



August 17, 2018

Dear Walker Parents,

I hope this letter finds you enjoying the last days of summer with your families and friends. This communication will include much of the necessary information to get the year started. I am excited to begin a new year at Walker School—a truly special place with an outstanding collection of students, staff, and parents!

My family had a great summer, visiting our lake house in Michigan, swimming, biking, rock climbing, kayaking, and hanging out with friends till late in the summer evenings. I even acquired a new nickname this summer from my children, “Vacation Dad.” Spending quality time with my children this summer has reminded me how important it is to change up our routines, try something new...and even scare ourselves once in a while...in order to grow and become better versions of ourselves.

I love the excitement and anticipation that comes with every August before the students’ first day. Walker School is sparkling clean and ready for our students and staff, thanks to Ms. Daisy (our *new* Head Custodian), Ana, Fernando, and the D181 custodial crew! And special thanks goes to Jan Martin (Administrative Assistant) for ensuring our Walker office is ready for the school year to begin! Our teachers and staff have been very busy preparing the building, setting up classrooms, and receiving training over the summer—in the effort to continue to move Walker forward in our pursuit of excellence.

I’d like to thank the PTO, especially Co-Presidents Lindsey Patel and Jessica Christensen, who have been a tremendous support as we have planned many fun events for the Walker community throughout the school year. I am eager to work with the PTO all year to enhance our students’ educational experiences at Walker. Be on the lookout for additional communications from our PTO about special upcoming events and information. Our students greatly benefit from the care and attention of the entire Walker community. I look forward to working with you to support your child in having a terrific school experience this year!

Walker Wednesday News

Walker Wednesday News (WWN) is a weekly communication that is posted on the PTO website (www.walkerpto.com) that provides families with the most up-to-date information regarding all that is going on at Walker School. The first WWN will be published on Wednesday, 8/29/2018. You should receive an email from walkernews120@gmail.com with a link to the PTO website. If you do not receive an email on 8/29/2018, please contact Jan Martin: (jmartin@d181.org).

Teacher Assignment via Parent Portal Viewable on Monday 8/20

As of Monday 8/20 at 10:00 AM, you will be able to log into the Skyward Family Access, skywardfamily.d181.org, to view your child's homeroom teacher. You will navigate to the student Info Menu on the left to view the teacher assignment.

Your Login ID is your first name last name (all one word and lowercase), i.e. "minniemouse." If you cannot login, use the *Forgot Login/Password?* link on the login page and follow the prompts to reset your password. If you receive an error message, contact Nick Skrip at nskrip@d181.org.

Apollo Before and After School Care

Walker is happy to partner with Apollo for Before School and After School Care this year in our Learning Lab. Several communications went out last spring to begin planning for this care option for families who choose it. If interested, please see the attached flyer and contact Apollo at 855.543.7277 or ce@apolloafterschool.com.

- Before School Care begins at 7:00 AM to 8:30
- After School Care begins at 3:05 until 6:00 PM

Visiting Walker? You'll Need a State ID or Drivers License

This year, in the ongoing effort to improve overall safety at Walker School all visitors will check-in at the office. All visitors must present a valid ID for a safety check and wear a pre-printed visitor's badge (similar to many other schools these days). Please allow for a few extra minutes to facilitate this new and important procedure while visiting or volunteering at Walker School this year. Thank you for your patience with this extra step and helping us to keep everyone safe at Walker!

It Takes a Village

We have a few new faces at Walker this school year—and some familiar faces in different roles. I am certain you will enjoy getting to know the following staff, *new* to Walker:

Staffing Changes/Updates

- Eileen Kapcar, Kindergarten Teacher
- Sherri Lee, 2nd Grade Teacher (move from 1st grade)
- Patricia Pappas, 4th Grade Teacher
- Jordan Thornquist, Reading Specialist
- Lynn Marquardt, 5th Grade Teacher (name change from Mueller)
- Gus Lauermann, PE (Walker in AM daily)
- Eric Morong, 5th Grade Band Teacher (Fridays)
- Melissa Capizzi, Pupil Service Administrator
- Beth Bellinger, Adapted Music for Program RISE
- Carolyn Finazzo, Speech and Language Pathologist (Fridays)
- Daisy Fulgencio, Head Custodian

- Terri Suchy, Secretary (Tuesdays only)
- Cynthia Soumar, Instructional Assistant
- Marie Barda, Instructional Assistant
- Monique Alexander, Instructional Assistant
- Katrina Wojczynski, Instructional Assistant
- Catherine McCook, Instructional Assistant

Walker will also be home base for the two district-wide Assistive Technology staff (Randy Wooten and Abby Rodriguez), as well as Patricia Ward (Behavior Specialist). As you can see, we have a full house! When visiting Walker, please allow extra time to find a parking spot and for the new Visitor check-in process.

Next Thursday (8/23) Back to School Events

Thanks to the careful coordination of the Walker PTO, we have planned a comprehensive schedule for getting ready for school with a full schedule on Thursday (8/23):

- New Family Orientation at Walker MPR 3:00 – 4:00 PM
- Bike Rodeo hosted in Walker Parking Lot 4:00 – 5:00 PM
This event is for students in grades 3-5 who plan to ride their bikes to school. If your child participated in this safety check previously, he/she does not need to gain approval again.
- Back-to-School Social, T-Shirt pickup, and Walker Spirit Wear on Blacktop/Gym 4:00 – 5:00 PM
All students may pick up their Walker t-shirts that were pre-ordered through PTO, and hang around for the Back-to-School Social.

Pre-Ordered Supply Kits Delivered to Classrooms

Same as last year, for those who pre-ordered school supply kits, our Walker PTO has arranged for kits to be delivered to classrooms so they are awaiting students on the first day. Teachers will help students unload the supplies on the first day. If you did not pre-order in the spring, no extra supply kits will be available for purchase.

You Can Make a Difference, Too!

If you have not already, I'd like to encourage you to sign up to support our Walker PTO. The PTO continues to need volunteers to support our many Walker activities. There are opportunities for everyone, so please check out the Walker PTO website: <http://www.walkerpto.com/>

Milk Does a Body Good!

The district offers a prepaid milk program for \$52 that covers the cost of one carton of milk for each lunch day. Use your Skyward login to prepay for milk through the Parent Access Portal. This option is only available to families until 9/14/2018. If you do not choose to participate in the prepaid milk program, you will need to send your child with 30¢ daily if they

want to purchase milk. The prepaid option is available **only at the beginning of the school** year as a convenience to families who purchase milk everyday, or to families who choose to make one payment for the entire year. There are no credits or refunds given if your child goes home for lunch periodically or chooses to bring a drink from home. **September 14th is the last day on which to pay for prepaid milk.**

Birthday Lunches with the Principal

We will continue the monthly Birthday Lunch celebrations with the principal, recognizing student birthdays (or half-birthdays for those born in the summer months). I will again read a story to students and we will have fun exploring Monarch Books and STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics) activities. Please refer to the attachment to better understand how we recognize your child's birthday. The first Birthday Lunch is Tuesday, September 4th, for **September** birthdays. August birthdays will be celebrated in February.

New This Year at Walker School

Foods at School

Please be reminded of the policy about foods at school, which Dr. Garcia communicated to all families previously:

The D181 Food Allergy Management Plan was adopted by the District 181 Board of Education on May 21, 2018. You can find a copy of the plan in full on our District website for the Food Allergy Management Plan here: [D181 Food Allergy Management Plan](#)

Of particular note is our Parent Information and Overview:

file:///Users/echisausky/Downloads/FAMP_Parent_Information_and_Overview_8_1_18.pdf

The Plan is aligned with Board policy 7.285, and provides a comprehensive, districtwide plan to prevent or reduce allergen exposure, educate staff, and respond to food allergy emergencies. Following is a summary of action items for District students and parents.

The Plan is communicated to all staff, students and parents prior to the first day of student attendance and includes information on: allergies and anaphylaxis, federal nondiscrimination & disability law, classroom food guidelines and resources for parents and staff. The plan will be reviewed annually by a Food Allergy Committee organized by the Superintendent.

Parents play a critical role in ensuring a safe school environment. Please help protect the health and safety of all students by following and encouraging students to follow all established guidelines below:

Elementary Guidelines

Classroom Snack

- *Fruits or vegetables only (including dried fruits such as raisins and applesauce).*
- *No additions, toppings or mixins (such as dips or spreads).*

Lunch

- For any classroom lunch or field trip lunch, the building principal will send an email stating that lunches should contain no peanuts or tree nuts. Please ensure that student lunches do not contain any peanuts or tree nuts on those days.

Elementary Classroom Parties:

Classroom parties shall be food free or, at teacher discretion, may include Outshine Fruit Bars (lemon, grape, and/or tangerine), Annie's fruit snacks, and/or Original Skinny Pop brand popcorn. Students shall not bring food to give as gifts or share with other students (such as with Valentine's cards, on Halloween, or as holiday gifts).

Parents will be provided with information, which can be found on the District website re Parent Information and Overview here: <https://www.d181.org/parents/health-information>

Drop-Off and Traffic Flow

To ensure the safest possible experience for our students at drop-off and pick-up, please be sure to review the attached WALKER SCHOOL INFORMATION (Parking Lot Procedures) and accompanying traffic flow map. We will continue the same drop-off and pick-up procedures as last year. Special Note: Kindergartners should be dropped off in the marked **drop-off zone** along the sidewalk. Kindergartners *only* will proceed to the Kindergarten door where they will line up and be greeted by a staff member from 8:25 – 8:35 AM until they enter the Kindergarten classroom. All other students in grades 1-5 should line up on the blacktop where staff will supervise them until they enter the school. During inclement weather, we will open the doors for student arrival at 8:30 for students to line up in the hallway by the gym.

Note the following for safety and traffic flow:

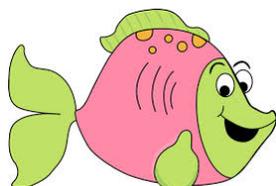
- Extra staff will be available for supervision and to assist children in locating vehicles during pick-up after school. Children will wait for their ride along the sidewalk at the **top of the traffic loop**.
- Similar to the morning drop-off, students only enter vehicles between the two white signs along the upper area of the traffic loop. Students will not be allowed to enter vehicles by the office doors area. This should keep the traffic flow moving with greater ease.
- Children are not allowed to play on the playground during afternoon dismissal.
- Please remember to place the name placard in your right hand dashboard starting on Monday, August 27; our staff will use this name placard to call children to the loading area as their rides idle along the curb during afternoon pick-up.
- Name placards will be provided to new families on the first day of school.
- If you need to purchase or replace a name placard for \$2, please visit the school office.

Back to School Assembly

On Monday, August 27, we will have a Welcome Back assembly at 2:30 PM for students in grades 1-5 to kick off the new year and to go over some routines to help us have a safe and exciting start of the year!

The Walker Way

The entire Walker staff is committed to every child's academic, social, and emotional success. Our SELAS (Social Emotional Learning for Academic Success) curriculum is interwoven in daily routines at Walker. Unique to Walker, we have adopted the FISH! Philosophy, which reminds us we are all responsible for each other and that we all must work together to make Walker a great place to learn and grow. We will continue to promote these ideals at Walker:



FISH! Philosophy

Choose Your Attitude
Make Someone's Day
Be There/Be Present
Play

Wildcats
Choose Kind

Our Walker Staff will model the SELAS and FISH! ideals, and I'd like to ask you to do the same as we work together to create a safe and positive learning environment! To support this effort this year, the PTO student t-shirt will display the theme, "Wildcats Choose Kind" as a visual reminder that our attitude and interactions with each other reflect our choices. We will continue our CHAMPS implementation, as well, where all staff will apply common language and common expectations throughout Walker to support our students to have a positive experience every day.

Mark Your Calendars!

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| 8/23 | 3:00 pm | New Family Orientation |
| 8/23 | 4:00 pm | PTO Bike Rodeo (Safety Check) |
| 8/23 | 4:00 pm | Back-to-School Social, T-Shirt Pickup, Spirit Wear |
| 8/27 | 8:35 am | First Day of School (Full Day) |
| 8/27 | 8:45 | PTO Welcome Back Coffee on Blacktop Area |
| 8/31 | 8:45 | PTO Volunteer Meeting in MRC (including Room Parents) |
| 9/3 | | No School – Labor Day |
| 9/4 | | Lunchtime September Birthday Lunch with Mr. C |
| 9/6 | 6:00 pm | Grades K-5 Curriculum Night |
| 9/13 | All Day | Student Picture Day |
| 9/21 | 4:00 pm | PTO Walker Warrior Challenge |
| 9/26 | 12:20 pm | All School Picture – Blacktop |

As a father of three young boys—one entering fifth grade this year and one second grade—I realize that many times parents have questions or concerns about what is going on at school. Please know that we are available to help answer any questions you may have, and feel free to

email or call us any time. Our partnership in your child's education is forged with strong communication and a passion for working with children. In advance, thank you for your involvement in your child's education. I feel so fortunate to work with such outstanding students, dedicated staff, and supportive parents. Together, we will have a terrific school year!

Sincerely,

Eric L. Chisausky

Eric L. Chisausky

Walker School Principal