



EYESTONE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Educational Excellence in a Kind, Loving Environment

August 17, 2010

Dear Eyestone Parents,

I am privileged to welcome you and your families to the brand-new 2010-11 school year at Eyestone Elementary. Whether your children are new students, “veteran” Cougars, or a combination, we are excited they’re here!

If you’re new to our community, please don’t be intimidated! Principal letters are not normally this long, nor are Thursday Folders typically packed with quite so much “stuff”. However, at the start of a year, there’s a lot to communicate. We really appreciate your taking the time to sift through all of this and take care of forms and other necessary feedback as soon as possible. This allows us to get off to a great start to the school year and on to the fun stuff – the business of learning – so thanks in advance!

New This Year

Composting: As you may know, an interest in and emphasis on the concepts of wellness, 21st Century skills, sustainable living, and other related topics has been growing over the past few years in the Eyestone Elementary community. Through grants and the efforts and initiative of parents and staff members, we’ve been able to offer such activities as the 9 Health Fair, Family Fit Night, Walkathon, and more. This year, the district is expanding its composting program (lunchroom waste, coordinated with GSI) that has been serving several schools at the secondary level to include one elementary school. I’m very pleased to announce that Eyestone Elementary was selected for this program! We’re still in the startup phase, but expect to be fully up and running sometime in the first two weeks of school. Students will be attending an assembly to learn about the program and how it works. We’ll keep you posted!

Family Math Night: If you’ve been in the Eyestone community for the last couple of years, you are certainly familiar with our Family Curriculum Nights. These are evenings during the year where the whole family can come to school to eat together, learn together, and have fun together! The nights have a particular curriculum focus – last year, we offered two nights centered on reading, and the year before we offered three nights focused on writing. This year we have two large implementations under way in our district – the adoption/implementation of a new literacy program (Treasures) that replaces the old Open Court program, and the implementation (this year and next) of the newly-adopted Colorado State Standards. As these will both require significant collaborative time and effort by staff to implement properly – and since we still wanted to continue this successful series – we will be offering a single Family Math Night on Thursday, January 27. We encourage you to block out the date on your calendar and take advantage of this opportunity to connect with your child’s learning and support his or her long-term success. Please look for updates and more specific information in school and classroom newsletters and at our upcoming Back to School Nights!

In the News: School Boundaries Update

As you may recall, when the last school year ended, the PSD Boundary Committee had forwarded its recommendations to the superintendent, but a formal decision had not yet been made. The boundaries for Eyestone Elementary and Rice Elementary were among those being reviewed. After extensive community input and discussion, the committee’s recommendation was to leave the Eyestone and Rice attendance area boundaries as they are currently drawn. The superintendent accepted these recommendations, so ***there will be no changes to the current boundaries for Eyestone and Rice.***

Thursday Folders

In your child's personal **Thursday communication folder**, accompanying this letter, you will find a district calendar for the school year (printed on the inside leaf of the folder), and a number of student-related forms. If you are new to Eyestone, these folders are referred to as "Thursday Folders", and are sent home with each student on that day each week. Please take out all materials and sign the line next to the appropriate date on the left-hand side of the folder. You can then place any communications, forms, etc. you wish to send back in to school into the folder (if any), and give to your child to return to his or her teacher on the next school day. (**Please note**: Rather than coming home on Thursday, folders are coming home today, Tuesday, this week only. Please sign and send the folder back in with your child tomorrow.) Some items of importance included in the folder:

Cougar Notes: This is our monthly school newsletter and includes a calendar of upcoming Eyestone events. Please note that **Back-to-School nights** at Eyestone are scheduled for Thursday, August 26 (for grades 3-5), and Tuesday, August 31 (for grades K-2). For both nights, classroom presentations will be from 7:00-8:00 PM.

Parking Plan: Please be sure to familiarize yourself with Eyestone's parking plan. To maximize both student safety and traffic efficiency, the basic ideas in the plan are (1) to keep the bulk of our staff parking to the west and north side of the building, freeing up parking slots and a pickup/drop-off area for parents and visitors in the main lot, (2) to separate bus and auto pickups and drop-offs, and (3) to keep the pickup area in the main lot moving, minimizing the amount of time parents must spend in line. Please note that the only pickup and drop-off area for students is **at the front of the building**, and never on the west or north sides of the school. You can also utilize Wilson Avenue for pickups and drop-offs, particularly west of the school (between the school and the Leeper Center), since both crosswalks at the southwest corner of the school property are supervised before and after school. (*Note: While it is not mentioned specifically in the plan, it is important to understand that no students are allowed into the parking lot unless accompanied by a parent or teacher. If you park in the lot to pick up your children, you must come to the pickup area to get them, and then personally walk them to your car.*) Currently, there are 12 buses arriving at and departing from Eyestone each day. These buses cover our large attendance area and also coordinate runs with Wellington Middle School and Rice Elementary. The buses are staged in the afternoon in a specific order to make their designated runs on time. This certainly heightens the need for the separation of bus and car traffic and adherence to our designated pickup areas. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and your concern for student safety.

In terms of information and communication, I'd like to make sure that you are aware that the district offers an **eNewsletter Signup program**. This program allows you to receive designated documents electronically, rather than as hard copies, reducing paper costs and clutter, providing up-to-the-minute information, minimizing the potential for lost papers, and promoting "green" living. This service allows you to receive district information electronically as well. If you are not already signed up for this program, you can do this through the PSD website (www.psdschools.org). A full set of directions is included in today's folder. Most of our families now get their information in this fashion. If you do not have easy access to a computer, you will need to return the slip at the bottom of the form requesting hard copies go home with your child each week. We are asking that you select this option only if you do not have dependable computer access. (Consider this: the money and time saved goes directly to your kids!) We are certainly happy to accommodate all families who require hard copies.

Please note that the district is now providing access to the **Student Rights and Code of Conduct** electronically, rather than printing individual booklets for all families. A certification form (in your packet)

is required to be on file for each student in a family. Please sign and return these to school as soon as possible. If you do not have adequate computer access, you may request a hard copy from the office. (A different certification form – specific to hard copies – will be provided and will then need to be returned and kept on file.)

Website and Parent Handbook

Please be sure to check out **Eyestone's website** (www.psdschools.org/schools/eyestone). On the website, you will find valuable information and current news, including a calendar with major school-wide events, links to staff email addresses, volunteer and PTO information, etc. If they are ever misplaced or lost, you can also find most Thursday Folder items there, such as copies of Cougar Notes and Principal's Letters (like this one!). Tom Torres, (formerly at 3rd grade, and this year teaching 5th grade) is our web manager. Please feel free to give us any feedback about ease of use of the website or about things you would like to see included. (Note: in the big changeover to the new PSD website, access to school websites was intermittent and/or impaired for several days and much of the more current information we had put on the site was knocked off. However, we were able to get things reconstructed and replaced soon after, and the information should now be current and accessible.)

As with most schools in the district, an Eyestone Elementary **Parent Handbook** is available in electronic form. The handbook is a general information directory of "all things Eyestone", including school policies and procedures, emergency dismissal information, general schedules, information on medications, etc. The handbook is posted on the website, with a drop-down link on the main page under "Eyestone Info". We will also send this out through the email system (above) next Thursday, August 26, so if you are signed up by then, you will receive a copy. Information will be revised and added on the website copy on an ongoing basis, and the updated version will then be emailed out early each school year. If you do not have adequate access to a computer, hard copies are available at the Eyestone office upon request.

Whew – I think that's it for now! I'm truly looking forward to working in partnership with you to provide the best educational experience for your child. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions, concerns, or feedback on things that are working well for you. My goal, as always, is a successful year for each and every Eyestone student and family.

Have a great first week, and I hope to see you all around and about!



David Sobson
Eyestone Principal

