

Dear New and Returning "Team Epic" Families,

Happy end-of-summer to all of you! I hope that the summertime has allowed for the perfect balance of relaxation and fun adventures. As I reflect on my own, I realize that I had beautiful bits of both: traveling to visit family in Colorado, attending my first Outhouse Family Historical Society Reunion, spending time with friends in the Teanaway River Valley, cooking, reading, and kayaking.

I want to share with you a little bit about my path as an educator. I began my teaching career in 1995. I taught Spanish to 5th and 6th graders, Reading to 6th graders, and a diversity-based course entitled Cultural Awareness to 7th graders in New York, where I grew up and lived until life brought me here in 1999. I moved to Seattle to obtain my Masters in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Multicultural Education at the University of Washington and once I arrived I had a gut feeling that I would never leave. I love living in the Pacific Northwest! After graduating, I decided to take what I honestly thought would be a temporary position as a Special Education Instructional Assistant (K-5) in Seattle Public Schools. Turns out, I loved the work so much that I did it for 8 years, before returning three years ago to my role as a classroom teacher. As always, I am very eager to bring pieces of all my experiences into our classroom and I feel most honored to get to be your teacher this year.

Our home this year is P7, which is one of the portable classrooms. I plan to be in the room often before the start of school, so please email me if you would like to set up a time to preview our new space before the first day of school. It would be a pleasure to get to meet you or to see you before the first day of school.

I will be using email as my primary mode of communicating with our families. If you are new to Team Epic, please send me a quick email with your child's name and **all** the email addresses that I should include for your child in our Team Epic group email list. If you are returning to Team Epic AND your information has changed, please do pass along those changes to me. In addition, I invite you to send me an email if there is any information that you would like to share with me before the start of the year. If email does not work for your family, please do let me know whether phone calls or notes home work better.

As you venture out to buy school supplies, I would like to say thank you in advance for all you do to help our classroom stay supplied with what we need. It is greatly appreciated!

Lastly, for the first day of school, please have your child bring the book that she/he is currently reading. I am reading Hour of the Bees, by Lindsay Eager, and I cannot seem to put it down! I am so looking forward to seeing you all on the first day of school!

All the best,
Jennifer Outhouse (a.k.a. Ms. O)

jkouthouse@seattleschools.org