

Hello boys/girls and parents/guardians:

I am Mrs. Kuchar-Long, your Southmoreland Elementary School Principal. Some of you in fifth grade this year may remember me from before or perhaps you've seen me at the middle school or athletic events and community gatherings..

Our mission at SES is focused on student learning, and includes the important role of the family in education. Our goal is to Bridge the Gap with students, parents, the community, and faculty of our district by improving communication, engaging with students, parents, and faculty, and demonstrating academic growth for all students. The excitement is building as we are working vigorously to prepare an engaging and fun start to the school year, and it starts at Meet the Teacher Night.



We are implementing a new instructional strategy this year: flexible grouping. Flexible grouping is a data-driven best practice for improving student learning in which teachers are able to target specific needs for students by creating a variety of fluid groups in which students are provided specific instructional needs. Flexible grouping is simply grouping students in the most advantageous way for delivering instruction. So your groups will not look the same throughout the school year, semester, or maybe even the week. It allows students to get the right support, in the right way, at the right time.

As you are preparing for the start of the upcoming school year, whether you are a returning student, a new student, a transfer student, or an incoming 2nd grader, my advice for you to be successful at SES is the same advice that I share with my own children.

- Don't be afraid to try something new. Learn to play an instrument or participate in a new sport. You don't know what you are capable of until you try.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions. That student sitting next to you probably has the same question.

- Don't be afraid to ask for help from a teacher or a friend. No one knows that you need help unless you ask.
- Always be proud of your accomplishments but know that there will always be someone better, faster, stronger, or smarter than you. Find your strengths and continue to build upon them, but don't be afraid to try new things and fail – that's how we learn..
- Don't compare yourself to others. Your uniqueness is what makes you special. The world would be a very dull place if we were all the same. Be the best version of yourself!
- Your friends today will not likely be your friends tomorrow. Value and appreciate your time together, but when you have reached the end of your friendship, move along with grace and dignity.
- Make new friends. Say, "Hello." Smile. Hold the door. Treat others as you would like to be treated. The boy or girl you are mad at today because you heard they said something about you will not even remember your name in a few years. They will, however, remember how you treated them.
- If you have nothing nice to say, then say nothing at all.
- Practice "Grandma's Rules." If you wouldn't want Grandma to hear it or see it, then don't say it, text it, post it, or take a photo of it. Just because you delete it, doesn't mean it no longer exists. In today's world of technology, only you are responsible for the digital image you leave on this world. Make it a positive one.
- Show respect, radiate humility, and demonstrate integrity – regardless of the circumstances you face or who is watching. Who you are is more important than what you are.
- Spread kindness, not the virus. Don't forget that you must wear a face-covering on the school bus, and it is recommended in school, too.

I am very much looking forward to the halls being filled with the voices and laughter that have been absent for far too long.

We must work together to benefit your child. Here is to a great year with lots of growth!

Love,

Mrs. Kuchar-Long