



August 2016

Dear Stokes families,

If you are new to our school, welcome to the Stokes family! If you are a returning, we look forward to welcoming you back soon. We are sending you a summer update to inform you of initiatives for the upcoming school year, and to update you on some staffing changes.

**Home Visits:** First, we want to remind everyone that we engage in home visits to develop a strong relationship with our families, learn about your children and your family, and answer any questions you may have. Teachers will be reaching out over the summer and early in the school year to schedule these at your convenience. Last school year we reached 71% of our families with home visits, and we are looking forward to reaching even more families next year.

**Staff Transitions:** Each summer season, there are staffing transitions in schools. We have quite a few this year as some people are moving within the building to new roles, and some people are moving on to new adventures.

Below is a list of staff members who will be moving on from Stokes--we will miss them!

Ms. Holly  
Sra. Mirta  
Ms. Convery  
Coach Ahkita  
Ms. Cathy (after school and health)  
Mme. Vony  
Mr. Vigneron  
Ms. Hausman  
Sra. Ilcia

We are excited to welcome new staff members and to see current staff members move into new and exciting roles:

Sra. Donado will be our Family Engagement Coordinator  
Ms. D (Daughn McNeil) will be our second grade English teacher for the Spanish class.  
Ms. Brewington (formerly Cornish) will be the second Grade English teacher for the French class  
Mr. Ryan Carey will be our new second grade French teacher  
Sra. Luz Pelaez Lopez will be joining us from Colombia as our second grade Spanish teacher  
Ms. Amelia Muller will join us from Switzerland as our first grade French teacher  
Ms. Lauren will be moving to the French class as a first grade English teacher  
Ms. Carter will be moving to the first grade as the English teacher in the Spanish class  
Mme. Blay will be moving to the fifth grade as French teacher  
Ms. Anna (who was a teaching fellow in pre-k last year) will be the pre-k assistant teacher in pre-k French  
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Ms. Chapman will be the third grade English teacher (she was a teaching fellow in third grade last year)  
Ms. Immani Hood will be our new music assistant teacher  
Ms. Joan (from after school) will be our new art teacher alongside Mr. Odi  
Eric Vance will be the new P.E. teacher with Mr. Jay.  
Of course, all of this is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances which may pop up over the summer.

**Initiatives:** We have some exciting instructional initiatives and some changes in our infrastructure/building happening this year. As for instruction, we will continue our transition to IB/PYP (International Baccalaureate/Primary Years Programme), which will involve teaching three whole units next year. This will be half of the school year, at different times for each grade level. You will receive information about those units as the school year gets underway. We have a new version of our mathematics curriculum, Investigations, which contains TONS of resources for families. We cannot wait to tell you about all of these resources during our Back to School Nights and Open Classroom events. Finally, we will be deepening our teaching practices related to teaching and learning through inquiry, which was our focus for professional development last year as well.

We have begun planned building renovations this summer. All of the lighting in and around the school has been replaced. Work on the roof began during the first week of August and the new roof installation, as well as the installation solar panels, will be complete by the end of August. Retrofitting of the heating and cooling system will begin in August and continue through the spring of 2017. When completed, this work will create a more comfortable physical environment in the school and it will afford our students an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge about energy efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Also, by the time school begins, we will have completed the construction of a new greenhouse on our campus that will provide us with additional space for gardening and will extend our growing season.

**Reminders:** Don't forget to check the Stokes website ([www.ewstokes.org](http://www.ewstokes.org)) for more detailed descriptions of IB, our school calendar, supply lists by grade and any important announcements over the summer. Of note is that we will have an early release day every Friday at 1:00 PM (with the option of additional aftercare hours available starting at 1:00) in order for us to fully engage in the transition to IB/PYP and honor the time that teachers and staff need in order to do this work well.

**Parent Feedback:** We hear you! We have been engaging in our end of year data analysis, and have looked at all of the wonderful feedback provided by parents in our end of year survey. We have decided to develop an FAQ section on our website for the areas in which parents would like more clarity which will be available in the coming weeks.

We look forward to seeing you on the first day of school, August 22 for kindergarten through fifth grade students and August 23 for pre-k students. In addition, we will hold a Family Orientation on August 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM. All families (especially new ones) are invited to learn about first day procedures, daily drop-off and pick-up procedures, important policy reminders, a brief curricular overview, and to meet their children's teachers.

Take care and enjoy what remains of summer!



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