

September,
2009

WOODLANDS LEARNING SPECIALIST

Jeff Sullivan
662-9715

BEGINNING AND CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Welcome back to a new school year at Woodlands Elementary School! During the first few days of the school year, I've become reacquainted with many returning students, and I've also met quite a few of the students who are new to our school. It's great to have you with us as we resume this journey!

There's always a lot of excitement around the beginning of a new school year, for both students and staff members. A few weeks ago, I came into Woodlands and looked around my office. With no students in the halls and just a handful of staff members in the building, it seemed a little too quiet; while I knew there was plenty for me to do, there was no sense of urgency, and I felt far away and somewhat removed from the names and faces on paper and on my computer screen.

Now the library, the hallways, and the classrooms are filled

with the excitement of children's voices, the light of their smiles, and the energy of their movement. Names and faces are immediately attached, in my mind, to a young person who has hopes, dreams, fears, interests, likes, and dislikes. The stress of the weeks before school started (evident in the "teacher dreams" that my wife and I shared in the mornings leading up to the first day) seems somewhat silly now that the kids are here and there are needs to be met that are clearly more pressing than our own.

I want to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new and returning families to the 2008-2009 school year at Woodlands Elementary School. A new school year offers an opportunity for so many new beginnings: a new teacher, new friends, possibly a new school, and a wide array of opportunities to try new things and meet new challenges.

Some students take these changes all in stride and continue to show staff members and peers alike that they are up to the challenge of accomplishing whatever is set before them. However, if your child has had difficulty with the challenges that have been presented in school, I would like to offer my help. This is my 21st year at Woodlands Elementary, and my tenth year as Learning Specialist. It's my job and responsibility to work with all Woodlands students and their families to help them achieve up to their full potential. Please feel free to call me at 662-9715 if you have any questions or concerns about your child and his or her success at Woodlands.

My office is in the main hallway – the last door on your left as you head for classrooms or the library. If the light is on, that means I'm in. Please feel free to walk right in.

See you at school!
Jeff Sullivan

Destination Imagination at Woodlands this year

- *I am looking for parents who are interested in being Team Managers*
- *If you'd like more information, please speak to me at Open House or call me at 662-9715*
- *Students will have an opportunity to "try out" DI in October*

Developmental Assets

Each month, I include a handout called "Ideas for Parents" in our newsletter. This month I'm running Newsletter #26, "Commitment to Learning." This newsletter, produced by a Minnesota based organization called Search Institute, includes ideas for nurturing children's independence as they grow up as part of a caring community. If you'd like copies of the other Ideas for Parents newsletters, please call me at 662-9715.