



Summer 2017

Dear 1st Grade Families,

I hope this letter finds all of you having a wonderful summer. I am so excited about entering the kingdom of first grade with the students! Though we still have a month before we return to school, below you will find important information as we begin to prepare for our year together.

Supplies

Please keep in mind that all school supplies should be simple (no media images), sturdy, and labeled with your child's name. The first graders will need:

- 1) a small mug with a handle
- 2) sneakers with laces to be worn as "inside shoes"
- 3) a shoe box no larger than 9" by 6" with a full set of extra clothing for fall to keep in a cubby, all items labeled with your child's name
- 4) painting smock (apron or old shirt)
- 5) rain gear: boots, pants, and a jacket with a hood
- 6) a small pillow and blanket in a canvas bag
- 7) a cloth place mat to be included in your child's lunch-box
- 8) Family Photo – I would love to have a family photo from each family (pets included if you have any!!). Please email me one as soon as possible with the names of everyone pictured.

Classroom Orientation

I am inviting you and your child (or children) to school on **Tuesday, August 29th, anytime between 10:00 AM – 12 PM** for a "Classroom Orientation." This will be a great opportunity to get your child acclimated to the classroom, see where his/her cubby will be, and be fitted for a desk and chair. You may want to bring any of the items mentioned above to help lighten the load on the first day.

First Day of School and Rose Ceremony

School begins promptly at 8:10 am on **Tuesday, September 5th**. It is important that your child arrive to school earlier (even 15 minutes) to allow time to ease into the newness of first grade and time to reconnect with friends before we officially start at 8:10 am. The 1st grade bell will ring at 8:10 am, the door will be closed, and the school day will begin. Each child will be seated at his or her desk, and I will tell them what to expect at the Rose Ceremony. Please make sure to review the Parent Handbook, and have your child dressed for this first day in assembly clothing. The seniors will be coming to class to spend time with the first graders and then we will rehearse the Rose Ceremony in the classroom. I warmly invite you to attend the opening assembly and Rose Ceremony. This is a reverent and special occasion where our seniors give each child a rose and warmly welcome him or her into the grade school. I will be telling the first graders our first fairy tale during the Rose Ceremony. The school auditorium doors will open at 10:00 am, and you may be seated then. **Please pack a snack only for this first day and note that school ends at 12 noon.**

First Parent Meeting

Our first parent meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 19th, from 7:00-8:30pm** in the 1st grade classroom. There will also be two additional parent meetings during the school-year: **Thursday, March 8th, and Thursday, May 3, both from 7:00-8:30pm**. Our meetings are not only informative, but just as importantly they help you to form a community of parents who can share your struggles, solutions, and creative ideas. It takes a village to raise a child and we are all partners in this very important process.

Lunches and Snacks

Your children will need a snack and lunch from home. Lunches should contain protein, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains when possible, and should be free of candy and sweets. Keep in mind that your child will need hearty and healthy food in order to maintain his/her energy for the longer school day. For convenience sake, children's foods are often prepackaged and contain the most preservatives, sugar, and other unidentifiable ingredients. Since these ingredients negatively affect the children's health and behavior, I ask that you please do your best to avoid those items. Please also limit sweet juices, as filtered water is always available. The school provides soup, homemade bread, and milk to supplement your child's lunch daily. This is purchased from your child's lunch account. Please check the website or contact the Business Office before school begins about adding money to your child's lunch account.

School Attire

The children should come to school in clothes and shoes which are comfortable and which will allow them to move freely. Non-slick sneakers are necessary so that your child can safely move indoors and during outdoor play and benefit from our movement exercises. There is a detailed description of the dress code in the Parent Handbook, but essentially clothing with media pictures or writing is not permitted. This is so that we can create an environment in our classroom that will be ideal for learning without distractions. Thank you in advance for following these guidelines.

Office Hours

I will be available in the classroom every Wednesday from 3:30-4:45pm. I am also available other days and times by appointment, whether in person or over the phone. Open and honest communication is crucial for successful relationships of any kind. If you have questions, comments, and/or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. I kindly ask that we not discuss anything besides relaying information prior to main lesson or via text message. I will share my cell phone number, but will not take phone calls after 7:00pm unless previously arranged.

Birthdays

We will celebrate birthdays in the classroom with classmates and teachers. I will give a small group gift to your child. Please send in a treat on the day we celebrate your child's birthday - fruit, muffins, or ice cream/sorbet. Do not send in cupcakes or muffins with icing. We have some food allergies and dietary restrictions in the class. I will let you know what those are once I have a comprehensive list. I will also send a list of days when we will be celebrating each child's birthday.

Other Notes

Throughout the year, school begins promptly at 8:10am. It is distracting for the class and unsettling for the child when he/she enters the room later than 8:10am. In addition, during those first minutes of the day your child has a wonderful opportunity to engage with his or her classmates, play a short game, possibly do a class chore, and get mentally prepared to start the school day. I trust and appreciate that you will do your best to arrive on time. Also, throughout the year, on Monday through Thursday, school ends at 3:15pm. If you are picking up your child, dismissal will happen in the hallway outside of our classroom. On Fridays, school ends at noon. "Lunch Bunch" takes place from 12:00-3:15pm in the third grade classroom for those children who will stay all day on Friday.

What a wonderful adventure we are embarking upon! I very much look forward to working together with love, humor, and reverence and becoming a class family!

With Warmest Regards,

Tasha England

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