

# Churchill Parent Bulletin

June 8, 2017

Dear Parents,

While I knew the day was inevitable, the real, physical letting go is now here. I've said plenty of good-byes and cried in public more than I could have ever imagined. I've been showered with well wishes and reminisced with former students who have stopped by to see me. It has been a tremendous few weeks that I will never forget.

I've always noted the incredible trust it takes for a parent to get out of bed each August and hand their children over to a group of adults they may or may not know and simply trust them. Trust them to take care of their babies, to teach them, to model character and integrity, to dry their tears and cheer them on. The level of trust that has been afforded me in this job is gratifying and, at times, overwhelming. It is the most awesome of responsibilities.

Knowing all of that, when the time came for discussions about who would follow me in the office, it was not just a matter of finding the right skill set. When my opinion was sought, skills were obviously important. But equally important to me was choosing the person with the right heart for the job. Someone who could not only run our school, but love it, nurture it and all who are attached to it. The good news is that we didn't have to look very far.

Our board and superintendent, in yet another of their wise decisions, chose Nikki Kerr. They made the decision with enough time for us to work together in a transition plan that very few schools ever get to experience. I have spent the year working with Nikki and MaryKay Gardiner – I can say with complete certainty – they are more than ready to lead our school. You are all in very good hands.

As you all transition to new faces and new leadership, I would like to ask one parting favor. In the course of a school year, we can all think of times when we have not seen eye to eye. Important jobs often breed conflict and there is no more important job than raising and educating our children. But in our disagreements, we have (almost) always found common ground. The respect between us has allowed us to resolve issues and feelings and move forward. My favor is this: please extend that to your new leadership. They are smart, caring, talented leaders who love our children and our school. But they can't do their best for them without your support.

Talk to them. Let them know when something doesn't seem right. Don't wait, talk to them. Let them know when things are good. Everyone needs feedback, especially the good kind. Talk to them. Tell them when your family has hit a rough patch. Let them help you. They can and they will.

And one final plea. If something is bothering you about our school, please make the first comments to them. Social media is a wonderful, terrifying, complex tool. It serves many purposes. One of the things it can't do is solve a problem at school. Venting your frustrations and worries on social media before talking with the people most directly involved will never adequately solve a problem. Talk to them. Give them the first shot at solving whatever issues you are facing.

I wish you all health, happiness and the joy of raising your wonderful children. Thank you all for...well, for everything.

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