

Taking Flight: Helping Your Child Adjust to the Move to Eagle View

Moving to a new school is exciting and a great opportunity to meet new people, gain new experiences and expand a child's confidence in his/her own coping skills. Change develops resiliency in children as they recognize that they can cope with life's ups and downs. However, change can also be stressful and can stir up "new school jitters." Below are some tips for helping your child get ready for the move to Eagle View.

PREPARATION COUNTS! Be sure to drive or walk by our school often. Just seeing the site can generate excitement and help younger children visualize where they will be in the fall. As soon as the information is available, walk the route to school or the bus stop. Attend orientation meetings. Allow your child to bring a few index cards to Open House so he/she can write the names of other children he might meet there.

CONSIDER TEMPERAMENT and READINESS: Consider your child's developmental stage when preparing him/her for the move to our school. Younger students will need to hear concrete facts about what will be different and the same about the new school, older students may need to practice ways to approach new people and reach out to new friends. If your child is less verbal and more visual, he/she may enjoy drawing pictures of what he thinks the first day of school or her new class will be like.

LISTEN TO FEELINGS-SPOKEN AND UNSPOKEN If your child is expressing fears or concerns about the move, let your responses show that you hear and accept them. It is normal for students to have mixed emotions about leaving a familiar school. Share with your child that it is ok to feel sad about leaving old friends and teachers. Explain to your child that many students will probably also be feeling nervous and a little unsure when school begins, and that fact will probably help classmates be more open to making new friends. Even the teachers will be a little nervous, at first! Some children show their feelings nonverbally and may be quieter or even act out occasionally. Give the feelings a name to help children express themselves: "You seem a little quiet today. Are you feeling a little worried about your new school?"

KEEP IN TOUCH: Encourage your child to exchange phone numbers, email addresses and photos with her friends from the current school. Make plans to keep in touch after the change takes place!

PROVIDE CONTINUITY: Next fall, provide predictability and constancy by keeping family routines intact. Your child may even feel more comfortable carrying his old and familiar school supplies to the new school for a while. Too many changes at once can be overwhelming.

LET US HELP: We are here to help! If your child is showing signs of withdrawal, regression or stress, please let Mrs. Hemmig or Mrs. Kessler, our school counselors, know. They will be inviting groups of students to have lunch to share their positive experiences at Eagle View and to help students make new friends and settle in more easily.

