

October 14, 2015

Dear Parents and Guardians of Wapakoneta Elementary School Students,

I am addressing this letter to you to introduce myself and offer you some information regarding Wapakoneta Elementary School's guidance programming. My name is Wes Newland and I am very pleased and fortunate to be serving as the school's guidance counselor. There are a number of ways in which I will be instructing and interacting with your child as a guidance counselor.

All forty of our elementary school's Kindergarten-Fourth Grade classes will be participating in guidance class visits and lessons once each month. During those sessions, the children will be taking part in whole-class presentations and activities. For example, September's theme for those class visitations was for our pupils to become familiar with how the guidance counselor can be of help to individual students, families, classes, and the school community. With Red Ribbon Week nearing, October's guidance lesson will be focusing on making wise and positive choices. The subject and process of positive and constructive choice making will be extended during the school's Red Ribbon Week; October 19-23. Those monthly guidance class meetings will continue throughout this school year. If ever you would like to learn more about the topics for the lessons, please do not hesitate to inquire.

Our boys and girls will preview a story book entitled "How Full Is Your Bucket?" during the month of October. The authors of that publication are Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer. The main idea of that story is that everyone has an "invisible bucket" and that anyone can "fill" another person's bucket by treating them with respect, dignity, doing acts of kindness, helping them out, saying something nice to them, and/or even just sending a smile their way. In contrast, the classes will learn that a "bucket dipper" is an individual who takes away from another person's good thoughts or feelings about themselves. Bucket dippers, of course, run the risk of being known as "bullies". Our goal for the lesson and ongoing promotion of being a force for good is that our children will strive to be bucket fillers, not bucket dippers. So, in the event that your child reports to you that he or she filled a bucket today, *that is a good thing!* We'll continue to encourage our kiddos to apply that outlook of responsibility and good will toward school and daily life throughout the year through our guidance classes and lessons.

Another guidance class connection will be that of recognizing students who do an outstanding job of being heroes at school. Pupils will have the chance to earn the Redskin Hero Award by following class and school guidelines, treating others with respect, completing assignments, setting a good example as an excellent citizen, and helping to make themselves....their school....and community better. All of our children will be eligible to be so honored. Several students in each class will be highlighted for these reasons during each monthly guidance class gathering. It is truly a privilege to be selected as a Redskin Hero and it is up to your child to do his or her best every day. Hopefully, during this year or your youngster's time at Wapakoneta Elementary your student will be honored with the designation of being a **Redskin Hero!**

The school guidance counselor may work with individual students, small groups of pupils, whole classes, grade levels, and the entire school population, dependent upon need and circumstance. Our children learned during September guidance class lessons how to request assistance, when necessary. As your child's guidance counselor, please be assured that my mission is that your son or daughter has a positive, rewarding, and fulfilling year of learning, growth, and development at Wapakoneta Elementary School. That goal and work can certainly be enhanced as we form a meaningful partnership, network of communication, and relationship of trust in serving our boys' and girls' best interests.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to learn and grow with your child! It is, indeed, my personal and professional pleasure to do so. I look forward to seeing you as you visit the school. Have an outstanding year!

Sincerely,  
Mr. Newland  
Guidance Counselor  
Wapakoneta Elementary School