



August 11, 2008

Dear Avery-Parsons Elementary Students and Parents,

On behalf of the entire staff of Avery-Parsons Elementary, I would like to say “**Konnichiwa**” (*kon-nee-chee-WAH*) or *hello!* It is time for the event we have all been waiting for...the start of school and our “**Nihon heno passport**” or *Passport to Japan*. Our Ape is leaving the jungle and traveling to the Orient. Our theme for the year is *Passport to Japan* and we are looking forward to learning about Japan and this ancient culture.



As we continue to move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, educators are being challenged with the task of educating students who are not only learning differently, but are challenged with preparing them for a world that looks very different. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Education, the top 10 jobs in 2010 didn't exist in 2004. Educators are currently preparing students for jobs that do not exist yet, using technologies that haven't yet been invented, in order to solve problems that we don't even know are problems yet. With that in mind, we must work together to ensure that our students are well prepared for this ever changing world. Together, we must balance many things in producing well-rounded, creative, problem-solving students who one day will lead our world. We must have students who can read and write, but they must also be able to work with others, think creatively, find solutions, and understand other languages and cultures.

In September, we will be welcoming Japanese intern Takashi Hosoyo. Mr. Hosoyo will be spending most of the year with us at APE teaching us about the Japanese culture, but also learning the art of teaching. Mr. Hosoyo is working on his elementary teaching degree in Japan and is with us to complete his student teaching requirements. We are very excited to have him on staff and look forward to introducing him to our school and community once he arrives in Buena Vista!

As our teachers and staff do every summer, we have been learning, planning, and working towards making Avery-Parsons Elementary the best elementary school in Colorado. Now that we have had time to evaluate last school year and process any changes to be made for this upcoming year, I would like to highlight some things that will make the start of school smooth for you and your student. If you have questions, do not hesitate in contacting the school office.

### **Food Service**

Whether you are new or returning to our school, we have the best cafeteria staff and best food in town! To make things simple for our students, our lunch system is computerized. Therefore, each student purchasing a breakfast or lunch will have to take his/her money to the office where our secretaries will record that amount into the computer system and a receipt will be given to your student. No money will be taken/accepted in the cafeteria. Upon entering the cafeteria, students will enter a four digit code specific to them. After receiving a tray, our cafeteria staff will use a touch screen to deduct the breakfast or lunch meal from that student's account. We welcome parents and families to eat lunch in the cafeteria with their student. If you are able to join us, please stop by the office for a visitors badge and to purchase a lunch.

**Beginning this year, we will not accept any breakfast or lunch charges.**

Our recess/lunch schedule is as follows:

**Recess/Lunch Schedule**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>10:40-11:15</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>10:40-10:55</b>	<b>11:00-11:20</b>
<b>2nd</b>	<b>11:05-11:20</b>	<b>11:25-11:45</b>
<b>3rd</b>	<b>11:30-11:45</b>	<b>11:50-12:10**</b>
<b>4th</b>	<b>11:55-12:10</b>	<b>12:15-12:35</b>
<b>5th</b>	<b>12:20-12:35</b>	<b>12:40-1:00</b>

Additionally, if your child was on the free and reduced lunch program last year, you will continue to be on that program for the first 30 days of school. Therefore, please return the Child Nutrition Form as soon as possible. If you are unsure if you qualify, complete the form anyway. There is no obligation or charge. **New to the free and reduced program, any child in grades kindergarten through second grade who qualify for the reduced lunch program will be coded as free. The federal government made changes to that part of the program this summer to be implemented for the 2008-2009 school year.**

**Dismissal Procedures**

We do have a dismissal procedure in place. Please review with your child the dismissal procedures (included in this packet) prior to the start of school. Any changes to your child's regular dismissal routine must be changed with a note to the classroom teacher or a call to the school office.

**Student Handbook**

A year long calendar with specific APE activities will be provided for you in the student handbook to be distributed the first week of school. Please review the handbook with your student.

**Red Folders**

In an effort to improve communication and to have school-wide consistency, each student preschool-3<sup>rd</sup> grade will have a red plastic communication folder. Information being sent home with the student will be sent in this red folder. Teachers will send papers, flyers, homework, and notes in this folder.

**Agendas**

Each student in fourth grade and the fifth grade students in Mrs. Enck's looping class will receive an agenda. Other fifth grade students will receive an agenda based on individual need. The agenda's purpose is to write down homework assignments and other important information. Teachers are required to utilize agendas in each of their classes. Parents are encouraged to look at the agendas daily to reinforce organization, promote positive study habits, monitor homework completion, and to be a role model for their child.

**Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum**

The award-winning Second Step curriculum is a program for schools and families to use to encourage children to get along well with others. The program teaches children to think about others' feelings, to solve problems cooperatively, and to manage their anger in a positive way. Mr. Jon Moorhead, school counselor and Second Step trainer, will train all staff covering what happens in the classroom and show examples of how Second Step can be used in the classroom. It takes time and practice to be comfortable using these skills, but the skills do work to reduce conflict and encourage cooperation in children.

Based on more than 15 years of classroom application and the most current academic, social, and emotional research, the Second Step program focuses on essential competencies – empathy, impulse control and problem solving, and anger management.

Research shows that aggressive behavior in children predicts risk of later delinquency, substance abuse, school dropout, early parenthood, and depression. Use of the Second Step program helps provide children with the skills they need to create safe environments and become successful adults.

Last year, Mr. Moorhead worked with the APE staff and the Committee for Children on developing an improved discipline referral that reflects the Second Step language and process. That form will be utilized this year.

Enclosed in this packet is information helpful to you and your student. We have enclosed the following forms:

- **Emergency Call Form**-Please complete and return the Emergency Call Sheet by August 31. This information helps us keep our records up-to-date and gives us information on who to contact in an emergency, how your child gets home from school, health concerns, etc.
- **Walking Field Trip Permission Form**-This form must be on record for your child to participate in any field trips where students will be walking from school.
- **Medicaid Consent Form**
- **Child Nutrition Program Forms**-Please review this packet and fill out forms accordingly. Federal money is given to our school/district based on the percentage of our students receiving free and reduced meals through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Anyone can apply and all information is confidential; therefore, we have sent every family in our school a packet. If you have any questions regarding this program, please contact our office.
- **Student Health Questionnaire**-Please complete and return by August 31. This is information is very important in meeting any health needs of your student.
- **School Breakfast and Lunch Menu**-Please note changes in prices!
- **School Calendar**-Hardcopy and magnet
- **Boys and Girls Club**

As a reminder...

- ❖ **August 19**—*Kindergarten Meet the Teacher* 4-5 p.m.
- ❖ **August 21**-First day of school for all students
- ❖ **August 26**-*Back to School Night* 4-6 p.m. Grades 1-5
- ❖ **September 1**-Labor Day-**No School**
- ❖ **September 2**-First day of school for preschool.
- ❖ **September 10**-Early release-Students dismissed at 1:45 p.m.

Again, welcome to the best school and school district in Colorado! Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher or office staff. Best wishes for a fun and successful 2008-2009 school year!

*Sayōnara (goodbye),*

Stefani D. Franklin, Principal