



August 2020

**Dear Fifth Grade Families,**

I am thrilled to officially welcome you and your children into the Fifth Grade and the 2020/2021 school year! Though the past year and current worldly challenges find us all in a tender place, I truly believe that our inner flexibility, warmth of heart and muscle of grit have been strengthened in totally unpredictable ways. When I consider us all arriving back on campus, it is with the golden beaming light of sisters and brothers in fortitude. That image, of the golden light of humanity, is the exact mood of your child's development during this Fifth Grade year.

Throughout their Fifth Grade year, children are bathed in the beauty of the years that have already passed and are ignited by the light and power of intellectual growth that will bloom in the very near future. This is the year that bridges early childhood into adolescence. And so, our curriculum this year will bring forward the periods of humanity that most encapsulate the mood or feeling of each stage of childhood through the study of Ancient Myths and Civilizations. Specifically we will cover: Ancient India, Persia, Babylon/Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. These studies will be split across three blocks throughout the year with the culmination in Greece where we will participate in the Greek Olympics in the spring.

Early childhood is filled with beauty and empathetic observation of all that is becoming and all that is disappearing. Imagine: the miracle of a blossom, such as a Rose of Sharron, which opens fully each morning and closes tightly each night. This picture, of becoming and disappearing, is what we will consider during our two Botany blocks. Along with learning about the parts and functions of flora and fauna we will sharpen our observation especially of things that are growing and forming and things that are dying away. Children have a remarkable capacity to connect to these images without strong judgment and often see what we as adults can not!

This year's mathematics blocks will cover the beauty and miracle of free hand geometry followed by the very pragmatic and earthly exploration of decimal fractions. Mathematics is the intellect's playground. Just as we played for so long and so dynamically with our bodies during early childhood, your children will revel in the intellectual gymnastics of geometry and decimals! On paper, these may seem dry but I promise, children at this age are captivated by the wonder of geometric figures that bloom out of straight and curved lines...they will revel in identifying these archetypal figures in nature. With decimal fractions they will be eager to report to you the specificity of how small or large this or that is. Decimals are a new tool for measure that fifth graders delight in wielding just as much as any physical tool from their childhood. The other main thrust of mathematics which your children will experience throughout the year is a

consolidation and recapitulation of all the vital mathematical skills that have been laid in place thus far. You can expect that your children will spend a good bit of time on math skills most days each week.

The fifth grade year is also the time when children begin to develop the capacity to consider the limits of land and sea and topography through the lens of North American Geography. They will be challenged to consider how the shape and form of the land and climate influence human life in different areas of our continent. We will experience much of this work through the adventures of Lewis and Clark, map drawing, and finally with in-depth individual state projects.

Spelling, grammar and vocabulary will not be an afterthought this year, but a needle through which content area blocks are threaded. You can expect that your child will encounter skills exercises and instruction in these areas several times a week.

My inner wish for your children this year is a wish of transformation. Schooling is healthiest when the content is not just the accumulation of information but rather an article of digestion and transformation. All of the curriculum this Fifth Grade year begs for us to show reverence and care of the process of transformation. My promise to you is that this sacred inner quest is sitting in your child's heart. I am honored to be guiding your children along this path.

Our classroom culture will be devoted to Belonging and allyship with all those who struggle to feel at home in their body, community and culture. Specifically, our classroom will be structured around anti-racisit values aligned with our school's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement.

Please save the date and time for our first parent evening via Zoom: September 17, 2020. 7:30.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://waldorfgarden-org.zoom.us/j/6047864299?pwd=U3Bnd0hlaUVzRUJsYW40ejVrdld2dz09>

Meeting ID: 604 786 4299

Passcode: golden

With Every Good Wish,  
Katie McCarthy  
(her/she)  
Fifth Grade Class Teacher

THINGS TO KNOW....(or hang on your fridge!)

**Fifth Grade Block Rotation**

**Ancient History I- India & Persia:** September 8-October 2

**Botany I:** October 5-October 30

**Mathematics I-Freehand Geometry:** November 2-November 25

**Ancient History- Egypt & Babylonia:** November 30-December 18

**Mathematics II- Decimal Fractions:** January 4-January 29

**North American Geography I:** February 1-March 5

**Ancient History III- Greece:** March 9-April 9

**Botany II:** April 12-May 7

**North American Geography II:** May 10-June 11

TDDL Schedule (teacher directed distance learning)

|  | Monday, Wednesday, Friday           | Tuesday, Thursday                          |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 8:10-10:00   | Main lesson and bookwork            | Main lesson and bookwork                   |
| 11:00-12:15<br>Skills work classes taught by Mrs. McCarthy                         | 11:00-12:00<br>Skills work (math)   | 11:00-11:30<br>Skills work (Language Arts) |
|  | 12:00-12:30<br>Gardening/Move ment  | 11:30-12:15<br>Handwork                    |
| 2:00-3:00<br>(Monday & Friday will be painting and form drawing with Mrs McCarthy) | Wednesday                           |  |
|  | 2:00-2:30<br>Music                  | 2:00-2:30<br>German                        |
|  | 2:30-3:00<br>SEL                    | 2:30-3:00<br>Orchestra                     |
| 3:00-3:15  | Farewell/wrap up with Mrs. McCarthy | Farewell/wrap up with Mrs. McCarthy        |

**CONTACT ME:**

[mccarthyk@waldorfgarden.org](mailto:mccarthyk@waldorfgarden.org)

516-375-2967 (please limit texts to quick updates or a request to set up a meeting)

**Office Hours:**

Wednesday's 3:30-4:30 or by appointment via phone or Zoom

**Zoom id: 604 786 4299**

**Password: golden**

**Google classroom code: tnvk2nn**

### Supplies

In preparation for the start of school, please be sure to read The Parent Handbook, especially regarding the regulations in place regarding COVID precautions. Masks will be required throughout the day with ample scheduled "mask breaks". I encourage you to have a spare mask packed with your child each day, however we will have paper masks on site if needed. I ask that you also look again at the student dress code. We will do our best to adhere to those rules regarding clothing. Please keep all school supplies media and graphic free, and as simple and functional as possible.

Most school supplies this year will be purchased through your student's account. Please be sure to fill your child's account for both lunch and supplies. However, I know children like to pick out some school supplies. With that in mind, if you wish, please purchase a folder with two pockets (it may have a picture/design but not media inspired), an eraser, three pencils, and an unlined sketch pad (no bigger than 8"x11"). IF YOU HAVE ANY SUPPLIES TAKEN HOME DURING DISTANCE LEARNING, SUCH AS CRAYONS, COLORED PENCILS, RULERS, ERASERS, PENCIL SHARPENERS, SCISSORS, please send them back in with your child on the first day of school. We will have plenty of hand sanitizer and extra washing stations in school and in our classroom this year. Please do not send students with individual hand sanitizers.

The children will also need:

raingear; jacket, pants and boots

sneakers for gym and inside use (to be kept at school)

a bag or shoe-box with an extra set of clothing including socks

2 masks

1 water bottle

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES! One measure of precaution we are asking this school year is to limit the amount of "stuff" that comes to and from school each day. Aside from snack, lunch and a water bottle, most of the items a student needs will remain at school each day. If new clothing or gear is needed, please send it in a sealed plastic bag and clearly labeled.