

September 12, 2014

Dear Parents,

We've had a great start to the school year in our classroom. Our days have been busy as we learn new routines and expectations, and as we get to know new friends. I will be trying to send out a newsletter like this one every other week to keep you informed. I hope that you'll find them useful.

Important Dates:

- CRES BBQ: Monday, September 15, 4:30-6:30
- CRES Open House, Thursday, September 18, 6:15
- Writer's Notebook decoration, Friday, September 19, 11:15. Volunteers needed!

Reading Workshop

We have been learning about expectations for Reading Workshop in third grade. Topics we've discussed include:

- choosing "good-fit" books
- taking care of books and classroom library
- reading one book at a time, from cover to cover
- carrying books back and forth from school to home
- increasing stamina for reading with "eyes and mind on the page"
- reading the "blurb" on the back of a book to gain information
- what should our workshop time look like, sound like, and feel like?

We also made "Reading Resolutions." We discussed the bad habits we used to have as readers (such as skipping around from book to book, never finishing one), and made resolutions about what we will do now (reading the whole book, cover to cover.)

Students have begun taking home green book bags so that they can read their books at home each night. Please remind your child to bring these back to school each day.

Writing Workshop

Our first writing unit will focus on personal narratives, or true stories about ourselves. We will be using writing notebooks to collect our ideas and writing this year. Next Friday we'll personalize and decorate our notebooks. Please help your child gather photos, clippings from magazines, stickers, etc. to use for this

project. I will also need a few volunteers to help cover notebooks with contact paper. Let me know if you can help out with this. Thanks!

Math

Our first math unit is a basic review of key concepts introduced in previous grade levels, and an exploration of math tools and routines. Home links will be sent each night. These correspond to each day's math lesson. If you find that your child is having a particularly difficult time with any homework that is sent, please write me a short note on the homework and I will be sure to spend some extra time with your child at school on the skills that were difficult.

Science

This year we will be spending a large portion of our day each Friday with a more in-depth exploration of our Science and Social Studies topics. Today we began learning about the steps of the scientific method and created a science notebook to plan experiments and record our observations. We ran out of time today to do our first science experiment, but we plan to get to this on Monday!

Our first Social Studies unit of the year will focus on mapping and geography. Students will learn a lot about Maine all year, and our mapping unit will give kids the opportunity to learn about important towns and landmarks in our state.

Class Rules

Each year I ask students to help me in creating a list of simple class rules. This discussion grows out of a discussion around personal goal setting for the year. We talk about how our classroom has to be a place where learning can take place so that we can all achieve our goals. After a lot of group work and discussion, the four rules we came up with for the year are:

1. Be safe
2. Be respectful and kind
3. Be responsible
4. Try your best

I think these rules will serve us well as we work together this year. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at Open House next Thursday. Enjoy the weekend, and please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Hannah

