



Florham Park School District

2017-2018 School Year

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Briarwood Elementary School

151 Briarwood Road
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Mrs. Sherri Glaab, Principal

I am Florham Park!

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Happy Holidays!

Whatever you celebrate, I sincerely wish you well.

Parent Conferences

Thank you to all of you who attended! I have received many positive comments regarding the conferences. It is our goal as a district to ensure that we partner together for your child's education. It is a pleasure to hear such positive statements regarding the conversations you had with our teachers.

Snow

It is the season! We have already had two snow filled days during this school year. That doesn't bode well for the remainder of the winter. Please make sure that you have all of your contact information updated in Powerschool. For cancellations and delays, I will be sending out phone calls, emails, and text messages. You can change your settings in the system. Please know that no matter what decision I make regarding a snow day, someone will not be happy. I have to keep in mind the safety of all children, whether on foot, on a bus, or in a car. This is no easy task.

Big News!

Lucy Calkins is considered "the" guru of literacy. It is a great honor to have our middle school ELA teachers given accolades in her latest book. If you see Michaela Harris, Robert Foster, Rebecca Fano or Christy O'Connor, congratulate them for receiving such an honor!

New Report Cards

By now you have received our new report cards. As one of the last districts to transfer to standards based, I hope you understand our process. We had a parent night for both Brooklake and Briarwood and our teachers are well versed in the transition. If you have any questions, reach out to your child's teacher, a supervisor or a building principal, they are very willing to help.

Changes

I began in Florham Park in 2015. Since then, we have changed our literacy program (a complete 180), report cards for K-5, we are incorporating more STEM, we have a new Special Education Parent Advisory Group, we moved to paperless board meetings and paperless registration, and our security drills have changed, etc. In sum, there has been a lot of change. My last change will be our student information system. We are currently using Powerschool as our data management system for our students. Next year, we will move to Genesis, which is a New Jersey based company and all of our information will be housed in one place. They do not outsource. This keeps all of our information safer and makes life more convenient. There will be more coming out about Genesis in the near future.

Farewell, Mrs. Rinaldi!

Mrs. Rinaldi will be retiring at the end of December. She has been a fixture in this district for 30 years. We will miss her smiling face in Briarwood. Good luck, Marlene!

Writing Workshop in Third Grade!

Our third grade students are revving up their Non-Fiction writing skills! Students are choosing topics of their choice that they consider themselves to be experts on! Our fabulous third grade teaching team is teaching them how to turn these topics into informational books! These book topics span from learning about baseball, to dance, or frogs, and even video games! We can't wait to add these books to our classroom and school libraries so we can all learn from our young authors! Way to go third grade!

4th Grade Science - Engineering an Earthquake-Resistant Structure Lab

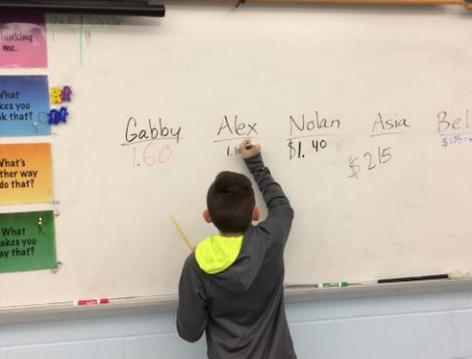
The scientists in 4th grade recently explored the different patterns and functions of earthquakes. Following a week of discovery-based learning, the scientists took on the role of engineers to plan, design, and construct an earthquake-resistant building.

Their building had to meet certain requirements while also adhering to the constraints of a limited budget and set amount of time for construction. This allowed the students to see firsthand how engineers share ideas, work together, and adhere to real-world constraints.

Planning



Budgeting



Construction

[Video of the Testing of the Earthquake-Resistant Structure](#)

I wish you and yours an amazing holiday season.

Sincerely,

A blue, cursive handwritten signature.

Dr. Melissa W. Varley