**Mrs. Darden’s Back to School Letter**

**2023-2024**

Parents and Guardians,

            I want to welcome you and your child to kindergarten.  I am looking forward to the opportunity to share this school year with your child.  I want this to be a wonderful time in your child’s life…a time of growing, learning, and smiling.  To help things run smoothly this year, please read the following information.  I have tried to address some questions that you may have, as well as share items I would like you to be aware of for the school year.

**Transportation and Office Procedures**

The school day begins at 8:25 a.m. and ends at 2:50 p.m.  If your child needs to be picked up early or is tardy (after 8:30), you must go to the office and sign the child in or out.  For children leaving early, the office will notify me, and then I will send your child to the office to meet you.  For children arriving late, the staff will send the child to the classroom with a hall pass.  This procedure must be followed; there are no exceptions.  This is for the protection of your child.

At dismissal parents may walk to meet their child at the gathering place that is located near the covered basketball court. If you want to meet your child to walk home, school policy requires that you go to the gathering place rather than wait near the classrooms. Bus and daycare van riders dismiss at the front of the school.

Parents may choose instead to go through the car drive-thru line located at the back of the school. In an effort to increase safety and efficiency of student pick up, we will be implementing a new dismissal program called PikMyKid.  This system uses an app to let the school know when parents/guardians arrive at the school.  In the afternoon at dismissal, students will be released from their classroom in real time to their car.  This will help with traffic and avoid students gathering at car pick up.  All students will still receive a car tag at orientation, but the app will announce the parent/guardian arrival as soon as they enter campus allowing for faster pick up. There are many other unique features of PikMyKid and we will be sending more information soon.

**IMPORTANT:** Please download the PikMyKid app to learn a little more on your own. Be sure to check out the following link that will show you a few of the PikMyKid features:  [https://www.pikmykid.com/features/for-parents/](https://nam11.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flinkprotect.cudasvc.com%2Furl%3Fa%3Dhttps%253a%252f%252fwww.pikmykid.com%252ffeatures%252ffor-parents%252f%26c%3DE%2C1%2CotESqfGlcBEZdNdx5AAmd7PQZ1OlvMptG5ZisqdCDZhfcok7v1UPoqUjA-_3O0BU0S4-raySbydYJ_eZrhpU4Y1vy9TUFkptTza_OGOvufOHUEaz3EfCRyfR%26typo%3D1&data=05%7C01%7C%7C5fac1caec2244c223af308db929b0d38%7C69292adba72a4537aa24d67a6f5642bc%7C0%7C0%7C638264967536722965%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LoDnijYqXaHGDT3L0ynX4Cg3OnxJ%2B%2F1aLBypvrmSVqw%3D&reserved=0)

 **If there is a change in the method your child will use to go home, you must submit a note to me in their KID folder.  Last minute changes can be made by calling the front office at 488-6133.** Due to the end of the day transitions, they will be unable to check out students in the front office for early dismissal between 2:30 and 2:50 p.m. If your child has an afternoon appointment, please ensure that you pick up your child prior to 2:30.

**Arrival at School**

When students arrive in the morning, they place their backpacks outside of our classroom on the hooks along the wall. They then proceed to play on the kindergarten playground until the bell rings. When the first bell rings, the children will form a line along the fence on the playground (next to my name). I will pick them up and walk them to our classroom. On the first day they come directly to our classroom. *Parents are not allowed on campus to drop off their child at their classroom.* I will be giving families stickers with student information for your child to wear for the first few days when you drop them off. There will be school personnel directing children to their classrooms.

**Supply List:**

-Bath-sized towel labeled with name

-backpack (no wheels and must hold a standard size notebook)

-complete change of clothes with socks (put in Ziplock bag with your child’s name written on the outside)

-4 boxes of 24 count Crayola crayons

-1 pair of blunt-tip Fiskars kid scissors

-1 box of Classic Crayola broad tip (thick) markers

-1 box of Crayola fine tip (thin) markers

-1 set of Expo dry erase markers

-1, 4 oz bottle of Elmer's white school glue

-24 Elmer's school glue sticks

-10-12 sharpened #2 pencils

-1 container Crayola watercolor paints

-1 plastic pencil box

-1 pair of headphones (not earbuds)

-1 four-count package of playdough

-1 refillable water bottle (they will bring this daily to school)

A **K.I.D. folder** is a special folder that each student in my class gets at the beginning of the school year. It stands for **K**eeping **I**nformed **D**aily. It is used to develop organizational skills and to teach responsibility. This folder is a way of maintaining effective communication between home and school. It aims to eliminate lost notes and money. Lastly, it keeps you informed of important school events, daily student behavior and academic progress. Please look at the items that will be included in the K.I.D. folder.

* **Money and Notes Pouch**-Please place any notes for me in this pouch. It is an ideal place to put money.
* **Monthly Behavior Sheet**- You will find your child's daily behavior note on the right-hand side. Please initial that you have seen your child’s behavior for the day. Celebrate the great behavior and please discuss any inappropriate behaviors.
* **Folder Pockets**- Newsletters, school notes, field trip permission slips, homework and other important papers will be placed on the left-hand side. Please place items that need to be returned to me in this pocket as well.

**K.I.D. Folder Rules:**

1. Please take very good care of the K.I.D. folder. Each student gets only one folder to last the whole year.

2. Clean out the left pocket in the notebook each night.

3. The K.I.D. folder will be sent home daily and should be returned the next morning.

4. Keep the K.I.D. folder clean. Please do not allow eating or drinking around it. Do not allow your child to write or draw anywhere in the K.I.D. folder.

5. Please make sure a parent signs the behavior section every night!

**Kinder-Darden Website**

I will update my website regularly.  I would like for you to check the *Updates* and *Newsletters* sections every Monday.  If I feel there is a need, I will send an e-mail newsflash. It is imperative that I have e-mail addresses for this to be successful.  If you do not have an e-mail address, please let me know so that I can provide hard copies in your child’s folder.

The website is: <http://www.leonschools.net//site/Default.aspx?PageID=11378>

**Appropriate Dress**

Comfortable clothes and shoes are recommended because children work and play hard.  We will be going out to recess on fair weather days.  Please dress your child accordingly. I am unable to regulate the temperature in our classroom; it is usually chilly. Your child can keep a lightweight jacket in their backpack to use if necessary.  Please label all clothing with your child's name.

**Snack**We will have an optional daily snack.  It must be healthy (no candy, carbonated beverages).  Items such as cheese and crackers, yogurt, granola bars, pretzels, applesauce, or fruit make good snacks.  Please send your child’s snack daily. Sometimes there is some confusion for the children as to what is their lunch and what is their snack.  Pick a spot in your child's backpack that is just for their snack.  You may want to place it in a brown lunch bag labeled "snack" at the beginning of the year.  We will not have a group snack due to allergies.  Our school is a peanut-free school.  We encourage parents to send in lunch and snack items that are safe for students with allergies.

**Lunch**

Our class eats lunch from **11:00-11:25**. All Buck Lake students will be provided free breakfast and lunch.  The menu is on my website. Your child is welcome to get a school lunch or bring a lunch from home.  If packing a lunch, please make sure you pack items your child can open without assistance.   Please take some time before school begins to practice opening and closing items as well as eating in a timely manner as our lunch is usually 25 minutes. Students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles from home.

**Money**

When sending any money to school, please put it in an envelope and label the outside with your child’s name, my name, the amount and what it is for.

**Medicine**

If your child needs to take **ANY** medication at school, it must be handled by the clinic.  Please complete a medication form in the front office when you drop off the medication.  Please do not send any medicine in your child’s lunchbox or backpack.

**Birthdays**

If it is your child’s birthday and you would like to send in a treat that is fine. Please contact me to set up the date and time. We can only accept individually prepackaged snack items at this time. Birthday celebrations are not a party so no need for drinks or other goodies.

I look forward to sharing this school year with you and your child.  If your address or phone numbers change throughout the year, please inform me promptly.  I am looking forward to a fun filled year with plenty of learning!

Sincerely,

Sonja Darden

dardens@leonschools.net

Buck Lake 488-6133