



*This letter was sent via email on Friday, 8/4/2023, to Galaxy (grades 5-6) families.*

Dear Galaxy families,

We hope that everyone is enjoying the last few weeks of summer break!

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. We have been teaching together since 2002, and we love teaching fifth and sixth-grade students. Tracey enjoys sharing her love of math and animals. In math, she enjoys using problem solving strategies to see how the same problem can be approached in a number of different ways. Neil is an avid reader and writer and enjoys working with Galaxy students to find and tell their own stories. Brad enjoys sharing his love of stories and humor and is eager to help build this year's Galaxy community.

### **Summer Project**

Each year, the Galaxy school year begins with an orientation for students for the first three days of school. The theme for the orientation this year is "New Beginnings". In preparation for this theme, we are asking each Galaxy student to read one of the following books this summer: *Tiger Rising* by Kate DiCamillo or *All the Way Home* by Patricia Reilly Giff. If you have already read one of these books, please choose the other one. We have ordered copies of each, and you can pick them up in the front office of the Guilford Campus (1128 New Garden Road). The books have already been paid for; all you need to do is write your name on the list underneath the title of the book you choose. There will be a discussion on the books during the beginning of the year retreat. These books will be turned in to the Galaxy teachers after the orientation.

The project that you need to work on in conjunction with the overall theme of "New Beginnings" is to write, build, make, and/or create a presentation (either a physical display or digital) that shows a time when you began something new that was exciting and/or challenging for you. This could have to do with your family, school, or community. Be imaginative, be creative, and show your best work on this project. We purposely leave this project open-ended. Feel free to be led in any direction and have fun with it. It should be more than a quick drawing or a short written piece. Projects will be shared with your classmates during the retreat. Hopefully, this will set a positive tone for how each of you will carry through with your work for the year.

### **First week of school**

We will go off campus during the school day for our Beginning of the Year Retreat on Thursday, August 24 and Friday, August 25. Please see the list of dates below for additional information. These shared experiences will help build community and get us off to a great start together.

### **Important Upcoming Dates**

- Monday, Aug. 21, 6-7 p.m. - Classroom Welcome Night
- Monday, Aug. 21, 7-7:30 p.m. - Athletics Interest Meeting
- Wednesday, Aug. 23 - First Day of School
- Thursday, Aug. 24, 8:30 a.m. - New Parent Orientation
- Thursday, Aug. 24 - Beginning of the Year Retreat: Galaxy to Bur-Mil Park in the afternoon; regular dismissal time
- Friday, Aug. 25 - Beginning of the Year Retreat: Galaxy to Hagan Stone Park, full day - **NO HOT LUNCH**; regular dismissal
  - Please make sure your child has a packed lunch, water bottle, comfortable outdoor clothing, swimsuit, towel, and sunscreen.
- Friday, Sept. 1 - Hopes and Dreams Conferences; no school for students, Extended Care is offered
- Monday, Sept. 4 - Labor Day; school is closed
- Tuesday, Sept. 12, 6-7 p.m. - Lower School Parent Night, including a presentation about the Galaxy curriculum

### **Required School Supplies**

- 4 - 1 inch binders (different colors); 5 if your child plays violin
- 1 - ½ inch binder
- Notebook dividers (12)
- Pens
- Pencils
- Pencil box
- Small non-electric pencil sharpener
- Highlighters (at least 3 colors)
- Markers or colored pencils (at least 5 colors)
- *For Art class:* 9x12 spiral-bound sketchbook
- *For general music class:* a soprano ukulele
- *For strings music class:* a violin
- Labeled reusable water bottle (at least 16 oz) with spill-proof cap (no glass)
- Lunch box

\*In *General Music* class, students will learn to play the ukulele. A ukulele can be purchased from many vendors, including Moore Music for a 10% discounted price in store (336-274-4636, ask for Dave; if you order online, it will not give you the discount for NGFS).

### **Optional School Supplies**

If you are interested in donating a few items for classroom use, we are regularly in need of:

- Tissues
- Hand sanitizer
- Clorox wipes
- Plastic spoons and forks
- Pencils
- White board markers

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- You will be given a name card to display on your car window visor. Please be sure to clearly display this card on the visor in the morning and afternoon; we appreciate your assistance in helping drop-off and pick-up run smoothly and efficiently.
- Drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. for Extended Care and 8 a.m. for the regular school day and continues until 8:25 a.m. Please plan to arrive during this window of time.
- At arrival, staff will direct you through the carpool line to drop off your child. Students will use the sidewalk to walk to their classroom and will be assisted by staff.
- If your child arrives late, please bring your child to the office and sign them in. An adult must accompany your child to the office. Your child will be escorted by staff to their classroom.
- Dismissal is at 3:10 p.m. Staff will direct parents/guardians through the carpool line, and teachers will bring their students to the carpool line. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick-up list in ParentsWeb (FACTS Family Portal). Instruct them to have identification with them; staff will check the ID of anyone unknown to them. (Please note that changes in ParentsWeb may take up to 48 hours to update.)
- If you must pick your child up before school is over, please go to the office to sign your child out. If early pick-up is for a scheduled appointment, please coordinate with your student's teacher in advance so they will have their belongings packed and ready to go at the designated time. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up early, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick up list in ParentsWeb.
- Please email your student's contact teacher if they will be absent. If an extended absence from school is necessary, communicate with the Division Head at least one week in advance so that arrangements can be made for work. After contacting the Division Head concerning a protracted absence, parents/guardians of students in K-6th grades should contact teachers for assignments.

### Extended Care (see [Extended Care page](#) for information)

- Morning care will be provided from 7:30-8 a.m.
- Afternoon extended care runs until 6 p.m.

### Snack and Lunch

- Your child needs to bring a snack, lunch, and non-caffeinated drink each day. Appropriate snacks include fruit, yogurt, cheese, bread products, and juice.
- We do not have refrigerator space for lunches or student access to microwaves, so pack lunches accordingly. Lunch box-sized ice packs/coolers work well for keeping drinks and yogurt cool.
- There is an option to order hot lunch through My Hot Lunchbox; see [Back to School page](#) for more information and directions for ordering.
- Please remember to send a snack daily, even when ordering hot lunch.

- **Due to food allergies, Galaxy will be shellfish-free this year.** Students may not bring food items containing shrimp, crab, lobster, etc. We ask that students also have a reusable water bottle each day that just contains water.

### **Contact Groups and Homerooms**

If you have any information or questions that may help to ensure a successful start to the school year for your child, please feel free to email your child's contact teacher. In addition, you will have an opportunity to share the hopes and dreams that you have for your child's school year with their contact teacher at our conferences held on Friday, September 1. Look for a Sign-Up Genius to be emailed prior to the start of school from your child's contact teacher. Your child's contact teacher will be meeting and communicating with you throughout the year.

For the list of contact groups and homeroom assignments, please see the Welcome Letter email, sent on 8/4/23 from Carolyn Howes, Head of Lower School, [chowes@ngfs.org](mailto:chowes@ngfs.org)

Sincerely,  
Brad, Neil, and Tracey

Brad Harrell (he, him), [bharrell@ngfs.org](mailto:bharrell@ngfs.org)

Neil Swenson (he, him), [nswenson@ngfs.org](mailto:nswenson@ngfs.org)

Tracey Bouchard (she, her), [tbouchard@ngfs.org](mailto:tbouchard@ngfs.org)