

Dear Cove Families,

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year! There is no simple way to share the volume of information that comes at us in the beginning of the school year...so, I have packed a lot in this letter including **new teachers, class placement schedule, early dismissal schedules** and more!

As we approach the year ahead, I keep thinking about the theme of renewal. Last spring, we experienced a lot of change. Four teachers retired (congratulations Ms. Hart, Ms. Lerohl, Ms. Meunier and Mr. Lescoe!), two teachers had babies over the summer (congratulations Ms. Gallagher and Ms. Estes!), and two teachers have accepted leadership roles in the district as Teachers on Special Assignment (congratulations Mr. Song- Science and Tech TOSA and Ms. Martinez- English Learner and Literacy TOSA!). The teachers and I have spent many days in search of the perfect individuals to fill these vacancies. Through a rigorous process, we found them! I am so excited for you to meet our new 2019-20 Cove team. An important focus this year is building relationships and sharing Cove's core values to ensure that we gel into a synergistic staff team!

Farewells/ New Roles: We are sending best wishes to the following staff members who have made changes over the summer:

- **Ann-Marie Skaggs** (previously TOSA) is starting a new role as Assistant Principal at Del Mar Middle School in the Reed Union School District.
- **Michael Song** (previously 5th-grade teacher) accepted a new role as LCMSD TOSA (Science, Technology, Robotics, and Engineering)

Who is teaching what next year? Here is a complete list of [Cove Teachers by Grade Level 2019-20](#). This reflects several teachers changing grade levels and classrooms. Our teachers are all happy with where they landed and are looking forward to the year ahead. These [New Teacher Bios](#) will give you a bit of insight into our new team members.

The change we have experienced in 2019 presents us with a natural opportunity for refreshing, renewing our purpose and our values. As we enter our 6th year of Cove, many of the original founding families have graduated on to middle school (and our first 4th-grade class is even entering high school this year!). This is an important time to share our culture and values with our new families so the wonderful work can carry on!

A quick google search yielded this definition for refresh: *To give new energy or strength to*. That is exactly what I picture us doing as a Cove family this year. We will revisit our roots, share our story of origin and ensure that we carry forth our guiding principles into our next phase as a school. We are well poised to continue and expand upon the beautiful culture of learning that we have built!

Our Culture and Values: All of the work we do here at Cove is centered around our 4 Guiding Principles: Experiential Learning, Social and Emotional Growth, Creativity and Community. These are at the forefront of our thinking and all decisions we make. We believe that this strong underpinning leads to academic excellence. Before your children return to school, teachers are engaging in professional development in [Cognitively Guided Math Instruction](#) and [Reading Workshop](#) to further refine our instructional practices.

Important Logistics- Please Read! This [Back to School Checklist](#) includes essential information including important dates, a list of what you need to do to ensure your child is ready for school (school supplies, hot lunch, bus passes, etc) and ways to get involved and support your school community.

Class Placement: I know you are eager to hear about class placement. We are currently working on final class placements from summer enrollment and other changes that have taken place since June. **You will receive an email on Monday, August 19 by 3pm with your child’s class assignment and a welcome letter from your child’s teacher.** We continue to spend many hours on the complex puzzle of class placement. I have received many emails with specific requests. Though I have not responded individually to many of these emails, I want to remind people that we cannot guarantee to meet parent requests for a particular teacher/classroom, and/or requests in regard to grouping students or separating students. We had many, many changes this year, and I know that changes can cause worry---the unknown can be scary! We take this process very seriously and we work intensely to “get it right” for each and every child/family. Thank you for trusting our decisions and respecting the time, energy and thought we spend on making the class placement decisions.

Required Annual Student Information Update: Please note, you will NOT get a teacher/class assignment if you have not completed the annual student information update. In July, you should have received an email from LCMSD (via BluPods) requesting that you complete your student information update. If you have more than one child enrolled, you are required to submit an update for each child. Should you have any questions or issues, please reach out to support@blupods.com to guide you through the process.

Given that we will use BluPods across a number of needs (digital signatures, field trips, invitations to school and classroom events), we recommend that you download the Blupods Messaging app in the App Store sign up with your email address used in this email. If you prefer to proceed via email, please also check in your “spam” folder, as it is occasionally blocked by email providers.

School Hours: [Full Schedule Here](#)

Kindergarten	8:14-2:10pm; Wed 1:15 *Kindergarten dismissal is at 12:20 August 21-30
Grades 1-5	8:14-3:00; Wed 1:15 *Early dismissal at 1:15 for assessments Aug 26-30

**I know this is a change from years past for grades 1-5! These early dismissals provide important time for teachers to assess students one on one. This data is essential for teachers*

to be able to plan instruction at your child's learning level! Teachers will be providing an assessment schedule to you in the week prior to assessment week.

Important School Schedule Notes/Changes for 2019-20:

- Cove in Motion will be 3 days per week this year- Monday through Wednesday. It begins August 26. Teachers may do a movement routine of their choosing on Friday mornings.
- All School Assemblies will be on Thursdays this year (8:15-8:45 unless otherwise specified)
- On Thursdays and Fridays, students will go straight to their classrooms rather than the blacktop.

SCHOOL POLICIES:

- **Code of Conduct:** Please review our [Student Code of Conduct](#) and [Adult Code of Conduct](#) on the Cove School website. This includes our school's discipline plan. In order to create an optimal environment for student learning, The Cove School expects that all members of our community adhere to these guidelines.
- **Attendance:** It is essential that your child is here every day and on time. This year we continue to aim to boost our attendance at Cove. Our goal is 98% attendance. Plan accordingly to do your part. Please do not take your children out of school for extended weekends or trips. We have designed our district calendar to allow for travel days around holidays so that students do not need to miss school. **Our funding depends on our daily attendance;** when a child is absent for any reason, the school loses money. When students miss 5 or more consecutive days of school for an unavoidable reason, please work with our school office and your child's teacher to complete an Independent Study Contract.
- **Illness/ Absence:** Of course, if your child is sick, please keep him/her home. Please email coveabsentee@lcmschools.org prior to 9:00 AM. If we don't hear from you, our automated system will call inquiring about your child's whereabouts.
- **Tardy Policy:** If your child is late to school he/she must come check in at the office and receive a late slip. Classroom teachers cannot welcome a student into their classes without this slip.
- **Snacks and Wellness Policy:** Please send a healthy snack with your child each day. Our district has a wellness policy that states that celebrations that involve food during the school are limited to one party per class per month. Each party can include no more than one sugary food or beverage. Please do not bring food for the class without arranging with your teacher ahead of time. Here are [ideas for Nutritious School Safe Nut-Free Snacks and Treats](#). Please be sure to look over our [LCMSD Student Health and Wellness Board Policy](#) to become familiar with our goals and guidelines.
- **Nut-Restricted Classrooms: All Kindergarten classrooms are nut free.** Please read this [Food Allergy letter to parents](#). Some the 1st -5th grade classrooms will also be nut restricted in order to protect children with life-threatening nut allergies. **Please do not prepare foods with nuts or nut oils for any classroom or school events.** Tree nuts

include, but are not limited to, walnut, almond, hazelnut, cashew, pistachio, and Brazil nuts. Please find several nutritious school safe nut-free foods [here](#).

- **Dress Code:** Appropriate dress is important for safety and consistency for our students. Modesty is encouraged as far as short skirts, shorts, midriff tops, tank tops etc. **Students are not allowed to wear flip-flops.** Shoes worn to school must be safe for physical activity and action-packed days!
- **Banned Items:** Consistent with our district strategic priority to cultivate safe, healthy, caring and inclusive school environments as well as the CA Education Code, we want to remind our parents (and will be visiting classrooms to remind students) that there are certain items that should never be brought to school. These include any knife, or toy weapons, real weapons, drugs, alcohol, etc. Please reinforce these rules with your child.

Please be sure to carefully review the [Cove Back to School Checklist](#) containing essential information.

School begins at **8:14 on Wednesday, August 21st**. I am looking forward to working with you to support your children in their academic, social and emotional growth!

Sincerely,

Michelle Walker
Principal