



Center Elementary School

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Dear Center School Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! Our goal this year at Center School will be to provide the highest quality education in a nurturing environment where students are encouraged to be creative and reach their potential. Center School values each and every student and emphasizes the importance of loving to learn.

As your school principal, I am spending the summer collaborating with district administration and members of our school team to make sure we are ready to begin the year in a highly effective manner. I also am working with my colleagues to plan my personal leadership goals to help drive the overall success of our wonderful school. I am excited about our intentional areas of focus for this upcoming school year. Our school improvement plan will mirror the district improvement plan with a focus on emotional intelligence, high quality teaching, and efficient operations. Your teachers will continue to enhance their craft through collaboration and professional development. They will also continue to work in teams to analyze data, create meaningful assessments, and plan high quality instruction across all content areas each and every week.

Beyond our academic goals, this year Center School will continue its emotional intelligence focus by implementing social thinking lessons in classrooms and RULER with our staff and students - RULER is an acronym for the five skills of emotional intelligence. In addition, we will celebrate the whole child as we teach problem solving skills, emphasize innovation and creativity, and provide opportunities to research ways to give back to the Ellington community. We also will continue a strong emphasis, from day one, on safe and healthy choices. We will continue to maximize student equity of learning and our commitment to the values of all throughout our school community. Again this year, our work will be grounded in the Ellington Seeds of Civility that you can learn more about on our district website. Lastly, we will infuse Ellington Unplugged (Unplug to Connect: A Healthy Balanced Life) into our daily work at Center School.

Along with improving academic, problem solving, civic, and social skills, our students will continue learning about the *Center Way To Be*. The key components to this are: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and Be Safe. Teachers will devote time during the school day to explore these three principles while emphasizing the importance of good character.

In an effort to enhance open communication, I encourage all families to frequently visit the district website, our Twitter feed, and the Center School PTO Facebook page to learn about the great things happening. Families are encouraged to communicate via email and/or phone with all teachers throughout the year. Also, please do not hesitate to reach out directly to me at any time as I value home-school collaboration.

I would like to personally thank the entire Center community for the opportunity to work with you and your children for this school year. I am honored and humbled to be in my sixth year as the principal of such an amazing school that is filled with excited kids, a committed staff, and dedicated families.

The Center Elementary School community is: students, families, teachers, staff, and friends all working together to provide the best learning environment possible. As a school community we put children first.

Michael P. Verderame, Principal

Growing Exceptional Learners