

First Grade Newsletter

September 6th, 2016

Welcome Families...

Welcome to first grade! We're so happy to be partnering with you this year! The first grade team has been working diligently to prepare for an exciting year ahead. Read on to find out about our homework policies, curriculum, information, and daily schedule.

Our Daily Schedule

9:15- 9:30: Our day begins
9:30-11:00: Morning Meeting, Reading, and Word Study
11:00-12:00: Math
12:15-12:40: Lunch
12:45-1:30: Writing
1:30-2:10: Specials
2:10-2:50: Block Time (Students pulled for special services)
2:50-3:10: Social Studies/Science
3:10-3:30: Recess
3:30-3:45: End-of-day Activities
3:45: Dismissal

Homework Policy

After a full day of working at school, we believe that evenings should be reserved for family time and outdoor play. Formal homework will not be assigned, but nightly family reading is highly encouraged!

Take Home Folders

Your child will receive a red take home folder that is to be brought to and from school each day. Please review the contents of the folder daily and feel free to use this folder to communicate with us.

About the First Grade Team...

Miss Byrne has taught kindergarten, first, second, fourth and fifth grades in the North Tonawanda City School District (previously at Ohio, Meadow, and Gilmore). Every grade level has been fun for her to teach, but she truly loves teaching first grade because she believes that the students grow so much throughout the year. Miss Byrne holds professional certification in childhood education and has master's degrees in literacy and special education. Outside of the classroom, Miss Byrne enjoys doing yoga, barre classes, going on bike rides, going for walks, drinking coffee, reading books, and spending time with her family.

Mrs. Lipps has taught first, second, and third grades in the North Tonawanda City School District at Ohio, Meadow, and Drake. She holds professional teaching certificates in childhood education and early childhood education and has a master's degree in literacy. Outside of the classroom, Mrs. Lipps enjoys singing and songwriting with her husband, Timothy.

Ms. Moore has been teaching since 1980 and has been at Drake School since 1989. She has taught kindergarten through fifth grade and first grade is her absolute favorite grade to teach. Ms. Moore will be the special education teacher for first grade.

Morning Meeting

Each day will begin with a morning meeting.

After gathering on the rug, students will greet each other with a hug in a friendly way. We have students with allergies to peanuts, so I will supply. Next, students will be able to share news and stories from their lives which allows them to improve their speaking and listening skills. Finally, students will participate in a unifying group activity. Morning meeting sets the tone for learning and helps to establish a climate of trust and respect.

Math

Math topics this year include addition, subtraction, five and ten relationships, patterns on a hundreds board, comparing and ordering numbers to 100, measurement, time to the half-hour, graphs, geometry, and fractions. Students will participate in whole group discussions, small group lessons, partner games, technology centers, and hands-on math stations to learn material and work on fact fluency.

Reading

Our reading workshop will open with a strategy mini-lesson on comprehension, fluency, or word-solving and then will incorporate time for independent literacy activities and small group reading lessons with the teacher. Students will also be exposed to a variety of texts through interactive read alouds and shared reading experiences. By the end of first grade, students typically move up several reading levels.

Writing

Through the use of mentor texts, teacher modeling and guided writing, students will be completing narrative, how-to, informational, poetry, and opinion writing pieces this year. Students will be taught the process of planning, drafting, editing, revising, and composing final copies and will have frequent one-to-one writing conferences with the teacher.

Word Study

Word study is an alternative to traditional spelling instruction based on recognizing word patterns rather than memorizing unconnected words. Students will be instructed in differentiated groups based on their developmental spelling levels through the use of word sorts. Students will also learn common sight words to aid them in their reading.

Social Studies and Science

Students will receive instruction in social studies or science four days a week. Science lessons will be centered around inquiry about the earth, weather, matter, energy, and living things. Major themes in the social studies curriculum for first grade are citizenship, families, our community, and wants/needs.

SNACKS!

We have students with allergies to peanuts so snacks that are peanut free will be supplied! Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. ☺ Thank you!!