



## A Note From the School Counselor

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Orchard Farm Elementary! We are so excited to have your child enrolled in kindergarten in our school for next year! This is a very exciting time for everyone involved! You are not only your child's first teacher but a partner in his/her education. I've listed a few tips that may help your child's transition into the kindergarten setting be a smooth and happy one:

- If your child has not spent a period of time away from you and home, now is the time to help him/her ease into this kind of separation. Have a friend or relative watch your child at their home for a designated period of time (you may want to start with just an hour or two and work your way up to a larger block of time). Summer day camps and programming are wonderful options to help with this as well.
- Start talking with your child about attending school. Tell him/her about some of the exciting things they can expect to see and do at school.
- Several weeks prior to the first day of school, start a bedtime and morning routine with your child that will be similar to that when school begins.
- Involve your child in selecting school supplies such as backpacks and lunch bags and then help him/her prepare them for the first day of school.
- Attend Open House so you and your child can meet the classroom teacher and explore the classroom before the start of school.
- Some children benefit from having a small comfort object such as a photo, small toy or personalized note to bring with them to keep in their pocket for when they feel homesick.
- Maintain a normal routine the night before school and allow plenty of time in the morning so your child won't feel rushed. Make it a happy day and celebrate this exciting beginning for your child!
- If you plan to bring your child to school for the first day, give him/her a hug and a quick "I love you" before leaving. Please note that due to safety procedures, parents are not allowed past our lobby doors. Do not linger behind (even if he/she is crying) as this only makes first day jitters and separation worse.
- Be assured that there are PLENTY of adults around to help ensure your child gets to his/her classroom.
- The majority of children are absolutely fine within minutes of their parent's departure. Assure yourself that your child will be loved and treated with care in your absence. The Orchard Farm faculty is THE BEST!

Please do not hesitate to give me a call at 636-757-8704 or email at [kdunkmann@ofr5.com](mailto:kdunkmann@ofr5.com) if I can be of further assistance.

Thanks!

Kristine Dunkmann, MSW, MA, LCSW

OFES Counselor