



Cherry Hill Public Schools

Bret Harte Elementary School

1909 Queen Anne Road
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003



Dr. Neil Burti, *Principal*
nburti@chclc.org

Phone: 856.795.0515
Fax: 856.795.7090

August 15, 2016

Dear 5th Grade Parents / Guardians:

The purpose of this correspondence is to discuss a new instructional arrangement I am piloting with our 5th grade students during the 2016-17 school year. Many of you with older children know that each year I visit our Harte 6th graders at their respective middle schools. In addition, I sent my 5th grade team to observe middle level classes this past school year. I have taken these measures to gather anecdotal data from former students and current staff that will help me to improve both the teaching and learning process here and ease the transition from elementary to middle school.

The most frequent concern I heard each of the past three years was the difficulty students experienced when they were required to change classes. The need to work with multiple teaching styles and classroom personas within a given day posed several unique challenges new to our students. To address this specific concern, I have decided to departmentalize our 5th grade classes. Therefore, regardless of homeroom assignment, all students will receive content-based instruction as follows:

Reading	Writing	Math
Ms. Naccarato (Formerly Francolino)	Mrs. Peralta (Formerly Caldas)	Mrs. Fulcher

I believe that this arrangement will better prepare students for their middle school experience by allowing them to move to different classes during the day in a safer, smaller environment. It will also allow our teachers the ability to focus their planning, instruction, and professional development on fewer content areas. Finally, it will afford students movement breaks within the day to help energize and re-engage students for the rigors of 5th grade instruction.

Again, this is a pilot program that I am putting in place based on student feedback. In the spirit of continuous improvement, I would welcome any additional feedback that may enhance the instructional environment for all learners. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks for your continued support,

Dr. Neil Burti
Principal