



## SALMON PAGES: SUMMER EDITION 2017

Dear City Neighbors Hamilton Families,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! It is such an honor and a privilege to write my inaugural summer letter to you. First and foremost, I hope that you are enjoying a relaxing and rejuvenating summer with your families. Even though the start of the school year is still weeks away, it will be here before we know it! We are working very hard this summer to get the building, curriculum, staffing, and materials ready to go for the fall. In this packet you will find information on New Parent Orientation, Middle School Orientation, Back-to-School Night, and some interesting new structures to increase student learning and engagement in the school.

In preparation for the new school year, there are various ways that we can connect, get to know one another, and discuss ideas together. During the first three weeks of August, I have created appointment slots for one-on-one meetings with anyone who would like to chat. All you have to do is click on this link <https://goo.gl/BvPRAh> (or paste it into your browser). This link will open my appointment calendar where you can click on a time in August that works with your schedule and sign up for a meeting. I'd love to get to know you! Not to worry, if the appointment times in August do not match your schedule, I will be creating times during the school year to meet both individually and in small groups. (Details forthcoming after the school year begins.) Feel free to also reach out to me, via email, with any questions, ideas, or suggestions you have between now and the start of the school year.

We are excited to announce new staff members who will be joining us this fall. A very special thanks goes to the team who volunteered on many evenings this summer to interview candidates for the Special Education and Social Studies positions at City Neighbors Hamilton: teachers Kim Farley, Hannah Cohen, Odessa Armstrong, Amanda Shipley, Clara Walter, Randy Johnson, and Lisa Bryant; CNH parents Lynette Volz Svoboda, David Millard, Diane Kuthy, Kim Lane, and Mary Haber. It is through this tremendous team effort that we have been able to meet amazing educators from up and down the Eastern seaboard and find the right fit for our school.

In the following pages you will find information about back-to-school meetings and new initiatives for the school.

Looking forward,

Shyla

P.S. I am going to ask the students to call me "Dr. Shyla." I would like for them to be reminded, in their daily vernacular, that women of color can have doctorates. For you, dear parents and guardians, please just call me Shyla. :-)



## Mark your calendars!

- **August 2-18 -- Meet with Shyla** -- Sign up for a time to introduce yourself and get to know Shyla a little bit.
- **August 28 -- Middle School Parent Night** -- 6:00 -- Even though most of our middle school students have been here for years, Middle School provides a whole new set of challenges and expectations for young people. Join us on this evening to discuss ways in which our community can best support our early adolescents.
- **August 31 -- New Parent Orientation** -- 6:00 -- At this event, we will give you an opportunity to meet other CNH parents, review City Neighbors policies, and provide a detailed overview of the school year. Lisa Bryant will also meet with Kindergarten parents on this evening. New parents, keep an eye out for an email from us that will give details for the event.
- **September 5 -- First Day of School!**
- **September 5-8 -- Kindergarten Staggered Entry** -- Kindergarten students will ease into the school year the first week of classes. Detailed information will be sent directly to Kindergarten parents.
- **September 14th -- Back-to-School Night** -- More information to come. For now, simply hold the evening for this event.

## New Initiative: Grades 3-5

One hour per day Grades 3-5 will be breaking down the walls and grouping students in a variety of ways across grade levels. This new initiative will provide classroom teachers with a new opportunity to meet the needs and interests of students in a variety of ways. We are very excited to see innovative ways of engaging our young people in learning and will be sharing updates regularly in the Monday Mailer.

## Professional Development Themes

Staff at CNH identified two main threads for professional development this upcoming school year. Along with these two focused threads of professional development, we will, of course, focus on learning in all disciplines and initiative new threads, as the needs arise.

- The first thread is focused on writing across the curriculum (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/671/1/>) . We will kick off the school year with a workshop facilitated by Harvey “Smokey” Daniels (<http://www.harveydaniels.com/>) in August. We will continue developing new strategies for deepening learning through writing throughout the school year, with a follow-up session with Smokey Daniels in November. We are excited for this deep dive into writing and the positive effects it will have on learning in all disciplines. By engaging with writing across the curriculum, our students are able to develop a variety of strategies for effective communication that is fluent between different contexts.



- The second professional development thread is continuing a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-lynn-edd/culturally-responsive-pedagogy\\_b\\_1147364.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-lynn-edd/culturally-responsive-pedagogy_b_1147364.html). The goal of culturally responsive pedagogy is for educators to first engage with intersections of their own identities and the cultural assumptions that impact how they understand the world, so that they are able and ready to learn about and understand the intersections of identities of each student in their classroom. It allows a teacher to develop learning experiences that is authentic to the students as well as connected to the world that is important to young people. This approach empowers young people's voices to effect change in the world, where they deem necessary, leading into a wonderfully personal approach to social action.

## Welcome New Staff!

- After an extensive search of candidates, we're excited to welcome **Jasper Gaerlan** as a fourth member of the Special Education Team! Jasper comes to us from New York City, with a Master's degree and dual certification in Special Education and General Education from City University of New York: Hunter College working the past eight years at a school focused solely on students with special needs. He brings with him experience developing real-world project-based learning engagements for young people and is committed to collaborative teaching.
- **Brad Bush** is the new Physical Education teacher who is shared between CNH and CNCS. He comes to us from the Baltimore Design School, has great ideas for developing the physical education program at our school. Brad has a Master's Degree in Instructional Studies from Augustana University. His warm demeanor and personable spirit will provide wonderful opportunities for collaboration and relationship-building with the students.
- We are still in the process of finding a Social Studies candidate who will work effectively within a newly revised Language Arts/Humanities/Social Studies integrated program. This revised program will provide more individualized supports for all learners within in-depth and carefully designed projects that develop literacies: reading, writing, social, and historical.

## Building and Facilities

Gary Bryant, and his team, have been working tirelessly to add dry erase boards, fix furniture, and renovate spaces around the building to enhance the learning environment for our young people. Please take a moment, when you enter the school in the fall, to note the big and small changes throughout the building and think about the dedicated staff who spent hours pouring love into every corner of the building over the summer.