



Room 412

First Grade Newsletter #5

September 25, 2017

Dear Families,

Hi! Thank you for visiting during our Family Welcome Breakfast. It was wonderful to join together as a community, and for families to meet and get to know each other!

During the past couple weeks in Social Studies, we have been discussing some things that are important about coming to school: feeling safe, having fun, making friends, learning and playing, and going to recess! From this discussion, the first graders thought about Hopes and Dreams for our year together. Last week, our class began a conversation about rules. What are some rules we need to help us make our Hopes and Dreams come true? How can we work together to make our classroom feel like a fun and safe place learn, play and make and be friends? We read a book called *Do Unto Otters* by Laurie Heller, about a rabbit and some otters who are new neighbors. They discover ways to get along, and they consider what it means to treat others the way they want to be treated. Many of the children connected these ideas to *The Golden Rule*. If you are looking for ways to connect to your child's experiences at school, this could be a great conversation to continue together at home.

Our First Friday Field trip will happen on Friday, October 6 at around 12:30. We will take a walking trip to Central Park. The more volunteers, the better! Please look for a sign-up sheet outside the classroom later this week. Thank you!

Last week in math, we revisited a game that some of the children learned in kindergarten called Racing Bears. As well as practicing being strong partners, the first graders worked on counting and splitting numbers up into 2 or 3 smaller numbers as bears jumped up the game board to collect buttons. In Reading Workshop, we realized that we *already* know many strategies for reading words and thinking about books. We discovered that exploring books can be like taking a trip. We pack our suitcase full of strategies and off we go on reading adventures! In Writing Workshop, we discovered that sometimes writers need to take some time to think about something to write about. Just like many authors, we get ideas from stories in our lives: trips, special times with family and friend, small moments like noticing a butterfly on a leaf, recess, school, etc.

We had our first Evacuation Drill (formerly called Fire Drills) last week. There will be more drills throughout the year. It would be really helpful if you could have a little chat with your child about the meaning of the drills, and how we can work together to make them comfortable for everyone. Here are some things we talked about as a class:

- An Evacuation Drill is one way to practice being safe as a school community. Since I have been teaching at MSC, there has never been an event where we need to evacuate. However, it's important to practice so that we all feel like we know what to do, and can feel safe.
- The alarm can feel loud and uncomfortable. Sometimes a few deep breaths can be calming.
- When leaving for a drill, we line up one at a time, rather than our usual lining up with a partner.
- Voices are off and our eyes should be on the teacher so that we can get important instructions.
- Give yourself a pat on the back for doing your best to follow these rules and helping our school community. This is a lot of hard work and attention for a first grader!

Have a fantastic week and thank you!

Laurel

Important Reminders

- Forms: Please take moment to complete the forms that I placed in your mail pouch Thanks!!!
- Allergies: Most years, there are some students in the room who are allergic to peanuts and/or tree nuts. Please be mindful of this when packing lunches or bringing in snacks. I will give you more specifics when I know more. Thanks for helping to keep the classroom safe for everyone!
- Recess: First Graders go outside to recess every morning from 9:15-9:55, unless weather is inclement. In that case, we will be in the basement gym.
- Newsletters: We will be sending out a newsletter most weeks, usually by the end of the day on Monday. Eventually, they newsletters will go out electronically. You can always find our class newsletter on our class webpage. Go to the school's website: <http://www.ps333.org> and click on the class pages. The password is: abc123. I am also happy to leave a hard copy in your mail pouch. Just let me know.
- Greenhouse with Shakira: We visit Shakira in the Greenhouse every Friday morning from 8:32-9:12. I will be out of the room, as this is my prep. Please drop your child off in the Greenhouse on Friday mornings at 8:32. It's helpful to leave lunches and water bottles in his or her cubby before heading up. When the weather is chilly, the children should bring jackets to the greenhouse because the class will be going directly to recess (not stopping by the classroom).

- Water: There's a water fountain with filtered water in the hallway where students can step out and get a drink. You may also bring in a reusable water bottle for your child to keep in the classroom. If you have a bottle with a clip or hook, that would be great so we can hang bottles and keep table space for the children to work on.
- Lunch: Students eat lunch in the classroom, at around 11:30 every day. You may order school lunch (which is delivered to the classroom) or bring one from home.
- Bathroom: The bathroom is in the hallway. Students leave the room to use the bathroom when they need to go by putting their name on the board so that we know where they are. 2 boys and 2 girls may leave the room at a time.
- Communication: The best way to check in with is by leaving a message on the message board in the classroom. I will call you back within a day. If you'd like to have a quick chat, just stick around after dismissal on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday. We have staff meetings on Mondays and Tuesdays, so I would have to scoot out right away after the children are dismissed. Please check your child's mail pouch daily for important information and special work going home. It's really helpful for you to remind your child that the pouches are just for grown-ups. That way, we can be sure messages get home to you. The kids have work trays inside the classroom.
- Snack: We eat snack together each morning in the classroom, usually after recess, but this time may vary. Please sign up for a time to bring in snack on the calendar on the outside board.
- Our Day: School begins at 8:32. Drop-off for students is in the classroom. Arriving on time helps us all transition into our day together, and feel ready for the day ahead. Students arriving after 8:45 will be marked late or absent, and will require a late pass from the main office. School ends at 2:55. Pick-up is in the classroom. If you are running late, please pick your child up in the auditorium.

Upcoming Dates

- Friday, October 6: Walking Trip to Central Park: 12:30-2:30
- Monday, October 9: Columbus Day- no school