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*"Together we Share, Discover, Create, and Achieve"*

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June 14, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

5, 4, 3, 2,.....1! It is hard to imagine yet impossible to ignore, only one school day remains this June. And, it is a half day at that!

This will be my final communication of the school year, and I will be sharing important information about summer reading, staffing assignments, Step Up Day, and some closing sentiments. As always, I welcome your thoughts and feedback and invite you to share them with me through email, phone, or face to face when we see each other here at Pine Grove School. 2018-2019 has been another successful year for Pine Grove School. Together, we shared, discovered, created, and achieved.

**Summer Academic Enrichment:** The most important thing for your child to do this summer is for your child to read. Research has shown that children who read about 20 minutes per day have a better chance of maintaining their current reading level and avoiding the summer slump. Our librarian has developed a website which can be found at [Library Media Center Summer Reading](#). This summer Pine Grove students will continue to have access to the online reading program Reading A-Z. This web based program provides online books and activities that can be accessed anywhere internet access is available. The program offers reading activities at each child's individual reading level. Our students are familiar with this program and it should serve as a valuable resource to all families. Your child will return home on the last day of school with a summer reading calendar to hang up and remind you both of the importance of summer reading. Our goal this summer is to have more than 90% of the calendars completed, signed, and returned at the start of school. To help motivate all students to read, **all students who return their completed summer reading logs will be invited to our Summer Reading Dance Party!** Participation is simple. Students only need to fill out their summer reading log and return it to their teacher when they return in August. Be on the lookout for reminder emails and phone calls this summer.

This summer I would also like to encourage all students to spend some time honing their math skills. Found here is a link to the CT Summer Math Challenge Flyer (with live links): [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Math/SummerMath/SM2019\\_flier.pdf?la=en](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Math/SummerMath/SM2019_flier.pdf?la=en) It introduces a **FREE** math skills maintenance program based on grade-level standards. The program is targeted to students who have just completed grades 1 through 8. Families enroll online and receive daily emails June & July with fun activities and links to educational resources. Each week of the six-week program targets a different grade level concept. This program offers another simple, take anywhere approach to avoid the summer slumps. This resource can also be accessed through Mrs. Antonelli's website link that was included above.

**Welcoming new staff & staff changing assignments:** Each summer we have the opportunity to interview and hire new staff for Pine Grove School. I always look forward to this process. New staff bring fresh ideas, varied experiences, and excitement into the school community. A full list of our new hires will be included in my welcome back letter. Each year, we also have staff who switch their teaching assignments. There are many reasons for this, but it always provides an opportunity for our staff to explore a new position. Next year, Mrs. Mary Labowsky will join our Kindergarten team and Mrs. Emily Ogalin will join our first grade team.

**2019-2020 Grade Level Sections/Teacher Assignments/Step up Day:** On June 17<sup>th</sup>, your child will return home with an envelope containing a summer reading packet, supply list, and a welcome letter from his or her teacher. When you print your child's report card from PowerSchool, [Link to PowerSchool login](#) his or her new teacher's name will appear on the very bottom of the comments section of the report card. We will also hold our annual "step up" day on the last day of the school year. Students will have the opportunity to meet their actual teachers for next year and ask him or her questions about their new grade and classroom. This will take place in the morning around 9:00 am. We are excited to provide students this opportunity and are hopeful it will help to eliminate any anxious feelings students may have heading into the summer. Each year, determining the number of classrooms sections is a process that is monitored throughout the school year as new students move into or out of the district. In some cases, the decision to add or reduce sections is made during the summer if the activity warrants such action. At this time, we are planning for 7 sections of Kindergarten, 6 for grade 1, 6 for grade 2, 6 for grade 3 and 6 for grade 4.

**Summer Projects:** Pine Grove School will be busy hosting the Avon Recreation Summer Program again this summer. Our maintenance staff will be attending to our normal summer projects that include: painting, cleaning, replacing broken items, and resurfacing floors. The most involved project will be the reorganization of our school's library. More information on the coming renovations will be shared in the fall upon our return. For now, I will share that we plan to reorganize the stacks to create a better flow and increased access to our books for students of all ages.

**Saying Farewell and Thank You:** Our final day of school is scheduled for Monday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019. This is a half-day of school and no breakfast or lunch will be served. On this day we will say goodbye to our fourth graders as they advance to Thompson Brook School. We are proud of their growth and wish them great success in grade 5. We encourage them to visit their Pine Grove family to share updates on their new school, friends, and accomplishments.

I would like to offer a special thank you and farewell to Mrs. Carolyn Daniels (Kindergarten) and Mrs. Gail Colangelo (Cafeteria) who are retiring Monday after many years in public education. The entire school community wishes them all the best and will miss seeing them both here each day. Gail was always a bright light in our cafeteria and made sure students felt welcome every day at lunch time. Mrs. Daniels', you can finally sit down! So many Avon students have had the benefit of starting their public school career with you. On behalf of all of us here at PGS I offer this quote in honor of you:

***"We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths." - Walt Disney***

Finally, I would personally like to acknowledge all the students, staff, parents, volunteers, members of the community, Avon Police and Fire Departments, the Avon Historical Society, the Avon Board of Education, and members of the district leadership team who have supported Pine Grove School this year and helped us to finish the year with such great success. You have also exemplified our mission statement: ***Together we Share, Discover, Create and Achieve!***

Happy Summer!

*Jess M. Giannini*