

Mrs. Cullen’s

Curriculum & Expectations Night:

Information Packet

Grade 4

2018-2019

**Welcome to Fourth Grade!**

This is going to be an exciting and challenging year for your child. Fourth grade is a ‘big step’ in their life as the expectations are set high. We have discussed these expectations already and will continue to review discipline, a sense of responsibility, and respect throughout the year.

**BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

**School Rules/Expectations:**

We have three all-encompassing guidelines followed at Frankfort Square School. They are:

**Be Respectful Be Responsible Be Safe**

We discuss these rules with the students every year and give a variety of examples to help them understand. We also ask students for their own ideas of what it means to be respectful, responsible, and safe. It is expected that each student will adhere to these rules. The expectations are to be followed at all time, in all parts of the building, by all students. For those who don’t, communication with parents will occur via either e-mail, a note, or call home. Per the teacher’s discretion, a minor/major disciplinary action form may be sent home with a copy going to our school principal. Please help us make our classroom environment a positive, rewarding place for all students by stressing the importance of appropriate behavior at school. Remember, when *one* student misbehaves, it affects the learning of *all* students.

I always promote positive behavior in my classroom. Students who continually follow these agreed-upon guidelines will be rewarded in a variety of ways:

Recess/Extra Recess Mustang Bingo Drawing Classroom Jungle Tickets

Prizes from the Treasure Chest Classroom Coupons Free Time in Class

**ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS**

**Homework Expectations:**

All homework is expected to be turned in on time, must be legible, and completed with the student’s best effort. Certain occasions, such as illness or vacation, are exceptions to the rule. Students who are out of school will get extra time to turn in work. (1 extra day for each day they were out.) However, it is the student’s responsibility to find out what work was missed. Also, per district guidelines, parents may pick up homework for their child **upon return from vacation**, not request it prior. If your child is home sick, please request to pick up their homework that day or have it sent home with a sibling or neighbor. Please notify the office before 11:00 am if you are requesting homework. Homework may be picked up in the office after 3:30 pm.

Generally, students will have homework Monday through Thursday and occasionally on Friday. There may be times when, for example, a long-term project will need to be finished over the weekend or a test is the following week. Students are expected to read for a minimum of 20 minutes a night to help develop reading skills. They are also required to practice their math facts each night including multiplication and division.

**Grading Scale:**

A = 100%-90% B =89%-80% C =79%-70% D =69%-60% F = 59%-50%

\*\*Please note the new grading scale

**Grading Policies:**

* Worked turned in with obvious lack of effort…Redo that work.
* There will be no extra credit offered.
* Parent assistance is accepted, but all work must be completed by the *student*.

All work, tests, etc. will be sent home with students. Students are expected to share their scores with parents on a regular basis. When students share their scores regularly, parents will be aware of their child’s academic progress. Grades are also available for viewing online at PowerSchool.

**\*\*\*NEW\*\*\*** Students receiving a D or F on any Summative Assessment will be required to retake that assessment. They will need to fill out a form prior to this retake and show they have made an effort to restudy and prepare themselves for the retest. Students receiving an A, B, or C on any Summative Assessment will have the option to retake one Summative Assessment per subject per quarter. The request must come from the student or parent, the teacher will not make this decision. The teacher must be notified within 2 days if a student would like to retake a Summative Assessment. The most recent score will be recorded on all retakes.

**Tests:**

Tests are generally a review of what has been taught up to that point. Students will be notified in advance of upcoming tests and quizzes and we will have review sessions for each. At times, students will be given study guides to help them review; other times they will use chapter reviews, homework, and similar means to study, as well as being expected to reread pertinent chapters. I suggest parents & students hold on to homework assignments as they come home graded and use these to study for the test that will eventually follow.

**Formative & Summative Assessments:**

Formative assessments are activities that are **for** learning. They help the teacher determine next steps during the learning process and adjust instruction as needed. They help the students identify their strengths and weaknesses and help the teacher understand where students are having difficulty. These activities include homework, classwork, activities, small/whole group lessons/discussions, projects, and worksheets to name a few. Formative assessments are recorded in PowerSchool and are calculated at 25% towards a quarterly report card grade.

Summative assessments are **of** learning. They are given at the end of a unit/chapter but may also be broken down by skills or concepts taught. These can be quizzes, tests, projects, papers, or experiments. Summative assessments are recorded in PowerSchool and are calculated at 75% towards a quarterly report card grade.

For your reference, formative assessments will be marked with points and summative assessments will be marked with percentages and letter grades.

**Reading/Language Arts**:

Students should already have a good foundation of reading skills. We will continue to practice these foundational skills, so each student continues to grow as a fluent reader, however, our main focus will be to practice good comprehension and thinking skills while reading.

Some of these skills include questioning when reading, predictions, making connections to prior text(s), lessons and life experiences, monitoring, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, drawing conclusions, understanding the main idea, point of view, and distinguishing between fact and opinion. The main focus will be on identifying what the students learned from their reading and what they think about it. Students should be able to express a thought (verbal and written) and provide support for their thinking.

To accomplish this challenge, I will lead a lesson on these skills daily. The students will also do a great deal of independent reading and writing to put these skills into practice. I will work with the students in whole group, small groups, as well as on an individual basis to achieve this goal. Students are also expected to read for at least 20 minutes for homework daily.

**Math**:

Our class will review previously learned skills and build upon them. Throughout the year, we will practice and strive for fluency in many math concepts, skills, and strategies. Students are expected to enter fourth grade having already memorized multiplication and division math facts through 10. Students need to know these facts automatically to work through multi-digit problems, multi-step word problems and advanced mathematical equations.

The concepts we will cover include place values, rounding, addition & subtraction of large numbers, estimating, multiplying & dividing multi-digit numbers, factors, divisibility, multiples, equivalent fractions, comparing fractions, adding, subtracting, & multiplying fractions, decimals, geometry, measuring angles, measurements, time, money, perimeter & area.

Students will be expected to complete math homework every day. This year we will be using an online program called XtraMath.org daily at school. This is an excellent website that assists students with learning their math fact in a quick, short, and fun way! It also tracks student progress throughout the year for teacher or parents to view. Students are highly encouraged to use the program at home in the evenings and on the weekends. (Which takes less than 10 minutes!)

**Spelling**:

Spelling Tests will be taken on Fridays (or the last day of the school week.) Every Monday, the students will take a pre-test. If they correctly spell all 20 words, they will automatically get 100% and will not have to take the test on Friday.

**Science**:

In Science, we will explore the Next Generation Science Standards. The students will be involved in hands-on experiences that will help develop the skills and knowledge needed for future careers. Students will have the opportunity to explore, touch, experiment, and interact with STEM phenomenon in ways that nurture their curiosity and challenge them to explain the world around them. This year’s topics include plant & animal parts, sense receptors, energy & speed, motion of waves, light reflection, rock patterns, changing land, and renewable/nonrenewable resources.

**Social Studies**:

The units we will cover this year are: Map Skills, Western Civilization, The Civil War, and Illinois. Students will use critical thinking techniques to develop an understanding of past experiences. Geographic concepts will be taught throughout the year. Novels and non-fiction text will be used throughout our units of study.

\*\*Please note: Students will be required to memorize one region of the U.S. per quarter including the state names, capitals, and be able to identify the states on a map. Your child will also participate in our State Float Parade and a Living Museum!  Look for more information to come home on both events later in the school year!

**Writing**:

Developing student writing is essential in fourth grade. We will read and examine all genres of writing throughout the year. Students will have the opportunity to identify patterns in different forms of writing. These include narratives, personal narratives, opinion, explanatory, persuasive compositions, as well as plays, poems, and other forms of print. Students will be expected to create several original writing pieces throughout the year. They will be guided and supported through the writing process. Writing samples will be modeled and students will use different graphic organizers to help keep their ideas organized and easy to follow. They will use technology to assist in finding facts and information to support their writing as well as to publish some of their original and creative pieces. Writing is an art!!!!!!

**CLASSROOM POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**Assignment Notebooks**:

Each student has an assignment notebook in which homework is written in daily. Students are responsible for copying down their homework each day. Please help your child to check their assignment notebooks every night. By doing this, parents & students can see what we are doing, what is due, upcoming tests, and any other pertinent information. I also use the assignment notebooks for communicating with parents so check it each night for notes from me or write a note to me that I will check the next morning.

**Weapons Policy**:

The district’s weapons policy was discussed with children in class. For more information about this, please see the Student-Parent Handbook on our district’s website.

**Birthday/Holiday Treats**:

The district wellness guidelines are strongly enforced. If you are unfamiliar with these, please see the Student-Parent Handbook. For the health and safety of our students, they are **NOT** allowed to bring in any edible treats. Any edible treats sent in will be returned home with the child. Students may bring in non-food items such as pencils, erasers, stickers, etc. if they would like on their birthdays or other holidays. At this time, we have 16 children in our room. However, it may be safe to send a few extras as new students may join our class. Summer birthdays will be celebrated on the students’ half-birthdays. Thank you for keeping our children safe!!

**Snacks/Water**:

Students may bring a *healthy*, *non-messy* snack to class each day. They will be given a short time to eat in the mid-morning. Many days we will have a working snack break so help your child choose something they can eat while they work. Students have been notified if they bring an unhealthy snack, they will not be allowed to eat it. Please remind your child to not talk with food in their mouth as it is disrespectful and can cause choking.

Water bottles are allowed and must be filled up at home; Water ONLY, no juice, pop, etc. Please be sure that the water bottle has a spout and not a screw cap to prevent spills. Sipping water throughout the day help keep the brain hydrated. However, please talk to your child about not drinking too much water as it causes frequent trips to the bathroom. If the water bottle becomes a distraction, the privilege will be taken away.

**Book Orders**:

I try to send a Scholastic Book order form home on a monthly basis and will let the students know the due date. If sending cash, please send the exact amount as no change can be given. *When writing a check, make it out to Scholastic Books*. You may also purchase books online with a credit card at www.scholastic.com. Our class’s online code is LVYDW.

**Communication**:

I believe that communication with parents is very important. I encourage you to check my website regularly as I will update it weekly (Typically by Monday morning.) On my site you will find information on what we are doing in class, upcoming quizzes/tests, important dates, and reminders. Please don’t hesitate to contact me any time with questions, comments, or concerns you may have. E-mail is my preferred method of communication; however I can also be reached by phone or written letter if needed.

\*\*\*Finally, please remember, I became a teacher because I love children and want nothing more than to help my students grow and flourish to become smart, respectful, contributing members of society*. But I am not perfect*. I will make mistakes, as will all of your children. Please come to me directly if there is ever a problem. I will do everything I can to make this year run as smooth as possible but know that we are on the same team and are all working toward the same goals. Let’s work together to help these kids become the best they can be!

Thank you for your support,

Mrs. Megan Cullen MCullen@summithill.org (815) 469-3176