

Averill Park Central School District

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#AP_EveryStudentEveryDay

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Dear Averill Park Families,

As we approach the start of the 2024-25 school year, we are all filled with many different emotions, and so are our students.

While many of us are excited for the first day of school, it's important to acknowledge that many children have feelings of anxiety when returning after a long break.

We develop different routines during summer vacations and the shift back to school can feel overwhelming for both students and adults. Children might worry about meeting new friends, having new teachers and new schedules, and academic challenges. These feelings are normal, but they can be distressing.

Children of all ages may not express their concerns directly with parents and guardians, so it is important to be aware of the signs, including:

- Expressing reluctance or refusing to go to school
- Complaints of physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches
- Changes in behavior, such as becoming more withdrawn or irritable
- Trouble sleeping or experiencing nightmares
- Constantly seeking reassurance about school-related worries

How to Help

There are a number of different ways that you can help support your child as we prepare for the first days of school.

- **Have Open Conversations:** Encourage your child to share their thoughts and feelings about returning to school. Share your own thoughts, and let them know you are there to answer any questions.
- **Re-establish Routines:** Regular routines can provide a sense of stability. Gradually returning to set bedtimes and wake-up times can help ease the transition.
- **Practice Positivity:** Help your child focus on the positive aspects of going back to school, such as seeing friends, learning new things, participating in fun activities, and being a part of classes they enjoy.
- **Be Proactive:** If possible, visit the school during Meet the Teacher events prior to the first day of school. Walk through their schedule, see the classroom, and make the environment feel familiar and less intimidating.
- **Be Calm and Confident:** Children often take cues from adults. By staying calm and positive about the new school year you can help reduce your child's anxiety.
- **Stay Connected:** Talk regularly with your child and have open communication with teachers and staff about anxiety issues that may arise.

Anxiety is normal when big changes occur in a child's life. If you notice that your child's worries are having an impact on their daily life, or if they persist over a long period of time, you may want to consider seeking additional support from one of our amazing school counselors.

Our goal is to kick off the upcoming school year on a positive note and we hope all of our students have a successful transition from summer vacation back into our classrooms. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your building principal any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James Franchini".

James R. Franchini, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Additional Resources:

- [The Child Mind Institute](#)
- [ADAA: 7 Tips for Addressing Back-to-School Anxiety](#)
- [YoungMinds](#)