

# CLASSROOM NEWS



Dear Third Grade Family,

I would like to welcome you to your child's third grade school year! I look forward to working with your child and you throughout our time together this year. I have composed this informative letter to give you some basic information about the routines and schedules of our classroom. I hope you find this information useful and helpful. If you have any questions or concerns, please, feel free to contact me at any time. Thank you!

## SCHOOL HOURS

Murray Lake Elementary has the following school hours:

8:25 – Doors open - Parents and buses may begin dropping students off

8:45 – Kids are let inside from playground

8:50 – School day officially begins

3:43 – Students dismissed

## CLASSROOM BLOOMZ PAGE

I use an online website called Bloomz to effectively communicate with my students' parents. The page I created on the site allows me to post important information, documents, and dates very quickly and with ease (It is like Facebook for teachers). I can also post pictures for you to view so you can see what is happening in the classroom. You can access Bloomz with an app on your cell phone or online with a computer of any kind. It is important that you check the Bloomz page often to see if there is any new information for you to know and see. I will send directions soon for signing up for Bloomz. Please make sure you sign up for Bloomz as quickly as possible so you don't miss out!

## CLASSROOM SOCIAL CONTRACT

In order to guarantee your child and all students the effective and nurturing educational environment they deserve; it is important that we have classroom rules. The first week of school the students and I will work together to create some basic classroom rules that we will all agree to follow. We will write a "Classroom Social Contract" and then all students will sign their name to the contract with the understanding that their signature is validating their knowledge of the rules and that they will do their very best to abide by them each day. Students will move their clip on our PBIS rainbow stick if rules are not followed and appropriate consequences will be given.

## STUDENT PLANNERS

Students will be bringing their planners home daily. Students will be writing down the work completed or concept learned that day in their planner so you know what has been taught that day. Homework assignments and test dates will also be listed in the planner. **I ask that you review the planner daily and initial at the bottom of the current day's section.** It is my hope that this planner will help student, parents, and teacher communicate more effectively about completed assignments, homework, and when tests will be given. **Students are responsible for their planners and their work, not their parents. Planners need to be at school every day.**

## **SPECIALS SCHEDULE**

I want you to be aware of the specials schedule so you can help your child to remember to wear appropriate clothing and shoes on those days. Students will be going outside for gym when the weather permits. Our class will be attending specials on the following days:

Monday – Art with Mrs. Coffman

Tuesday – Library with Mrs. Judge

Wednesday – Gym with Mr. Steele

Thursday – Music with Mrs. Paiz

Friday – Music with Mrs. Paiz and Gym with Mr. Steele

## **SNACK TIME & WATER BOTTLES**

We will have a daily snack time each morning, so your child is welcome to bring a snack each day to eat. **Please, provide healthy snacks for your child such as fruits, vegetables, yogurt, granola bars, crackers, cheese, etc.** Candy and other sugary treats are not allowed. Snacks will not be shared by students. I do not provide snacks for students that do not have one.

I do encourage students to bring their own water bottles to fill with water throughout the school day. Sink faucets and water filling stations are accessible to students throughout the school. All water bottles must be able to be sealed closed, so if it tips over, it will not leak out. Your child's first and last name must be clearly marked on the bottle. **Bottles may only have water inside of them; no other liquids are allowed.**

## **LUNCH TIME, LUNCH MONEY, and RECESSES**

Our class will be having **lunch and recess each day from 11:55 - 12:30 p.m.** Students will eat lunch in the cafeteria and then proceed outside for recess. It is recommended that lunch money be deposited directly into your child's lunch account online. If lunch money is brought to school, it should be placed in an envelope or sealed baggie with your child's name and teacher's name on it.

**Grades 3-5 will also have a daily afternoon recess time from 1:40 – 2:10 p.m.** We do not have recess at the end of the school day like grades K-2, so please keep that in mind when making appointments and picking up your child before school dismissal. Your child will miss academic instruction and work time if you pick up early and that work will need to be made up.

## **FLEXIBLE SEATING**

I do use flexible seating in my classroom. Flexible seating can vary greatly in classrooms, but the types I utilize are used along with a desk or table. Students will have flexible seats to sit on such as wobble stools, wiggle cushions, bucket seats, or traditional classroom chairs. Students will use a flexible seat for a week and then switch each Monday since the types of seats are limited. More information and a Flexible Seating Contract will come home after the students and I have discussed flexible seating the first week of school.

## **HOLIDAY PARTIES**

We will be having classroom holiday parties for Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day this school year. I will send out detailed information about each party about three weeks prior to the event.

## **HOMEWORK**

Students will have a weekly reading log to keep track of their reading at home each night. **I am asking that students read 20 minutes each night Monday – Friday for a total of 100 minutes.** If your child can't read on a given night, then that time can be made up on Saturday and/or Sunday. Reading logs will be turned in every Monday and a new one will be given out that same day. Reading logs will be scored with points and are included in the overall reading grade. Accelerated Reader goals will be set each trimester and students will be held accountable for those goals.

Students will have weekly spelling words as well, but there will not be any assigned homework for them. I will send home an informational letter that explains some spelling activities that your child may use at home to help him/her learn the spelling patterns of the assigned words each week. New words will come home on Monday, and students will test on those words on Friday. A letter explaining this in more detail will come home when our spelling program begins in September.

This year, all the elementary schools in Lowell will be implementing a new math program called Reveal Math. I was fortunate enough to be a teacher that piloted the program last year, and I absolutely loved it! My students were excited about math every day as we established routines for the program, and they made huge gains in their learning. I have a huge passion for mathematics, so I can't wait to dig even deeper into the program with my new students this year. The Reveal Math program includes a daily "Additional Practice" page that will come home with your child each day. These practice pages are similar to the "Homelinks" you saw with the Everyday Math program last year. The practice pages need to be completed at home each night and returned the next day. Practice pages will be scored and are included in the overall math grade for report cards. It is very important that your child complete and return each practice page as it is assigned, so he/she does not fall behind in learning.

Your child will also bring home special project assignments to be completed at home throughout the school year. When those are assigned, more detailed information will be communicated through letters and on my online teacher Bloomz page.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Students may bring in a treat for their birthday if they choose to. If your child has a summer birthday, we can celebrate your child's half birthday. Students may bring in a treat that is store boughten, prepackaged, and sealed. We cannot allow any homemade treats or any foods that have been opened. Treats could include granola bars, Little Debbie snacks, fruit snacks, candies. Cupcakes, cookies, and other store boughten bakery items are allowed as long as they are made at the store and unopened. Please send along napkins for any of those items, so we can pass them out without touching the food item and clean up any crumbs. Thank you!

## **FIELD TRIPS**

We will be attending some exciting field trips this school year! We currently have two field trips planned. One is to **Heidi's Farmstand for our Michigan Historical Days on Friday, October 6, 2023.** We also have our **Lansing Capitol trip planned, which will be on Friday, February 16, 2024.** We will be visiting the Wittenbach Wege Center two times this year, but those dates have not been confirmed yet. We will also be attending an Immerse Museum program for two consecutive days at the Lowell Area Historical Museum. Those dates are yet to be confirmed.

## **STAR STUDENT**

Each week I will be selecting a student from the class to be our "Star Student." The Star Student will be featured throughout the school week. Each student will complete a writing/coloring project at home the first weeks of school that we will use to showcase each student in the classroom throughout the year. The Star Student will have a sharing time to talk about him/herself using the completed project. I only select Star Students on the weeks that we have at least four days of school. I will select our first Star Student the second week of September.

## **FUN SHIRT FRIDAYS**

Each Friday, we will wear a different themed shirt to display our likes, interests, holiday spirit, or school spirit. I will let students know mid-week what the shirt theme is so they can be prepared for Friday. Of course, this is voluntary and not required. Please, don't think your child has to participate each week. Motto for this: "Wear what you have when you can." I will also post a reminder each Thursday on the online class Bloomz page.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent Teacher Conferences will be conducted two times this school year. The Fall conferences will be in-person, and we will discuss your child's classroom behaviors/mindsets, preliminary assessments, and student goals. These conferences will be held **October 16 and 18, 2023**. We will have flexibility with the Spring conferences, so they may be in-person or virtual. We will discuss your child's classroom behaviors/mindsets, academic progress, and any new goals. These conferences are scheduled for **the week of March 18 - 22, 2024**.

## **ABSENCES AND APPOINTMENTS**

For the health safety of others, if your child wakes up in the morning and is having any type of symptom for an illness, it is best to keep your child home from school. When your child is ill and unable to come to school, please call the school to let the office know that your child is safe at home and will not be attending school that day. If a student is absent for any reason, he/she is given one extra day for every day missed to complete missed assignments.

Whenever possible, please, schedule medical and dental appointments after school, during days off, or vacation periods. I know that this is not always possible, but it is in the best interest of your child to miss the least amount of school as possible.

If your family will be taking an extended vacation during the school year, please, let me know as soon as you are able. I can prepare some work for your child to complete while you are away if you would like.

## **CHANGES IN ROUTINE**

For their protection and ours, children are allowed to change their regular daily routine **only with written permission from you or a phone call to the office**. Specifically, if you wish for your child to do something or go somewhere that differs from their regular routine (for example, go to a friend's house, go to a babysitter's house, or ride home with another adult), please, send a note or email to school stating clearly what you want your child to do differently that day. **If there is no note, email, or**

**phone call to the office, your child will automatically be sent home in their usual manner. This is a school policy.** Per district policy, students are not allowed to ride the bus home with another student.

If it is necessary for you to pick your child up from school before dismissal, please, send a note or email informing me of the time or call the office to let them know. This will allow time for me to prepare your child and materials for dismissal. Thank you!

### **EXTRA NOTES OF INTEREST**

- If you would like to contact me about anything, it is best to send me a message through the class Bloomz page or my school email. I check Bloomz and my emails each morning before school starts, during my planning times, and after school.
- Students will be bringing home their corrected daily work on Fridays in a “Friday Envelope” that I will supply. Please, look through all of the items carefully, keep the corrected work, and return only the folder on Monday.
- Your child’s planner and “Homework Folder” should come home every night. Homework and important information/documents will come home in your child’s homework folder when they are distributed. Please, check the folder each night for homework and any documents that I may send home with your child. Students will also use their “Homework Folder” to return their work to school when it is due.
- The basic math facts for multiplication are important in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Please, help your child to practice and memorize the basic multiplication facts. Because time is limited in the classroom for memorization, it is extremely important for students to work on these facts at home. If your child memorizes the facts, he/she will have a much easier time doing math this year and years to come. Students will have IXL and Xtra Math accounts again this year, which will give them an opportunity to practice facts and other skills online. These programs can also be utilized at home and should be used 2-3 times per week.
- Scholastic Book Club orders will be sent home throughout the school year for those that would like to purchase books at a reasonable price. Our classroom earns bonus points for each book purchased. These points are used to buy additional books for our classroom library. Books can be ordered online! I will send home the information for purchasing online when I send home the order forms. Thank you in advance for your support with this program!
- Third Grade is the first year that students begin taking the state level M-STEP assessment to evaluate learning in both math and language arts. This assessment is given in the Spring of each school year. We will take time to prepare our third graders for this assessment a few weeks prior to the assessment dates.
- Breakfast and lunch are FREE for ALL students this school year. If your child will be eating school breakfast, he/she will need to go directly to the school cafeteria after arriving at school and prior to going outside for the morning recess. If your child is not eating breakfast, he/she will go directly outside for recess.