

**LIMESTONE WALTERS  
8223 W. SMITHVILLE ROAD  
PEORIA, IL 61607**

**LW PARENT NEWS  
JULY 24, 2017**

**Welcome Back!**

We are approaching the start of another school year. I hope this letter finds your family doing well and enjoying the summer. As the anticipation of a new school year awaits us, we extend a warm welcome to all of our returning families. If your family is new to Limestone Walters, we look forward to establishing long lasting relationships with you and your children.

**What's New for 2017– 2018?**

- On-line Registration & On-line Payments
- Air Conditioning & No Heat Schedule
  - New Bell Schedule
- New Student Information System (**Teacher Ease**)
  - Technology Infrastructure Upgrade

Listed below is a summary of those new changes for 2017 – 2018.

**On-line Registration**

This year we have moved to online registration. A guide to the online registration process is included with this newsletter. The registration window will open on Monday, July 31 and **will close on Wednesday, August 9**. All payments will be due no later than Friday, August 11.

**On-line Payments**

With our new student information system, Teacher Ease, we will soon have the capability to allow on-line payments if parents so choose. There will be a convenience fee for any online payments, but you will still have the option to pay with check or cash to avoid the convenience fee. However, the online payment option will not yet be available by the payment deadline of August 11<sup>th</sup>. Instead, we will ask that you send in check or cash for registration fees as you have done in the past. We do hope to have the payment system available for lunch payments before the first day of school.

**Air Conditioning**

Last Fall the Board indicated that if the County Facilities Sales Tax (CFST) were to pass, they would immediately look at providing air conditioning in the classrooms. Well, the CFST did indeed pass, and this summer air conditioning units have been installed in 11 classrooms. Air conditioning for the remainder of the building will be completed in phases, similar to how the upgrade of the parking lot was completed. However, this year there will be air conditioning in every classroom of the building. With the addition of air conditioning, we will no longer need to operate a heat schedule.

### **New Bell Schedule**

Our bell schedule will change slightly this year. We have an opportunity to save significant transportation funds by sharing buses with Oak Grove. In order for that to happen, we need to move our schedule to **7:50 AM to 2:40 PM**. Our morning bus routes will not start any earlier than they currently do, but by sliding our schedule 5 minutes the district can realize savings in transportation.

### **Teacher Ease**

Another change this year is a new student information system, Teacher Ease. More information on this new system will be forthcoming. We have found that Teacher Ease is user friendly and will also allow for lunch and other fees to be paid online if parents so choose to do so.

### **Technology Infrastructure Upgrade**

You may not see or physically feel (such as air conditioning) the new technology infrastructure, but you will definitely notice it when technology is not working. With the many devices that are now available to our students, it is critical that we keep the supports in place to make sure our technology runs as smoothly as possible.

### **New Staff Members**

We have three new staff members to Limestone Walters this year. Ms. Brittany Bryant will be the new kindergarten teacher. Ms. Jamie Eckert will be taking over as the junior high science and social studies teacher, and Mrs. Michelle Stear will be our new librarian. We are excited to have them at Limestone Walters. Please welcome them.

### **First Day of Student Attendance**

We look forward to a wonderful school year. Our staff is committed to putting children first and we encourage communication with our parents. The first day for students is **Friday, August 18, 2017**. **We will run a shortened schedule for the first day only, 7:50 AM – 1:40 PM.**

### **Lunch Applications**

Beginning this year, you will be able to complete the Free and Reduced Price Lunch application during the on-line registration process. We encourage you to take advantage of this program for two reasons. First, should you qualify, it will be a benefit for your family. Lunches can be provided at little or no cost throughout the entire school year. Please know that all information provided for the application is strictly confidential. Students are scanned through the lunch line so no one knows anyone's status. Second, should your family qualify, it does benefit our school lunch program. Reimbursement from the Federal Government does help cover costs associated with the lunch program. Unfortunately, our lunch program loses money every year. The regular meal price has not changed from last year and is \$2.25. We are certainly respectful of everyone's situation, but we encourage every family to apply this year. Qualifying for the free/reduced lunch program could be both a benefit to your family and to your school.

### **Technology Fee and Lunch Prices**

With the one-to-one ratio of technology devices to students, the Board of Education implemented a new technology fee last year of **\$60**. This fee will remain the same for the current school year. This fee provides a technology device to every student. As mentioned earlier, lunch prices remain the same at **\$2.25**.

### **BlackBoard Connect**

BlackBoard Connect is the district notification system that we will use throughout the year. BlackBoard Connect is used to provide updates on school events. The majority of these calls pertain to inclement

weather and school calendar reminders. Please keep us updated with any phone number changes. We want to make sure everyone is notified. You will be able to verify and update these numbers during the on-line registration process.

### **Field Trip Permission Slip**

Once again we will have one field trip permission slip for all trips throughout the year. You will be asked to sign electronically for field trip permission during the on-line registration process. However, information will still be sent home via notes and email outlining the details of all trips.

### **Shirts for Students in Grades 5 -8**

Students in grades 5 – 8 will be required to purchase a blue polo shirt that will have Limestone Walters embroidered on the front. These shirts will serve as activity shirts and be worn for all field trips, similar to the orange shirts our primary students wear. These shirts will also serve as the official activity shirt for band, chorus, scholastic bowl, speech, and any other athletic sport. Samples are available in the office and the cost for these shirts is \$24.00. Students who purchased a shirt last year may not need to purchase a new shirt. *NOTE: These shirts run a little large and do not shrink.*

### **Field Trip Shirts for Grades K-4**

Once again we will be selling our orange field trip shirts for \$3.00. Students in grades K through 4 are required to wear their orange shirt on all field trips for safety and easy identification. *Note: These shirts run true to size and are cotton or cotton blend, so they may shrink in the wash.*

The staff and I look forward to another year working with your children. We very much appreciate the trust and support you provide us throughout the year, and we take that responsibility very seriously.

Here's to a great school year!

**Tim Dotson, Superintendent**