

**Welcome to First Grade**

**Mohawk Trails**

**August 2016**

Dear Parents,

I am looking forward to another great year at Mohawk Trails Elementary. This time of year is always an exciting one for everyone involved. Even more fulfilling is the opportunity to work with your child. I welcome the challenge of my role as facilitator in the learning process. I encourage you to become involved in your child's growth. Together we can create a year of learning and an environment that encourages social, emotional, and academic development.

Sincerely,

Becky Campbell

### **Important First Grade Information**

First grade is an important year in the life of your child. This year your child will begin to develop much independence and responsibility for his/her academic progress. As parents and teacher we will need to work together to encourage your child to develop the skills necessary to become a successful student. The following topics address some of the ways in which we can assist your child in developing these critical skills.

## *“Go” folders*

To encourage organization, we use “Go” folders and “Homework Bags”. The folder and bag should come home EVERY NIGHT and be returned to school EVERY MORNING. It is your child’s way of carrying papers, notes, and other important information to you and from you. Any notes you need to send to your child’s teacher should be placed in the “Homework Bag”. Please take time each day after school or each evening to review all papers. It is a great time to ask your child what happened in school that day!

## *\*\*Alternate Dismissal\*\**

In order to change the afternoon transportation from the normal mode of transportation to another means, parents must log into myCCS (available through the Carmel Clay Schools website) and access the MTE transportation change link. This must be done by 1:00 pm the day of the change.

Once the transportation change website is accessed, parents will need to enter the necessary information with regards to the change. Parents are also asked to enter their family number, which is simply their home phone number.

Please be aware that all transportation changes must occur in the manner outlined above. To ensure safety and the accuracy with which we process transportation changes, we cannot accept transportation changes via a note, an email, or a phone call.

## *Lunch*

All children have a lunch account established by the cafeteria staff. You may deposit any amount of money into this account depending upon your needs. Please write your child's account number on your check. Send lunch money in an envelope labeled with your child's name, your child's lunch account number, and the teacher's name.

Check out this website for additional information concerning lunch and online payments. <http://www1.ccs.k12.in.us/district/food-services/EZSCHOOLPAY>

Parents are welcome to join their child for lunch. Adult lunches must be ordered prior to 9:00am. You may order a lunch by sending a note to your child's teacher (salad, hot lunch, sack) or by calling the cafeteria. Please sign in at the office, get a visitor's badge, and meet your child in the cafeteria. Payment for lunch can be made as you exit the serving line.

## *Money*

Any money that comes to school should be placed in a sealed envelope or other type of container marked with your child's name and the teacher's name. Please also note the purpose, i.e. "field trip", "book order", "lunch money".

## *Birthdays*

Birthdays are certainly special occasions that are fun to celebrate! However, school policy states that these celebrations need to occur outside of the school and, due to health regulations, treats may not be brought to school. Additionally, to avoid any hurt feelings among the children, we must ask that invitations to parties be mailed from your home. Addresses and phone numbers of class members will be available in the e-directory published by the PTO.

## *Recess*

We go outside during all kinds of weather with the exception of rain, low wind chill, or severe conditions. Please dress your child accordingly, including boots and snowpants when necessary.

In addition, students will need tennis shoes in order to use the climbing equipment on the playground.

## *Medical Policies*

Please review the “Medication Guidelines” in the Mohawk Trails handbook or online. No medicine (even non-prescription medication or cough drops) may be taken at school without a doctor’s prescription. All medication must be transported to school by a parent and kept in the health center.

## *Shoelaces*

All first graders need to know how to tie their own shoelaces. Loose shoelaces are dangerous in P.E. and when playing or walking. If this skill is not manageable, try Velcro.

## *Mohawk Trails Handbook*

This information is available on the Mohawk Trails home page. Check this out if you have policy questions.

## *Special Classes*

The children will participate in music, art, physical education, and computer lab classes. They will also visit the library once a week.

Please help your child remember to return his/her books each week.

Your child must also have tennis shoes for physical education.

## *Classroom Newsletters*

Each classroom teacher will publish a weekly e-newsletter or send an email with "First Grade Scoop". Look for important information from this source every Friday. You can also find this information on each teacher's website.

## *Evaluation*

Checklists, observations, and other informal evaluations will be used to assess your child's progress throughout the year. Some standardized assessments will be used as well. First graders will receive a Standards Based Report Card four times a year.

## *Homework*

Your child will have homework most Monday through Thursday evenings. Homework might consist of reading, working with spelling patterns, reviewing vocabulary, completing Home Links, and working on math facts. Nightly homework is important for developing good work habits and is a review of skills taught in the classroom. On the next page you will find a copy of our weekly homework sheet. This sheet will be placed in your child's "homework bag" each Monday. Every night you should check the bag and homework assignment sheet. After the assignment is completed, please sign on the appropriate line and return it to your child's bag. It will be checked by your child's teacher each morning. Be sure to sign for Friday as well and return the homework assignment sheet on Monday in the homework bag.

Thank you in advance for your help and support with this. We are learning to be responsible for our own work!!!

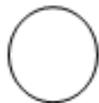
Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**Homework Assignment**  
**Week of August 20-24**

- Monday:**  Complete spelling homework sheet.  
 Count back from 20 to 0 by 1s.  
 Read for 15 minutes.

How was my day?



Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Tuesday:**  Read for 15 minutes.  
 Practice sight words (sent home with newsletter on Friday).  
Use a suggestion from the list sent last Friday with sight words.  
 Attend Meet the Teacher Night at 6:00 tonight.

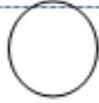
How was my day?



Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Wednesday:**  Read for 15 minutes.  
 Bring library books back to school for media tomorrow.

How was my day?



Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Thursday:**  Practice spelling short *a* vowel pattern words (like *cat, bat, cap, tap, sat, ham, man*) and high-frequency words (*like* and *a*). Use a suggestion from the list sent last Friday with the spelling program information. Your child will have a spelling assessment tomorrow.  
 Read for 15 minutes.  
 Wear tennis shoes for PE tomorrow.

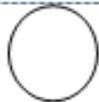
How was my day?



Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Friday:**  Look in the homework bag for next week's sight words and read the newsletter for next week's spelling pattern.

How was my day?



Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please check your email or my website for the newsletter. You will find classroom Highlights and the spelling pattern for next week.

# Reading Strategies

Continuing the development of reading skills is one of the most important tasks we will work on in first grade. The following pages will give you some insights into the best way to help your child at home. We hope they will be of great use to you.

Please praise your child for what he or she **can** do. We build on strengths, not weaknesses. Find some success for which you can honestly praise your child!

## **Ideas for Developing Early Reading Skills**

### ***Learn Letter Names***

#### **Practice making a letter and saying its name:**

1. writing - pencil, chalk, paint brush and water
2. forming letter in clay or from pipe cleaners
3. tracing letter in sand or on sandpaper

#### **Find letters in magazines or newspapers - circle or cut them out**

#### **Games**

1. Concentration - find matching pairs
2. Lotto type board - cover letters that match
3. Fish - make letters on cards, ask for a match or draw from stack
4. Bingo card covered with letters - cover as letter is called

### ***Learn Letter Sounds***

1. Say a group of words beginning with the same sound and have the child tell the beginning letter.

2. Say a group of words, all but one beginning with the same sound and have the child tell which word does not belong.

3. Say a letter name and have the child name words that begin with the letter.

4. Say a letter sound and a clue and have the child guess the word.

("b" - something to wear outside - boots/This could not be a coat because of the beginning letter sound.)

5. Increase the difficulty of #4 by focusing on both the beginning and ending sounds. ("b" and "l" - a toy - ball/This could not be a doll or a bat.)

### ***Vocabulary Words***

1. Use the game suggestions above under *Learn Letter Names* and substitute vocabulary word for the letters.

2. Use flash cards for drill.

3. Color code parts of words to show relationships. (For the words fox and box, use a red marker to write the "ox". For the words can and cat, use different colors for the letters "n" and "t".)

4. Post one or two new vocabulary words on the refrigerator or bathroom mirror or some other spot where the child frequently sees the word. Remind them to read the words each time he/she passes them.

5. Find the words in printed materials - magazines, newspapers - and have the child circle or cut out the words.

# Think About Words

When a child has difficulty reading a word, the following questions may help her or him to decode it.

1. What makes sense?
2. Are there word parts I know?
3. What letter sounds do I know?
4. I think the word is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Is there a picture? Does that word go with it?
6. I'll read the sentence again. Does that word make sense?