

Hi, House 2 Families!

Kids, the time has come to dust off your backpacks, gather your pencils, and head over to Highcrest for a fantastic sixth grade year! WE'RE SUPER EXCITED TO MEET YOU!

You will have either Dr. Heyde or Mrs. Espinoza for language arts. Dr. Heyde is delighted to begin her thirteenth year as a sixth-grade teacher at Highcrest. She earned her bachelor's degree from Harvard, a law degree and a master's degree in education from Northwestern, and a doctorate in education from National Louis. Prior to coming to Highcrest, she practiced law at Jenner & Block for almost three years and served as a clinical associate professor on the faculty of Northwestern's law school for eight and a half years. She lives in Park Ridge with her husband, John, an attorney at the law firm Sidley Austin. Her oldest child, Alex, is at Harvard completing his Ph.D. in mathematical biology. Her daughter Elise is a senior at University of Illinois, and her daughter Katherine started as a freshman at Emory. Dr. Heyde had a fantastic summer, traveling to Spain, Portugal, Arizona, North Carolina, Georgia, and Green Bay, Wisconsin. In her free time, Dr. Heyde enjoys reading novels, volunteering at Feed My Starving Children, watching classic Hollywood and foreign-language movies, and taking tours with the Chicago Architecture Foundation. She is excited to start the new school year!

This is Mrs. Espinoza's seventh year at Highcrest, and her eleventh year of teaching! Over the summer Mrs. Espinoza spent a lot of time at the pool as well as at many baseball and softball games with her children. The remainder of the summer was spent reading many of the 6th grade Reading Challenge books, cheering on the Cubs, and visiting Colorado Springs with her family! Mrs. Espinoza lives in Skokie with her husband, three children, and their dog, Spencer. Her son, Matthew, is turning 16 in a few weeks and is a sophomore at Niles North High School. She also has two daughters, Emma and Sophie. Emma is 11 and will be in 6th grade (just like you!) and Sophie is 9 and just started 4th grade.

Mrs. Flanagan is the math teacher for House 2. This is her fourteenth year of teaching at Highcrest. During her free time, she loves playing outside with her kids and watching sports. This summer, Mrs. Flanagan galavanted all over Lake County with her husband, Patrick, 7-year-old son, Connor, 3-year-old daughter, Kayley, and 15-month-old son, Charlie. The family goal was to find the coolest playground. Their favorite was Bowen Park in Waukegan. Mrs. Flanagan lives in Wauconda, has a dog named Shannon, and this year, she just might bike the 34 miles from her house to school if we have a Bike to School day!

Ms. Brisky will be your science teacher! This is her second year teaching science at Highcrest Middle School, but her third in the district. She spent her first year at Wilmette Junior High teaching 8th grade math, after spending three years building and teaching at a charter school in an at-risk community. During her free time, she loves to read, her favorite book series being Harry Potter, and spending time with her family. She is looking forward to the start of the school year.

Another friendly face in and out of our classrooms this year will be Mrs. Whiston, who is our team's Learning Behavior Specialist (LBS). Mrs. Whiston is entering her 18th year of teaching

and her 15th as an LBS at Highcrest. Born and raised in Chicago, she currently lives in Des Plaines with her husband and almost five-year old son, Jack. Mrs. Whiston enjoyed summer, traveling to Las Vegas and San Francisco, but she is ready to get back to work! In her spare time, Mrs. Whiston enjoys cooking, traveling, and crafts.

Some other tidbits of the year that you might like to know:

- Mrs. Espinoza and Mrs. Whiston can be found in room 209; Mrs. Flanagan calls 211 home; Ms. Brisky is in room 103; and Dr. Heyde is in 101. There will be lots of signs and smiling faces to lead the way on your first day.
- Your homeroom teacher will also teach you social studies.
- Feel free to bring your supplies with you on the first day of school.
- We can't wait to see you for a **half-day of school on Tuesday, September 5th!**

Sincerely,

Dr. Heyde, Mrs. Espinoza, Mrs. Flanagan, Ms. Brisky, and Mrs. Whiston