



FORT CASPAR ACADEMY
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RICK EDWARDS, PRINCIPAL

August 21, 2017

Dear Fort Caspar Academy Families,

Happy August! I hope you've had time to enjoy your summer. September 5th and the start of school are coming soon! Over the summer we've been working hard to be ready for school to kick off for 2017-2018!

We've had a few staff changes for the coming school year. Mrs. Vreeland moved with her family to Texas. Mrs. Rice has moved to second grade to fill that classroom position. Ms. Lexi Strom has moved from Grant Elementary and will be our new 1st grade teacher. Mrs. Lenihan retired from teaching. Mrs. Brenda Bosco has moved from our Instructional Facilitator position back to the classroom in 4th grade. Mrs. Garcia who has been with us in the special education classroom since FCA opened has retired. Mr. Steven Woodward joined us in January for special education. He will continue at FCA this year. We also will be welcoming Mrs. Samantha FitzGerald to FCA as a special education teacher! Mrs. FitzGerald brings with her a special new staff member, Jammer, her therapy dog. Jammer will be around FCA to work with Mrs. FitzGerald with select students. Many of you know due to funding cuts, we lost our full time administrative manager position, and we had to say goodbye to Mr. DeWald. For this school year we have Mrs. Margret Swan as our administrative manager. She has worked as a children's advocate and has good experience working with children and families. Mrs. Fetter made a change this year from being a classroom assistant to working with our Braille learner students. Mrs. Kelsey Hutchinson will be our new classroom assistant.

At FCA communication with our families is something we are always looking to improve. We are looking to reduce the number of mass emails you get from us so that we save that communication route for important announcements. To that end we will be adopting the use of the [Bloomz](#) app for the school office and PTO. Several teachers in our building already use Bloomz. We will have more information on [Bloomz](#) as we get our account set up and the school year gets closer. We plan to have several opportunities to get [Bloomz](#) downloaded and connected at the beginning of the school year and throughout the year.

Please mark your calendars for the following important dates:

- We will NOT hold a school wide “Meet and Greet” night the night before school starts. Kindergarten will host “Meet and Greet” for kindergarten students ONLY. Kindergarten Meet and Greet is Tuesday, August 29th, from 4:00 to 6:00pm. Kindergarten parents should have received a letter from kindergarten teachers about Meet and Greet. If you did not receive a letter, please call the office.
- Thursday, September 14th from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Fort Caspar will host our academic Back-to-School Night. This evening is an essential parents-only opportunity to hear teachers give an overview of curriculum and learning to take place for the year in their classroom. Teachers will inform parents and families about curriculum, learning, procedures and expectations for their classrooms. Parents will have an important opportunity to ask questions after having their children in school for two weeks. Two sessions will run; one from 5:00 to 5:45, and one from 6:15 to 7:00. This allows parents with multiple students attending Fort Caspar Academy to attend more than one teacher session. From 5:50 to 6:10 the principal and PTO will address parents with information about our school, and how parents can support our school. We ask that students not attend this evening if possible so that parents may focus on information geared towards adults about your child’s classroom learning and our school philosophy. This night is especially important for families to understand how learning is facilitated differently at FCA than other schools. Parent and family participation in a child’s education is critical to a child’s success and well-being. Back-to-School night is important for parents and teachers to begin building a working partnership to support your child’s learning.
- New parent orientation will also be held on Thursday, September 14th. There will be two sessions. One at 9:00 in the morning. The second will start at 7:10 in the evening following Back-to-School night. Families who are new to Fort Caspar Academy need to plan to attend one of these sessions. New parent orientation is where I sit down as the principal with new families to explain our approach to teaching and learning success at Fort Caspar Academy. I will explain our school philosophy and procedures. I will answer questions to help new families and their children become familiar with us and become established engaged members of our FCA family!
- A parent Spalding – Writing Road to Reading class and information night is scheduled for Thursday, September 21st from 6:00 to 9:00 in the evening.

Bus service will be available before and after school to those who register for it. Students will be dropped off on the west side of the building.

Student safety is a major priority at Fort Caspar Academy! For those families who drop their students off and pick them up every day, please be

aware of school protocols in an effort to provide safety for our students. Look for signs and painting in the parking lot to help with streamlining pick up so that it goes more quickly and smoothly while improving safety. Please keep the following in mind: No vehicle should stop in the outside lane to let a student in or out. We do not want students crossing a lane of traffic to enter the school. All drivers are expected to only use the inside lane next to the curb to let kids in and out of the vehicle. When dropping students off, please do not park your vehicle and get out in the drop off lane. If you want to walk your child in, please park in the parking lot or on 38th street. When dropping children off, please keep moving forward so that more parents can fit into the drop off lane and keep traffic flowing. When picking up students, please also move up until you are stopped behind the west doors or behind the car in front of you. We want to minimize gaps in the line so that more cars can be in the pick up zone loading students at the same time. This will make it faster for everyone. When traffic flows smoothly it will be safer for students. Please save the parking lot for parents who want to park and wait for their child or get out to meet their child. If there is a line of cars picking students up, it blocks access to parking spots. The parking lot and 38th street are still appropriate places to drop off and pick up students, but please abide by paint markings (don't park in striped areas, or red or yellow striped curbs), and posted signs (using the parking lot by busses is dangerous for students and drivers and causes congestion). Traffic flow is one way only. In order to minimize lines of traffic trying to change lanes, be aware that the right lane will only be able to turn right and the left lane will only turn left. We will send a more detailed letter including a map before school starts. Please do not drop off your student prior to 8:00 a.m., as the doors will be locked. Students should be picked up no later than 3:40 p.m.

School supply lists are online at natronaschools.org as well as at local stores. Please ensure that you find Fort Caspar Academy's lists so that you can purchase the correct items.

The first day of school is Tuesday, September 5th. Classes begin at 8:45 a.m., with the tardy bell ringing at 8:50. On the morning of the 5th, parents will be allowed in classrooms starting at 8:20 until 8:45, when an announcement will be made so that instruction may begin. Please help students get into the swing of their classes by leaving the building at that time so that children can focus on building a relationship with their teacher.

I am eager to meet you and your students this year. I am looking forward to a magnificent school year!

Respectfully,

Rick Edwards
Principal