

Our FIRST Room 18 Multi-Age Classroom Newsletter of the year

Vol. 1, Weeks of September 16 – October 1, 2018

Double Page Edition (typically only one page)

Upcoming Dates of Interest

- **CFC Read-A-Thon Fundraiser** –September 23 – October 4th (details below)
- **Picture Day** – Monday September 23
- **School-Wide Open House** –Wednesday September 25, 6:00-7:00 PM
- **No School: Professional Day/Indigenous People Day/Columbus Day** – Fri. October 11 – Mon. October 14
- **Fort Western Field Trip** - Monday October 21 (more info below)

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

- **Routines, Procedures & Classroom set up** - *Our main practice over these first few weeks includes:*
 - Familiarizing ourselves with the daily schedule
 - Morning procedures
 - What reading, writing and Math blocks look and feel like
 - Transition and whole group carpet expectations
 - Getting to know the other multi-age teachers & launching study group rotations
 - Generating class rules/expectations & setting up a contract we all sign acknowledging buy-in
 - Introducing our class library, how to care and put away books and knowing what's our available selection
 - This week, we open our class library for all to access with a special ribbon cutting ceremony (which have been off limits for the past 10 days)
- **Choice Time** - Part of our M/W/F schedule will include time for students to socialize, create, share, and have open free-form play time with legos, puzzles, STEM related games and other items
- **Reading: In the coming weeks, we'll begin by Building Good Reading Habits and Growing our Reading Skills:**
 - We have been building our independent reading stamina and have picked up on skills that support good habits:
 - Take a sneak peaks in books
 - Do something with our books when we're done reading them (reading logs, use post-its, retell, etc.)
 - Setting goals, reading more and more and scooping up words in bigger scoops
 - Good habits for **partner reading** (partners don't just read to each other they help and remind each other)
 - Starting this week I plan to start getting to know students as readers, starting with 1:1 check-ins and then eventually in differentiated groups according to reading ability
- **Social Studies/Study Groups**

Study groups are a way multi-age students dig deeper into our Social Studies and Science curriculum, oftentimes integrating literacy and Math skills along the way. This year we're taking a look at our contents of Social Studies (American Families Now & Then AND Community), along with a variety of Science content that includes study of Plants, The Water Cycle, Seasons, & Night & Day. We plan to launch with community building, Students will visit all classrooms in multi-age (starting to move with their whole class and then eventually mixing up students within each class). They'll have opportunities to learn from 4 different teachers via hands-on/small group projects, observatory, and evidence based inquiry, and navigate a deeper understanding of the science and social studies curriculum regularly on Tuesdays & Thursdays Study groups begin this week with various angles of community building.
- **Word Work/Handwriting/Spelling:**
 - **Word Work/Spelling/Shared Reading** - We use a variety of word study practices that helps us build on our understanding of word structure and spelling patterns in differentiation setting of word work, "making words", shared reading (choral reading and notice of word patterns in books). Throughout the year, we'll grow our capacity as writers, spellers, and building on spelling patterns
 - **Handwriting** – We have a program that is in its 2nd year – [Handwriting without Tears](#)
 - 2nd graders will have their own handwriting book (new this year) as will 1st graders
 - Students will build on verbal pathways of last year's instruction (K or 1st grade) to continue working toward forming letters proportionately, accurately and neatly
- **Writing:** We are focusing on writing personal narratives OR small moment stories
 - Writing about something we've done or a thing that's happened to us – stories that are unique or interesting
 - Process of writing: plan, sketch, write and then add more details, then revising and editing
 - We've already begun writing partnerships, which is a powerful way for peers to confer with each other's writing and in turn compliment and suggest upon their partner's work, allowing their partners to revise or edit their work
 - We will start by making our characters move, talk, feel and think, with 2nd graders growing their small moment stories and planning/writing about what their reader might want to know more about

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- o **1st Grade Math:** Starting our unit on Chapter 1 – Numbers to 10
- o **2nd Grade Math:** Finishing up/starting Chapter 1 – Numbers to 1,000

Classroom Updates

- **Communication Folder** - Our “Come & Go” folder is an essential form to communicate and inform between home and school. Be sure your child brings their folder to school every day (even if it’s empty).
 - **[Field Trip to Fort Western in Augusta, ME](#)**
 - o This will be our first year on this newly added field trip for a Day in the Life in 18th Century
 - o All of multi-age will travel on Monday October 21 from about 9 AM - 1 PM
 - o Cost will be \$6 for students
 - o Since our group will be somewhat large and the location can only accommodate certain numbers, chaperone numbers will need to be limited to 1 or 2 parents per class (cost is also \$6). Keep that in mind as you offer to volunteer. There will be more field trips later in the school year to chaperone.
 - o Field Trip forms are going out this week. Lunch will be eaten on site (home lunch or school bag lunch)
 - **CFC Read-A-Thon**
 - o Starts next Monday, September 23 and runs through the first week of October
 - o Fundraiser for the Community for Coffin where students/families gather sponsors for reading
 - o More information is coming home this week
 - **Open House Wednesday September 25 6-7 PM-** 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 an opportunity to show off their room. Have your child tell you what’s happening in their Study group room (starting this week). It’s a great chance for your child to introduce you to classmates and where they spend 6 ½ hours every day.
 - **Read Aloud Book** –We’re starting with *Tales of Despereaux*, a fantasy about a mouse named Despereaux who lives in a castle and looks to rescue a human princess from a bunch of rats.
 - **Homework**
 - o ***Outdoor play, healthy eating and reasonable bedtimes/rest are # 1 priority- I understand the post-school moments are precious and short***
 - o Homework for students at this age is really all about carving time to read nightly with your child. Sometimes there will be occasional light Math skills to work on. If you’d like a reading log to keep your child accountable, I can provide that. Just let me know.
 - **Classroom Celebrations** – Every 4 – 8 weeks, we’ll find a way to celebrate how well we work together as a classroom community. These can come in many forms and are typically decided by the students in a democratic voting process. Anything from chewing sugar-free gum, lunch in the classroom to PJ day to extra choice time or recess are options. We have already earned celebration # 1 (in 8 days!). If we happen to get to celebration # 2, 3, 4, etc. in less than 8 days, we double the celebration. I’ll let you know in advance if there’s a celebration on the forefront.
- As you all know, we have a tree nut allergy in the classroom. To play it safe, we limit the snacks of any nuts in the classroom to save for cafeteria lunch.** Students have done an excellent job asking about ingredients in certain products if they’re unsure. Most (if any) food celebrations will be planned and communicated – ***please let me know of any additional allergies/diet restrictions*** as students receive snacks at school when they don’t have one. If your child would like to celebrate an upcoming birthday, there are many ways – contact me!
- **Brain Breaks/Mindfulness** – We’re constantly focusing on promoting movement throughout the day through choice seating (standing, floor, cushions, movement stools, yoga balls), regular motor breaks, yoga poses, mindfulness and the emphasis of maintaining curiosity in everything we do. One website we’ve used that goes hand and hand with our 2nd Step Social/Emotional program is Myla Kabat-Zinn’s coaching on sitting still like a frog (found [HERE](#)). It’s all about coaching to pay attention to our breath, sounds, our movements during a small moment. This will parlay nicely into our woods walks where we want to ensure we have “deer ears” and “eagle eyes” as we observe the world around us.
 - **Class interviews** – Classmates are learning more about each other as we interview each student during these first 18 days of school. We’ve been working on creative, inquiry based questions. Often time “What’s your favorite…” dominates the line of questioning. I encourage creative questioning. We’ll create a book of our interviewees (including Mr. Funderburk ☺)

A Shorter Newsletter will be provided in 2 weeks. Thank You!

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