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January 31, 2018

Dear Parents,

I write to share with you changes that will be made effective Monday February 5, to implement more time for recess in grades K-5.

As you are likely aware, there was some concern expressed by parents and community members in the fall when a new schedule was implemented, in particular, regarding a decrease in recess time. In response to this, and with the help of the Menands PTA a forum was hosted in November to provide information to parents and the community and gather their feedback. Following the forum, additional feedback was solicited from students and teachers.

In advance of their scheduled December meeting, members of the board reviewed all the information gathered, and at the meeting engaged in a comprehensive discussion considering how to proceed. The board came to consensus that it was their desire to work to increase recess time to previous levels at grades K-5.

In the weeks since then, the administration has worked in concert with the Menands Association of Teachers to accomplish this. The collaborative work resulted in a short term solution that could be implemented for the remainder of that the new schedule can be implemented this school year. During this week, the necessary logistical work is being done so Monday, February 5.

Under this new schedule, recess will be restored in grades K-5 to the same levels as last year. These students will now be assigned to a 40 minute lunch/recess period, with half of the period being dedicated to lunch and half to recess. The revised schedule does result in some changes to lunch/recess times. A copy of the new times can be found on the reverse side of this letter. The changes do not impact grades 6 – 8 who will continue to have a 30 minute lunch period without a scheduled recess.

This adjustment is for the remainder of the current school year only. The administration will continue to work with the teachers association, in consideration of the parent and community input, to develop and implement potential long term adjustments. As subsequent work is conducted and decisions made, the information will be shared.

Sincerely,

Dr. Maureen A. Long