



Kissel Hill Elementary School
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Dear Kissel Hill Students, Parents, and Staff Members,

The time has finally come! Welcome back to another exciting school year at Kissel Hill Elementary. It is my sincere hope that everyone has experienced summer months filled with relaxation, laughter, smiles, and memories. Remember that the best parts of Kissel Hill are the personal imprints that each of you leave due to your presence. It is my hope that you allow these vibrant emotions of the summer to continue to shine brightly as you reenter on September 9th. Kissel Hill's greatness has nothing to do with the brick and mortar, and everything to do with the hearts of its occupants. Thank you for all that you do as a Kissel Hill Climber. We truly do "climb" best working together!

I'd like to open this year by asking every student, parent, and staff member to "**reach beyond the surface.**" In short, act upon opportunities to strengthen the affective elements of our culture with little, yet meaningful, behaviors. Take chances on opportunities, and people, even if such actions may be unpopular or unnecessary. Stories of the past remind us that those willing to "reach beyond the surface" are often those that produce true greatness. History shares that a pillar of marble 14 feet tall was imported into Italy. It had been looked over by two famous sculptors, and was rejected by both. There were obvious imperfections that would have compromised the hard work that every sculptor puts into his or her art. So the block sat for over 20 years...until Michelangelo cast his eyes upon it. Stories are told that Michelangelo would lay his hands upon a piece of marble and close his eyes. He would share that he was "listening" for the art within, sensing the product that he was to unlock with his tools. He found this marble, previously rejected, and unlocked the Statue of David. His work, born from imperfect material, has been described as one of the most perfect pieces of art ever created.

The parallels between this story and our purpose in education excite me to my core! As a teacher, and now principal, my favorite moments have been the opportunities to tell a child that his or her achievements were the result of greatness he or she always had within him/her self. Together we had organized understandings and strengthened skillsets. The students, however, were always the treasure chest...we simply showed them how to use the key. To ensure we keep the passion of learning alive in our students, we must collaboratively utilize both quantifiable and qualitative data to grow for our children. No single number defines who your child is, or the value of his or her ability to enhance the world. Your child's worth is immense...we believe that as fact. We are honored to be a steppingstone in the educational journey upon which your child is traveling.

I am privileged to be an educator within the ranks of our talented staff and supportive community. Our elementary school, and school district, operates under the premise that every child matters, has the potential for greatness, and possesses the ability to learn. To achieve this, I ask for all stakeholders to communicate with the assumption of best intentions from all, and dialogue with the understanding that we all must continue to learn from one another. Thank you for joining me as we "reach beyond the surface" to the heart of every child. As an educational community working together, we are powerful...we are Kissel Hill Climbers...we are instruments of positive growth in the lives of every child! From the Berardi Family to all Kissel Hill Families, welcome to a great year!

Sincerely,


Melissa B. Berardi (M)

Mr. Ryan P. Berardi & Family (Melissa and Cella [3 yrs old])
Principal
Kissel Hill Elementary

P.S. Follow us on Twitter: @KisselHillWSD

