

Dear Student,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year at Plato Academy! I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Dionysia Panagiotopoulos and this is my fifth-year teaching at Plato Academy!! I have 18+ years of teaching experience in Elementary Education. My previous teaching experiences include teaching 2nd - 6th grade and mentoring new teachers in New York. I have received my Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education (K-9) from National Louis University and an endorsement in Psychology. I graduated from Teachers College, Columbia University in NYC and received my Master's Degree in Giftedness Education. I love teaching because I believe that all children can learn. I believe that learning should take place through inquiry, exploring and experience.

I am very excited to start a great new school year at Plato and have been very busy setting up our classroom and getting it ready for your arrival. I hope by now you have received my postcard from Florida! My family and I spent a week in Florida and we had so much fun together making memories! We went to Sea World, Legoland, Walt Disney World and Indian Rock Beach!!! I can't wait to hear about your summer adventures!!!

We have many new and interesting things to learn this year and we are going to have tons of fun together! Please remember to read *The Phantom Tollbooth* novel by the first day of school. We will begin the school year with learning explorations that connect to *The Phantom Tollbooth* novel. I have planned many fun and engaging learning explorations for the upcoming school year! Our first exploration will be studying our home state of Illinois!!! So many world-changing events have happened in our home state! Here are some fun facts about Illinois. Did you know? Illinois had two other state capitals before Springfield - Kaskaskia and Vandalia, nearly 80% of the state's land area is farmland, and the ice cream sundae originated in Evanston, Il. I can't wait to start exploring and learning about Illinois with you!!

As we start the new school year together, please think about what are your hopes and dreams for this school year? I will share some of my hopes and dreams with you on the first day of school. I can't wait to hear some of your hopes and dreams as well. On the first day of school we will create a Time Capsule with our hopes and dreams! We will explore a good place to conceal our Time Capsule around the school and will open it up on the last day of school!!! I hope you are having an awesome summer and that you are excited for the new school year! I look forward to seeing you on the first day of school!

Enjoy the last days of summer and see you soon!!! ☺

Sincerely,

Ms. Dionysia

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