Greeting Centennial Families:

I wanted to take this opportunity to explain to the Centennial community what exactly will be happening during our Wednesday collaboration mornings and our three non-student days for professional development. I believe a little background information will be helpful.

In the last year, the state legislature passed a law which revises the systems of teacher and principal evaluation. As a part of that law, every school district in the state is required to adopt one of three approved instructional frameworks. In short, an instructional framework is a set of guidelines about what constitutes effective teaching and professional practice. Through learning and using an instructional framework, teachers and principals will now have a “common language” about instruction and a clear set of guidelines for teaching.

The Olympia School District, along with most of the neighboring school districts, has selected Charlotte Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching*. This school year, all of the teachers and principals in our district are going to be focused on learning the details of this framework for instruction. For Centennial that begins on October 19th.

On each of our late start days, the Centennial teachers will be involved in a book study, discussions and activities that will allow us to delve into the details of Charlotte Danielson’s framework.

This is extremely important work with the end goal being improved student learning. It is also somewhat nerve racking for some principals and teachers because it is new. Personally, I have high hopes that I will be able to use this new common language to increase my leadership skills and continue to support teachers in their efforts to provide the highest level of learning for all students.

I am excited to begin this important work.

Sincerely,

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**Veterans Day Assembly**
**Friday, November 9**
**9:45 A.M. Centennial’s gym**

Centennial Elementary students will be presenting a Veterans Day program. We will be acknowledging the veterans of our community’s families. Informational letters went home last week.
We are sorry to announce there will be no Book Fair during Fall Conferences. We hope to have one scheduled during Spring Conferences in March.

**BIRTHDAY PARTIES AND INVITATIONS**

It is a difficult and heartbreaking experience for a child to see his/her classmates receive a party invitation and discover that he/she has been left out. We ask that you please not allow your child to distribute party invitations at school unless every classmate has been invited!

**BIRTHDAYS TREATS AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS**

If you are interested in helping your child celebrate his/her birthday at school, please note that due to our nutrition policy, food items that do not meet nutritional guidelines will **not** be allowed. Please talk with your child’s teacher about ideas for birthday celebrations.

**NUTRITION POLICY BASIC GUIDELINES:**

- Shall be under 200 calories per unit
- Less than 10% of the calories from a combination of trans/saturated fats
- Nuts - which do not need to fall within the fat guidelines but should have no added saturated fats (Please note that we have numerous peanut allergies in the building and some allergies to tree nuts. Please talk with your child’s teacher before sending any items with nuts or nut oils.)
- Yogurt and cheese products need to be made with 2% or lower milk fat
- Foods that contain minimal nutritional value as defined by the USDA, cannot be dispensed at school during the academic day- this includes items such as popsicles, chewing gum, hard candy, jellies and gums, marshmallow candies, licorice, fondant, spun candy, coated popcorn, etc.
- Office has a list of snack ideas.

We are practicing our emergency drills at school each month. As a reminder, please make sure your child has an emergency kit in their classroom. You can pick up instructions to make your own or purchase one of the Booster Club’s emergency kits in the school office.

**Learning to be Patient**

It pays to be patient. Talk to your youngster about these two benefits of learning to wait.

1. **Accomplish more.** Your child can turn wait time into work time. Say he needs his teacher’s help with a worksheet, but she’s talking to another student. He can do the parts that he understands and save his questions for when the teacher is available.

2. **Enjoy the results.** Teach your youngster the saying “Good things come to those who wait.” Together, brainstorm things that improve with time. For instance, fruit tastes better if you wait for it to ripen. Or the longer it takes to get to the top of a roller coaster, the more fun it is to ride down. How many examples can your child come up with?

*October 2012, Home & School Connection*

With **Halloween** approaching at the end of the month, we ask families to remember to have their child wear appropriate attire to school. Please check with your individual teachers regarding plans for the day. Students are asked not to wear masks or anything that might scare other children and no look-a-like weapons. Also, remember no candy, due to the school district’s nutrition policy.

**National Sleep Foundation’s Recommended Amount of Sleep per Night**

- Babies 3 to 11 months - 14 to 15 hours of sleep
- Toddlers 1 to 3 years - 12 to 14 hours of sleep
- Preschoolers - 11 to 13 hours of sleep
- Elementary Schoolers - 10 to 11 hours of sleep
Centennial Cookbooks
For Sale!
1 for $7.00
2 for $8.00
3 for $10.00
Pick up an extra copy for a gift.

Make Homework Less Stressful For Your Child

Does your child come unglued at homework time? To reduce stress:

- Check her backpack as soon as she gets home. That way, there won’t be any surprises about what’s due tomorrow.
- Let her unwind. Don’t make her hit the books the second she walks in the door from school.
- Build in breaks. If she’s tackling a big assignment, have her take a breather every so often.

Discipline with Praise

You’re tired of nagging. You’ve even tried reasoning. Nothing seems to work when disciplining your child. To end misbehavior, use praise to encourage desired behavior instead. Remember to:

- Make your praise specific.
- Reinforce praise with a smile.
- Use praise immediately following the desired behavior.

In other words, catch your child being good – and she just might make it a habit!

Handwriting Counts

Your youngster might use computers for part of his work, which can leave him (and you) wondering how important handwriting is. Remind him that his teacher needs to be able to easily read his written assignments. Also, learning to print will help a beginning reader recognize letters, while an older student needs legible handwriting for note taking.

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Help Your Child Develop ‘Character’

Parents want their children’s ‘character’ to be admirable. But what exactly does that mean? And how can you promote your child’s character development?

Consider focusing on these traits:

- **Trustworthiness.** Emphasize the importance of meaning what you say when you’ve made a commitment. “Let’s go see Grandpa. I promised we’d visit today. He’s counting on us!”

- **Respect.** Make the “Golden Rule” a family rule. Discuss what it means to treat others as you would like to be treated. Look for examples in everyday life.

- **Responsibility.** Enforce fair rules and give your child age-appropriate jobs. Highlight the rewards of hard work. “We’ve finished cleaning up. Now you can invite your friends to come over!”

- **Caring.** Consider other people’s feelings and needs. “Johnny is sad because he hasn’t had a turn. Let’s share the ball with him.” “Today we’re going to collect canned goods for the food drive.”

- **Fairness.** When you play games, talk about the rules. Why are they important? What if there were no rules? Would life be more fun – or more difficult?

- **Citizenship.** Find ways to contribute to your school and community, such as volunteering at an event. Read and tell stories about others who have made a difference.


What is Fair?

My kids favorite phrase used to be “That’s not fair!” If my son had a slightly bigger serving of potatoes or my daughter got to sit beside me on the couch, I would hear complaints.

Then one day, my son shared something his teacher said during a class meeting: Fairness isn’t everyone getting the exact same thing – it’s each person getting what he needs. That explanation made a lot of sense, so I asked my children if they could think of examples. My son pointed out that if his sister is sick, it’s fair for her to get extra attention. And my daughter said it’s fair for her brother to go first when we play a game because he’s younger.

Now when I hear one of them say, “That’s not fair!” I ask, “Are you sure?” I remind them of the teacher’s advice and encourage them to think about why it might be fair after all.

*October 2012, Home & School Connection*