

Our FIRST Room 18 Multi-Age Classroom Newsletter of 2017-2018 Year Vol. 1

Weeks of September 18 – October 1, 2017

Double Page Edition (typically only one page)

Upcoming Dates of Interest

- **Picture Day – Next Monday September 25**
- **Walking Field Trip to Tom Settlemire Community Garden** Wednesday September 27 or Thursday September 28 – *Volunteers will not be needed for this trip. See below for details on new volunteer form to sign.*
- **School-Wide Open House** –Thursday September 28, 6:00-7:00 PM – Families Welcome!
- **No School** Friday October 6 – Monday October 9 (Professional Day/Columbus Day)

Last Week, This Week (and Next Week) We're Working on...

- **Reading:** *Lots of teaching in how to care for our class library*
 - **Building Good Reading Habits:** Starting the year practicing how to choose **good fit books** (books that are interesting, able to read most of the words and able to retell the story) from our class library. We're doing amazing during read-to-self, focusing on reading our own books, using quiet head voices to read and constantly reflecting on whether our books are good choices for independent reading.
 - **Shared Reading:** We read together chorally every day by finding a weekly book which both 1st & 2nd graders can get excited to read together. We spend a week talking about the book, making predictions and noticing patterns in words from the book. We work on a variety of skills such as expression, noticing punctuation and matching 1:1 what we read to the words on the page. By the end of the week, the class reads the book chorally on their own – one of my favorite parts of the day hearing their growth over the week. Over the past two weeks, *Gossie & Gertie* and *Walter Tries To Whistle* have been our starting point as we locate initial letters, blends, digraphs and middle vowel teams to help us with new or tricky word.
 - **Read Aloud – *Toys Go Out*** – Book 1 (of 3) - A fiction chapter book of a group animate toys in the real world (similar to *Toy Story*) named Plastic, Stingray, & Lumphy who come to life after hours and navigate toy relationships & loyalty of their little girl owner. This book is a crowd-pleaser full of imaginative storylines for what the characters are thinking and feeling.
 - **Choice Time/Word Work Afternoons** – *Screen Free time (with the exception of reading on the computer)*
 - 3 x per week @ end of day– M/W/Fr, students have an opportunity to quietly socialize and make a choice to partake in an activity (Art, clay, blocks, games, Legos, puzzles, challenge book) while I work with others on a rotational basis with students on word work (spelling, word sorts, making words, handwriting). Often, there is a required activity such as small group word study OR something such as finishing unfinished work, problem solving with a peer or partner reading
 - Each block will start with a whole group activity that will parlay into skills during the small group time
 - These first 6 weeks, we will work on appropriate transitions, practice appropriate voice level, explore all choices, and familiarize ourselves with the system (*see below on how you can help contribute to activities*)
 - **Making Words** – Every week we target a “Making Words” activity where we build words from a set of letters and find a secret word that would use all of the letters (i.e. **e,i,d,f,n,r,s**)– 1st and 2nd graders have separate sets and focus on a sequence of spelling patterns that is linked with our Word Sorts
 - **Word Sorts** will begin soon that align with “stretch” spelling patterns for individual students (students have been evaluated on areas of focus: vowels, blends, digraphs (sh/th/ch), long vowel patterns, etc.) – Students sort words and pictures according to a given spelling pattern (could be as simple as three letter words) – you'll see these when they're completed
 - Handwriting – Multi-Age is piloting a new Handwriting program called Nellie Edge
 - **Spelling words-** Focus this year will be on differentiated spelling words based on student writing. We'll target a class mini-word wall for rule breaker words (words that aren't spelled like they sound or with a familiar spelling pattern – i.e. - what, was, are, friend, who, people) Students will be given spelling words in their writing folder to reference during their writing. 2nd graders.
- **Writing:** Starting the year with personal narratives (writing about something we do or a thing that happened to us). We've talked about how to start writing a story (plan, sketch, write) and will move into ways to bring stories to life and strategies for spelling words in our writing. We recently read a book, *Night of the Veggie Monster* that will support teaching writers to notice craft moves from mentor authors (in this case, George McClemons) to apply to our writing.
- **Social Studies/Study Groups:** - Warming up with visits to each multi classroom & learning the lay of the land. We are also building community and establishing and cultivating classroom expectations. In the coming weeks, we'll start our study of plants and its cycle. This will include an early in the year walking field trip to a local community garden. We'll predict, observe and collect data on what a garden might look like during this season – post-harvest.

- **1st Grade Math: Chapter 1 – Number to 10** –A fairly basic initial chapter on recognizing #'s, #'s words, comparing #'s using “more” and “less” and noticing basic patterns 1, 2,3, ?, ? or 7, ?, 5, ?, 3, 2, 1...
- **2nd Grade Math (from Mrs. Stinson)** “*Second years are becoming more flexible with “one more” and “ten more” for numbers up to 1,000. Try giving them a three digit number and asking them “what is ten more?” and see how fast they can answer! Both groups began work in workbooks this week.*”

Classroom Updates

- THANK YOU SO MUCH for the outpouring of supplies at the start of the year! Will keep you posted on other needs
- We’ve had a marvelous first two weeks and will continue to grow, learn and practice everyday procedures. We’ve unveiled a classroom library, practiced structure for transitions in workshops, met with other multi-age teachers, and have grown accustomed to our new flexible seating process (including being mindful of others who may want a particular seat).
- **Scholastic Book Club** – Use form sent last week, go to www.scholastic.com/newparent, enter our class code **LNJ6Y**, submit an order online or by hand (minimum is \$20), due date: **Friday September 22**, orders should arrive the following week
- **Classroom Volunteers** – Our community (including you) are welcome. So many options! FIRST, all volunteers must fill out this [District Volunteer Form](#) (also attached to copy of newsletter) – This must be filled out before you’re able to volunteer.
 - [Parent Classroom Volunteers Sign Up](#) - Detailed digital classroom sign up with options, times/dates found [HERE](#)
 - [The Brunswick Rotary](#) will join us on Tuesdays starting in October to read with students
 - [America Counts Bowdoin Tutors](#) will join us weekly during Math (1st grade)
 - [Spindleworks](#) volunteers will weave with students 1 x per month in the mornings
- **Homework** – Limited amount of homework assigned this year (2nd grade Math also may have some from time to time)
 - Reading Logs – **starting in October** – track your reading and return when completed
 - Book Exchange – 2-3 books go home to be read (M-TH), returned on Fri., new books on Mondays (starting in Oct.)
 - **Math** extra practice (by request or need), sent on Mondays, **due Fridays**
 - Homework: 10-20 minutes max. per night – reading before bed, after school – fill the reading log, return to class
 - Let me know if you feel homework needs to be scaled back – **outdoor play, healthy eating and reasonable bedtimes/rest are # 1 priority** – *very flexible with creating reasonable deadlines and due dates*
 - Down the road: Some spelling words and practice.
- **Open House Thursday September 28** - This is an exciting time for your child to show off their classroom to the whole family. It’s more hands on for your child and gives them space to show off their room and work.
- **Wellness Policy** – Our school district recently updated our Wellness policy which includes outlining healthy food choices for celebrations, non-food options for celebrating & considerations for those w/ food allergies and/or special diets. **ATTACHED** Most (if any) food celebrations will be planned and communicated – **please let me know of any allergies/diets** as students receive snacks at school when they don’t have one *and* on occasion an option of sugar-free gum as a celebration (not yet!).
- **Brain Breaks/Mindfulness** – Go Noodle Plus (NEW) We work hard to incorporate age appropriate movement and breathing breaks through the day. Usually mid-way through the afternoon and when we can during the morning, we get moving and find ways to breathe and concentrate on what our next task might be. We have a year paid subscription to Go Noodle + which includes lots of extra ways to encourage movement and customize interactive check-ins for class teachings.
- **Tablet Use** – We have 3 tablets that have a few academic apps that can be used during two circumstances.
 - 1. When child has been assigned on a rotational basis to use Raz-Kids (reading app) during Read-To-Self
 - 2. When child has obtained 50 Dojo points for following various class expectations or adhering to core class values
 - Students who choose option # 2 have a choice from a variety of academic and thinking games - IXL Math, Xtra Math, Brain Pop Jr., Raz Kids, Handwriting Without Tears, Logic games, Science experiments, an Atlas app
- **Google Drive Photos** – I’ll share class photos from time to time of happenings in the classroom. In order to ensure privacy of pictures, the link will be shared separately via e-mail.
- **Classroom Needs:**
 - Choice time needs: **Legos from home**– not a lot – 4-5 large handfuls or various sizes/kinds, may fit into a gallon sized bag or plastic container with a lid, enough for two to play with, can and will be returned at the end of school year, **Play Doh (store bought or homemade)**, simple card/board games or jigsaw puzzles from home
 - Any books by Chris Van Dusen (Maine author) – he will visit our school in the Spring (we have some)
 - For the classroom: AAA batteries, push pins, quality packing tape (our walls are finicky when it comes to holding stuff up ☺), plastic sheet protectors with three holes extension affixed to side, (vs directly on the sheet protector)

Questions? Contact Mr. Funderburk at efunderburk@brunswick.k12.me.us (BEST OPTION) or 207-319-1950 or by note. All class newsletters are also available 24/7 at <http://www.brunswick.k12.me.us/efunderburk/classroom-newsletters>