



January 2016

Dear East Hills Family:

Happy New Year! May 2016 be filled with an abundance of health and happiness for all. As educators, we are fortunate to experience two new years: one in September and one in January. Each has its similarities: thoughts of our hopes, dreams and wishes for our families, friends and students. Throughout the past week, I have heard echoes of questions posed as well as reflections stated such as, *"What are your new year's resolutions," "What will you do differently in 2016," "As I reflect on the past year I realize..." "I have learned so much this past year and hope to use that knowledge to..."*, as well as pledges to be better, stronger, wiser, healthier and kinder.

As I sit at my desk on this first day of the new calendar year, I contemplate the words that I want to share. I reflect on the incredible compassion and assiduous dedication that the teachers and staff at East Hills demonstrate in regard to your children each and every day through their words and actions. I think about the generosity and selflessness of our PFA/SEPTA who work tirelessly to support programs and activities that benefit our children and community, the myriad ways in which our students work collaboratively to cheerlead for one another as well as those less fortunate as well as the unyielding support that we receive from our central administration and Board of Education. My hope is that we continue to work together with the same fortitude and drive to ensure that our students are provided with an exemplary academic, social and emotional education that meets their diverse needs in an environment that encourages risk taking and inquiry so our children feel confident as they work towards becoming their best selves.

In our continued effort to identify and share books that support our character education initiatives, I have chosen an oldie but goodie: ***Cookies Bite-Size Life Lessons***, written by Amy Krouse Rosenthal and illustrated by Jane Dyer. This whimsical text teaches compassion and courage while taking the reader on a cookie making journey. Poignant vocabulary words are embedded in each page to teach important life lessons such as: *"Compassionate means don't worry it's okay you can have part of my cookie," "Respect means offering the very first cookie to your grandmother," "cooperate means how about you add the chips while I stir," and courageous means, "it was not easy for me to tell you that I took the cookie but I took a deep breath...and made the words come out."*

Nichole and I hope you enjoy this book of the month and feel free to follow the chocolate chip cookie recipe provided at the end of the book!

All the best for the New Year,

Melissa Krieger
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Principal