

September 6, 2019

Dear Parents,

I intended to send this note home on Friday. Unfortunately, the entire school district experienced an internet malfunction. The internet, phones, copy machines, computers, etc. were all not working. I printed this letter at home on Sunday. I am sorry that the note is late. As of this moment, I have no idea when things will be up and running again. We will try to let you know. As always, if you have any questions, please call or text my cell phone. 815-871-2700.

The first couple of days of school have gone very well. We are still in the "honeymoon" period of the year. All of the children are angels. The noise level is very good and they haven't become comfortable enough with each other yet to be talking out of turn. Please praise your child for a perfect start to the school year.

I talked about a packet of work to be sent home on Fridays. I will begin to send them home next week. I would like to gently lead everyone into the swing of things. Each child must read 20 minutes every night and on weekends. There is a calendar in the orange folder that is to come back and forth from school to home with your child. Please initial on the days your child reads. Looking into the future, in the next few weeks your child will also be asked to respond with a couple of sentences to the reading he/she does at home. The only way for your child to improve in reading is to read.

Third grade may be a very challenging year for your child. We are switching gears from learning how to read letters and put them together, to using reading to learn. We are expecting that the students become deeper thinkers with their reading and math. We will work on comprehension, comparing and contrasting, inferring and finding main ideas and supportive details and many more strategies to understanding text. There will be no spelling tests or lists. Furthermore, the reading will be taught through "integrated reading", which means that science and social studies will be integrated into the reading units. In third grade math, the students are not just counting money and telling time. They are buying multiple items in story problems and making change. They are practicing elapsed time. They have to make multiple steps to find the correct answer in a story problem.

All work needs to be done in the student's neatest handwriting. Every question needs to be answered with a complete sentence, using part of the question in the answer. All work is expected to be turned in the day it is due. Grades will be based upon the accuracy of the original assignments. Not all papers will have a letter grade, because some papers are for practicing the skill. Generally, if a paper has a star on it, I have looked at it, but it has not gone in my gradebook. Remember you can view your child's progress in my grade book online.

Late assignments will be accepted with a reduced effort grade up to two weeks after the assignment is given. After two weeks the assignment will receive the effort grade of 0. I will be contacting you if your child is having a difficult time organizing him/herself for assignment completion. Extra effort options will be offered and encouraged in all subject areas, with participation points earned being credited toward the final report card grade. If unacceptable work is turned in, I may return it with instructions that it be re-done. If your child is absent, please try to stop by the school to pick up the assignments. I can send the work home with a neighbor if you notify the office. A student has two days to make up each missed one-day's work.

The Rockford School District utilizes a standards-based achievement system (report cards) based on the Common Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards.

Achievement benchmarks or goals are established in each subject area for each trimester. The purpose of the report card is to share your child's progress towards meeting these benchmarks. Achievement in each content area is reported in numbers instead of letters.

- 4=exceeds standard (The child must be able to teach the concept to someone else. He/she must know and understand every part of the concept 93-100% of the time. He/she must be able to think and talk about the concept using higher level thinking skills-analysis and synthesis)
- 3=meets standard (The child must know and understand the concept. There may be a few mistakes here and there. He/she must know the concept 75-92% of the time.)
- 2=does not meet standard (The child may have a grasp of the concept. However, he/she will earn this if they make an average number of mistakes. They may be able to explain the concept, but make mistakes more than 62-74% of the time.)
- 1=warning – significantly below standard (The child has little or no understanding of the concept being taught. The child's understanding of the concept would be at 61% or below)
- NA=Standard not addressed or not assessed this trimester.

These numbers will reflect your child's progress toward mastery at the end of each trimester. I will be keeping evidence (the completed work) in a portfolio to show you how the score was determined. Effort is reported separately for each subject, and is noted by the following:

- M=Meets
- P=progressing
- N=needs improvement

The school district has determined that all homework and behavior will fall into the effort category. Social Habits will also use the M, P, N scale listed above.

You will be able to view all of the grades your child receives this year. In a few weeks you will receive a letter in the mail which gives you a password to view your child's grades online. You will be able to see what assignments your child has turned in and his/her grade on it.

I wish to thank you ahead of time for your support and for your assistance in the year ahead of us. I am looking forward to teaching each and every child in this class and helping each and every child grow. It will be challenging at times, but fun too.

Thank You,
Betsy Burgoyne