



## PLEASANTVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NORTH MAIN STREET SCHOOL  
215 NORTH MAIN STREET  
PLEASANTVILLE, N.J. 08232-2102

April 30, 1999

Dear Governor Whitman:

I would like to take a few minutes to tell you about the Tang Soo Do Karate Program at North Main Street School in Pleasantville, as I see it from the perspective of the guidance office.

Parenting and teaching are not easy under the best of conditions. Pleasantville is a unique town with some very special needs. Many of our students are being raised by grandparents, foster parents or parents who have to work day and night to survive; and unfortunately, some of our children are raising themselves.

The Tang Soo Do Karate Program is the result of many diligent volunteers who have been willing to put the children in our community first. The children at North Main Street School receive karate lessons for 45 minutes twice a week. This is a Board approved program which supplements our physical education program. This is the second year for the program.

In the process of learning karate and making great strides in physical development, the children also gain improved relations with their teachers and parents. At a typical Back to School Night, we can expect 20 - 30 parents. When the children in the Tang Soo Do Karate Program took their test to receive their Yellow Belts there was at least one parent (and whole families) present for each child taking the test. We have never experienced such overwhelming support from the parents for any other program the school has offered.

This program has also reduced occurrences of negative behavior. It uses conflict as a chance to teach the children more appropriate problem-solving skills. It allows children to identify problems and ways that they can deal with the problem more effectively in the future.

Indeed, our students are fortunate to have Masier Straga in their community. It is rare to find an individual who is willing to undertake such a long term project. Through his program he has been a source of inspiration, support, and positive reinforcement to each

and every child learning Tang Soo Do. My respect for him has deepened over the course of his endeavor. I hope you will find it possible to help support this worthy project.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ernestine R. Zeli-Bove". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Ernestine R. Zeli-Bove  
Student Personnel Services