

## Parent-to-Parent Tips for Successful Elementary School Transitions

### **BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS:**

- Get a filing/calendar system to hold all School and PTO/PTA letters and paperwork. There is lots of it. Respond promptly when asked.
- Take your child to the elementary building playground and PTO/PTA events.
- Include a discussion of summer enrichment programs and NSSRA or park district camps at your IEP meeting.
- Any special peer placements requests or teacher placements discussed at the IEP should be confirmed in writing to the new school principal in the spring.
- Start the new waking, sleeping and breakfast routine two weeks before school. You and your child need time to adjust to the new schedule. Talk about what "hurry up" means and what you want your child to do when you say that.
- Plan for your child to go to the school campus before the first day of school. Stop by or call the building and let them know your child's needs to rehearse before the first day. Find the classrooms, stairwells, bathrooms, nurses' office, lost and found, auditorium, library, cafeteria, auditorium, and gym. If you know an older student or sibling that can take your student, it is even better. Show where the bus picks up and drops off. Be sure and meet the staff who welcome the opportunity, but do not interrupt staff getting ready for school.
- If your student is riding the bus, practice the walk to the bus stop. You will receive a colored bus tag. Make sure your child can identify the color and know that they will always see the color sign on the bus window. Teach them the drivers name and how to greet the driver and say good bye with a thank you. If you have any concerns about the bus, call Barbara Wagner Zook, Director of Transportation (847-256-2450).
- Practice the names of the classroom teacher, principal, nurse, custodians, bus drivers, gym, art, and music teachers.
- If your child uses specialized pencil grips, seat coverings, books-on-tape or other assistive technology, discuss at the IEP meeting how they are to be supplied. Send a short email or call the principal with a list of these items around August 1<sup>st</sup> thanking them for making sure they are in place to welcome your child. Do the same with the school nurse when appropriate.
- Become familiar with the District 39 website at [www.wilmette39.org](http://www.wilmette39.org). Go online with your child and look at the pictures and student products.
- Be prepared for a call from your student's LBS (Learning/Behavior Specialist) about a week before the start of school. Make a **short** list of any things important for them to know the first two weeks of school that might impact your students emotional or social wellbeing or health condition. The first few weeks are about settling in and getting to know one another, not about academics. Some examples might be: need to use a bathroom as needed, can't read or write name, significant anxiety behaviors, any serious situations happening at home. Confirm this short list in writing or via email with the LBS and classroom teacher before the start of school.

### **WHEN SCHOOL STARTS:**

- District 39 has an active commitment to communication. Initiate a communication network with **all** of your child's team of teachers. It should fit your needs as well as the individual teachers. Some examples are group email, phone call, monthly updates.
- Provide a brief summary of key attributes of your child and provide it to all teachers at the beginning of school. Focus on student learning strengths and supports that create successful student outcomes.
- Join the PTO and PTA at your school. Be as active as you can.

*For questions, please contact PASS39 at [pass39@wilmette39.org](mailto:pass39@wilmette39.org)*