August, 2025

Dear James Rhoads Elementary School Community,

I hope this letter finds you enjoying a restful and rejuvenating summer break! As we eagerly anticipate the start of the 2025-2026 school year, I wanted to share some exciting updates and important information.

Last year was truly remarkable, and I am incredibly proud of our collective efforts, especially in attendance. Thanks to your partnership and our attendance incentives, we saw significant improvement, with over 40% of our students achieving the district's goal of 90% attendance or higher! We will be continuing these incentives, and a detailed calendar outlining them will be sent home soon.

Academically, many of our students made more than a year's growth, showcasing their dedication and the impactful instruction provided by our talented staff. Building on this momentum, we will continue to implement the successful Imagine Learning Math Curriculum and the comprehensive EL Reading Curriculum. We are also incredibly thrilled to introduce a brand-new, hands-on Science curriculum this school year, promising engaging and interactive learning experiences for all our students!

To ensure all families are up-to-date on everything happening at James Rhoads, we will continue to send home monthly calendars detailing events, holidays, and important dates.

We are also pleased to confirm that our valuable before-school care and after-school care programs will continue for the upcoming school year. Furthermore, our partnership with Safe Haven will carry on, and we are excited to announce the addition of a new program: The Community Council Artistic and Cultural Enrichment Program (A.C.E.)! Both Safe Haven and A.C.E. are free to our community and are part of the school district's and Mayor's Extended Day/Extended School Year partnership. Students enrolled in these wonderful programs will benefit from an extended school day, from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

For our regular school day, please remember that students should arrive by 7:45 AM for breakfast and by 8:10 AM for morning arrival. School concludes at 2:54 PM.

**The first day of school for students is Monday, August 25th.**

To kick off the new year with celebration and community spirit, please mark your calendars for our Annual Back-to-School Barbecue! Join us on **Thursday, August 21st, from 10:00 AM to 2:00** PM. It will be a fun-filled day with bouncy houses, great music, delicious food, and uniforms available for sale. We'll also have various community organizations on hand to offer support and resources, including the Philadelphia Water Department, City Commissioners Office, PCOM, PECO, A Place For Ummi Maternity Care and Family Services, City of Philadelphia Department of Revenue, Townwatch, and more! This is a fantastic opportunity to connect, gather information, and get excited for the year ahead.

I am personally incredibly excited for the new school year and all the exciting things we have coming. We look forward to partnering with you once again to make the 2025-2026 school year our best one yet!

Enjoy these last few weeks of summer, and we look forward to seeing you all very soon!

Warmly,

Megan Wapner

Principal, James Rhoads Elementary School