



September Newsletter 2018

And We're Off!

I cannot believe we are halfway through September! In addition to other notices, I will be sending home a month newsletter. Please take the time to read over each newsletter as it will highlight what we have been working on in school, what we will soon be working on, as well as ways to help reinforce the skills with your first grader at home.

Our school year has gotten off to a wonderful start! As we began the school year, students did a great job learning the routines and expectations of our day in first grade. We worked together to develop our classroom rules and we reviewed school and playground rules. Students have become comfortable in their new learning environment and we have quickly become a classroom "family". Our days have been filled with lots of learning and lots of FUN!

Word Work

During our Word Work time, we have been reviewing the word wall words that were taught through Foundations in kindergarten. We will begin adding first grade sight words to our word wall. Once a word is added to the word wall, we expect it to be read and written correctly. We will practice counting syllables (the parts) of words and we will also have a quick review of rhyming words in word families.

Foundations

First grade uses Foundations, our whole group phonics and handwriting program, similar to kindergarten. Students have been reintroduced to the writing lines (sky line, plane line, grass line, worm line). We use these name lines when practicing how to properly form letters. We are reviewing the letter names and sounds as well as the icons associated with each letter, all previously introduced to your child in kindergarten. I will send home a letter showing how to properly form each letter. When your child is writing at home, please emphasize correct letter formation and letters being written between the appropriate lines.

Reader's Workshop

Students participate in Reader's Workshop for about 50-60 minutes each day. We have begun our first unit: *Readers Build Good Habits*, introducing students to good reading habits to practice. These "good reading habits" include: rereading to make your voice smooth, setting reading goals (how many books do you plan/hope to read each day), read more and more, take a sneak peek at the beginning of your book, check your sneak peek, etc. Everyday students participate in a reading mini lesson, read independently, read with a teacher, and read in partnerships with a peer. In another few weeks, students will begin bringing home a book or two from their book box to read to you at night. The books brought home should be in students' "just right" range of reading. That is, they should be able to read the book with ease or with needing just a little bit of support from you.

Writer's Workshop

Students are engaged in Writer's Workshop for about 50-60 minutes each day. In writing this month, we launched our first writing unit known as Small Moments/Narrative Writing. This week students have been writing narrative stories...true stories about themselves. Students begin by planning their story; telling their story while planning/dividing the story across a few pages to separate the beginning, middle and end of the story. When they're done writing, students are also learning to go back and revise their writing to include details such as who, what, where, when, why and how. We like to say "When you're down, you've just begun!" 😊 Next week, we will focus on the small moments of a story. Students will again choose a true story from their life, they narrow it down to just one small moment and stretch out that story across the pages. Reader's and Writer's Workshop time have quickly become favorite times of our day!

Math

Our math curriculum is organized around the Common Core State Standards. Since the start of the year, students have been working hard on recognizing numbers as well as reading, writing and sequencing them. When working with your child, please help him/her to fix any number reversals s/he might still be in the habit of making. When working with teen numbers, remind your child that "teen numbers always start with one." We have also spent time reviewing 2D shapes...their names, attributes and where in the classroom or "real life" we can see these shapes. We have had lots of fun sorting various objects into similar groups and have worked on complex patterns. Becoming fluent with solving algorithms and equations is a first grade goal. In these first few months of school, we will introduce students to the fact groupings: +0, -0, +1, -1, +2, -2. Eventually we will have these facts memorized through 20! Every day we practicing counting by 1's well over 100, backwards from 20-0, by 2s, 5s and by 10s. Of course, students have had plenty of opportunities for playing fun math games with partners!

Note Reminder

When sending in lunch money, please place it in a sealed envelope or baggie labeled with your child's first & last name. Also, if your child's afternoon dismissal routine should change, please send in a note explaining the change. Be sure to include your child's first and last name and their bus letter (if applicable).

Classroom Rules

Using Centre School's "Responsive Classroom" philosophy as well as our first Social Studied unit: Civics, students helped generate our classroom rules. After much discussion, students came up with 4 rules to follow this year. Help reinforce these rules by discussing them with your child at home. Talk about what the rules mean and what it would look like to follow/not follow the rules at school.

- Talk quietly and use kind words.
- Keep your body in control and to yourself.
- Take care of our classroom, our school, and our materials
- Be a good listener.
- Treat others the way you want to be treated.

IA Schedule

Monday ~ Computer Lab with Mr. Dutton

Tuesday ~ Art with Mrs. Olson

Wednesday ~ Music with Mrs. Mallett

Thursday ~ PE with Mrs. Coren

Friday ~ Library with Ms Knutson

Important Dates

- Thursday, September 27th ~ Open House & Book Fair - see separate note that came home on 9/12/18
- Friday, September 28th ~ No School - Teacher In-Service Day
- Wednesday, October 3rd ~ Walk to School Day
- Thursday, October 4th ~ School Picture Day
- Monday, October 8th ~ No school in honor of Columbus Day
- Wednesday, October 31st ~ Halloween Parade & Class Celebration (more info to come in October)

I have loved getting to know this group of youngsters...we're going to have a fantastic year together. Please always feel free to email, call or write me with any questions or concerns!

Sincerely,
Christin Shaw-Ryan