

Mrs. Myers

&

Mrs. Walsh

# Parent Information Manual



# Parent Information Manual

*Hello and Welcome! We are Mrs. Myers and Mrs. Walsh!*

## **Classroom Philosophy Statement**

This is such a fundamentally important time in your child's life we hope you will be as excited as we are to participate in this continuum model of learning. We are a multi-age classroom, mostly serving students ages 5 - 7 years old. The advantages are; consistent, continuous education with two professionals focused on your child's growth in reading skills, math concepts, and development of critical thinking across all subject areas.

We strongly believe in the relationship between home and school. We welcome parents as volunteers in the classroom and count on you to be the teacher at home. You are the expert on your child so we will be learning much from you!

## **The Journey**

School is a child's work, just as parents go to a job. The focuses in our room are practicing our personal best and learning to enjoy the process and product. The first quarter is spent hearing "personal best" through words of encouragement. Second quarter, we ask students to redo work if it is not their personal best. The third and fourth quarters, we expect increased independence and self-monitoring.

Enjoying "process exploration" alleviates competition & perfectionism, increases pleasure in activities, and helps children understand the learning curve: the idea that humans are usually not great at something until we've practiced enough to get better! It is also important to learn we all have talents in certain areas and may not easily master other activities and this is a natural part of life. We can still enjoy something and give it our best effort, even if we are not great at it.

## **Classroom Behavior Expectations and Promises**

We spend the first month of school creating a special community in our classroom where students will be kind, respectful, and loving to themselves, peers, and adults. We will practice asking questions instead of telling stories about ourselves. We will learn that even though everyone is not our friend, we can still be friendly. We practice these concepts amidst the developmental needs of children ages 5 to 7 years old. Any behaviors beyond the typical, or behaviors that are repeated after intervention has been implemented, will be discussed with parents as needed.

We all agree we will make our classroom a productive, safe, and happy learning environment by:

**Being Safe**

**Being Kind**

**Doing Our Best**

As a school, we focus and stress three personal standards:

- Make good decisions
- Be a problem solver
- Show respect

### **Communication**

- Email! Please provide your best email contact address so you will receive weekly and monthly communications from our classrooms. You can send an introduction email to Mrs. Myers at [mmyers@washoeschools.net](mailto:mmyers@washoeschools.net) and/or to Mrs. Walsh at [mdwalsh@washoeschools.net](mailto:mdwalsh@washoeschools.net)

In order to keep you updated with any new information we will be sending home a monthly newsletter, which will also be on the school website. Also, please use the school calendar for dates and SWE policies.

- Friday Folders

This folder will be going home each Friday, and will contain your child's finished work for that week. It needs to be signed and returned by the following Monday to show you have reviewed and removed the contents.

## **Curriculum Overview**

### **Reading**

We will read in class daily through read aloud, close-reads, shared reading, guided reading and independent reading. We will be using A-Z leveled books, *Houghton Mifflin* reading series, sight word work, Vowel Power and other strategy based programs for reading goals. Students will also be reading leveled readers and non-fiction literature in small groups with teachers at their developmental level regularly. We will be involved in various extension activities after reading, which reinforce and build on literacy strategies, such as vocabulary, grammar, nonfiction text strategies, and writing strategies.

### **Writing**

Students need to have a solid foundation in writing. Therefore, we will be writing using the Lucy Calkins program and writing folders. This will incorporate shared writing, interactive writing, and ultimately independent writing. We will focus on student conferencing and developing voice, ideas, conventions and organization. We will focus on Narrative, Opinion, and Informative types of writing.

### **Math**

We will be using the Bridges math program to meet math standards with a combination of centers and hands-on activities and other aligned supplemental activities. We teach and place a huge emphasis on discussion, math best practices, and using problem solving skills. We are excited about mastering our abilities in identifying the strategies students bring in problem solving and how to move them forward in complex thinking.

## Curriculum Overview (continued)

### Science/Social Studies

We will be doing thematic science and social studies units in our classroom. During the year we will learn about many subjects. We will teach about these topics through a teaching strategy called *GLAD*, (Guided Language Acquisition Design) which incorporates social studies, language, writing skills, extensive vocabulary, hands-on activities and many visual aids. This strategy will be aligned with the Core Knowledge social studies/science program. Science is incorporated through Field Journaling which emphasizes micro and macro observation, art/drawing, writing (labeling), and measurement & geometry.

The themes we will cover are:

- Nursery Rhymes, Fairy Tales, Tall Tales, Fables, Stories, Different Lands/Similar Stories; and,
- The Five Senses and The Human Body;
- Plants, Farms, Animals & Habitats, The Earth and Astronomy;
- Kings & Queens, Columbus & the Pilgrims, Colonial Towns & Townspeople, Early World Civilizations, Early American Civilizations, A New Nation, Frontier Explorers.

### Compass Learning

Another wonderful tool that we will be using at school, and that you can use through your home computer is Compass Learning. The web address is <https://www.thelearningodyssey.com/> or via the SWE website there is a Quick Link called: **New Compass Link**.

We will be handing out your child's username at Parent/Teacher conferences in October.

The password will always be X.

Your child can login to this site and practice different areas of study and lessons that we have assigned.

## Homework

### ☺ Read, Read, Read!

There have been some changes in our school-wide homework policies the past couple of years so nightly homework is now not mandatory. Even though there is no homework that your child will be responsible for on a regular basis, there will project based work to do at home periodically.

Regardless, we stress the importance of reading to/with your child nightly, while asking important questions. It is also extremely beneficial to practice addition/subtraction math facts nightly. They can also practice typing at home, if there is access to a computer.

Students will have a monthly calendar of suggested activities which can be returned at the end of the month for a prize (parent initials each activity completed at home).

## Parent Involvement

There are many areas in which family members can be of great help. Those include working directly with students for their academic learning, or doing clerical type tasks such as copying, stapling etc. However, the first three weeks of school are hectic and we are devoted to establishing our classroom routines and relationship with our students, so we will not be ready for parent (family) involvement until the fourth or fifth week of school.

***Please be aware that ALL volunteers need to fill out a volunteer form before you can help in the classroom or chaperone a field trip. It takes about 2 weeks to get the paperwork returned to SWE.***

Within the structure of our multi-age classroom we are required to provide data based on the student's enrolled grade in Infinite Campus.

The following will help you understand those assessments.

## **Grading (1<sup>st</sup> Grade)**

### **4.0-3.5 Exceeding grade level expectations.**

*I understand and consistently apply concepts independently at a level higher than grade-level expectations.*

### **3.0-2.5 Meeting grade level expectations.**

*I understand the concepts taught in class and I apply them correctly most of the time. I am doing well!*

### **2.0-1.5 Approaching grade level expectations.**

*I understand most concepts taught but I require support to apply these concepts correctly.*

### **1.0-0.5 Emerging/developing into grade level expectations.**

*I inconsistently understand/apply concepts and I require extensive support.*

### **No score/star.**

*My teacher used this task to check my progress, but did not use it as a grade on my report card. **OR***

*I completed this activity with the rest of my class.*

# Benchmark Targets

## Kindergarten

### Reading Levels

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	N/A	1	2	4

### Reading - High Frequency Words: Proficient: 70-100

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	0-5	5-10	10-30	30-100

### Spelling Levels - Stage/Features\*

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	N/A	Pre-Emergent	Emergent	Early Letter Name

Writing: (total scores) Below 1-2, Proficient 3, Exceeds 4

Rubric for kindergarten writing	Letter Strings	Some sounds & directional pattern	Simple Sentences	Two or more sentences and punct.	Language and Vocabulary
	1	2	3	4	

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## First Grade

### Reading Levels

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	4	6	12	16-18

### Reading - High Frequency Words: Proficient: 85% accuracy

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	16-20	56-66	113-133	170-200

### Spelling Levels - Stage/Features\*

	Beginning of the Year	End 1st Trimester	End 2nd Trimester	Year End
Target:	Letter	Early Letter Name	Mid Letter Name	Late Letter Name

Writing: (total scores) Below 1-2, Proficient 3, Exceeds 4

Areas of Assessment:	Elaboration	Organization	Focus	Conventions	Language and Vocabulary

Math: Proficiency = 75%

Areas of Assessment:	MAPs	SWE Benchmark	Timed Test +	Timed Test -



## **Birthdays**

We love to celebrate our students' birthdays. You may send in a special non-edible treat (pencil, cute eraser, decorative shoelaces, etc.).

- ✓ Please contact us prior to bringing in treats, so that we can coordinate an appropriate time.

## **Toys**

**Toys should not be brought to school.** Toys are a distraction and can be broken, lost or stolen. This includes items like D.S., Gameboys, fidget-spinners, trading cards (Pokémon, Magic, etc.), dolls, make-up, purses, stuffed animals, and iPads. We will take away toys, so please do not allow your child to bring a toy or a special treasure to school.

## **Snack**

As parents and teachers, the safety and protection of our students is a main priority. If your child has a food allergy, please let us know in writing as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your care and consideration in making sure that all of our students are safe.

The morning snack will be provided for the first two weeks of school. The remainder of the year you may send fresh produce **ONLY** as a morning snack for recess. We do this so your student can learn what it means to have a healthy, non-processed, fresh snack (ie: applesauce is not fresh fruit but an apple is).

## **Lunch**

We eat lunch at 12:30 every day, and follow with a recess from 1-1:15. We suggest students pack lunch for at least the first week until we all get the lunchroom routine down.

Lunch costs \$2.80, which includes milk. If your child wishes to purchase milk only it costs \$0.80. You can prepay for lunches, which will be put on your child's account, and when funds are low you will receive a reminder from the nutrition services.

## Attendance

Regular attendance is critical to your child's academic progress. If your child is not present, they are not participating, absorbing, or contributing to the learning! Please notify the office whenever your child is absent at the beginning of that school day. The Attendance Line phone number is 775-327-3807. All medical absences must have a physician's note turned into the office to be determined as excused in Infinite Campus. (ie: no note = unexcused)

Please be aware for KINDERGARTEN: If your child has 18+ unverified absences, they must take AND pass a first grade admission test and if they do not pass the test, they must repeat Kindergarten.

## Helpful Tips

### Clothing:

Be sure your child is dressed for the weather and all outerwear which may be removed during the day is clearly labeled with their name. You may wish to send your student in comfortable, washable play clothes since many of our activities can also be quite messy and we have playground time every day. It is important that shoes have a strap if sandals; tennis shoes are preferable.

### Learning at Home:

Posting an alphabet chart and number poster in your child's bedroom or study area provide a model during homework time. You may wish to purchase extra school supplies and create a special study supply box to be used when completing work at home. Your child will need a pencil, glue, scissors, and crayons for many assignments. Be sure to schedule reading and concept practice time into your daily routine.