



GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

MR. THOMAS C. HEALY
Principal

MS. LINDSEY PONTIERI MR. SCOTT TRUNGADI
Assistant Principals

Dear Parents and Families,

September 2018

Welcome back! It is my great pleasure to join the Central Middle School administrative team this year, working alongside Principal Tom Healy and Assistant Principal Scott Trungadi. Together, we are all looking forward to a successful and productive year. I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some information regarding special education at Central 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, Elana Brookman (6th grade), Judie Baumeister (7th grade), Cassandra Wilkinson (7th grade), Lisa Boone (8th grade), and Kelly Lindine (8th grade). Ms. Rose Rinaldi (6th grade) joins us this year to fill in while Christine Oliver is out on maternity leave. Ms. Lindine joins us after working in Brooklyn, NY for the last 4 years splitting her time in between a co-teaching role and reading instruction. Ms. Rinaldi spent the last school year at Western Middle School in the same role (Long-term leave for 6th grade special education). We are fortunate to also have our speech and language therapist, Hallie Sigman, returning this year. Our psychologist, Daniella Phelan, and our social worker, Ashley Dawson, will be returning to provide mental health support to our students. In addition, we will continue to have Nicki Mancusi, occupational therapist and Chris Kish, physical therapist for our students. Our dedicated guidance staff also supports our students. Returning this year is Colleen Alfano (6th grade), Michelle Davis (7th grade) and Lesley Palange (8th grade). Our school nurse, Lori Fierro, will also be returning this year.

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 student or class for part of the day. For 2018-2019, our returning professional assistants are: Christopher Krumeich, Denise Brown, Julia Aviles, Megan Van Eyck, Vince Diaco, Joe Summa, Brittany Vartuli and John Gonzalez.

SES - Special Education Subcommittee of the PTA

This subcommittee of the PTA focuses on the needs, issues and concerns of the families of students with disabilities. 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.

IEP Annual Review Meetings

Like last year, we attempt to lessen the impact of IEP meetings on the instructional day whenever possible. We will email you well in advance of your Annual Review meeting to schedule the meeting. Please mark your calendars once the meeting has been scheduled. This planning helps us decrease the amount of time teachers are out of their classrooms, so it is important that we keep the scheduled dates once they are planned. You will then receive an invitation by mail 3 to 4 weeks before the meeting. Your child's special education monitor will call you a few days in advance to discuss the draft goals and objectives and to get your input prior to the meeting. If you know that a date or time will not work for you after a meeting has been scheduled, please call Melissa Pagni at 203-661-8500 ext. 4305 to request a rescheduling of your meeting. Thank you for your assistance with this procedure. 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 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 online system. Go to the district web site (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 your child’s grade level administrator: Ms. Lindsey Pontieri (6th grade), Mr. Scott Trungadi (7th grade), Mr. Tom Healy (8th grade). 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, Ms. Carrie Borcharding. The next level of problem resolution would either be Mary Forde, Director of PPS or Dr. 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) 661-8500.

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

Over the course of the year, I will send out emails notifying you of upcoming school parent meetings or events that will provide information and resources on various topics that relate to your child’s needs, such as technology to support your child and transitioning to the high school. I will also make sure to share any district or town-wide events that might provide information on areas that relate to your child. I am always available to answer any questions or hear any concerns you may have in regards to the supports your child receives at Central.

We hope you had a chance to relax and reconnect this summer. Everyone at Central Middle 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,
Lindsey Pontieri, Assistant Principal
Central Middle School