem before involving administrators outside the building.

## **Emergencies**

In cases of emergency, please call the main office number: 203-869-4670.

## **Procedural Safeguards**

Copies of the Procedural Safeguards in both English and Spanish can be found on the district's website, <http://www.greenwichschools.org>. Also included, in English and Spanish, are the Safeguards regarding Restraint and Seclusion and the Transition Rights. If you would like to obtain a paper copy of any of the Procedural Safeguard documents, please contact me at the school or you can contact the district Office of

Pupil Personnel Services and make your request (telephone – Joan Pritchard, 203-625-7493, fax 203-625-7490, email – Joan\_pritchard@greenwich.k12.ct.us)

### **Parent Education and Communication Opportunities**

#### School-based Coffees

As in past years, we will be hosting a Parent Coffee. This is an opportunity to meet the staff and other parents and provides time to discuss issues that are important to your children in our school. **Our Parent Coffee will be held in the Learning Commons on September 18, 2018 from 8:30-9:15.**

We hope you had a chance to relax and reconnect this summer. Everyone at Cos Cob School is looking forward to a wonderful 2018-2019 school year full of success and inspiration. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Michael Reid  
Assistant Principal  
Cos Cob School