Miss Saltas’ Class Information

I am so excited to be working with you and your child this year! Here is some important information about our class:

Curriculum:

First grade is full of so many exciting learning experiences and a great time for growth! We teach the first-grade core (found online at uen.org/core by clicking on the first-grade links under each subject, there is also a link to the common core state standards on our class website). Our district’s language arts program, Wonders, is used to promote student growth in reading and writing. The i-Ready Math curriculum includes number sense, and depth of knowledge involving math. This was a new program last year and they have revamped it for this year, so please be patient while we work through any issues. We are lucky to have fine arts instruction through the Beverly Taylor-Sorensen program. Our fine arts teacher (Ms. Petty) works with the students every other week (Wednesdays for our class). Science and Social Studies will also be taught regularly and integrated into reading and math. Students will participate in weekly PE (on Mondays), library, and daily Chromebook time.

Homework Policy:

Homework will be sent home for practice and will not be required to be returned except for special assignments and circumstances. It is important for first graders to have family and play time outside after school.

The focus of homework for practice is the expectation of reading with your child for 20 minutes each day. I will be sending home a sheet every week showing what we are working on for the week in reading. This will have a spelling list on it, as well. Spelling tests will be given on Fridays this year. We have a new math program, so practice pages will come home when needed. These pages provide extra practice and help you to see what they are working on in class. These do not need to be returned.

There are many resources if you would like to provide more practice at home for your child. The following are some ideas:

* Flashcards: your child will be doing timed tests using xtramath.com at school. These are just to increase fluency and are not graded in any way. To get extra practice at home, flash cards are a great idea.
* Additional online resources: i-Ready Math and Wonders both have online components. Login information is on the yellow information sheet on the front of their homework folder.

Homework/Communication Folders:

Each student will be given a red homework folder which will go back and forth between school and home every day. I will send home notes, corrected work, math practice, etc. in these folders. The “home” side of the folder is for anything that has already been corrected or notes that can stay at home. The “school” side will be used for items that need to be returned (such as signed notes, homework, etc.). Please check your child’s folder daily and take out papers from the home side. You can also use this folder to send me a note, if needed, just please let your child know it is in their folder and that they need to give it to me. I don’t go through student folders looking for notes.

Grading Policy:

Grades are intended to reflect academic proficiency, showing what a student knows and can show for each standard taught, this is called ‘proficiency-based grading’. In Focus, the grades will change as a student works towards mastery on the specific standards being taught. Please check Focus to understand where your child is at in their level of mastery for each standard. Report cards will report proficiency overall for each subject, accounting for all of the combined standards within the subjects (Language Arts and Math). The following is a description of the scale use for every standard and each subject on the report card:

1. Below Proficient
2. Approaching Proficient
3. Proficient
4. Above Proficient

Please understand three main items with our new grading system:

1. The numbers 1-4 do NOT equate to letter grades A, B, C, D
2. The goal is for your child to be proficient, meaning that they earn a 3
3. 4s will not be given frequently as they represent a student who is going above and beyond what is expected of them, beyond proficiency

In addition, we will adhere to the following for proficiency-based grading:

* There is no ‘extra credit’ given to uplift grades as grades are based solely on proficiency.
* Participation, behavior, and attendance will not be included in academic grades, but will be reflected in citizenship grades.
* Students will be given several opportunities to show mastery for standards
* Homework is not required; however it is available to provide independent practice toward proficiency.
* Content does become more challenging as the year progresses. Therefore, a student who receives a 3 in math in the first term, may end up with a 2 in the second term if they are struggling with the more challenging content, for example. Grades will not always go up as the year progresses as we are assessing different standards each term.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me and I will do my best to answer them.

Discipline Plan:

Our classroom discipline plan is in place in accordance with Crestview’s school-wide discipline plan (found in the school information packet). This includes rewards (such as cougar paws, the 200 club, and special recognition from the principal for going above and beyond), as well as, consequences for inappropriate behavior (including warnings, notifications, conferences, and suspensions, as necessary). Our classroom will focus on positive behaviors by using character development discussions, positive notes home, recognition for following rules, and rewards (including prizes from our class prize box, table points, and earned class celebrations). Natural consequences will be used to help students learn responsibility when necessary. The first-grade team has also coordinated a time-away assignment in another classroom for students who need time to think about their behavior. They may need to fill out a ‘Think Sheet’ to help them analyze their actions. If so, this would come home and need to be signed by a parent so there is an opportunity for discussion. As we are a team in supporting your child, I will communicate with you about any issues or concerns regarding your child’s behavior.

Birthdays:

Birthdays are special in first grade and we will celebrate them with your child by recognizing them and singing to them. Due to allergies and dietary restrictions, our class will not be having food birthday treats this year. If your child would like to bring a ‘treat’ to celebrate their birthday, some suggestions would be pencils, little notebooks, etc., just no food, please.

Miscellaneous Information:

* Appointments: please schedule appointments outside of school hours when possible. We have a rigorous learning curriculum which builds on previously taught concepts; it makes it difficult for the student if he or she misses class time.
* Vacation/Missing days: If you have a vacation planned with your child, please have them write in a journal daily about their vacation experiences. We would love to hear about it when they come back! Any work they miss will be sent home upon their return to school to be completed at home.

Thank you so much for your support in your child’s education! If you have any questions or concerns, email is the best way to reach me (edsaltas@graniteschools.org), however, please know that I do not typically check email after 4:15PM or on weekends.

Thank you!

Miss Saltas