



## **Taunton Forge School**

*Future Leaders Begin Here*

# ***THE TIGER TIMES***

*SEPTEMBER 2017 EDITION*

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! We are excited to be working with you and your child/children.

In our ongoing effort to promote an environment of safety and respect for all children and adults, we will continue a formalized School-Wide Behavioral Expectation Program. This program will communicate four behavioral expectations that all students will need to follow **inside the school**, **on the bus**, and **on the playground**. The behavioral expectations are as follows:

### **INSIDE THE SCHOOL AND BUS BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:**

- 1) Respect people and property.
- 2) Walk at all times.
- 3) Use an inside voice.
- 4) Keep your hands, feet, and body to yourself.

### **PLAYGROUND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:**

- 1) Respect people and property.
- 2) Use equipment properly.
- 3) Play fairly.
- 4) Keep your hands, feet, and body to yourself.

We have found it helpful to provide consistent explanations of these expectations to students, teachers, assistants, bus drivers, and parents. The expectations will be posted throughout the school. Students will receive direct instruction from their teachers during the first or second day of school to learn about these expectations and consequences (to be explained below) in an age appropriate way. Teachers and assistants will meet together at an opening staff meeting to make sure that they are all aware of the expectations and the consequences. Parents are receiving this letter to inform them of the program.

Clear and consistent consequences will also be part of the program as follows:

### **POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR FOLLOWING THE EXPECTATIONS:**

- 1) A safe and respectful environment for all.
- 2) Positive verbal recognition from adults in the school.
- 3) Full participation in school wide privileges.
- 4) Special events for students.

### **NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR DISREGARDING THE EXPECTATIONS:**

- 1) Warning
- 2) Lunch and/or recess detention or after school detention; both accompanied by student written reflection.
- 3) Parent/principal intervention.
- 4) Saturday School

Our goal is to focus on the positive. Staff members will be asked to go out of their way to verbally commend children for following the expectations. They will not be trying to “catch the students being bad” but rather recognize them for doing a good job. Teachers will continue to have their own classroom rules and expectations. The rules above are meant to provide expectations for behavior in common areas like the hallways, cafeteria, bus, and playground. I’m sure you’d agree that if the four expectations were to be followed consistently, any school environment would improve. That is what we are striving for...continuous improvement. We have great students, parents, and staff, but we can always improve.

Additionally, as a way of showing respect for each other, we are asking that children **not wear hats in the school building or bring electronic devices or stuffed animals to school**. If your bus driver allows such items, that’s fine. However, they should be kept in your child’s school bag during the day. Children wearing hats inside or playing with electronic devices or stuffed animals may have these items taken away and parents will be notified to pick them up.

### **NEW SCHOOL STARTING AND ENDING TIME**

Beginning this school year, student instructional time will increase by 20 minutes per day. The student day will begin at 8:15 a.m. and end at 2:50 p.m. Students can be dropped off as early as 8:00 a.m. On early dismissal days the student day will run 8:15 a.m. until 12:25 p.m.

### **NEW TIGER PAW RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

Taunton Forge will be implementing a new Tiger Paw Recognition Program to recognize excellent character in our students. Taunton Forge School promotes putting into action six core values: kindness, honesty, responsibility, caring, integrity, and respect. Children that demonstrate these values will have the opportunity to earn a Tiger Paw. Any staff member may award a Tiger Paw to recognize a student for demonstrating one or more of our core values. At the end of each month students who earned a Tiger Paw will have their photographs taken with their grade level peers and the photo will be displayed in our entrance foyer. They will also receive a Taunton Forge pen or pencil. Students earn Tiger Paw recognition for behavior that goes above and beyond what is expected in school, not for normal, expected behavior as described above. Each month we will focus on a different core value at school. September’s emphasis will be “responsibility”. The start of the school year is a great time to focus on being responsible for our actions and our work both at home and school. Remember that we, as parents, are our child’s first teachers. Our children are watching us closely to model responsible behavior. With regard to our core value program, each morning a short message that focuses on the month’s value will be delivered over the public address system. Most of the time students will write and announce the messages. It’s a great self-esteem builder and the students really enjoy using the public address system. I encourage you to talk about the core values at home regularly and ask your children about each month’s value.

Please join me in welcoming new staff members to Taunton Forge School. Ms. Brianne O’Neill will be teaching special education in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. She is a recent graduate of Monmouth University. Ms. Brenda Worrell will be joining us as a new evening custodian.

I want to remind all parents and guardians that on Friday, October 20 and Friday, February 16, school is closed for students due to teacher professional development sessions. Additionally, Tuesday, December 5, Wednesday, January 10 and Thursday, March 15 are two hour delayed opening days. In an effort to provide more professional development to our faculty, teachers will be attending training during the early morning. Your child’s bus pick-up and start of the school day will be two hours later than usual to accommodate this. Please note these dates so that you can make appropriate child care arrangements. Lunches WILL be served on these days. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

I am excited to announce that Taunton Forge will be continuing our presence on Twitter and Facebook. Please follow us @TFTigers and/or on the Taunton Forge Facebook page for information and happenings at the school. You can easily begin to follow us by using the link on our school web site at [www.tauntonforgeschool.org](http://www.tauntonforgeschool.org). Speaking of the web site, it is a great source of information about our school and also contains a calendar of all school events. I encourage you to check it out regularly.

A BIG thank you goes out to Mr. Bryan, Ms. Evans, and Ms. Worrell for their outstanding work in getting the building ready this summer. We also want to thank Mrs. Mills and Mrs. Freeman for completing the ordering, copying, collating, and organizing of our supplies and paperwork to insure that our students have a smooth first day. Additionally, I would like to thank the Home and School Association for their generous donations in the 2016-2017 school year. We are saving this money to replace technology that is either obsolete or at the end of its useful life, among other things. Thank you for all you do for our students!

Soon, the school calendar for the entire year will be posted on our school web site under the calendar tab. Please use this regularly as a way to stay on top of important dates. In the interim, please see below for important September and early October events.

### **COMING EVENTS**

September 7 – First Student Day

September 11 – Taunton Forge Back to School Night; 7:00 p.m.

September 18 – Board of Education Meeting; 7:30 p.m. at Memorial Middle School LGI

September 21 – School Closed for Rosh Hashanah

October 2-6 – Week of Respect

October 20 – School Closed for students due to Teacher In-Service

### **HOW TO HELP OUR SCHOOL:**

The challenge is still on! Our **BOX TOPS for EDUCATION** collection earned hundreds of dollars last year for our school. Please continue to save them and send the Box Tops labels to school. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting plastic bags for recycling as our partner is no longer in this business. Stay tuned for possible new programs that are in the works for this school year!

### **FOOD ALLERGY PROTOCOLS**

We will continue to be vigilant about the types of food that come into your child's classroom. Following both state law and district policy, we cannot allow candy, cupcakes, cookies, or ANY food item for birthday celebrations. When we 'celebrate' in classrooms, you will be notified of exactly what foods are being served through a permission slip that you must sign and return to the teacher. Our Halloween and Valentine's Day celebrations will focus on games and crafts. Any food that we plan to serve at these parties will be listed on a permission slip for your pre-approval.

If you are planning to pick up your child from school, please let the office know of your plans (by phone, email, FAX) *before* 2:00 PM. We need time to alert the staff to the change. Please note that after school parent pick up will continue to take place in the library at 2:45 p.m. Please note that this time is 10 minutes later than previous years due to our longer school day. Parents should enter the library through the exterior doors to the right of the main school entrance.

I look forward to seeing you at Back to School Night on September 11 and working with you during this school year. You can e-mail ([rlacovara@medford.k12.nj.us](mailto:rlacovara@medford.k12.nj.us)) or call me at the above number (extension 5445) should you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Rich Lacovara  
Principal

