



Pearl River School District

EVANS PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

40 Marion Place

Pearl River, New York 10965-2505

www.pearlriver.org

Phone: 845-620- 3950 – Fax: 845-620-7570

lynchp@pearlriver.org

Peggy Lynch
Principal

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Welcome back, Evans Park Families. It is so enjoyable to have you and your children here at school again. After just seven days in session, the children and their teachers are demonstrating that they are motivated, engaged and actively learning. When I met with each grade level recently, it was my pleasure to express to them how impressed I am with the climate in the building and their full cooperation throughout the day, especially including arrival and dismissal times.

As many of you know, our continued work around *Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication* has brought us not only refashioned lessons aimed at strategies and challenges that support independent problem solving, but also our Maker Space (still under renovation after being moved) and several remodeled classrooms, most recently our three fourth grade rooms. The purpose of the change to furnishings in classrooms is to plan and provide instruction in a manner that enables students with a variety of learning styles to reach their full potential. Students and staff are inspired by these changes; the ability to make choices and find their most focused selves as they are learning are outgrowths.

FLEx periods, rich with time for students to read, write, research, use technology and interact with peers, are highlighted by opportunities for intervention AND independence. One of our goals this year is to fully articulate with you the small group and individualized work your children are doing each day to enhance their growth. As we continue to address Next Generation Science Standards, Kindergarten will be utilizing Science 21 while first and second grades continue with STEMScopes. Our goal is to be certain we are effectively connecting Disciplinary Core Ideas, Science and Engineering practices, and Crosscutting Connections through informed program decisions. Writing instruction is also a focus; two years of professional development and piloting of Teachers College Units of Study have resulted in a formalized plan for each grade level.

Our work based on PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is again in full swing; students in all grades are reviewing expectations and, I'm happy to report, practicing those in and around all areas of the building. In an effort to promote mindfulness and strong social-emotional skills, we will be forming small groups for instruction with the Second Step Social Emotional Learning Curriculum under the guidance of Ms. Kane and Ms. Cervantes-Libassi. We can look at this work related to social emotional strengths as additional "Cs" in our line up...character and citizenship. Please join us in using the language of our positive behavior expectations, *respectful, responsible, ready and safe*, at home to promote a pro-social culture for all and in all places.

If you have been at the Evans Park building, or plan to stop in soon, you will be aware of the work of the Capital Improvement Bond, the newly secure vestibule (almost finished) and the move of the offices to the front of the building. We are pleased with the safety measures the district has undertaken on behalf of the Evans Park community. The students have acclimated to different points of entry and are enjoying the changes.

Also at those grade level meetings I referenced earlier, the students gave me their ideas about what was positive about their new year and grade. Here are some of their thoughts:

New friends, riding the bus, recess on the "big" playground, homework (yes, homework!), harder sprints, recess before lunch, learning harder things, being in the intermediate hallway, remodeled classrooms and seating, reading and games, new teachers and looking forward to field trips, student council, the BBQ and other events

I'm hopeful that the students at Evans Park will maintain their enthusiasm for new learning and fun events throughout the 2018-2019 school year. Let's all work to make that happen for each and every student!

Sincerely,

Peggy Lynch