**Principal’s Briefing**

**February 2018**

*At the PTO meeting on Tuesday, February 6, Mrs. Price provided a brief principal’s update. In an effort to keep you informed, we wanted to provide this update to those unable to attend the meeting.*

**2018-19 School Year** **Teacher Requests** – Next year will be here before we know it! In preparation, just a few reminders about teacher requests. Dogwood **does not** honor requests where a teacher is requested by name. Parents may make requests regarding specific teacher characteristics. If you have a reason to request specific teacher characteristics for your student, you may do that by email only to Teresa.price@gmsdk12.org. Please include your child’s (upcoming) grade level in the subject line. If a request names a teacher, it will not be considered. Friend requests also will not be honored this year. If you have any additional special circumstances, you may email DES Administration.

**Class Placement Procedure** - Our class placement procedure goes through many phases. Current year teachers have input, teacher characteristic requests (see above) are considered, gender balance is taken into consideration, and finally the teachers review the class list for overall balance. The process takes up to three weeks. We believe this placement process is an unbiased approach to meeting every student’s individual needs.

**Class Sizes** – We have been hearing much about class sizes recently. The process for calculating the state maximum class size is two-pronged based upon class band averages and a per classroom maximum.

**Class Band Averages**:

Grades K - 3 – 20 students on average (total students divided by teachers)

Grades 4 - 5 – 25 students on average (total students divided by teachers)

**Classroom Maximum**

 Kindergarten – 20 students maximum

 1st – 3rd Grades – 25 students maximum

 4th – 5th Grades – 30 students maximum

You may reference <http://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/0520/0520-01/0520-01-03.20180123.pdf> for more information.

**Update on 40th Anniversary Gifts -** The cafeteria upgrade is moving along! Engineers, contractors and interior designers are working on plans for the addition of a new drop down projector and screen, new ceiling tiles and acoustical panels to help mitigate the noise, stage area updates and a new ceiling grid. The new acoustical panels will infringe upon the existing mural making it hard to save any meaningful portion of the artwork, so we are looking into some fun artwork ideas for making the space look fresh and new. Thank you to Anne Turner and Anna Pearson for their great design help on the cafeteria project! The district hopes to begin the actual work in the cafeteria soon.

In addition, the new exterior Dogwood Elementary School sign is in the works. The 40th Anniversary Gift Committee selected a design, and landscaping options are being finalized. The district soon will present the sign proposal to the City of Germantown’s Design Review Committee for approval. We hope to have both projects completed by the end of the school year!

**Appropriations Update** – Thanks to generous donations by our Dogwood families through Family Donation Drive and by the PTA, we have been able to provide/purchase the following:

* New Kindergarten tables for our Kindergarten classrooms
* Recess equipment bags and new recess equipment
* Funds to kick off and support our 4th and 5th grade in-school clubs
* Promethean board updates and repairs
* New tables and chairs for the art room
* Sensory room for students with special needs
* A new refrigerator for the teachers’ lounge
* Guidance materials
* Printer for 4th grade
* Teacher funds to allow our teachers to purchase instructional items for their individual classrooms
* Monthly lunches and treats for our teachers
* Teacher professional development, including Eureka training, Art of Education training and a classroom management and behavior seminar.

And coming soon: new library technology equipment and a printer for the front desk. What an amazingly supportive community of families we have! Thank you!

**Instructional Fee Update –** At the beginning of the school year, we collected$15,742 in instructional fees. Those funds were used to purchase the following:

* Tennessee History for Kids
* Reading A-Z
* Student Island
* Wit and Wisdom
* Brain Pop, Brain Pop Jr. Brain Pop ESL
* Accelerated Reader
* Starfall
* Bloomz
* Instructional books
* Curriculum Associates Test Ready
* Moose Productions Daily Star Math

**Upcoming Events** – Make sure to mark your calendars for the following upcoming events.

* General Student Registration - Coming soon! Dates TBD.
* Kindergarten Registration – Exact dates and times TBD. More information coming soon!
* New Family Open House – April 5 at 6:30 p.m. at Dogwood
* Springfest – April 7 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Family fun for everyone at Dogwood!
* Dogwood’s Kindergarten Camp – June 4-8 from 9:00 a.m. – Noon. Registration information coming soon!