



## Celebrating 45 Years of Serving Tucson's Children

July 2011

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. Mark's Preschool and Kindergarten for the 2011-2012 school year! I am thrilled to be taking on the position of Director here at the school. Although the position will not start for me until January, I look forward to continuing the strong tradition of education, community and excellence that has always been a part of St. Mark's Preschool and Kindergarten. Until then, Jane Hilyard will continue on as the Director. We would both like to welcome everyone to the start of a great school year! I just know your children will be filled with learning, smiles and wonder.

The new school year officially begins on Monday, August 15; but there are two important events before that date. On Thursday evening, August 11, there will be a Parent Information Night beginning at 7pm in Geneva Hall. After that, there will be individual class meetings in your child's classroom. Your child's teacher will give you important information regarding your child's preschool experience at St. Mark's. This evening is for adults only; no child care will be provided.

The following morning, Friday, August 12, there will be a classroom visitation for all children. Students and parents may visit their classroom and teachers between 9:30-11am. This is an excellent opportunity for your child to become acquainted with his/her new school environment.

**Kathy Meakins** and **Norla Jarvis** are all set for another action packed year in Room F. They look forward to guiding the children as they learn and grow during this very important kindergarten year. **Corinne Lewis** and **Bobbie Machado** will be in Room E. They are looking forward to an exciting year with the four year olds. They have already been busy planning activities for this school year. **Leticia Fagg** will be joined this year by **Anna Kolb** in Room D. Anna is new to our staff this year; but is familiar with St. Mark's as a parent. Both of her daughters, Teagan and Ari, are former students. Anna has had experience as a preschool teacher and has taken Early Childhood Education classes. Both Leticia and Anna are anticipating a terrific year filled with many adventures.

**Catherine Pearson** is returning this year as a morning teacher with **Robin Martin** in Room C. They are planning a fun-filled year with the three year olds. **Leslee Higginbottom** and **David Phinizy** are working with our young threes class in Room B. They are looking forward to helping our youngest children as they learn and explore their world. **Shayna Smith** and **Shyleigh Scott** are back for a fantastic year with the Wild Things in Room A. They have lots of great ideas already in progress for a truly exceptional year.

**Ann Brewster** is returning this year and will be leading the Extended Day program. Ann will be assisted by **Amy Diephouse** and **Kristina Haythornwhite**. Both Amy and Kristina are new to the school this year. Amy has been in the education field since 2004 and is a graduate of Valparaiso University. She is now working towards a master's degree in Early Childhood Education at Northern Arizona University. Kristina has worked in a pre-K classroom since 2008 and is currently a student at Pima Community College. As always, the afternoon team has lots of great experiences planned for those children staying late.

We also have a new addition to our office staff this year. I would like to welcome **Hilary Myli** who will be the new office manager. Hilary is excited to be here and is looking forward to helping in every way she can. She has worked as an office manager at a school before and so, she should fit right in. She is also a gymnastics coach and will be teaching gymnastics to the children this year as part of school enrichment program.

St. Mark's is pleased to offer four quality enrichment programs as part of our regular curriculum. **Alicia Haggerman** will teach Music and Movement. Alicia is an experienced early childhood music educator and a violinist with the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. Our Spanish teacher, **Kelly Strachan**, will be returning this year. As mentioned, **Hilary Myli** will be bringing gymnastics lessons to the kids. Also, our check-out library, with **Annie Tong** will be offered. If you would like your child to participate in an enrichment class which occurs on a day (s)he is not enrolled, you may bring your child to school for the enrichment class only. We ask that you stay at school during the class as it is only for 30 minutes, and we cannot accommodate extra students before and after the class. There is no additional cost for participation in enrichment programs.

Fridays will continue to be pizza lunch day. The cost is \$4.00 per lunch, payable with the following month's tuition. Sign up in the front of each class sign in book. Pizza lunch and the enrichment programs will begin in September.

This year we also have some fantastic new items for our playground. Thanks to everyone's hard work at the Spring Fundraiser last year, we were able to purchase some great building and digging tools. Be sure to check these out as the school year starts.

Finally, make sure to pick up your copy of the Parent Handbook in your child's classroom at the parent meeting. Please take a moment to read it, as it explains many of our school policies. We are looking forward to seeing you in August.

Here's to a wonderful year!

Alicia Durbin

