Dear North Salem Family,

There is something very special about sending your child off to kindergarten and first grade. I know this both as a parent and as a former readiness and first grade teacher for many years. Next August I will also experience it as a grandparent! It is the beginning of a new journey. You have been your child’s primary teacher since birth and while that will never change, you must now entrust him or her to us to carry on that which you began. Our wonderful staff is ready for this truly awesome responsibility. Our Kindergarten team includes Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Gendron, and Mrs. Scenna. Earlier this summer Mrs. Gendron and family welcomed baby Nora, and she will be on leave through mid October. Ms. Ashley Roy will be the long term substitute. She has been a para for several years at NS and filled in for Mrs. Johnson last year. When Mrs. Gendron returns, Ms. Roy will stay on in the classroom as the instructional paraprofessional. Our grade 1 team includes Ms. Kennedy, Mrs. Strob, and Mrs. O’Neill, and Mrs. Sarah Gray. Mrs. Gray joins us after spending a year in Kindergarten at Lancaster School. Prior to that she taught first grade for several years in a neighboring city. They have all been hard at work creating classrooms that are warm, exciting, and challenging places for your child to learn and grow academically, socially, and emotionally this year.

Custodians Mrs. Hutchins and Mr. Cole have done a tremendous short-handed job to get the school in tip-top shape for the first day of school on THURSDAY, AUGUST 29th. Every room and space is emptied, cleaned, stripped and waxed, and then put back together for teachers and staff to create your child’s school “home”. Our P.T.A. has been busy planning, too! Every year I remark that change is a constant, and this year is no exception. Ms. Wienberg and Mrs. Warlick are onto new chapters in their lives. This year we’ll have 3 full day kindergartens. Another first grade was added due to increasing enrollments. Many other grade level teachers are changing grades and classroom locations. With the exception of K, each grade level has a change in teachers. Samantha Abraham (2), Sarah Novia (3), and Sarah Gray (1) are new teachers to our district and school. We have many new support staff too -- Sarah MacAskill, Jen Roy, Michelle Zukowski, Jenna Martin, and Tammy Forcier and Josie Coco will join our staff full time. You can check out our Facebook page to “meet” our new staff during August and see what the rest of us have been up to this summer!

At this time of year, families often ask what supplies students need to start the school year. Really, the only thing is a backpack and lunch box. Anything else is optional. We provide students with the supplies they need to have, including home-school folders for K-1 students.

Here is some information about upcoming events as you and your child prepare for the new school year.

- Bus routes will soon be posted on our App and on the district web site. (Look up Salem School District in the APP store if you don’t have this yet.)
- Our school handbook (school information, schedules, school rules) will be posted on our website later this month.
- Friday, August 23rd — Class lists posted at the school after 3:00 PM (tradition) and emailed.
- **Tuesday, August 27th – Meet and greet your new teacher 5:00-5:30 PM in the classroom.**
- Tuesday, August 27th – 5:30-7:30 Welcome Back Cookout hosted by our P.T.A. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, and your appetites for hot dogs prepared by some of North Salem’s finest chefs! There will be entertainment too! If the weather does not cooperate, we will alert you earlier in the day. **WE WILL STILL HAVE CLASSROOM VISITING TIME!**
- PTA will provide hotdogs, rolls, and paper goods. **COOK OUT DONATIONS are needed as follows:**
  - **Grade 1 families – Cookies (Individually packaged please – peanut free)**
  - **Grade 2 families - Chips (Individually packaged please)**
  - **Grade 3 families - Single serving (small) water bottles**
  - **Grade 4 families - Single serving juice boxes**
  - **Grade 5 families - anything from the list above**
  - **Kindergarten families are our guests!**
- Look for our PTA information tables at the cookout. You can support our school and PTA by becoming a member. Learn about our Fall Fundraiser and about PTA sponsored social events.
- We will also be selling Panther Pride Spirit Wear (tee shirts, etc)

**THURSDAY, August 29th** – **First Day of School 😊** Continue reading and find out how you can be a part of that day!
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL INFORMATION

The start of any new year is an exciting one, but especially for our kindergarten and first grade students as they begin their public school journey. We know that some of you may want to be at NS for your child’s first day of school. If your schedule permits, we invite you to bring your kindergartener or first grader to school on the first day. I’m sure there will also be time for a photo or two!

Because of parking, buses, and student safety, please plan on doing the following if you wish to come to school on the first day.

- **If driving** your child to school, you may want to arrive at school between **8:50 and 9:00 AM** as other students will already be in the building and it will be less busy outside. Entry to our parking lot is via the second driveway (the one farthest from the school entrance). The first driveway is reserved for buses. If the parking lot is full, you may park on the school side of Zion Hill Road. This means you will need to factor parking and a short walk into your arrival time. Please bring your child directly into the building by the front door after other students enter. Our staff will be available to direct you and your child to his/her classroom and give you a visitor sticker to wear.
- **If** your child is arriving **by bus**, you should plan to arrive at school by 8:45. Again, parking is limited, so factor parking and walking time into your arrival. K & 1 students will be escorted off the bus and led over to the playground area where they play until the bell rings. **PARENTS/GUARDIANS will NOT be allowed on the playgrounds due to safety issues.** You’ll be asked to wait in a designated area until all of the students have entered the building at 8:45. Once you have received a VISITOR sticker from a staff member, we’ll then have you enter the building and go meet your child in his/her room.
- After photos and hugs, you will be dismissed from the classroom at about 9:15 so that the children and teachers can begin their day.
- If you are unable to attend, and your child will be arriving by bus, please know we will welcome and direct him/her where to go.
- Several staff members, including me, will be available in the cafeteria if you have questions after you are dismissed from classrooms. There will **not** be any formal meeting.
- **FOR STUDENT SAFETY, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ON THE BALLFIELD, PLAYGROUND AREA, OR IN THE BUILDING PRIOR TO 9:00.**

You may want to check out local our district web site, [www.sau57.org](http://www.sau57.org) or school app for information on bus schedules and routes. If you have transportation questions or concerns, please contact Kathy Graziano at the Superintendent’s Office at 893-7040. You will be receiving information about our lunch program including pricing, payment methods, and a menu on the first day of school. This information can be found on our school’s webpage or school app. Your child may bring a snack to school. Please send in ONE healthy snack that can be easily handled by your child and eaten in a short amount of time. You will be informed if your child is in a peanut free classroom. For our half day kindergarten families, extended day care opportunities are offered by the Salem Boys and Girls Club and Kids Krossroads. We offer before and after school care at North Salem through Create and Discover.

On behalf of our entire staff, welcome (back to our returning K students) to North Salem Elementary School! With your help and support, I know it will be a successful school year for your child. To stay informed, check out our websites at [www.sau57.org/northsalem](http://www.sau57.org/northsalem) and [www.northsalempta.org](http://www.northsalempta.org) as well as our Facebook page and district app.

I look forward to working with you to make this year the beginning of many successful years in Salem! Please do not hesitate to contact me any time during the year if you have questions, concerns, or a comment to share!

**Janice Wilkins**, Principal

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