## First Grade Facts

Welcome to First Grade! First Grade is a year of many changes! Below is some information that may be helpful as we start the new school year!

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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#### ARRIVAL

Dropoff will be between 7:30 and 8:00. First graders will enter through the gym lobby entrance. It is important that your child be in class on time (by 8:00), as our morning routine is a part of our learning experience and contains information that is critical to your student's successful academic development.

#### WEBSITE AND COMMUNICATION

Please check the first grade page on the school website for important dates, announcements, and weekly objectives. Our page also contains educational links, photos, and other information that can be very helpful. Although we may send email reminders, the webpage is our main tool for communication and should be checked weekly.

#### **ASSIGNMENT NOTEBOOKS**

First Grade Assignment Notebooks are white binders that go home Monday through Thursday. The notebook includes a place for students to record daily assignments and provides a great opportunity for learning responsibility. Students are to have a parent read and sign the daily assignment page each night. Homework will be placed in the front pocket of the notebook. Any homework, notes, forms, or money should be returned in the front pocket. When sending money, please place it in an envelope labeled with your child's name and what the money is for.

#### **HOMEWORK**

First Grade is the time to establish good homework practices for the future! It may be helpful to designate a time and an area in your house for your child to complete his/her homework (kitchen table, desk, etc.). Please be sure that you have the supplies necessary for completing homework.

All homework needs to be completed in pencil. If the homework involves coloring, crayons or colored pencils should be used. Please look over your child's completed homework to check for understanding and neatness. However, please remember that this is your child's homework, so he/she should be doing the work. The homework should be returned in the front pocket of the Assignment Notebook the next day.

#### "TAKE HOME" FOLDERS

The Take Home folder goes home every Thursday. The folder includes graded and completed papers for parents to examine and **keep**. Take Home folders should be returned by Monday.

#### **BOOK ORDERS**

Scholastic book orders will be sent home periodically. They provide reasonably priced, ageappropriate books. A classroom code will be sent to you, so that you may order online at your convenience.

#### P. E.

Tennis shoes are required for participation in the gym. An extra pair may be kept in your child's locker if he/she prefers to wear other shoes the rest of the day. Girls wearing dresses or skirts should wear shorts underneath for P. E. and recess.

#### LUNCH

First graders eat lunch at 11:05. We do NOT have a way to heat your child's lunch. Please send items that your child can open independently in order to build confidence and independence. Please remember to include forks, spoons, and napkins if needed. Information for ordering lunches and menus will be available on the website. Fridays are pizza days. Please contact the office for information on how to purchase pizza.

#### CONFERENCES

Conferences are scheduled in January and at the end of the year (optional). You are welcome to schedule a conference as needed at any time.

#### BEHAVIOR

First Grade uses the same clip chart as Early Childhood. Students who end the day on green or above will receive a sticker or a stamp on their behavior charts. When the chart is full, the student may choose a reward from the treasure chest.

#### **BIRTHDAYS**

At this time, shared snacks, including birthday treats, should be individually prepackaged. Please let us know what you will be sending ahead of time so that we can allow time in our schedule and can determine if the treat is safe and healthy for all students in the class. Due to allergies and COVID, treat bags are a safe option as well. If your child will be handing out invitations at school, please make sure that there is an invitation for each child in the class.

#### LOCKERS

Students will each have a locker in our hallway to put their backpacks and lunches in. Please **do not** send wallpaper, magnets, or any other type of locker decorations, as these become a distraction to our learning.

#### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Early dismissal for first graders is at 12:30. We will still have lunch at 11:05 on these days. Please refer to the school calendar and our webpage for dates of early dismissals.

## When your child is engaging in Morning Work, he/she is:

\*Independently practicing & reviewing fundamental math & literacy skills that spiral throughout the year to gain understanding and mastery of grade level objectives.

## When your child is engaged in Calendar Time, he/she is:

- \*Practicing fundamental math skills such as rote counting, one-to-one correspondence, place value, telling time, counting coins, patterns, number sense, addition & subtraction, and greater/less than concepts.
  - \*Identifying and correctly writing the days of the week, months of the year, and the date.
  - \*Identifying numbers and number patterns and representing numbers in various ways.

## When your child is at Math tubs, he/she is:

\*Working cooperatively & independently.

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\*Developing & honing fundamental skills in addition & subtraction, patterning, problem solving, estimating & predicting, graphing, telling time, counting coins, comparing, measuring, numeral recognition, one-to-one. correspondence, sorting, sequencing, and number sense.

## When your child is engaged in Writer's Workshop, he/she is:

- \*Writing to communicate to an audience.
- \*Building endurance & stamina.
- \*Developing and refining grade appropriate writing skills such as basic capitalization, correct punctuation, and spelling.
  - \*Working on the writing process {plan, draft, revise, edit, publish}.
  - \*Improving his/her fine motor skills and handwriting.

## When your child visits literacy stations, he/she is:

\*Working cooperatively & independently

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\*Rotating through various literacy-based activities that provide him/her with opportunities to explore & practice writing, manipulating sounds & spelling patterns, reading, developing vocabulary, retelling & summarizing stories, building fluency & comprehension, and building their reading stamina.

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## When your child is receiving guided reading instruction, he/she is:

- \*Learning various reading strategies needed to become a fluent, independent reader
- \*Building his/her fluency & comprehension
- \*Practicing phonemic & print awareness

## When your child is learning about Science & Social Studies, he/she is:

\*Making connections through knowledge, strategies, skills, and vocabulary to other learning areas such as reading, writing, and math concepts.

## When your child is at Specials, he/she is:

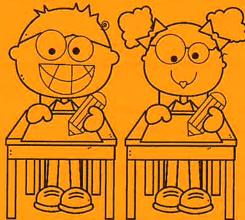
\*Involved in physical activities, participating in music & movement, and developing an awareness & appreciation for the arts.

## When your child is using technology, he/she is:

- \*Working independently & building stamina
- \*Learning mouse control, enhancing fine motor skills, practicing basic computer/tablet/iPad functions, learning how to manipulate and operate various computer programs and apps, & enhancing reading, math, and phonemic awareness skills.
  - \*Becoming a digital citizen

## When your child is at recess, he/she is:

- \*Developing in areas such as oral language, fine & gross motor skills, problem solving skills, spatial reasoning, interpersonal skills, self-confidence, sharing, and taking turns.
  - \*Engaged in imaginative play
  - \*Participating in physical activity and practicing his/her social skills with peers.



When you ask me what I've done at school today, and I say that "I just played", please don't misunderstand me. For, you see, I'm learning as I play. I'm learning to enjoy & be successful in my work. I'm preparing for tomorrow. Today, I am a child and my work is my play."

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# FIRST 9RADE EXPECTATIONS

We will arrive rested and ready to learn every day!

We will use kind words with others.

We will follow directions the first time they are given.

We will treat others with kindness and compassion.

We will keep our hands, feet, and bodies to ourselves.

We will use good manners such as, "please", "thank you", "yes ma'am", and "no ma'am".

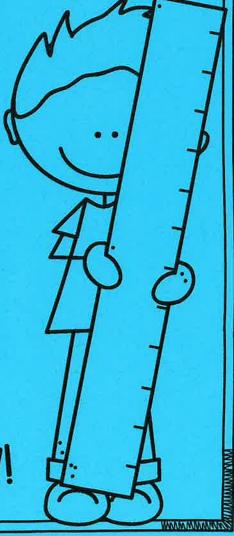
We will share.

CONTRACTOR

We will take turns.

We will apologize.

We will HAVE FUN!







Dear Family:

A new school year has been launched! This year, I will be using a program called **Fundations**® to teach some important basics of reading and spelling. However, I am going to **need your help**.

We know that when a child has a "coach" in addition to a classroom teacher, the child makes significant progress. We will work together as a "team" – I will be the teacher, and you the coach.

I will do my best to provide you with the necessary tools to take on that role. I shall keep you informed of "what is happening" in the classroom and provide suggestions and a guide as to "what can be happening" at home.

I look forward to a very successful year as we work together with your child in **Fundations**. We will have fun teaching and helping your child build a strong foundation for literacy!

In the next letter, I will share with you Unit 1 and its related activities.

Once again thank you for your interest and cooperation.

Sincerely,









## You are likely wondering, "What is Fundations"?"

Research indicates that **systematic** and **explicit phonics instruction** is effective for all children. Fundations provides a systematic and explicit approach to reading and spelling with phonics. We will combine this instruction with the **reading of good literature**, which is just as important for your child's development.

## **Fundations is systematic**

because it follows a very definite sequence for teaching and it follows a very definite procedure to teach those concepts.

## **Fundations is explicit**

because this program does not leave room for guessing. It teaches all concepts directly. The children will review letters and how to form these letters. They will learn sounds using keywords to help them remember. They will soon move on to blend the sounds into words.

As the year progresses, Fundations introduces many aspects of word structure and sentence structure. I shall be sending home guides and activities for all of this.

You are also probably wondering, "How can I become a successful "Coach" in this reading program?"

## As a "Coach" you can:

- **1.** Read the Fundations letters that I send home. These letters will contain up-dates, program information, and activity suggestions.
- **2.** Set aside time to do the "home activities" with your child.
- **3.** Monitor your child's progress and share successes as well as concerns with me.

I feel certain that you will find working with your child in Fundations very rewarding. Your child will treasure your involvement!