

Welcome to 4th Grade!

2016-2017

Parent Packet



We would like to welcome you and your child to our classroom. We are looking forward to working with each one of you. We want to involve you, as parents, in your child's learning as much as possible. We welcome any suggestions you may have in our combined efforts to make your child's learning experience in 4th grade as meaningful and productive as possible. Please don't hesitate to call or email if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child. Our school number is 417-869-0600 or email at daniellejones@willardschools.net or maryblackburn@willardschools.net.

Whole Brain Teaching

As the year progresses, you may notice that our classroom doesn't run like other classrooms. We will be learning through Whole Brain Teaching, a research based system that utilizes all areas of the brain, keeps children engaged throughout their lessons, and helps them retain much more information than the standard lecture-discussion model.

Whole Brain Teaching is a highly interactive form of instruction that delivers information to students in short "chunks." Kids then teach what they have just learned to their partners, using hand-gestures to help remember specific vocabulary. While students teach each other, the teacher walks around the room to discover who understands the lesson and who needs more instruction.

Research shows that children retain more information when they have an opportunity to put it into their own words and use gestures to emphasize key instructional units...plus, it's amazingly fun! For more information about Whole Brain Teaching please contact us or go to www.WholeBrainTeaching.com.

Team Teaching

This year, Mrs. Blackburn and Miss Jones will be working together to teach our students. Please visit our website for some FAQ about team teaching. If you have any other questions, feel free to contact us! (<http://wohetigerteam.weebly.com/faq-about-tiger-team.html>) Additionally, we have an informational video available on our classroom website.

Drop-off/Pick-up Procedure

- School starts at 8:20am. The tardy bell rings at 8:40am.
- Monday school ends at 2:55pm. Tuesday-Friday school ends at 3:25 pm.
- We ask that you do NOT come down to your child's classroom to pick him/her up. This alleviates the congestion in the halls, helps the buses to dismiss on time, and reduces the chance of a child

getting to the wrong place.

- If your child's transportation needs to be changed for the day or permanently, we **MUST** have a note or your verbal permission. Due to other responsibilities, we are not always able to check our voicemail and email during the day. Therefore, if you call the day of please tell the office and they will make sure we are informed. All calls must be made before 2:30pm. If your student will be riding the bus differently than normal (i.e. getting off at a friend's house), you must call the bus barn to arrange this. We will not be able to call home if a student forgets to bring a note.

Attendance

It is very important that your child attends school and is on time regularly. Much of the work in 4th grade is hands-on learning that cannot be made up. If your child is absent, please call the school to let us know. If your child is only absent one day, we will send home any homework that needs to be completed. Please return it as soon as possible. In a case of extended absence, please make arrangements with us to pick up any missing work after 2:00 p.m. Additionally, we begin our spiraling math review and practice, Math Masters, at 8:20 each morning. Please make sure that your child arrives in a timely manner so they are able to take advantage of this opportunity to practice their math skills.

Discipline

This year, we will continue our school wide behavior plan. We will use the acronym PAWS to help remind students what our school's expectations are. All teachers in the building will use the same language and incentives throughout the entire building.

Pay Attention

Act Positively

Work Hard

Show Self-Control

Individual students will be rewarded with individual "Pawsitives" that can be collected and turned into us for a special reward.

Whole classrooms will be rewarded with classroom "Pawsitives" that will be collected and redeemed for a special class wide reward.

Students not meeting PAWS expectations will be given a think sheet. These can be given by any adult in the building. If your child receives one, please make sure it is signed and returned immediately. If you have any questions about the think sheet, please contact the teacher who sent it. As per the student handbook, inappropriate student behavior and/or think sheets will be counted against classroom rewards/events. Please remember, we are unable to discuss punishments given to other students.

Achievement

Students' overall understanding of the material will be determined using a Standards Based Grading system (SBG). With SBG your student's achievement will be determined through various forms of assessment and then reported as mastery, near mastery, or remediation. In addition to

district assessments, class work will be entered into Mastery Connect to help understand student achievement. It is important that students do their best on ALL work.

Mastery is answering a question correctly 80% or more of the time

Near Mastery is answering a question correctly 60%- 79% of the time

Remediation is answering a question correctly 0%- 59% of the time.

With SBG, students will be given a score for each standard, or content area, they are expected to learn. By breaking assessments out into standards, the teachers and parents are able to more efficiently target the specific areas individual students need more attention. For example, after a unit assessment, a student may score mastery on multiplication, mastery on division, but remediation on multiplication and division word problems. With this information, we can easily identify that the student does in fact understand the concepts of multiplication and division, but he or she is struggling to apply it to real life situations. If you have any questions about SBG please contact us!

Homework

It is often said that fourth grade is the transition year from "learning to read" to "reading to learn". In order to help promote growth, students are expected to read at least 20 minutes / 4 days a week in a book on their reading level at home. This time can be spent reading together or independently. No formal reading log will be required for weekly reading. Students will discuss their reading habits with the teacher during our reading conferences.

It is important to mention that according to federal law, students who are reading more than one grade level behind at the end of the fourth grade, shall be retained. Please encourage reading in your home.

In addition to their reading homework, students may have other homework to attend to in the evening. **Any unfinished work from the day is expected to come back completed the next day.** If it is not finished, it is considered late. All late work has to be completed on the next scheduled recess work time. Also, students will periodically have math homework that will be assigned. Please check with your student to make sure they are staying on top of these responsibilities.

Classroom Communication

Feel free to browse our classroom website at <http://wohetigerteam.weebly.com>. The classroom website is designed to provide information about our classroom. Important messages for students and parents will be listed under the "home" tab. It is our hope that this website will help facilitate communication between the teacher, students, and parents. We will update it often, so please check regularly.

You can also check out our classroom Padlet for even more detailed information at <http://padlet.com/dj1988/tigerteamupdates>. This will take the place of our weekly newsletters. Our Padlet will also provide you with copies of important forms and papers you may need as well. Please check often!

Also, please see our information about joining our Remind list, for text message updates. This will be especially helpful when it comes time for field trips and other big events.

Brain Books

Brain Books are online notebooks that the students will keep throughout the year. We will make every effort to write in them daily. We will also write any homework or special notes in them. At the beginning of the year, we will e-mail you a link that can be used to view your child's brain book. Please do this nightly as it will allow you to understand your child's progress as well as see important information. If you have questions or issues viewing your child's Brain Book, please let us know.

Birthdays

If you would like to send treats for your child's birthday, all you need to do is let us know ahead of time. We will set aside time to celebrate your child's birthday with the class. If your child has a summer birthday, he or she can celebrate on the half birthday (i.e. July 27th celebrates on Jan. 27th). Please note that all birthday treats need to be store bought. Please make sure you are aware of any classroom allergies as well.

Willard Student Handbook on Birthday Invitations:

"Birthday invitations for private parties will not be allowed to be passed out during school hours. If a parent wishes to send invitations, they must be distributed and put away prior to the start of the school day. Teachers are not responsible for handing out invitations."

Gum and Water Bottles

Students will not be allowed to chew gum in class. If they are given gum by another teacher, they will need to spit it out before entering the classroom.

Students are welcome to bring water bottles to class as long as they are plastic, closed lid bottles. No glass please! Bottles may only contain regular water. No flavors, juice, soda, etc. are allowed. Water bottles will be stored in the classroom and will not travel around the room or outside of the classroom except for lunch time. The teacher has the right to refuse use of any bottle in order to prevent spills and ensure the safety of the Chromebooks and other students' belongings.

Book Orders

We will send book orders home approximately once a month. If you would like to purchase books from the order, you will be able to online (We will send directions home with the first order). You may also send a check made out to "Scholastic" in an envelope along with the order form. Please write your child's name and total enclosed on the front of the envelope. However, please know that our classroom benefits from online orders. If you send cash, please make sure to send exact change. If there is ever a time that you want the book order to be a surprise (i.e. birthday present or Christmas present) just enclose a note to us and we'll let you know when the books have arrived. We can then make arrangements to get them to you secretly!

Recess

We will have recess daily. Please make sure your child dresses appropriately for the weather conditions. We will go outside, weather permitting, if the temperature is above 30°F and the wind-chill is above 25°F. In the case of extreme heat, we will go outside for only 10-15 minutes.

General Information

Lunch: 11:38-12:05

Library: Odd- Monday and Even- Wednesday (Make sure your child brings back his/her library books weekly.)

Again, we are looking forward to a wonderful year! We encourage you to ask questions as they arise and let us know if you have any concerns. By working together, we know we'll have a fabulous year!

Thank you!

Miss Jones and Mrs. Blackburn

I have read Tiger Team's "Parent Packet" of information. I understand all policies and procedures. I have discussed this packet with my child and I assume my child understands all expectations and discipline policies.

Parent's Signature

Child's Name

