

August 31, 2011

Welcome Parents!

Will and I are looking forward to fabulous year ahead with your family. Below you will find information regarding the logistics of our classroom. Please contact me with any additional questions that may arise after your review this information.

Schedule

Physical Education with Steve starts our day off **beginning class promptly at 8:30 daily**. Please drop your children off by 8:20 so that they can have time to get ready and be in the barn by 8:30. Our morning work time runs from 9:00 until 12:00 with lunch starting at 12:00. Right after lunch, we will have quiet reading time until recess, which begins at 12:50 and runs until 1:20.

Each afternoon includes time for work, read aloud and jobs. Our class wide cultural enrichment activities are scheduled predominately on one afternoon or at the day's end so that we will have uninterrupted afternoon work time. This year Spanish will be held in on Monday and Wednesday afternoons with Senora Koski.

- Thursday afternoons will be something the students look forward to! Art with Alison Hoffman will be every Thursday afternoon. In addition, Alison will be offering Art History discussions over lunch every Wednesday! Music with Jeanmarie Riccobono will also be Thursdays afternoons. Half of our class will begin in Art and the other half in music and then they will switch mid-afternoon.
- The children will have a rotation (each rotation is one week long) in Della Terra with Michele Worden beginning in the fall, breaking over the winter and resuming in early spring. Springtime will offer abundant opportunities for additional garden time as many hands are needed to get the grounds and gardens ready for the season.
- The children will also have two rotations (each rotation is one week long) in the Kitchen Classroom with Kristina Weidenfeller over the course of the school year, another all time favorite!
- Catherine Turnbull will be periodically leading book clubs and Writer's Workshops with the students in small groups one afternoon each week. She also will be having open library hours daily along with the opportunity to schedule individual writing conferences for additional support.

Trips

We will visit the Leelanau Outdoor Center twice this year with a day visit September 12th and an overnight trip at the end of May. Most other outings will be small group trips or "going-out" experiences that are an important part of the Elementary curriculum. Students in this age group are developmentally ready to expand their horizons and reach

out to the community around them to pursue subjects of interest. The students are responsible for arranging their outings and the success of their outings requires both willing drivers and community contacts. Please consider participating and indicate your willingness on the attached volunteer form.

Spelling Tests and Math Fact Sheets

Lots and lots of repetition is the best aid for memorization so please support your child with their weekly work in math and spelling. Each Friday a spelling list for the upcoming week as well as a math fact sheet will come home in your child's home folder. Please practice with your child at home over the course of the week. Children may take their spelling test for the week whenever they are ready, with the guideline that all tests must be completed by Friday. Math quizzes will take place on Friday mornings. If your child has not had ample success with their work, the list/fact sheet will be repeated the following week so you will see the same sheet coming home again.

Observations

We encourage you to observe your child in the classroom setting. It is an accurate way to gain an understating of your child's life at school. During the first six weeks, we ask that you wait while the class settles in. We are eager to have you join us for the upcoming Parent Visiting Days that are scheduled on the school wide calendar.

Lunch

We are eating lunch in our classroom. You are welcome to dine with us anytime your schedule allows, please let us know you will be coming so that we can set a place for you! **Please send a cloth napkin and placemat that is rolled up in a napkin ring with your child. We will launder them and keep them at school for the year.**

The school provided lunch program begins Wednesday, September 7th with monthly menus available on-line. You are asked to sign up at least four days in advance. There are a very limited number of last minute lunches available each day. Please call the front desk if you need to reserve a last minute lunch for your child. A microwave is available to reheat food; please send food in a microwavable container.

Snack

The school will be providing a daily morning and afternoon snack for all elementary children. Please keep any other snacks for home.

Personal Belongings

Please label all of your child's personal belongs on the tag of the clothing item. This aids our effort in helping the students keep track of their things and minimizing lost and found items.

If your child has something from home that they would like to share with classmates, they will have an opportunity each Monday during Show and Tell. Please help us limit items to these categories: something from nature, photographs, something they have made or something from another culture. Please keep toys at home.

Birthday Celebrations

Your child will be invited to celebrate his birthday or half-birthday during the school year. A letter will be sent home in his home folder detailing the celebration. In our class the student is invited to create a poster of photographs (please no digital frames). The photos can be of themselves, people and or places that are important to them and there should be **one or two pictures from each year**, for example, a favorite shot from when your child was one years old, two, and so on. We encourage your child to write his own captions to many of the photos. The poster will be kept up for the day in the classroom and your child will be invited to talk about his poster during his celebration. Children enjoy bringing a snack on their birthday. Please remember to keep the snack a healthy choice and to make sure all of the ingredients in the **snack contain no nut products**. Please save cookies, cupcakes and other sugary treats for home.

Home-School Communication

Each student has been supplied with a folder that will be sent home every day and should return to school every day. This folder is used to send notes home and for you to send notes / forms to school. Please help your child to keep track of it and to get in the habit of bringing it to school daily.

During the school day (8:20 - 3:40), the person at the front desk will forward your calls to my voicemail. I will check my messages throughout the day as possible and will return your calls as soon as I am able. I am available between 8:00 -9:00 for phone calls and again at 3:40 until 4:00 (often later). If you miss me at school, please feel free to call me at home anytime (271-6969). If you would like to meet with me in person let me know so that we can set up an appointment. Please know that I am available to meet anytime the need arises, not only during the scheduled conferences. Email is another great way to communicate; my address is Nadine@traversechildrenshouse.org Please keep in mind that during the days I am engaged with your children, not at a computer, which means that you will not hear back from me via email immediately, but always within a 24 hour time period (with a possible exception on weekends). Weekly talking points are a good way to stay current about all of the great happenings in our classroom!

Swimming

Our class will be participating in Red Cross swimming instruction for an eight week session at the Traverse City Civic Center, on Friday afternoons in the late fall or early winter. We will travel to our lessons on a school bus and return back to school in time for regular dismissal.

I look forward to all of the rich experiences together in the year ahead and am so grateful to be a part of it all!

