



Welcome to Second Grade

Dear Parents,

Teaching is one of the few professions where you are wished a Happy New Year in August! For us, each fall brings a new school year and a new challenge- a new class of students. It's really like starting a new job every year. Your child might be surprised to learn that teachers don't sleep much the night before school starts either.

The children are beginning to make the classroom their own and I was very pleased with the effort I saw in their work. We had several discussions and read stories to emphasize the importance of working together. While we have discussed some classroom and playground rules, we will continue to work on developing *our* rules next week.

The following information may be useful to you as we begin the school year.

Water bottles may be brought to class. If they are partially frozen, the water stays cold for most of the day. Studies have shown that dehydration can have a significant effect on concentration and learning. In addition, we only have one bubbler in class which is not easy for all students to reach. During cold and flu season especially, bottled water is preferable.

Lunch-

Children take care of their own money. **Please** put the money in a baggie, wrist pouch, wallet, etc. Money should not be brought to school in pockets or loose in backpacks. The children tend to play with loose change, drop money at recess, or lose their "ice cream money" if it is not in some sort of container.

In the past, children were able to purchase a five day lunch ticket that the cafeteria holds for the child. Lunches do not have to be purchased consecutively. You might want to try that option.

Classroom organization

Your child should have a **folder** to carry home class work as well as memos from the office or class. They will also be given a folder for homework. Please check your child's folders daily. Simply looking at the work will give you an idea of the skills being covered in class. It will also show you where your child may need extra practice.

If your child comes home for a few days with nothing in his folder, please suggest that he clean out his desk! *At the end of school every day we go over what should be in their folders!*

In addition, if possible, please send in a **one inch binder**. We will be using this for vocabulary development. (I received a flyer from Big Value Outlet. They are on sale for \$1.99)

Every child has been provided with a box of 24 crayons, scissors, glue stick, pencil and eraser. **Please** have them leave markers, extra crayons, colored pencils, little pencil sharpeners and extra pencil grips (1 is okay) at home. They are an added distraction. ***School policy states that toys are not allowed.***

Spelling-This year our spelling program will be organized as follows:

The first 12 words are directly from the reading text and are correlated with the phonics skill being taught that week.

The next 5 words are chosen from the Dolch high frequency list for reading and writing. Some are words that serve as "anchors". For example, if you know *cat*, think of how many other words one could read or write by changing the beginning sound. Others are "sight" words that have to be memorized.

The final 3 words are the challenge words from the reading text.

Math- One of the most important state standards in second grade math is mastery of addition and subtraction facts. While strategies and some rules may be taught, mastery means a student is able to respond immediately to any fact without counting, etc. That takes practice!
Having a set of flashcards at home would be a helpful tool for you when practicing with your child.

Specialists/Physical Education- Specialists rotate on a seven day schedule. During each rotation the children will have art and physical education twice. They will also have music three times a cycle.

We are very fortunate this year to have Mr. Perry, a former teacher at Fairhaven High School, to assist us in technology. He will help us explore

Smart Boards as well as assisting the students with other programs and procedures on the computer. Students will also have the opportunity to use the Lexia program for reading. Other programs will also be introduced. If you know of any particularly good online activities, please let me know.

Physical Education will be on ***E and G days***- Wednesday and Friday next week. Please have your child wear sneakers and comfortable clothes on gym days. Art is on C and F days.

Wish List- Supplies are always needed and appreciated. Some things we always need in second grade are **Kleenex**, paper plates, zip lock baggies, thin whiteboard markers and lunch sized white or brown paper bags. ***Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes are also appreciated!!***

Homework Policy- A separate letter will be sent home Tuesday regarding homework. Homework will begin next week.

Book Orders- You may choose to purchase books from Scholastic. When you do so, the classroom earns points that the teacher can trade for books. Using points from the book orders gives us a cost effective way to provide your child with a greater variety of interesting reading materials.

Buses- ***It is very important to send a note whenever your child's transportation plans change.*** School policy mandates that your child go on the bus you have indicated on your form *unless* we have a note or a call to the school. The children get very upset if they've been told at home that "Auntie Sue" is picking them up and I have to say that they need to go on the bus because I don't have a note. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Birthdays- While we all realize that celebrating a birthday is an exciting event for a child, this year the school policy is that no food will be allowed. We will continue to recognize and honor each child in the classroom. ***We will continue to have a few holiday celebrations throughout the year. Juice and treat will be allowed at those times.***

Dates to Remember

Release Day- Thursday, September 15th

Open House- Tuesday, September 21st

Conferences - November

Beginning of the Year Forms- Please try to return emergency, transportation, lunch and internet/media forms as soon as possible. The internet form is on page 20 of the handbook.

Finally, please let me know if something is happening at home that might have an impact on your child at school! Everything from an upcoming vacation, to the death of a pet can change the way a child interacts in the classroom. Knowing what is happening in your child's life helps me to understand changes in behavior and work habits. Your privacy will be respected and our conversations will be kept confidential. You may send a note, e-mail, or call the school. My e-mail address is under the East Fairhaven School website. I usually check it in the evening. However, I **never** check it in the morning, so if there is an immediate need, please write a note or call the school. Please continue to send ***notes or call the school*** if there is a transportation change.

I am looking forward to getting to know all of the students and I hope that your child will have a happy, exciting, productive year!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Whitehead