

## **Principally Speaking** *from the desk of Melissa Burns, Principal*

Dear Parents,

We have gotten off to a great start and are looking forward to a successful year of learning and growing. We would like to welcome all of the families who are new to Olive Chapel Elementary. We're glad to have you with us!

Along with our new students, we welcome new staff members as well. Ms. Kenya Moore-Kerr has joined our staff as a full-time Assistant Principal intern. We welcome to our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade team Ms. Rachael Stauffer, who has several years of teaching experience and is herself the parent of a new student at OCE. We are fortunate to have another experienced teacher, Ms. Kimmie Niemitalo, join our special programs' team. Our new speech teacher, Ms. Liz Miller, has come to us from Davis Drive Elementary with experience working with children with special needs. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team welcomes Ms. Gladys White, who will be student teaching with Ms. Noonan. Mr. Terrell Wright joins the staff as our school psychologist thru September, when he will reach his goal of retirement. In addition, we welcome several new teacher assistants, Ms. Kelly McDonald, Ms. Sheree Brinton, Ms. Jocelyn Jones, Ms. Julia Dadio, and Ms. Karen Anderson, who all come to us with experience working at other Wake County Schools.

Along with staffing changes have come some scheduling changes as well. The Board of Education approved the 2009-2010 bell schedule including a change of time to support learning and teaching, developing techniques for strengthening and enriching students' skills. The new schedule adds 10 minutes to the school day and provides for one hour early dismissal on Wednesdays. Our school day now begins at 9:05 a.m. (Early arrivals will operate from 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Children should not arrive on campus before 8:45 a.m. unless they are in the early arrivals program.) Students who arrive after 9:05 a.m. are considered tardy, and a parent must report to the office to sign in the student. Dismissal on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday still occurs at 3:45 p.m.; but on Wednesday, school dismisses one hour earlier, at 2:45 p.m. On eight Wednesdays, school will release 2.5 hours early, at 1:15 p.m., to allow staff to attend professional development opportunities. All of these early dismissals are noted on the *Clipper* calendar and school website for your convenience. We welcome and appreciate parent visits to our campus. Please remember that all visitors must report to the main office to sign in before proceeding to any classrooms, including the cottages. A few notes about carpool procedures are below. Please know that these rules are for the safety of all children at OCE. We appreciate your assistance.

Finally, I'd like to commend our remarkable staff for making such a successful transition to the new school year. Along with the PTA Board, led by Carolyn Sloan, we all look forward to another outstanding school year filled with learning, teaching, and fun memories for everyone at OCE!

*--Melissa Burns, Principal*

## **Carpool Procedures**

- Please do not drop children off before 8:45 a.m. unless they are in the early arrivals program.
- Drop off and pick up children in the carpool line *only*. Dropping students off in the bus lot, visitors' lot, and cafeteria lot is not permitted.
- Make sure your children are ready to get out of the car with their shoes on and backpack in hand when you pull up to the curb. Staff and safety patrol members will be ready to assist them as needed.
- All parents are asked to remain in their cars and to pull up to the colored cones to allow children to be picked up in the afternoon. It can cause confusion for students and staff if many adults are surrounding the doors at the front of the school or multipurpose room.
- If you need to secure your child(ren) in their seats, please pull forward out of the direct carpool line to avoid holding up traffic.
- Please do not park in the fire lanes marked at the front of the school.

We are aware that the parking lot is inadequate for the number of cars and carpool students that we have. Having your child ride the bus, carpool with a neighbor, or walk to school can alleviate traffic. In fact, you can combat congestion and support healthy activity by joining the "Walking Schoolbus" on our Walk to School Days, the first Wednesday of every month. Mark your calendar for the first "Walk to School" day on Wednesday, October 7.