

Meet the Teacher

My name is Sheila Mahoney and I am delighted to have your child in my classroom this year. We are looking forward to a challenging and rewarding year in Sixth Grade! I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little about myself.

This will be my eighth year as a teacher, and my fifth year in North Tonawanda. I taught 4th grade at Spruce last year, and prior to that I had three great years in 5th grade at Ohio Elementary. Before coming to North Tonawanda, I had wonderful experiences teaching in Kenmore-Tonawanda, Williamsville, and Lancaster. Teaching is career change for me. For many years, I was the morning anchor and medical reporter at WKBW-TV. On a personal note, I have four of my own children, ranging from fifth grade to a third year law student!

Your child's academic success is my top priority, and I look forward to an effective partnership. Thank you for helping to make our start of the school year successful by sending your child to school well rested and prepared. This newsletter is a summary of important things going on in our classroom. Please hold onto this letter, as you may wish to refer to it throughout the school year. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am looking forward to a wonderful year working with your child!

SUPPLIES- There are just a few additional items not listed on the supply list, that are highly recommended for the important work that we will be doing in our classroom. If possible, please send in an old clean sock (to use as an eraser).

Girls: Gallon size zip lock bags

Boys: Quart size zip lock bags.

Please send these items in by Monday, September 9th.

ABSENCE - If your child is absent, please send in a written excuse upon his/her return to school.

AGENDA PLANNER - Students will have agenda planners that will contain homework assignments, project information and day to day correspondence.

BEHAVIOR PLAN - We use a "Turn a Card" behavior system. Each student has 4 cards. In order, the cards are green, yellow, orange, and red—with green being the best behavior. Students start the day on green. For each infraction, the card is flipped. Verbal/Nonverbal warnings are given prior to a card flip. Consequences for failure to follow the rules are listed below. If necessary, parents will receive a weekly progress report which details the card color/infraction each day.

This is how the system works:

Green	Great Day!	Made great choices	I didn't even get a warning!
Yellow	OK Day	Needed reminders	Lose 5 minutes of Free Time
Orange	Rocky Day	Made Many Poor Choices	Lose 15 minutes of Free Time/other
Red	Bad Day	Made Mostly Poor Choices	Note Home/Discipline Referral

Modifications may be made to this plan as they are needed throughout the year. A student who frequently disrupts class may be sent to the Principal's office.

Students are also given many opportunities to earn praise or rewards throughout the day. They may earn praise, stickers, or prizes for a job well done.

BINDERS- Students will be responsible for bringing their **MATH BINDERS** back and for to school each day. These binders will contain important resources, homework, and graded tests. The binders will require a parental signature every two weeks. Please review your child's work and sign the sheet in the inside pocket. In this way, you can track your child's math progress throughout the marking period.

BIRTHDAYS - Parents are welcome to send in a treat for their child's birthday. Please let me know the day you would like your child to celebrate his or her birthday a few days in advance so I can plan accordingly. Keep in mind, anything that is easily served is appreciated. That means pre-sliced, packaged, etc. **Also, please provide everything necessary to serve the treat that you are sending such as napkins or spoons.** We now have 20 students in our class. Your cooperation in helping us maintain a peanut, tree nut-free zone is appreciated.

BOOK CLUBS - Each month you will have the opportunity to purchase books from a book club. Each book purchased earns points for our class to get free books. Receiving books is exciting and helps foster a love for reading. The back of the order form notes the date orders are due. **Please pay by check, and make the check out to Scholastic.** You only need to write one check because the other clubs are all part of Scholastic. Parents will also have the opportunity to order on line. Details to follow. (There is a link to Scholastic on my teacher website.)

COMMUNICATION - Please feel free to send notes, call, or e-mail me at school whenever you have a question or concern. I always try to respond as quickly as possible. E-mail is the best way to communicate, because I check my e-mail frequently. I will be setting up an e-mail group. At open house, you will have the opportunity to enter you email address into our class group. I have found the group to be a very important communication tool. If you are unable to make it to open house, please send in your e-mail address.

During the school day, it is very difficult to take a phone call. If you do call, I would ask that you do so after 3:20.

Email: sdmahoney@ntschoools.org

Telephone: 807-3651 Voice mailbox: 5205

FIELD TRIPS - We will go on several field trips this year. I will send home a permission slip and a note asking for chaperones before every trip. We often get an overwhelming number of volunteers, so we will choose names at random to be as fair as possible.

HOLIDAY PARTIES - We will have several holiday parties during the course of the year. Sign up sheets for parent volunteers and treats will be available at Open House.

HOME FOLDERS -Take-Home folders are to be taken home each day and returned to school the next morning. This will include mail, homework, and work that is not being displayed in the classroom or put into your child's portfolio. Please review the contents with your child every night.

HOMEWORK - I cannot stress enough the importance of completing homework. Math homework will be assigned just about EVERY night. Failure to complete a homework assignment detracts from the grade point average. ***Students can do well on tests, but incomplete assignments can lead to low grades.*** Homework must be returned to school the very next day unless otherwise noted.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS -There will be several opportunities to volunteer in the classroom and throughout the school. There will be a sign-up sheet at Open House.

PICTURES -I love taking pictures of the students doing various activities throughout the year. I will be sending a permission slip home to make sure it is ok to display your child's picture.

SPELLING: Spelling homework will be given every night, and students will be required to show me their finished work every day. **Sixth grade spelling words are very challenging and students will not do well on tests unless they do their homework.** Students are also encouraged to use an on line site, "Spelling City" to study their words.

LUNCH - Our class lunchtime is from 1:15-1:40.

SNACK - Students can bring in a healthy snack each day. The snack should be something that is easy to eat while your child continues working, such as crackers or grapes.

SCHEDULE: I have found that it is much easier to keep everything on a 6 day schedule. In that way, we are not cramming to fit things in during those weeks when we have half days or days off. Therefore, new spelling and vocabulary words, and grammar concepts are introduced on Day 1. **Tests are given on Day 6.**

SPECIALS-	Day 1	Art
	Day 2	PE
	Day 3	PE
	Day 4	MUSIC

Day 5	Computer
Day 6	PE

TECHNOLOGY - Your child will be using computers on a regular basis. I have an extensive site of bookmarked sites that we will be using throughout the school year. You can:

- Access the site directly by going to: www.ikeepbookmarks.com/TeamMahoney

TIMED TESTS - In 6th grade we use timed tests as a way of practicing important math facts. These tests assist the children in memorizing their math facts.

TRANSPORTATION - Students will always take their regular bus home unless the school is notified otherwise. If your child will not be riding his/her bus home a note is needed.

UNFINISHED WORK - Students accomplish tasks at different rates. As a teacher, I am sensitive to how much time the children need to complete assignments. If a student is unable to complete his or her work by Friday afternoon, the work will be sent home for weekend homework.