

September 2014

Dear Southdown Community,

Welcome back to school! I hope all of you had a relaxing, enjoyable vacation and took many opportunities to recharge and energize. I would like to begin a new tradition at Southdown, ***Principal and PTA Book Choice***. Three times per year, the PTA will purchase a book for each of our eighteen classrooms. Books may be selected around themes, teaching points, author's craft, or simply to share some of my favorites with the children. They will provide opportunities for community building and text-rich discussion within classrooms and hopefully at home.

September is the month for new beginnings. As teachers, students, and administrators select their *first-day* outfit or prepare their *first-day* lunch, I'm sure we all experience some ***First-Day Jitters***. This book, by Julie Danneberg, begins with Sarah Jane Hartwell snuggled down tightly under her covers, not wanting to go to her new school, while Mr. Hartwell urges and cajoles her into moving along. Mr. Hartwell drives her to school, where the principal, Mrs. Burton, kindly meets Sarah Jane at the car and personally escorts her into the classroom. On the last page is a wonderful surprise that is guaranteed to put a smile on the face of any young child, or teacher, who's concerned about that all-important first day!

This book provides opportunities for students to relate with a character in a text. Throughout the story are many occasions where students can step inside Sarah Jane's shoes and think about their own experiences prior to the first day of a new school year. Sarah Jane's journey is a great way to begin discussions with children about community, anxiety, and hopefully overcoming their nerves.

September is a time filled with excitement, hope, and of course...jitters. ***First Day Jitters*** is a wonderful springboard into a new school year and an opportunity for every child to feel that we are ALL in it together.

Wishing you the best of all years,

Sincerely,

Scott Oshrin
Principal
Southdown Primary School