



Open House 2017
Third Grade
Information Guide

Dear Parents,

I have thoroughly enjoyed the first three weeks of third grade with your child. We have been working hard to remind ourselves of class routines and we have generated our new third grade class agreement regarding how we will work together. The children experienced new third grade materials and will continue to learn about new (higher!) expectations and routines. To assist you in understanding your child's day in third grade, please take time to read the following information.

Literacy

Our third grade reading program follows the Reading Workshop Model. Each day, our Reading time will begin with a mini-lesson. These lessons will begin with setting the expectations for our reading time and progress to include comprehension strategies. Students will learn about the importance of doing "real reading" where their mind is active while they read the words and pictures in a book.

This model allows for more differentiation of instruction. Students see, talk and hear about Reading strategies as a whole group. Then, they practice the strategy while reading a book at their independent reading level. Teachers will spend this time listening to students read and working with small groups. Our small group time will work with students to strengthen comprehension, accuracy, fluency and vocabulary. We will track these strategies in our Reading Journals.

Spelling

Third grade teachers at CRES follow the Rebecca Sitton Spelling Program. The goal of this program is to "Turn Friday Spellers into Forever Spellers." The emphasis of this program is on correct spelling in everyday writing, not just for an end-of-the-week test. We are hopeful that students will learn skills and strategies for spelling unfamiliar words while also practicing high-frequency words.

Writing

This year students will be engaged in a writer's workshop based on Lucy Calkins' units of study. The writing workshop always begins with the children coming together for a mini lesson in which instruction is given in the skills they need. Students then write while I confer with individuals and small groups of children whose needs may be similar. Each writing workshop ends with writers having time to read and share their work. The units of study this year will be; personal narratives, expository writing, how- to- books, persuasive essays, and adapted fairy tales. We will also write reports about Maine animals.

Everyday Mathematics Programs

Our school uses a *Common Core Aligned* edition of *Everyday Mathematics* curriculum, developed by the University of Chicago School of Mathematics Project (UCSMP). This curriculum is unique in that children both "do" and "think" mathematics. This promotes thinking and communicating mathematically. This math program parallels the national goals in that it requires a shift from arithmetic to problem solving and creates an environment that stimulates learning.

Program Highlights include:

- cooperative learning through partner and small group activities
- sharing ideas through discussion
- developing readiness through hands-on activities
- establishing links between past experiences and explorations of new concepts
- problem solving about real life situations
- practice through games
- ongoing review throughout the year
- informal assessment
- home-school partnership through Home Links
- daily routines

Third Grade Everyday Mathematics instructional time will center on 4 areas:

- **Multiplication and Division:** from the use of equal groups, arrays and area models to more sophisticated strategies for finding products of multi-digit numbers
- **Fractions:** beginning with unit fractions and moving on to fractions of sets, mixed numbers and comparing fractions
- **Area:** as a property of two-dimensional regions; measuring area by counting unit squares, using arrays and multiplication
- **Properties of two-dimensional shapes:** comparing and classifying shapes based on shared attributes

Through all grade levels students will work on Goals of Mathematical Practice:

- Make sense of problems & persevere in solving them.
- Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
- Model with mathematics.
- Use appropriate tools strategically.
- Attend to precision.
- Look for and make use of structure.
- Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Science

Three Science Units will be explored this year: Magnets, Maine Animals and Weather and Climate. Science is a very hands-on time as students follow the steps of the Scientific Method. Students will also use content related texts to help develop an understanding of concepts related to the topic of study.

Social Studies

Our social studies program revolves around our theme of Maine. We work on developing a sense of our classroom as a community of learners. First trimester, we'll learn about maps and globes. Then, students learn about State and Local Government. Third trimester, students will explore Early Maine life, Colonial Times as well as Native American culture.

Assessment

Assessment occurs throughout each day in a variety of forms. It is important to note that student understanding cannot be determined by a single measure. It is equally important to remember that children develop over time and at different rates. We will use student work, observation, conferencing, and more formal assessments to help guide instruction. A portfolio of student work will be collected and our hope is to add a technology piece with an online portfolio of student work. In addition, students complete STAR testing in the Fall, Winter and Spring.

Homework

Homework is assigned nightly Monday - Thursday. Assignment sheets should be returned to school daily. Math Home Links should be returned to school daily. Family Letters from the Everyday Math program will be sent home at the start of each unit. These letters outline upcoming skills, concepts, and vocabulary and serve as helpful tools when working on Home Links. It is expected that students in the third grade are reading at home for 20 - 30 minutes every night.

I hope that you will help your child develop a routine and positive attitude when thinking about homework. Setting up a routine for completing homework at the same time each day may alleviate homework "blues." It will also allow work to be done in a timely fashion. Please initial the assignment sheet after you check that homework has been completed. If you have questions about certain problems, or if your child needs assistance from the teacher, please jot a note on the assignment sheet.

Snack

We will be having our snack in the afternoon. Snacks are important as children need to keep up their energy. Please send in finger foods that can be eaten in 10 - 15 minutes such as carrot sticks, cheese sticks, apples, goldfish, etc.

Remember that we are a nut-free school!

Volunteers

I welcome volunteers in our classroom and volunteers that would like to help out by doing things at home. As the year goes on I will be better able to assess exact needs, but for now I foresee the following: reading with children, assisting students during math time, laminating, copying, book orders, and computer work. Volunteers can sign up using the form available at open house and sent home.

Classroom Management

To learn best, students must feel safe and comfortable in their learning environment. Our classroom community will be build on respect for each other and for ourselves. We will create this environment by following our classroom rules:

We will be respectful.

We will be kind.

We will persevere.

We will be safe.

We will explore and discuss these rules throughout the year. I hope to provide positive feedback to encourage students to follow these rules. When needed, a student will spend time talking about a rule with me. This may occur during recess or snack time. Please help at home by talking to your child about our rules and how they might look at home and at school.

3rd Grade Information Guide



**Mrs. Foster's Class
2017-2018**

