

**The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires.
-- William Arthur Ward**

A new chapter begins at Hillcrest Elementary School, with the hiring of Nakia Jones-Tate as principal, replacing Pat Carney-Dalton who retired at the end of the last school year. The above quote, one of Mrs. Jones-Tate's favorites, gives a keen insight into her style and perspective.

Mrs. Jones-Tate grew up as a "military brat" and was educated mostly in Eastern Montgomery County. She spent her high school years at Wissahickon High School where she met her husband, who is a police officer in Whitmarsh Township. She received a Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education from Cheyney University and a Masters Degree in Multicultural Studies and Administrative Certificate from Eastern University. She and her husband have three children, one girl and two boys, ages fifteen, nine, and five.

Mrs. Jones-Tate began her professional career in the Baltimore City School District teaching first grade. She and her family later moved "back home" to Montgomery County, where she taught kindergarten in the Colonial School District and first grade in the Norristown School District. Mrs. Jones-Tate later took a position as a middle school assistant principal in the Norristown School District.

When the Hillcrest Principal position became available last winter, she saw a great opportunity to return to her solid background and roots in elementary education. She describes herself as a child advocate, child-centered, and both compassionate and passionate for quality public education. Her desire to come to Council Rock was reinforced by her belief that the district has the best teachers in Pennsylvania, who share in her passion.

Her goals include increasing technology initiatives, providing better technology, creating smart rooms in every classroom, and also expanding "courtesy matters." This year, students will be rewarded for being courteous by a partnership brokered with Applebee's. She hopes to keep these rewards fresh and new each year. More globally, she finds it worrisome that education is being directed more and more by the "top of the hill." Regulations, as well as decisions, are based on saving dollars vs. increasing educational value.

When asked of her impression of Council Rock so far, she replied it is "one big happy family" and repeats what she was once told: It feels like she "has died and gone to Council Rock". "The Council Rock Community is so fortunate to have teachers working in their district that aim to inspire children daily." When pressed for what she found disappointing in Council Rock, Mrs. Jones-Tate replied that the school was not air conditioned. She was also surprised that there were so many "learning cottages," as her colleague Jill Kingston calls the trailers. That is something Citizens For Education has in common with Hillcrest's new principal, right off the bat!!

Citizens extends best wishes to Mrs. Jones-Tate for many successful and rewarding years here in Council Rock!