

September 1, 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome! The week has flown by! I am delighted to be with your 3<sup>rd</sup> grader this year! I taught 3<sup>rd</sup> grade for quite a few years before becoming a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, so it is really a treat for me to be back in 3<sup>rd</sup> for a year.

You will usually receive a newsletter from me bi-weekly, catching you up on academics and other important information. This week, I just want to say hello and introduce myself to you. I will have a lot of information for you at the family homecoming on September 14<sup>th</sup>.

This has been a very busy week for me, with the beginning of the school year, but also because we have been getting ready for our son's wedding this weekend in Boston. Nick is the oldest of our six children and the first to be married, so I am pretty much beside myself with joy and excitement for them! We are going directly to the airport from school, so I was hustling to pack last night!

We have spent the last three days getting to know each other and establishing a foundation for our classroom community. We wrote a social contract to guide us and keep us aware of our love and responsibilities for each other. The students are also learning some very important procedures. It

is sometimes tedious, but establishing solid expectations, guidelines, and procedures sets the tone for the whole year, so this is critical work we are doing.

I believe very strongly in integrating movement into our day! For many years now I have been studying and reading about the impact of recent brain research upon education. In 2004, I wrote my master's thesis on implementing this research in the classroom. I use brain gym and other quick energizing movements throughout the day. I should tell you that I am also a group fitness instructor at the YMCA.

I am also a health nut as my kids would say. Good nutrition and sleep are also crucial to good learning habits. Every day, the children should bring a healthy snack. They do not eat lunch until 12:05. That's a long time from breakfast, so bringing a healthy snack each day is very important.

My faith life is something I love to share with my students. I have tons of stories of God at work in my life and the lives of my children. The kids love these stories!

Again, I am delighted and honored to be your child's teacher in this beautiful and faith-filled school. I can't tell you how excited I am to be a partner with you in your child's education!

Blessings,

Mrs. Deb Pieri