

WELCOME TO FIRST GRADE

Dear First Graders and Parents,

Welcome to first grade! We will have lots of exciting things going on throughout the year. We will be reading, writing, learning math, science, and about our world and community. We will be attending all school liturgies every Friday (parents you are certainly welcome to join us!) and in the spring, we will even be planning our own liturgies, and doing all of the readings, music, taking gifts, etc. by ourselves!

Snacks

We will be having a snack time each morning, so please bring fruits or vegetables. Your child **SHOULD** bring fresh water daily throughout the year. Send **ONLY** 1 snack for your child. They will be allowed only 1 because first of all, we do not take much time for snack and second, they do not eat a very good lunch if they bring a large snack. Your child **MAY** bring class treats for birthdays, holidays or other special occasions. Please **DO NOT** send cakes, etc, that will need to be cut, and do not send juice. We will have 22 children in our classroom.

Arrival and Dismissal

School starts at 8:15. If your child needs to be at school before school starts he/she will need to go directly to the gym or the playground where there will be supervision. Please do not come to the room to drop off backpacks, etc. before going to the gym. Children will line up at 8:10 in the gym to be dismissed to their classrooms. Please do not have your child wait by our classroom door. Dismissal is at 3:00. You may pick up your children at the designated door, depending on your last name. The "Kid's Club"

meets in the gym after school and goes to Kids Club with their teacher. If there will be someone else picking up your child, please call the office and Shelly will let us know.

Friday Folders

Each Friday the first graders will bring home a green folder with school notices and their schoolwork for the week. Please return the folder to school empty the following Monday.

Daily Folders

Your child will be bringing an **orange** folder home DAILY and it will need to be checked by you and returned the next day. Inside there may be notes from the office or from me or there may be homework for your child to do. Some days there will be nothing in it, but as part of learning responsibility, your child is still required to bring it home and back to school daily. Please initial the box with the day's date so that I know that you have seen it. When it is returned, I will put a sticker on your signature. If your child has NOT turned it in, even if YOU have initialed it, there will be NO sticker, so that we can both check on the child's part of this. It is their part of being a responsible student.

Homework

First graders do not generally have much homework unless they need more practice, have been gone or did not do their work in school. There will however be occasional homework and your child will KNOW that it is homework to be returned. Please do not throw it out unless you ask your child if it needs to be returned. There will also be extra practice sheets for reading and math that you may just keep at home for practice. Look for spelling homework every Monday. This is homework and IS NOT

OPTIONAL. (Spelling will not begin until October some time.) A "Homework Helper" is needed to go over directions and make sure work is completed and returned to school. Please sign or initial your child's work and send a note if it wasn't done. There will be a homework calendar in the **BLUE** folder that you received from me, as well as reading and homework calendars for the year. Please do only what you can on the homework calendar, because reading is something that should be done **EVERY NIGHT** for 10-15 minutes. In the beginning of the year, many first graders cannot read, so please read **TO** them. As the year progresses, please have your child do more and more of the reading until he/she is doing all of it. I realize that most of you are working parents and I understand the time constraints on a busy family, but 10-15 minutes a night should not be too difficult. If they have practice for basketball, hockey, soccer, dance, piano, etc. it is important, *however* reading is a lifelong skill and is equally important. Please keep this folder in a spot that can be easily located. Please record the time spent reading for each day, and send it in on the last day of each month. (Please make sure that your child's name is on this when returned.) This is part of their reading grade and is not optional. We very little homework in first grade, but this is required.

Library

Our class will visit the Library once a week. Children may take 2 books out at a time and the books must be returned before others are taken out. A schedule of all our special classes goes home during the first week of school. Children will also be able to check out books from our classroom. The same rules will apply for these as do for any library books.

Show and Tell

Children will take turns bringing things in for Show and Tell. The item should be something that we can learn about. This is an optional activity. Please make sure that your child brings only 1 item each week. Some children prefer to wait and participate later in the year. There are many opportunities for speaking to the class during the regular school day. A schedule will go home the first week of school. Please make sure that your child brings show and tell **ONLY** on his/her assigned day, otherwise it takes up a lot of class time. If your child forgets on his/her sharing day, just skip it and bring it in on the next sharing day. If your child is planning on bringing in something that is **LIVE**, please contact me before hand so that we can make arrangements. If your child is sick on his/her sharing day, he/she may bring it in when returning to school.

Birthdays

You may send in a class snack to celebrate your child's birthday. Please remember that we will not be able to cut cakes or bars, so they can either already be cut, or another choice can be made. There will be 22 children in our class this year. Invitations to parties may be passed out in school **ONLY** if the whole class is invited (or all girls if it is a girl party or all boys for a boy party). Children this age are very sensitive to being left out. Please do not pick the children up from the school for birthday parties unless all of the girls, boys or the entire class have been invited. We will celebrate summer birthdays as "half year" birthdays, meaning 6 months after the date.

Computer

You will be getting a schedule of our computer times. Please note that we WILL be using the internet, so please make sure that you have read and signed the permission slip. If you have any concerns about this, please visit with me. Your children will NOT be allowed to just "surf", but will be going to sites that I have checked out and bookmarked for them. Your child will also have his/her own email address. We will TRY to check and send email once a week (more if time permits) so please send a list of your email address as well as any family or friends. (If you are free during computer times, we would LOVE to have you come in and help...young children need LOTS of help, and it's hard to get to each one in a timely manner.) Please **DO NOT** send forwarded messages as it takes too long to go through them and much of it is not appropriate for first graders. Please also ask this of your family and friends who may be writing to your child. Forwarded messages will most likely be deleted. If you or any family/friends do not have email, please let me know and I will send to them so that they are assured of getting mail occasionally. In this folder is a laminated keyboard. Please help your child to learn to type his/her name so that when we use the computer things will go more smoothly. (You will be getting a note about your child's email address and password. Please work with your child on this too.) We will have a class web site (more info as this develops) and you should have a "permission" form from the office. Please, if you have any concerns at all, contact me so that I can explain to you what will be involved. Any time that there are any updates on our page, I will email you so that you can check out the "new stuff" which may include new work by the students, photos, some good web sites for you to go to with your children or for yourselves as parents.

Water bottles

We WILL be using the water bottles for the entire year, so please make sure that this is packed DAILY. It just takes TOO much class time to be running to the water fountain. Please also make sure that your child brings the bottle home daily to clean it and refill with fresh water, sometimes nasty things start showing up in those bottles:)

Vowac

We will be continuing the Vowac program that was started in Kindergarten for instruction in both phonics and spelling. If your child did not learn Vowac in kindergarten, don't be concerned; we will do lots of refresher things in the beginning of the year. Please encourage your child to share the phonics rules with you (I know that I learned a lot of things from this even as an adult!) We will begin the Vowac spelling in October. Each Monday your child will be bringing home a spelling page with the week's words. This is a homework activity and is not optional. It will be DUE on the Friday of that week. The test will be on the following Monday.

Recess

We will have three recess times each day. One will be mid morning, the next is before lunch and the last will be mid afternoon. Children DO need this time to be outside playing. All children are expected to be outside during this time, so please make sure that you pay attention to the weather and dress your child properly for it. We will be going outside all through the winter unless it is too cold. We check the wind-chill before each recess and make the decision to go out or stay in accordingly. Having a cold is not usually a good reason to be inside; too many germs are shared in the classroom.

D'Nealian Printing

Attached is an example of the alphabet that we will be using this year. Please encourage your child to make the letters according to the examples as this will make their transition to cursive in second grade much easier. Also, when practicing any printing with your child, please be mindful to use capital letters **ONLY** at the beginning of a name, any proper noun or a sentence. Children should be printing their names **ALL** lower case except for the first letter.

Phy. Ed.

We will have PE twice each week. Mrs. Heuer asks that you bring or wear gym shoes on those days. She also asks that they have low heels with white soles.

Music

We will have music three times each week. Mrs. Schmaltz will be our music teacher.

Spanish

Mrs. Voigt will be our Spanish teacher. We will have Spanish twice per week.

Please keep track of this **ORANGE** folder during the year. It contains things that you need to know about first grade as well as the homework and reading calendars for the year. I may send other things home at times for you to add to it. Please feel free to come in at any time to see what we are doing.

God Bless,
Cindy Fischer

If you have any questions or need to contact me, my email address is:

cindy.fischer@sendit.nodak.edu

Or call the school and leave a message. The school phone number is 223-0225.