Tuesday, September 6th 2011

Dear Parents and/or Guardians,

We would like to welcome you and your child to our Grade 6 classroom! This year, your child will have two teachers covering all subject areas. Ms. Christopoulos, OCT, B.FA, B.Ed., graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in English and Fine Arts. She completed her Bachelor of Education degree at York University, certified in Primary, Junior, and Intermediate divisions. Prior to teaching at Golf Road, she taught Grade 2 at McKinnon Public School and a Grade 1/2 combined class at Credit Valley Public School. Ms. Christopoulos will be teaching in the afternoons and will be covering Mathematics, Social Studies, and Dance. Mr. Romano, OCT, B.FA., B.Ed., and M.Ed candidate is originally from Toronto, Ontario where he received his Bachelor of Fine Art degree in Visual Art and his Bachelor of Education degree, both at York University, certified in the Junior, Intermediate and Senior divisions. This is his fourth year of teaching with the Toronto District School Board. Prior to this teaching assignment, he taught Core Grade 6 at Golf Road Junior Public School, Core Grade 4 at Highcastle Public School, Core & Rotary Grade 8 at Morrish Public School and Core Grade 4 at Meadowvale Public School. He has also taught a variety of TDSB Continuing Education courses, inclusive of after school tutoring programs and summer school. He is currently a Masters of Education graduate student at York University, focusing on Digital Literacy, E – Learning and Virtual World Pedagogy. Mr. Romano is the morning teacher and will be covering Language, Science, Visual Arts, Gym, Drama, and Computers.

We are looking forward to getting to know both you and your child this year. Grade 6 students will achieve much this year in terms of academic growth, greater self-confidence, and improved social skills. Good communication between parent, teacher and student is very important for your child’s academic growth – a relationship we hope to all develop together.

We would like to briefly discuss our homework policy. While we do have regular homework in Grade 6, we do not assign a great deal of homework on a regular basis. On most nights, homework should average between 30-60 minutes. Occasionally there will be no homework, as your child will have an opportunity to finish his or her assignments in class. Generally speaking, we have Math homework every night, Language homework one or two nights a week (Reading and Writing) and Science/ Social Studies homework once every week or so. On rare occasions, your child may have more than one hour of homework. Please let us know if you find that your child is regularly working for more than one hour towards the completion of any assignment as this indicates that we need to discuss the matter. Please access the Toronto District School Board Homework Policy @ http://goo.gl/hND82 for more information.

The purpose of homework is two-fold: to reinforce what we have learned in class and to teach responsibility. A child who has done his or her homework is prepared in class to hear explanations of what he or she has had trouble with at home. A child without his/her homework done loses twice—both in learning through reinforcement, and in listening to explanations in class. We are also attempting, in Grade 6, to help students develop good work habits for future years. When a child arrives in class without his or her homework done, it is our policy to send a “Homework Alert” for parents to sign that same evening, which may be found in the Agenda. This is our way of communicating the importance of homework and accountability to your child. If an unusual circumstance prevents your child from doing his or her homework (sickness, injury, or other serious problem), we would ask that you please send a note with your child in the morning, so that he or she can be excused. Each evening, you can expect your child to arrive at home with his or her homework written in their Agenda.

(Please See Reverse)
Each day, all assignments are written on our class “Assignment Board” (also available on our class website – see below), and at least ten minutes are given toward the end of the day for students to copy this information into their agendas. Please review this information daily with your child, as we may write notes home occasionally in this space. Also, please feel free to use the Agenda to write notes for us, as well. Together, we can help your child succeed at school.

We do encourage a great deal of independent reading for pleasure with our Grade 6 students. Developing a love of reading is so important to a child’s educational future, and we view reading for pleasure as a priority. We have a great selection of books, right in our own classroom but we do encourage all students to bring any form of enjoyable reading material to class each day (such as magazines, newspapers and the like). These books are of ALL reading levels, available for students to check out, in addition to those found in our school and public libraries.

Further, we are advocates for Digital Literacy and Digital Learning in the classroom. On a daily basis, we use digital teaching aides and strategies as a part of our classroom practice and encourage students to do the same. With this, please review the attached ICT Information Letter for information regarding our class website www.classpace.ca as well as how technology will be implemented within the classroom. The Classpace website serves multiple functions: a Student Discussion Space, a Homework/ Due Date Calendar, an Assignment Database, and an Announcement Home Page among many features. Please visit and bookmark the site with your child to learn about what it has to offer. In addition to that mentioned within the letter, please ensure you visit and bookmark the “Parent Space” section of the website @ http://wp.me/P12tyA-3T to view information regarding the home-school connection.

We are available to meet with parents during the regular workweek after school between 3:30 PM and 4:00 PM by appointment only. Unfortunately, we are not able to meet with parents before school starts in the morning. For parents who use e-mail, we check our e-mail daily and this is often the quickest, most efficient way to get in touch or to discuss any concerns. We will respond promptly. Please feel free to e-mail us at any time, @ joseph.romano@tdsb.on.ca or kathryn.christopoulos@tdsb.on.ca . If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to either call Golf Road Junior Public School @ (416) 396-6285, send a note with your child in the morning, or to contact either of us via e-mail. Thank You.

Sincerely,

Mr. J. Romano
Grade 6 Teacher
Golf Road Junior Public School
Toronto District School Board

Ms. K. Christopoulos
Grade 6 Teacher
Golf Road Junior Public School
Toronto District School Board