

August 19, 2009

Dear Second Grade Families,

Welcome!

This is a letter to tell you some of the things that you can expect this year in second grade. I will begin by telling you some of the things that your child will be learning this year.

In religion, your child will learn about the Roman Catholic faith, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, and how we participate in the Roman Catholic Church.

In reading and language arts, your child will participate in *Superkids*. This program will greatly expand their knowledge of reading and writing, by presenting highly motivating materials in authentic, "real world" formats. Nonfiction literature will be presented in a magazine called SUPER, which is full of fascinating articles about science, social studies, art, and world cultures. The Book Club will allow students to read chapter books from a variety of genres, and students will discuss these books in Book Talk Journals. Since students come to second grade with more fluent handwriting and already know the basics of sentence construction, students will focus more on expressing their ideas in writing.

In math, your child will be learning to add and subtract two and three digit numbers, with regrouping. Your child will also be learning to tell time, use money, identify fractions, and measure. Also, your child will continue to develop estimation skills and identify and describe shapes and patterns. Toward the end of second grade, your child will begin to learn multiplication facts. During second grade, it is expected that your child will memorize addition and subtraction facts to 18.

In science, your child will learn about animals and their habitats, plants, heat, weather, sound, light, and forces.

In social studies, your child will be learning about Earth's geography, family life, and types of work. In addition, your child will receive an introduction to the history of the United States and the formation of its government.

In second grade, your child will continue to develop positive social skills such as turn-taking, sharing, and respecting the rights and property of others. Your child will also be expected to observe rules and procedures in our classroom and throughout the school. In addition, your child will continue to develop positive work-study habits. This means that your child will be expected to complete and return homework in a timely manner and that your child will come to school with the materials necessary to complete school-work. It also means that your child will be encouraged to work independently, listen attentively, stay on task, complete all work in a reasonable amount of time, and keep his or her work area and materials organized.

Now that you know some of what your child will be learning in second grade, I would like to address some other issues such as homework, classroom newsletters, Friday folders, classroom discipline, community service, and preparation for receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion.

In an effort to encourage responsibility and reinforce skills learned at school, reading and math homework will be given, Monday through Thursday. A form for a parent or guardian signature will be attached to your child's homework folder. After reviewing your child's homework, please sign the form and return the folder to your child. **If homework is not completed and returned the following day, your child will use his or her recess or special class time to complete the assigned work. For this reason, please encourage your child to complete and return his or her homework on time.** If your child is having difficulty completing homework, you can enroll your child in after school care. During that time, your child will be given assistance completing his or her homework and may receive additional instruction in reading, writing, and math.

Each Monday, a classroom newsletter will be sent home. This newsletter will list your child's spelling words for the week, as well as your child's reading and math homework for the week. Also, this newsletter will provide information about what is happening in second grade and throughout the school.

On Fridays, your child will bring home a folder that contains some of the work that he or she completed during the week, as well as any school announcements or newsletters. A form for a parent or guardian signature will be attached to this folder. After looking through all of your child's work, please sign the form and return the folder to school. Unless it is requested that you sign and return your child's work, you may keep your child's work at home.

In an effort to encourage a classroom community, the second grade students will take part in making a few rules for their classroom that reflect safety and kindness. In addition to these rules, a color chart will be used to help monitor student behavior. When your child's name is placed on green, this means that your child is exhibiting positive behavior. If your child engages in behavior that is inappropriate, his or her name will be moved to yellow, and your child will be orally warned. If your child continues to display inappropriate behavior, his or her name will be moved to red, and your child will be given a time-out, in the classroom. However, if this time-out does not result in more positive behavior, your child's name will be removed from the chart and your child will be sent to the office where he or she will speak privately with Mrs. Bowman, Ms. Sanchez, and me. **Please note, however, that your child may be sent directly to the office if he or she threatens to or commits physical harm against another person; damages or destroys student, teacher, or school property; or refuses to follow the instructions of an adult.**

In an effort to encourage service to others, the second grade students will participate in a number of community service activities throughout the year. These activities may include fund raisers, food drives, book and school supply drives, or prayer services that will benefit those who battle illness, poverty, homelessness, and indifference in our local, regional, national, and international communities. As a special devotion to St. Jude, the second grade students will collect pennies throughout the year. At the end of the year, the money they collected will be sent to **St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital**, in Memphis Tennessee, to help in the prevention, treatment, and cure of diseases, such as cancer, that affect children and the lives of their families. Thank you, in advance, for your support of these activities!

Finally, if your child has been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, **the school must have a copy of his or her Baptismal certificate in order for your child to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion with our class.** If the school does not have a copy of your child's baptismal certificate, I will contact you to request a copy. Preparation for Reconciliation and First Communion will begin in February, and your child will receive these Sacraments in the spring.

Thank you for all you do to encourage your child's success in school. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please feel free to visit with me in person or speak to me over the telephone. I wish you much success this year and I am looking forward to working with you and your child!

Sincerely,

Mr. Santoro, Second Grade Teacher