



LITTLE SILVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

124 Willow Drive, Little Silver, NJ 07739

Dr. Carolyn M. Kossack
Superintendent of Schools

Tel: 732-741-2188
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August 21, 2019

Dear Parents,

As the summer is nearing its end, I want to extend a warm *Welcome Back* to all as we begin the 2019-2020 school year. This summer has been extremely busy! Our teachers return on Tuesday, September 3rd for their first of two professional development days before welcoming your children back on Thursday, September 5th.

We've had a busy summer in terms of staffing. We have many new hires including:

Point Road

- Melanie Jaenicke – Guidance Counselor (leave replacement from 9/3-10/16 pending BOE approval on 8/29)
- Jason Lakshmanan – Music Teacher

Markham Place

- Feba Chacko – 7th Grade Language Arts Teacher (one year leave replacement)
- April Owen – Instructional Assistant
- Adam Pereira – 7th Grade Social Studies
- Deborah Petrone - Part-time Media Assistant
- Marcia Schiffman – Instructional Assistant
- Marianne Shekian – Instructional Assistant (pending BOE approval on 8/29/19)
- Alecsa Unrath – 5th Grade (leave replacement from 9/3-11/25)
- Susan VanMeter – Instructional Assistant (pending BOE approval on 8/29/19)

We are pleased to have hired such a high caliber group of individuals who will support the Little Silver School District's quality programs. Please be aware of the fact that *all* of our teachers, new hires and existing staff, meet the criteria for being *Highly Qualified* for the content they teach.

The Little Silver Board of Education was happy to renew our contract with our food service provider, *Simplified Culinary*. Students will be able to purchase lunch beginning the first day of school using their existing accounts, provided you have funds in those accounts. For parents who are new to the district, the Little Silver School District offers MySchoolBucks®! This is an online payment service providing a quick and easy way to add money to your child's meal account using a credit/debit card or electronic check. You can also view recent purchases, check balances, and set up low-balance alerts for FREE! Go to www.MySchoolBucks.com and register for a free account. You will receive a confirmation email with a link to activate your account and add your children using their school name and birth date. *You will have the opportunity to review any fees and cancel if you choose.* Further, since the Little Silver School District is implementing an **Activity Participation Fee Program** for the first time, parents will pay for district-sponsored afterschool activities by accessing the "school store" icon in MySchoolBucks. If you have any questions, contact MySchoolBucks directly at parentsupport@myschoolbucks.com or call 1-855-832-5226. Visit www.MySchoolBucks.com and click on Help/FAQ's.

For parents who are new to the district, I send out digital monthly Spotlights that are filled with announcements and other timely information. I would encourage you to access this monthly blog. The August 2019 Spotlight (<https://www.littlesilverschools.org/district/blog/1619215/august-2019-spotlight>) was filled with a great deal of information.



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We are always working on enhancing communication. One section of the August Spotlight pertained to **Parent Communication**. Parents have asked that we streamline forms of communication. This continues to be challenging in a day and age where we have access to so many different forms of communication and the teachers' comfort level using various technologies differ. That said, we ask parents to utilize the Genesis Parent Portal as our primary source of communication. Again, please view the August 2019 Spotlight. While this letter notification was sent via **Code Red** Emergency Communications Network, as a matter of practice, **Code Red** emails and text messages will be used for *emergency* notifications such as snow days, bus delays, etc. It will also be used to notify you of monthly Spotlight postings. Other communication will be placed in the **Genesis Parent Portal**. If you have not already enrolled in our **Code Red** Emergency Communications Network, you must do so ASAP.

If you are already a registered user with the **CodeRED** provider, you need not re-register. Parents who are new residents can sign up for **CodeRED**, free of charge, at the school district's website. Go to <http://www.littlesilverschools.org> and click on **Parents** on the menu bar. Click on **LSS Alerts CODERed** on the drop-down. Follow the online enrollment instructions and establish a password as a new user. Once you log onto the site, PLEASE TAKE NOTE of the final section called ACCOUNT SPECIFICS. This is the section where you would choose the groups in which you want to be included (i.e. Point Road, Markham Place, Grade Level, etc.).

The information on the district **website**, <http://www.littlesilverschools.org>, contains information such as:

- ✓ Department & program information
- ✓ School information
- ✓ Board of Education information

The district calendar is a Google calendar that can be easily downloaded from the website.

The district will continue to use Facebook and Twitter to post information including:

- ✓ LS Sch Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Little-Silver-Schools/1397790480449479?fref=tss>
- ✓ Little Silver School District's Twitter feed (@LittleSilverSch) <https://twitter.com/LittleSilverSch>
- ✓ Point Road Twitter feed (@PointRoad2) <https://twitter.com/PointRoad2>
- ✓ Markham Place Twitter feed (@Warrior_News) https://twitter.com/Warrior_News

School Hours:

Point Road: 8:05 AM – 2:55 PM

Markham Place: 8:07 AM – 3:05 PM

Traffic patterns by the Point Road School are always challenging. Parents are always encouraged to:

- Use the student drop-off location on the Seven Bridges Road side of the Point Road School
- Drop off on Lippincott Road and have your children cross with the crossing guard
- Walk or bike to school with your child



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I am very excited to start this school year. We have much to appreciate within our “little” district this year. As our district has been faced with budgetary challenges, our support organizations, both the EFLS and PTO, have continued to provide valuable materials and programs for your children.

For this upcoming school year, the Education Foundation of Little Silver (EFLS) is not only outfitting the district with various technological equipment such as student computers, interactive white boards, and STEM materials to name a few, they also generously agreed to help fund all new digital Social Studies materials for students in grades K-4. The school district can only commit to one-year contracts, but with the support of EFLS funding, we were able to enter into a 6-year contract for elementary school Social Studies materials which will save the district money.

Similarly, the unyielding support of our PTO is amazing! The Little Silver PTO supports numerous activities and programs which further enrich your children’s education. They provide Cultural Arts programs for both schools, support teacher grant applications (which enable our teachers to purchase a variety of materials to support instruction), and sponsor all of the field day and carnival barbecues just to name a few. Most importantly, the PTO is always willing to support district initiatives in a variety of ways. For the second year, the PTO will be offering a variety of “pay-to-play” afterschool activities in an effort to generate additional funds that can be funneled back into educational experiences for your children. The Little Silver PTO publishes a digital newsletter called Constant Contact. Parents are encouraged to subscribe.

Again, I thank both the EFLS and the PTO for their continued support of our schools and programs, and I encourage you to get involved in either or both of these outstanding organizations.

I am eager to begin the 2019-2020 school year, and I thank you for serving as our partners in education. In an effort to promote home/school partnerships, the New Jersey Department of Education has published a brief *Checklist for Student Success* including things parents can ask and do to help their children thrive at school. The resource can be found at: <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/parent-checklist.pdf>

The first day of school is always an exciting time for students and staff. This is a gentle reminder that parents should say goodbye to their children outside of the school, and staff members will help escort the children to their new classrooms. At Point Road, New Student Orientation is on Wednesday, September 4th at 3:00 PM. Therefore, new students will have had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the building and their new classrooms the day prior to the start of school. For new students to Markham Place, New Student Orientation will be Wednesday, August 28th at 11:00 AM. New students to Markham Place will have the opportunity to maneuver through the school prior to the first day.

I look forward to seeing all our students on **Thursday, September 5th**. Welcome back!

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools