

International School Pointe-Noire

Pointe-Noire, Republique du Congo

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Family Newsletter

#3

August 20, 2010

Dear Families,

A Note from Traci and Jeff:

Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.

- *Sitting Bull (1831-1890) Sioux Chief and Medicine Man*

We share this quote because it expresses our deep desire and commitment to work together with you and your children to make this school year the very best it can possibly be.

Understanding is the beginning of appreciation. Appreciation is the beginning of love.

- *Mother Teresa*

We share this quote because it expresses our belief that knowing one another well will lead to strong connections between us, and strong connections between us will lead to the greatest learning and joy.

As we begin our Pointe-Noire adventure with all of you:

We have now spent a week in Pointe-Noire. Benefiting from Romuald Balou's knowledge and assistance, we have been busy cleaning and organizing the school. A fresh coat of paint has been added to the inside school walls and to the school sign. While we enjoy readying the school and the classrooms, our greatest joy is in meeting all of our new students and their families.

We know that with the end of summer and the beginning of school, children and their families can begin to feel anxious. Change can be both exhilarating and challenging. Like us, you and your children may be feeling excited and nervous about a new school year with new teachers. As we mentioned in our previous newsletters, we would like to meet with each family, this coming Thursday or Friday.

Many of you, like the two of us, have recently arrived in Pointe-Noire and are either setting into or re-settling into your lives here. Spending time with our students and all of you before school helps us to begin to make important connections with one another. It will give your family time to see the changes we have made to the school setting and, more importantly, it will help your children to feel more comfortable about the start of the year.

We will use our time together to begin developing trust and comfort between us. Doing so will help to ease any "uncertainty" (which is a natural part of any transition) that your

children may have. Similarly, having the chance to meet you will contribute to the development of what is sure to be our growing friendship.

We have scheduled 30-minute meeting times with families who have one child, and one-hour meeting times for families with two or more children. We appreciate your doing what you can to make your family's scheduled time fit into what we know can be a busy summer schedule. In the event that the time scheduled below truly does not work for you, please e-mail us at jeff.bushnell@gmail.com as soon as possible so that we can try to figure out a different time to meet on one of those two days.

Our proposed family meeting schedule follows:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Time</u>
Thursday, August 26	Adrien	9:00 am – 9:30 am
	Damola Daniel Demi	9:30 am – 10:30 am
	Danielle	10:30 am – 11:00 am
	Dewa	11:00 am – 11:30 am
	Donald	11:30 am – 12:00 pm
	Emilee Marcus	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
	Gbenga Dayo Ore Ayodeji Paul Oluwadunsin David	1:00 pm– 2:00 pm
Thursday, August 27	Luis Monica	9:00 am – 10:00 am
	Natalia	10: 00 am – 10:30 am
	Numi	10:30 am – 11:00 am
	Princess Wofai Joseph	11:00 am – 12:00 pm
	Rossi	12:00 pm – 12:30 pm

We have a great many things to share as we begin the school year, so we will be sending other newsletters soon. For now, we would like to share some important information

about the school schedule (please note changes from last year), school contacts, school clothing and supplies.

School Hours

7:50 AM	Arrival for students
8:00 AM	School day begins
10:15 – 10:30 AM	Snack/recess
12:00 PM	Dismissal for pre-K students, recess/lunch for K-5 students
2:30 PM	School day ends

School phone numbers

The School's telephone number is 748-7700 (Romuald Balou's number)

The School's e-mail address is jeff.bushnell@gmail.com

School Clothes and Supplies

It is important that students are prepared to succeed at school with the tools they need to learn and as few distractions as possible to their physical comfort. As such, we request that parents ensure that children are dressed and supplied for success in all that they do here. The children move around all day so wearing comfortable clothing and footwear will greatly benefit their learning. We have dance/movement/fitness classes every day and your children will often sit on the rug for meetings. Therefore, we ask that students wear clothing that will allow them to do these things comfortably and safely. For the sake of safety, also please provide your children with shoes that tie or fasten securely. If your child would like to wear a skirt, we recommend wearing shorts underneath. This will ensure that recess and movement classes are comfortable and enjoyable

Students will receive all of the supplies they need for learning at school from ISPN. We will store these supplies at school so that they are available for the students' learning each day. We request that you provide your child or children with a full complement of school supplies as well, to be kept at home, so that they can be successful in completing their homework: pens, pencils, colored pencils, pencil sharpener, ruler, erasers, glue, scissors, blank and lined paper, and a dictionary.

Parent-Student Handbook

Within the next week or two you will receive an e-mail with the revised 2010-2011 Student-Parent Handbook attached. We will also have printed Handbooks available at school. There are a few changes from last year, so even if you've seen it before please take the time to read through it with your family. It is a good idea to be familiar with the ways and "whys" of International School Pointe-Noire, and the Handbook also contains valuable ideas about how you can help to support your child's academic progress.

We are looking forward to meeting all of you very soon, and to a great year of learning and friendship!

Our very warmest wishes to all of you as
our adventures together begin,

Traci and Jeff

Notes and Reminders:

- * **Wednesday, September 1 – First day of school**
 - Please arrange for your children to arrive at school between 7:50 and 8:00 am.
 - Please arrange pick-up for your pre-K students at 12:00. Pre-K students do not eat lunch at school.
 - Please provide your children with a water bottle, as well as a healthy snack for the morning.
 - Please arrange pick-up for your Kindergarten through fifth-grade students at 2:30 pm.
- * **We will send a more detailed daily school schedule soon.**
- * **One change this year is that the two of us will be sharing the principal duties. We will describe our respective leadership roles in more detail as the extent of those duties becomes clearer to us.**

Requests:

- **Sometime during the first week of classes please send your children to school with a towel that can be used for yoga.**
- **Please provide your child with a water bottle that he or she can keep at school.**
- **Please provide your child with a school bag/backpack and a bag lunch (K-5 students only). Please make certain your child's name is written on each of these items.**
- **Please let us know what name your children would like us to use when referring to them. This will be particularly helpful for students who are new to the school. We will be making up a class/school list in the coming week and would like to include your children's names as they prefer them to appear.**
- **We are looking for a volunteer or volunteers to make pillow covers for the seven floor pillows the children will use in the whole-group meeting area. We would like covers that can be removed and cleaned each week. We are happy to provide the fabric. Please let us know if you would be interested in helping us with this.**