Dear Wines Families,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year! I hope everyone has had a nice summer and I hope you are enjoying the last days of the season. We had a great summer as a family spending most of our time up north in Northport as we usually do. We also did a little traveling to California and Colorado at the beginning of the summer, but for the most part we moved in up north and enjoyed another wonderful summer. As many of you know, my parents retired to northern Michigan in 2000 and Northport has been a special place for our family since the late 1980’s. We lost my mother three years ago and so having a house full of people certainly puts a smile on my dad’s face!

I want to welcome everyone back to Wines and extend a warm welcome to our new families. A lot has happened at Wines this summer (and continues to happen)! Our construction project has remained more or less on schedule all summer, but the schedule is tight so the building still looks a bit like a construction site. But we are nearing the time when teachers can begin to move back into their classrooms. In addition to adding air conditioning to areas that didn’t have it before, new lighting in all spaces, and new window treatments, we received quite a bit of new paint and the school is now a very colorful place! I think the kids will really like the color changes. Unfortunately, our AC will not be fully functional this fall as DTE has to complete their end of things. But as I said to the staff, we’ve been teaching and learning without AC at Wines since 1957 so we can wait a little longer.

As you may recall, we had to move EVERYTHING out of the building last summer for the construction project so it will be quite a task to get things ready to go for our first day of school August 29th. But we will be ready!

The purpose of this note—in addition to welcoming everyone to Wines—is to get some of the most important information into your hands right now. In the coming days, I will be sending out our Family Handbook which will have some of this same information as well as more detailed information about our school. In addition, I will be hosting new family orientation meetings next week (see information below) and sending some reminders/updates as we approach the first day of school on August 29th.

New Staff Members
Please welcome three new staff members to Wines. First, please welcome Beth Kingkiner as our new 2nd grade teacher replacing Angela Black who retired last March. Beth most recently taught 3rd grade in the AAPS Virtual Academy last year. Prior to coming to Ann Arbor, Beth taught for 12 years in New Jersey and North Carolina serving as both a second grade teacher for six years and several years as a Reading Intervention teacher. Beth brings outstanding skills and experiences to our team!

I’d also like to welcome Amy Welzenbach as a new Teaching Assistant at Wines. Amy will be a familiar face to many of our students as she worked in our noon hour program last year. Amy is a retired elementary teacher and we are thrilled that she has joined our full time staff.
Finally, I want to give an update on our third new “staff member”. Gracie, our Therapy Dog, is doing great! She is now just over five months old and has been busy training with Greg Lambert from The Up and Up Pup since last May. Last week, our staff care giver, Lexi Fata, had Gracie at her home while Greg was out of town. I was able to visit Gracie with Lexi one day and the next day Lexi and I participated in our first formal training with Greg and Gracie. I was really pleased to see how far she has come in such a short time and Greg said he is already implementing training that he would not normally do until a bit later in the process. I guess she’s gifted!! While she still has work to do, Greg believes that in October he will be able to transition Gracie to living with Ms. Fata full time and move the training to her home and here at Wines. So, we are on schedule to have Gracie join our community later this fall! Below is a recent picture of her.

Meet the Teacher Events/New Family Orientation
We will host our meet the teacher events next week. There have been a couple of small changes to our usual process.

Young 5’s/Kindergarten: Wednesday, August 24th. 6:00 PM
Our teachers will greet our kids on the back playground near the Kindergarten rooms at 6:00 PM. Students will then go to their classrooms and spend some time getting acclimated. While the kids are in classrooms, I will invite parents to the Multi-Purpose Room for our new family orientation. This is a chance for you to see the building and spend a little time with me going over some of the nuts and bolts that will hopefully make the first day go smoothly.

1st-5th Grades: Thursday, August 25th 8:30 AM.
This will take place on the back playground. We’ve moved the event from the traditional afternoon time to the morning for two reasons. First, we hope that this time might be a bit easier for working families. Second, our teachers will be spending the bulk of their day on
Thursday moving into their classrooms and getting things ready for the first day of school. We wanted to give them as much time as possible to do this important work. In addition, moving and arranging is hard work and our staff will likely be quite tired and sweaty by the afternoon and I didn’t want them to feel like they needed to freshen up to welcome families. Even with the I will have popsicles for the kids Thursday morning. So perhaps we’ll re-name it “Breakfast Popsicles” or something like that. A new tradition???

**New Family Orientation for 1st-5th grade families will take place on Thursday, August 25th at 6:00 PM** in the Multi-Purpose Room. New students are certainly welcome that evening. However, please note that the event is an informational event for parents and we will not be able to visit classrooms, etc.

**Registration Documents**

Many of our new families still need to turn in registration documents. From new families, we need three proofs of residency (lease/deed/tax bill and two utility bills), birth certificate, immunization records, and a copy of a parent drivers license. I realize with the school still being closed; it has been difficult to arrange times to do this.

If possible, please utilize the meet the teacher events to do this. For Young 5’s and Kindergarten families, we will collect your documents when you arrive on Wednesday evening. Robin will make necessary copies and we’ll hopefully have everything ready for you after our parent orientation (reminder: Kindergarteners coming from Wines Young 5’s last year do not need to supply documents this year unless Robin has contacted you that something is missing).

For new 1st-5th grade families, if possible, please bring your documents to the meet the teacher event and come to the front office after your child has met their teacher, etc. **We will not be able to collect documents at the 1st-5th new family orientation Thursday evening.**

If you are not able to drop your documents off on either of those days, please contact Robin Moore at moorero@aaps.k12.mi.us and she will arrange an appointment with you.

**COVID Protocols**

As has been the case for over two years, variables related to COVID are ever changing. Later this week I will be participating in a district level meeting that will outline all of the safety protocols this year. I will include more details to families after this meeting. For now, I am able to share that Washtenaw County is currently in “yellow” as far as community transmission. This means that masks are recommended, **but optional**, indoors. If this continues to be the case on August 29th, we will honor your family decision about if your child will wear a mask or not and our students and staff will support and respect this decision.

In addition, as we began to do at the end of last year, we intend to welcome our community into our school this year. I will outline more specifics about volunteers and visitors next week.
School Hours

First Bell: 8:42.
Second Bell/Instruction Begins: 8:45
Dismissal 3:48

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Again this year we will utilize two lots and two entrances to our school. Families with students in Young 5’s, Kindergarten, and 5th Grade will enter and exit Wines from Cooley Ave., not Newport. Families with students in grades 1-4 will enter from Newport. The traffic flow is the same as last year and we are asking that those using the Newport entrance to please exit via the Forsythe turn rather than going back to Newport. This is particularly important during afternoon pick up. Please use the entrance for your youngest student. If you have a fourth grader and a Kindergartener or Young 5’s student, for example, please use the Cooley lot. If you have a 5th grader and a 1st-4th grader, please use the Newport entrance. It is an important safety issue that families utilize the appropriate entrance/exit to Wines. This means many of our 5th grade families who are used to the Newport entrance will need to learn the Cooley entrance and many of our 1st grade families who used the Cooley entrance in Kindergarten will need to learn the Newport procedures.

For afternoon pick up, families will need to display your Driveline family number. This should be displayed in your car if you are using the pick up lane. If you are parking and coming to our entrances to meet your child in person, please bring your number to show to our staff member checking in numbers. For those of you whose numbers I memorized last year, please note that my brain is turning 50 this year so I’ll need to see your number again for a little while to start the year!

Prior to school starting, I will be emailing everyone your family Driveline number. For returning families, your number is the same each year so you can use last year’s signs if you still have them. If you are new or have lost your sign, on the first day of school, please write this number on a piece of paper from home. We will then be sending home copies of your number during the first week of school for you to use.

Please note: you do not need to display your Driveline number at morning drop off.

Below are two pictures of our parking lot routes. I will be going over this in more detail at our new family orientation and I will send out information again before school starts. It may seem complicated but it is actually quite simple and efficient!
Parking
Parking is very limited at Wines. If you choose to park and escort your child to the school entrance or pick them (not in your car) you must park in a designated parking spot. There is absolutely no parking allowed along any of our curbs. There is nearly no parking in the Cooley...
lot and limited parking in the main lot. The best place to park is in the Forsythe overflow lot near the Newport entrance. This is only accessible from the Newport entrance.

**Bus Routes**
The Wines bus routes have been published. You can find information on pick up and drop off times at the following link: https://www.a2schools.org/Page/10472

**Lunch and Breakfast**
Breakfast and lunch are no longer free for all students as has been the case during the past two years during COVID. To add money to your child’s account, please utilize the family portal at: https://annarbor.familyportal.cloud/

If you would like to apply for free or reduced lunch and breakfast, please go to the portal linked above, choose guest, and then choose application.

I hope this is enough information for everyone and hopefully you have some time to read this over and digest it. I will go over many of these items at our New Family Orientation meetings, and I will be sending out more messages to all as we approach the new school year with reminders, clarifications, and updates. Please feel free to email me at deyoung@aaps.k12.mi.us if you have any questions.

Again, welcome back!!

David