

April 1, 2019



Dear Marshall Primary School Parents,

What a wonderful time to be at Marshall Primary School! We have so many positive changes to be excited about and so many successes to celebrate. We would like to take this time to celebrate these areas of progress that our school and School Improvement Council have made in the goals and objectives of our School Renewal Plan.

This year we had an opportunity to have several teachers trained in Orton-Gillingham. This is a multi-sensory approach that breaks reading and spelling into smaller skills, and then builds on those skills over time to help students learn how to read. Teachers use sight, hearing, touch, and movement to help students connect and learn the concepts being taught. Because of the overwhelming success we have seen student have with this approach, we are excited to be able to have even more of our staff participate in training again this summer.

We were also very fortunate to have more technology added to our school this year as part of the ASD2 Technology expansion. Our second grade classes went 1-to-1 with Chromebooks, while our kindergarten and first grade classes shared a class set of Chromebooks between two classes. This access to technology has allowed our students to take learning outside of the classroom walls by participating in virtual trips and researching new topics of interest. It has also allowed us to open up our computer labs for related arts, and offer more activities in reading, math, and typing skills.

In looking at our assessment data, our kindergarten through second grade students have shown substantial academic improvement from fall to spring test administrations on our reading and math i-Ready assessments, as well as the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessments. To support academic growth, Marshall Primary School began common weekly planning periods for certified teachers with school administrators and instructional coaches, to focus on curriculum updates and common assessments. Our pre-kindergarten students have also shown tremendous growth on both their DIAL-4 (Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning) screening and PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) assessment. The hard work displayed by our teachers, staff, and students this year has truly paid off, and we could not be more proud!

In addition to our academic success, our school continues to make our students' social development a top priority. With the continued implementation of our *Responsive Classroom* program, we have intentionally focused on relationship building and supporting a whole-child approach. We have continued a TEAM approach with our positive behavior incentive system this school year. Each month we take time to celebrate students through our MPS Hall of Fame and MPS Birthday Club.

Parent involvement is an area we always seek to strengthen at Marshall Primary School. This year, we hosted several parent workshops throughout the year that focused on reading, math, and understanding the standards-based report card. We also held quarterly STEAM days and invited parents to participate in several of the planned STEAM activities. Our fall Literacy Night gave parents an opportunity to meet with their child's teacher and select new reading materials at the Book Fair, while our spring STEAM Night gave families an opportunity to participate in hands-on learning through the StarLab, Google Expedition, Coding Robots, Roper Mountain Science Center, and Riverbanks Zoo. To combat summer reading loss, we are excited to hold a free book fair for our students prior to the end of the year so that every child has new books to take home and read with their family during the summer months.

We are excited about the 2019-2020 school year at Marshall Primary School. We will continue to implement more common standards-based assessments throughout each grade level and strengthen our instructional practices.

Thank you for your continued support as we work hard to improve and provide your child with a world-class education that builds the foundation for their future as a college-and-career ready student.

Sincerely,

Shelly Blalock, Principal

Norma Hughes-Smith, SIC Chairperson