



October 14, 2014

Dear Base parent,

As you know, yesterday marked the first day of the new schedule for the Blue Dolphin bus route. If you remember, the change was initiated to reduce over-crowding on the bus. This schedule change has resulted in base scholars arriving very early to school-by 7:35 a.m. When we initiated the change, we did not calculate an early arrival. Staff duty begins at 7:45 a.m., so we have very limited adult presence on campus prior to 7:45 a.m.

There are many reasons such an early arrival is not a safe option for scholars. First, we have wildlife (coyotes, bobcats, etc...) that can sometimes be seen on our playgrounds during early morning hours. While these animals retreat when large groups of students arrive by bus and enter the school grounds, small numbers of students might not result in such a retreat. Second, scholars tend to get heated and over-excited when playing for an extended period of time (7:35-8:10 is a long recess for them), so they may not be as prepared for calm, focused learning when they walk into the start of their class day. Lastly, as you are aware, we must always be vigilant when it comes to strangers who might enter our school grounds with intent to harm. Our adult presence is too limited at this hour to adequately patrol against such unwanted strangers.

One of the reasons our transportation company made the decision to drop off base scholars at 7:35 a.m. is largely because there have been past concerns by base parents about their children riding the school bus into the Village en route to Manzanita. I am recommending Base parents re-consider their thoughts on this topic.

With the current schedule, if a base scholar stays on the Blue Dolphin bus as it travels to Vandenberg Village, they will arrive at Manzanita at approximately 7:55 a.m. This would allow for plenty of time for breakfast and would also be a safer option for your child. **Beginning tomorrow, October 15, I am making the decision to keep all base scholars, on the Blue Bus, until they arrive safely, at the end of the bus route, at 7:55 a.m.**

I realize there may be concerns about this change. Please feel free to contact me so we can discuss those concerns. As some of you may wish to contact me after work hours, please feel free to call or text my cell number: (805) 588-2423.

Best regards,

Suzanne Nicastro, Principal
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