Dear Families,

We had an incredible start to the new school year. Our students have glided into their rituals and routines of their school day. Our students never cease to amaze me with how quickly they have created a warm and vibrant learning community within their classrooms where there are engaged learners happily doing their “jobs”! Our youngest learners (along with our staff) have also persevered through the complexities of going through the lunch lines and dismissal with a lot less tears and much more laughter! We need to celebrate these moments of joy and wins!

Thank you to so many that came to our first Nokomis North PTO meeting. We truly are grateful for the rich discussions, wonderful new ideas, and the sub committees that have formed from the first meeting. Thank you to the parents who are taking over organizing our first Nokomis North Fall Festival on October 24th. Our Next PTO meeting will be on Wednesday, October 9th from 6 to 7 pm. Again, we are so grateful for your support and partnership!

October will be another busy month filled with exciting events! Join us on Friday, October 11th from 5 - 6:30 pm at Nokomis North Campus to celebrate the launch of Kao Kalia Yang’s first children’s book!

In partnership,

Ms. Terri
Important reminders:

- **For students in grades 3 thru 5 only:** EDL (Extended Day Learning) forms went home in last Friday's folder. Please turn them into your child’s teacher ASAP (no later than Wed. Oct. 2nd) if you are interested in participating. Our EDL classes will begin on October 7th. Classes will be from 4 pm to 5:45 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays.

- Please sign up for a fall conference time for your child(ren) if you have not yet done so. Information went home in last Friday's folder.

- Please do not drop off your student(s) on Case or Ruth, and drive through the drop off line.

- **Please fill out your I-update information.** Please reach out to Ms. Paula, our clerk, if you need assistance filling these out. You may call Paula at 651-744-7440, or email her at paula.mcgaughey@spps.org.

Meet More New staff

**Ms. Stephanie Sinjem - Counselor**

Hello Families,

My name is Stephanie Sinjem and I am thrilled to be the new Counselor at Nokomis Montessori! As a School Counselor I am here to support every single student at Nokomis. My goal is to help all students better understand their own interests and skills while ultimately achieving their potential. Throughout the year I will teach classroom lessons about Social Emotional Learning, Personal Safety, Bullying, Career Development, and the Importance of Academics. The lesson theme for September was “Meet the Counselor.” All of the students had a chance to meet me as I introduced myself and explained what I do here at Nokomis. I also support student growth by running group and individual counseling sessions about a variety of counseling-related topics. These topics include Friendship and Social Skills, Managing Anger, Worry or Stress, Self-Control Skills, Mindfulness, Building Self Esteem, Leadership Skills, etc. If you would like your student to participate in a specific group please email me at Stephanie.Sinjem@spps.org or call me at 651-744-1100. I am split between the two buildings so I will be at Nokomis South all day Mondays and Wednesdays as well as Friday afternoons. I will be at Nokomis North all day Tuesdays and Thursdays as well as Friday mornings. I am extremely excited to get to know you and your student(s) better and to see what the rest of the school year brings. Happy October!

Stephanie Sinjem

**Susan Larson - Speech Therapist**

My name is Susan Larson and I am excited to be part of Nokomis North. I grew up in WI and graduated from UW-Madison with a Master's degree in Speech Language Pathology. I have worked in elementary school settings for more than 30 years. This is my 10th year living in MN.
My family and I live in Bayport, MN with Sophie a 10-year-old Weimaraner and Charlie, a parrot. In my free time, I enjoy traveling, sailing on Lake Superior, sewing, reading, and writing.

**Ryan Haenz - ASD Teacher**

My name is Ryan Haenze (Mr. Ryan) and I am one of the ASD (autism spectrum) classroom teachers at Nokomis North. I currently teach students in grades 1-4.

In our class, we focus on not just academic work, but also the social-emotional, functional and sensory needs of our students through structured play and exploration of manipulatives and sensory items. In our class we use the interactive Unique Learning System academic curriculum created for students on the autism spectrum. The teaching assistants in my room and I strive to create a peaceful, rigorous and fun environment where students learn how to gain independence and advocate for themselves.

A little about me: I am a graduate of Augsburg University with a Academic Behavior Strategist (ABS) special education licensure. This is my third year teaching and my first year teaching in SPPS. In my free time I enjoy reading a good book at a cafe, biking and walking around Lake Nokomis and Minnehaha Falls, going to concerts and learning about film and music history.

Feel free to contact me at:
ryan.haenze@spps.org
(651) 744-5500
Room 1406

**If you would like the newsletter in paper form or have it interpreted, please call Ms. Paula at 651-744-7440.**