

August 2008

Dear Parents of Good Shepherd School Kindergartners,

We are about to start our journey into the wonderful world of kindergarten! I am very excited to meet you and your students. I will really enjoy getting to know your precious young children. I will take a great deal of pleasure from watching them learn and grow over our many months together. We will become family in the classroom with love, friendship and support for one another. We will hope to become friends for life!

For the past seven years I taught kindergarten, first, and second grades at New Horizons School in Soquel. Your community was very generous to our small non-profit school serving homeless and disadvantaged children. I thank you, many children benefited from your kindness. Sadly, the school had to close after 14 years due to lack of enrollment and lack of funds. Over those 14 years the Santa Cruz community and the public schools have expanded services for homeless children. I am confident that those children will be served well. The next door opened for me, I was then very blessed to have the opportunity to teach kindergarten at Good Shepherd Catholic School. This past month I have had a team of family and friends generously donating their time to help me move out of NHS and into Good Shepherd Catholic School.

Dan Anderson asked me to write a short bio about myself... I don't know if I know how to write a short bio!! I'll try!

My husband Greg and I will be celebrating our 29th anniversary this coming week. We met at Soquel High School and have raised two fine people with a great deal of help from their grandparents. Our son Blake and his wife live in a small cabin on my parent's property five miles up Old San Jose Road. Blake and Katherine have recently finished their college degrees and are pursuing their careers. Emily is attending Cabrillo College and is planning to move to San Diego after Christmas to complete her degree in art, and then a teaching credential. These three are the joy of our lives. This January we will be experiencing (suffering) the empty nest syndrome. I will probably be extra clingy with your children!! To try to counteract the empty nest problem, we adopted Winston, our one- year- old, chocolate, eight pound wiener dog. I tend to become known as the crazy wiener dog teacher. Your children will hear lots of Blake, Katherine, Emily, and Winston stories from me!

Greg hopes to come to the classroom to play some music for the children. (Thank you Greg for all your lifting, cleaning, and help with the classroom.) Emily and Katherine might want to teach some art. Blake is an on-call firefighter with Central Fire District and may come teach some fire safety lessons. My mother, known as Grammy Dolores at New Horizons School, will probably do some volunteering in the classroom. My dad will stop by to visit. It will be a family affair!

One of my greatest passions is teaching the pre-emergent readers to read! I love those "light bulb" moments when the broad smile and look of astonishment come over the

child's face the first time they read a word, a sentence, and then their first "Bob" book! I have been certified in the Phonographix reading program and have found it to be extremely successful while also being a great deal of fun. I will include some information for you about that program with the first day of school letter. Look for that in your student's home-to-school envelope.

I am sure parents, children, and myself are excited, and maybe a little nervous, about the **first day of school!!**

Here are some recommendations and information for the BIG day....

*Send a small backpack with your child every day. You do not need to send school supplies, and please, no toys.

*Due to August 25 being a minimum day, you only need to send a healthy snack and drink, no lunch is necessary on mini days.

*Always send a lightweight jacket or sweatshirt.

*Send a small bag of extra clothing to keep in your child's cubby in case of any "accidents". Label everything please.

*Meet me at the door to the "K" room at 7:55. I think I have yard duty out front until then. I will have name tags for the children. We will quickly put backpacks in the room and then we line up to go to mass. After mass, we will have some "getting to know each other" games and songs.

*You can let your student know that we will have snack, recess, and a "Clifford the Big Red Dog" project that they can take home.

I am so excited! Until then, please, always read, read, read with and to your student. I hope you'll take advantage of our fine public libraries. Enjoy some great summer family times until I get to meet you.

Elizabeth Weber