

# University Park Elementary School



---

Ms. Jennifer Hoffner, M.Ed  
Principal  
320 Noel Drive  
Monroeville, PA 15146  
724-327-4113  
[JHoffner@gatewayk12.org](mailto:JHoffner@gatewayk12.org)

Dear UP Parents,

It is my honor and a pleasure to welcome you to the 2023 – 2024 school year! I hope you all have had a relaxing and fun summer break. I am extremely proud to serve as the Principal of this amazing learning community for the 7th year, and to continue to support the students of University Park! University Park's theme this year is "*Emerging Stronger.*" As we can all attest, the last few years have been challenging, but the UP Learning Community has emerged on the other side more resilient, more unified, and better equipped to handle an ever-changing landscape. This new school year brings the promise of a renewed dedication, focus, and energy to the mission of teaching and learning. With that said, the UP staff and PTO are ready to kick this year off in true Gator fashion!

I would like to welcome all of our new families to the UP Community. We are excited to share all that UP has to offer with you and believe you will soon feel as we do, that University Park is a special place for *all* children. Our teachers, support staff, and families are ready to welcome you because, "No One Beats A Gator!".

The dedicated staff at UP has been working tirelessly to finalize classes and schedules, fine-tune our instructional models, engage in professional learning opportunities, and update class routines and expectations, all with the goal of fostering academic success. Our teachers are eager to meet their new students and begin this year's journey with them. Our primary goal is to ensure student growth in core academic subjects, so we will continue to refine Tier I instruction, analyze data, conduct observations, and review classwork to guide instruction and intervention. We will work together to create a solid foundation for our students so that they have the opportunity to become self-directed learners, collaborative teammates, critical thinkers, and responsible citizens. We will continue to offer intervention services for neurodiverse learners through specialized programs, counseling when appropriate, and the implementation of Tier II and Tier III programs and learning strategies.

**The first day of school is Thursday, August 24, for all students in Grades 1-4.**

**Safety protocols** are being implemented in the building for all school personnel and visitors.

**Kindergarten Orientation and Kindercamp** will take place on the first day of school. On Thursday, August 24th, parents and students will attend Kindergarten orientation at 10:00 AM in the All Purpose Room. This will last approximately one hour. Kindergarten students will then return on Friday, August 25th using their preferred method of transportation. During this time, students will engage in many different activities, both academic and social, guided by the Kindergarten teachers. Kindercamp will continue through Tuesday, August 29th. At the end of the day families will be notified of who their child's Kindergarten teacher will be.

**Homeroom Assignments:**

I have scheduled all students into their homerooms. **Homeroom teachers are only accessible by updating personal information in Skyward.** You may already be able to see this in Skyward. If not, our technology department will be releasing this on August 10th. Homeroom teachers are as follows:

- PreK - Mrs. Linderman
- Kg - Mrs. Debone, Mrs. Maniccia and Mrs. Mutschler
- Grade 1 - Mrs. Doman and Mrs. Yazvac
- Grade 2 - Ms. Rubino, Mrs. Burkhart, Mrs. Lovas
- Grade 3 - Mrs. Eathorne (ELA), Mr. Maniccia (Math) and Mrs. Mueller (SS/Science)
- Grade 4 - Ms. Madden (ELA/Science) and Mrs. Haritan (Math/SS)

**UP Specialists:**

Our special teachers, school counselor, Title I, Special Education teachers, Secretary and Principal will serve as support for all students.

**Specials Classes and Departmentalized Grades:**

Art, PE/Health, Music, and Library will be hosted in the special area classes.

**Save the Dates:** (Formal invitations will be sent through Skyward and Posted on FB)

- **Thursday, August 24th** - First Day of School (Grades 1-4)
- **Friday, August 25th** - First Day of Kindergarten
- **Thursday, August 31st** - : Meet the Teacher Night (Grades 1 and 2 from 7-8 and Grades 3 and 4 from 6 to 7).
- **Tuesday, September 5th** - First Day of PreK

It is our desire to keep you informed of all that is taking place at school. Up-to-date and additional information will be sent to you through Skyward. If you have questions or concerns that arise at any time, please do not hesitate to call or email me. I look forward to having a long and rewarding relationship with you and your family.

Along with academic excellence, University Park Elementary School is also committed to the social and emotional needs of our students. We offer site based counseling and social skills training to help students form positive relationships. We have also created a "calming room" where students can meet with Mrs. Montgomery in a more comfortable environment. The Gateway School District will also continue to use the Olweus Bully Prevention Program and focus on character education. We encourage students to be kind and a good friend.

University Park also recognizes that the world is changing around us daily, and that technology is a huge part of that. Therefore, we strive to engage students through the use of various means of technology. Students will continue to utilize Google Classroom, and will bring their iPads home. ***Students in grades K and 1 will initially leave their iPads at school.*** We will communicate any additional information as we receive it. We hope this initiative will bring the 21st Century to the forefront, as well as engage your children in additional critical thinking, collaboration and communication activities.

The iPad, charger, and case will be used in the classroom and home for educational purposes. Teachers will vary in their expectations for use, but your child will be using this tool for instruction, assignments, projects, research and assessment throughout the day. Teachers will provide students and parents with username and passwords for home access. The iPad is the property of the Gateway School District. ***Please do not remove the case for any reason.*** If you have an issue with your student's iPad, please contact the help desk at [helpdesk@gatewayk12.org](mailto:helpdesk@gatewayk12.org) or 412-373-5870, or Mrs. Salerno. at [rsalerno@gatewayk12.org](mailto:rsalerno@gatewayk12.org)

I encourage our parents to frequently visit our webpage and follow our social media for up to date and accurate information. **Please ensure your child's iPad is charged and returned to school each day and ready for use.** We have a limited number of chargers and loaners available.

Daily Carpool Procedures will be at the same location as morning drop off around the back of the school. When dropping off your child, please do not pull off until your child has safely entered the building. Also, do not drive around other vehicles when dropping off or picking up students. If you plan on picking your child up from school more than once per week, you must sign up for the daily carpool. ***For the safety of your children, please do not call after 2:30 PM to request office pick-up for your child.*** Office pick-up will be dismissed after the buses. The end of day gets very hectic. Early dismissals can be sent in via note or emailed to the classroom teacher as well as Mrs. Salerno at [rsalerno@gatewayk12.org](mailto:rsalerno@gatewayk12.org). Guardians will not enter the building for early dismissals. You will still be responsible for scanning your license. We will bring your child to you.

I look forward to the start of the new school year and to continuing our collaboration of providing your children with an effective and engaging educational experience. As always, we will look to our families to be positive partners in this year's journey. The UP staff has always made a priority of working together as a caring and compassionate learning community with professionalism, teamwork, action, and expertise. We will always put the best interests of our students at the center of our purpose. Join us in ensuring the success of all UP students. Stay positive, and stay connected.

As we continue on this journey together, please never hesitate to reach out to me with any questions. The staff at University Park is looking forward to a great year!

Nobody Beats A Gator!!

Ms. Hoffner