

September 2020

Dear Kresson Family

My name is Maureen Boyle and I am the school counselor here at Kresson Elementary. I know the 2020 school year looks a lot different than we are used to...as does the world at large! It has been an incredibly challenging time for so many families trying to balance work, remote learning, childcare, and the emotional needs of not only our children but ourselves. Staying afloat in these uncharted waters is not an easy task. And yet somehow here we all are doing just that. So please pause for just a moment to give yourself credit for everything you have overcome in the last 6 months to get to this point. The resilience of our Kresson community is nothing short of extraordinary.

If you are like me, you might be feeling overwhelmed by all the "bad" news that we are inundated with at the moment. The sources we go to for information, whether it be the national news or social media, are filled with stories of fear and divisiveness that seem to highlight the "worst in us". But when I take that wide lens and zoom it in close, I see nothing but the "best in us" here at Kresson Elementary.

Everyday I see students whose happiness can not be masked simply because they are asked to wear a mask. They trod into school with smiling eyes, upbeat greetings, and the most resilient attitudes. They are excited to see their friends and teachers, even if it means that it looks a little differently this year.

I see teachers who have been asked to do the impossible, be two places at one time. They are teaching both in person students and remote students all at once . They are learning new technology and dealing with the many accompanying glitches. They are fielding questions from all angles, while being watched by tiny eyes and tiny cameras, and yet they keep showing up with enthusiasm, side stepping each barrier in their way to meet not only the academic needs of their students, but the social-emotional as well.

I see parents (and grandparents) who have been thrust into the role of teacher while juggling work and home responsibilities, often with multiple children. They are lifting spirits, wiping tears, making lunches, monitoring google meets, and still trying to manage the million other jobs that are required of them. But day in and day out they show up for their kids, proving no barrier, no matter how big can match the fierceness of a family's love.

Everywhere I look I see love, courage, resilience, flexibility, perseverance, compassion and dedication. My goal this year (in addition to doing whatever I can to support the social-emotional needs of you and your children) is to magnify the good. Which simply means to pay attention to it, to name it when I see it, to collect it, and to share it. This doesn't mean I am ignoring or denying all of the very serious issues we are collectively facing. I am just not going

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to allow it to be all consuming. Because when fear is the only voice at the table, we become frozen and overwhelmed. But when we purposefully, intentionally make room for love, kindness, courage, and all of the good, we can breathe again and are freed up to make forward progress. Even if it is one tiny step at a time.

You are doing an amazing job! Your children are resilient and this difficult time will pass, but the many lessons they learn from overcoming these challenges will serve them for a lifetime. As I tell my students, WE CAN DO HARD THINGS...especially when we do them TOGETHER!

Be Well

Mrs. Boyle

**If you have any questions or need a little extra support for you or your child please feel free to reach out to me at 856-424-1816 x2128 or email me at [boyle@voorhees.k12.nj.us](mailto:boyle@voorhees.k12.nj.us)**