



## Welcome back!

Welcome back to school! We are so glad you are here! The school is almost ready, and the teachers have been busy spending their last days of summer preparing their classrooms and curriculum for their students.

This is the beginning of my fifth year as Grundy Center Elementary principal. It is hard to believe time has passed so quickly, but I am proud of the work staff have put into the past four years to make our school great! We are fortunate to have highly qualified staff and resources to support them. This summer, several staff have taken coursework including: Iowa Reading Conference, Nerd Camp Michigan, Technology for Libraries, Teaching on the Move, ISU Summer Institute.



A few new staff members join us this year as well. Mrs.

Katie Hilby joined us as our transitional kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Kelli Jordan joined the special education staff, and

### *Important Dates*

- Sept. 2 No School
- Sept. 4 12:45 Early Out
- Sept. 18 12:45 Early Out
- Sept. 20 Fundraiser kick-off

### **Student Arrival Times**

If your child is eating breakfast at school, he/she may arrive at 7:50 and enter the school building. If your child is not eating breakfast, he/she may arrive at 8:00 and enter the building.

There is an 8:00 arrival bell and an 8:15 tardy bell letting students know they need to be in their classrooms.

There is no outdoor school supervision until 7:45.

Please remember, parents dropping students off may stop in front of the doors to drop students off. When picking up, you may park along the street or in the parking spaces. **NO PARKING** is allowed in front of the doors.

Cearra Aguon joined the paraeducators. Welcome!

Literacy initiatives are continually a focus at the elementary school. Celebrating reading is our culture. It's the way we approach the many literature based activities we provide for our students. This year, we will continue many of the exciting activities which help our students engage in and grow their love of reading. Our most celebrated activities will be TWO guest author visits! Minnesota author, Joseph Kuefler, will be making his fourth visit to Grundy Center Elementary in the fall. He will be featuring his newest illustrated book is Caveboy Crush by Beth Ferry. Another author, Laurie Keller, will be visiting us in the spring. The Michigan author has written and illustrated books such as Potato Pants!, The Scrambled States of America, Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners, and the Arnie the Donut series.



We are also continuing our One Community, One Book initiative. The book chosen for the 2019-2020 school year is Potato Pants! by visiting author, Laurie Keller! This initiative is a great opportunity to build community through literacy and promote reading and book discussions with a common book everyone can enjoy! Trust me, you will enjoy this book! Flyers for this initiative are currently circulating around town. If you would like to download the flyer, please go to my blog at [mrbsammons.weebly.com](http://mrbsammons.weebly.com)

Another highlight for students this year will be the Mock Caldecott activity. Students LOVE to read and study some of the best books of the year and choose their own

Caldecott winner!

We will, once again, be collaborating with Broadway actor, Hayley Podschun to learn about the fine arts and New York City. Hayley will be collaborating with students via Skype and is always willing to make connections with what students are learning in class.

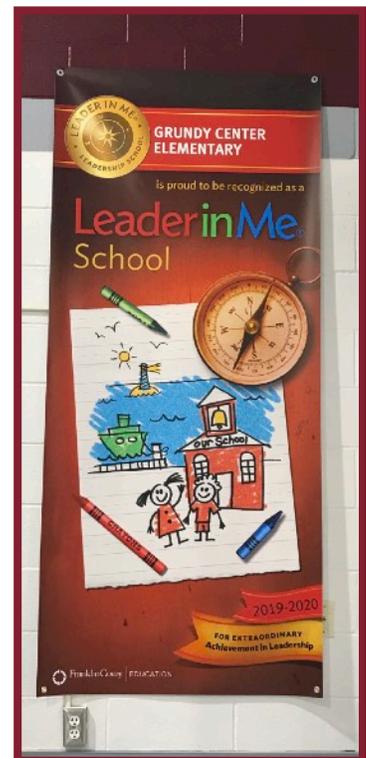
As with every new school year, a few new changes have been made you need to know. First, we are moving our elementary specials schedule back to a 5-day Monday-Friday cycle. This increased the number of minutes students spend at specials and creates a more predictable cycle. The drawbacks are that we had to create Wednesday afternoons with no specials (which affects how we stagger specials throughout the week) to accommodate early out days for professional development, and if there is a snow day, students miss those specials as they no longer roll over to the next day. As always, we continue to look for what will work best for kids, teachers, and the overall schedule.



As a reminder, we do ask that ALL visitors enter through the front door of the school building and stand on the maroon painted feet while pressing the doorbell. This will allow us to visibly see all guests who enter the building. All guests must also check into the office and receive a guest badge before continuing. We have also upgraded our intruder awareness and emergency procedures. As the school year progresses, we will have a digital entry system where all guests wanting to access the building will need a valid government issued ID.

I am happy to announce we will continue our school wide multiage groups called Kids Club. Kids Club allows students from every grade to form their own smaller community within the school. Kids Club is held twice a month for 30 minutes and focuses on the 7 Habits from the Leader in Me.

We at Grundy Center Elementary School are proud to be in our **FIRST** year as a Leader in Me School. Leader in Me is a whole-school improvement process based on the idea that everyone can be a leader. This evidence-based approach empowers students with the leadership and life-skills they need to thrive in the 21st century. What to expect now we're a Leader in Me School? Increased use of 7 Habits language Leadership opportunities for students and families School-wide events Visit the Leader in Me Blog for inspiration and resources or learn more at [leaderinme.org](http://leaderinme.org)



Our Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) program at the elementary is as strong as ever! We have Jan Lindeman returning as the student achievement coordinator (works with data and PLC groups), Sue Graham returning as the lead teacher (implements reading and math strategies), and Abby Hendershot returning as the mentor teacher (mentors new to the school staff). Joining them will be Katie Lechtenberg and Addi Smith as building improvement team members (creates innovative ideas for future implementation).

BOXTOPS collecting has changed! The BOXTOPS to cut out are being phased out. They can still be collected until their expiration date, but collecting BOXTOPS now involves SCANNING your grocery receipt! You can go to [Boxtops4Education.com](http://Boxtops4Education.com) for directions! You may also bring your



receipts to the elementary school, and we will scan them. However, be aware that this must be done within 14 days of purchase! The money raised funds author visits, field trips, and books. Thank you for your participation!

If you have not heard, there is a free app you may download that will give you allergen and nutrition information for our school lunches. The app is called YumYummi. Download it and give it a try!

Communication between teacher and parent is a critical component of student success at Grundy Center Elementary. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers via email or phone call to share successes and concerns.

All of us here at Grundy Center Elementary look forward to a great year!

*Brian Sammons, Elementary Principal*