

Welcome to Ms. Reiss' 4th Grade Team



2019-2020
Handbook

Welcome to Fourth Grade!

My name is Amanda Reiss and I will be your child's fourth grade teacher. I graduated from Missouri State University with a degree in Elementary Education. In my spare time I enjoy being with family and friends, cycling, running, cooking, going to the Lake of the Ozarks, and being with my dog, Cooper! I look forward to getting to know you and your family this year. Through open communication and working together, your student will have a great opportunity to succeed. We are going to have a fabulous year!

Schedule: Our daily schedule along with our special schedule is on another paper . We have orchestra on Monday and Wednesday. Please be sure your child brings their instrument to school on the days we have orchestra. Library check out will be every other week on Thursdays.

Behavior Management:

Our mission statement at McKelvey states that all students are expected to be CARING, RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, and SELF-MOTIVATED learners at all times everywhere in the building. These rules are highly enforced in our classroom. Our goal is to reduce behavior situations through positive reinforcement; however, if a student makes poor choices, they will have logical consequences. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. Parent-teacher communication is key!

ClassDojo

In our classroom, I use a management tool called ClassDojo. ClassDojo is a web-based program, which allows teachers to track students' behaviors easily and efficiently. The program is based on points. Students can be given positive points and have points taken away based on McKelvey's mission statement (caring, respectful, responsible, and self-motivated). ClassDojo provides many opportunities for your student to reflect on his/her behavior, celebrate their successes, and set goals for improvement.

After students have been added to the system, you will have the option to access the application with the access code given to you that is specific to your child. You have the ability to access ClassDojo online or you can download an app if you have a smartphone. I highly suggest sitting down with your child on a consistent basis to discuss how many points he/she has, which positive behaviors were noted, and which behaviors should be a primary focus to improve. This would be a great time to celebrate successes and set necessary goals. As students reach certain increments, he/she will earn coupons as rewards. My hope is that this will help you better understand the progress of your student's behavior on a day-to-day basis.

Other than tracking your child's behavior, ClassDojo will give you the opportunity to see what is going on in our classroom and to contact me through instant messages. I love these features! Frequently, I will post pictures and videos of activities students are participating in, as well as anchor charts to allow you to see what we are learning; the anchor charts can help you assist your child with homework and to further prepare them for assessments. Also, I will post reminders of important dates and announcements. *Please know that the pictures and videos that I post cannot be viewed by the public; only those specific participants invited to our class page can view.*

Behavior Management Continued:

-A warning is given before points are taken away. If I notice your child continually has to have points taken away, I will ask that we have a meeting at your convenience. I may ask that your child be present,

so we can all discuss ways to improve behavior. It is important that your child is trying their best and not interrupting or distracting their peers.

-It is my responsibility to keep my students safe and provide an environment that accommodates learning. If there are any questions about my decisions, please do not hesitate to ask. I appreciate your continuous support.

-I love to catch the students doing the right thing at the right time. The students can earn rewards collectively as a class or individually in the following ways:

-Braggin' Dragons~ tickets that are turned into the office daily for prizes

-Compliments~ when the class earns all the letters to spell out compliment, we will have a class celebration

Homework: Homework is very important because it reinforces skills and concepts taught in the classroom. Students can expect to have approximately 35-45 minutes of homework a night. Student's homework will be recorded in their assignment notebooks and due the next day. Please call or email if your child's homework is taking longer than 45 minutes per night. The following procedures will be followed for homework in my classroom:

1. Students will be expected to record their assignments in their assignment notebook in order to help them accomplish their tasks everyday.
2. All homework is expected to be completed on time, to the best of the students' ability, and in neat writing.
3. Twenty-five minutes of daily reading and practicing of math facts will be part of the students' nightly tasks. Students are required to write a journal entry about their reading and complete math homework on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students will need to read a "just right book" and complete math homework on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Homework Accountability: All students will be held accountable for the completion of their homework assignments. Students who do not complete their assignments will finish their homework during earned recess.

Snack: Due to our early lunchtime (11:25), students should bring a nutritious snack to school to eat in the afternoon. Please ensure it is a healthy snack they can eat while working. Due to food allergies, do not send food with peanut-related products. Good **nutritious** snack include fruits, vegetables, cheese and crackers, pretzels, etc. Your child is also encouraged to have a water bottle to stay hydrated and reduce the amount of time spent at the water fountain.

Food Policy/Birthday Treats: In order to help protect the health and safety of our students with life-threatening food allergies and to contribute to the health and academic success of all students, the Parkway School District has adopted new district-wide Food Safety Expectations. Beginning in the 2017-2018 school years, all schools will promote these best practice guidelines:

-Classrooms should be food-free whenever possible (students can continue to bring a daily snack for their own consumption)

-Food may not be brought from home for sharing class-wide

-Birthday and holiday celebrations will not include food. Please see the attached list for birthday celebration ideas.

-Food will not be used as a reward or motivator

-A permission letter will be sent home to parents and/or guardians if a situation arises where your child will be given food

We love celebrating birthdays in our classroom! Since food and drinks is no longer allowed to be brought for classmates, the birthday girl/boy will:

- receive a special prize from Miss Reiss
- bring 3-5 items to show the class (no electronics or pets)

Book orders: I will send home book orders from Scholastic Book Club. If you wish to order, please send a check made out to Scholastic Book Club (NO CASH) or you may order online using our online code (**Class Code: P3QZM**). The books usually arrive 1-2 weeks after the order is put in. You do not have to order books, but I recommend the clubs and find the prices cheaper than most bookstores. Also, by purchasing books through Scholastic, I am able to get books to add to my classroom library.

Absence: Please call the front office or e-mail me in the morning if your child is ill. Your child will be expected to make up missed work. However, much of our work is done in conjunction with a lesson or activity and cannot be easily made up.

Transportation:

In order to keep your child safe, we need to know how your child is going home from school *each* day. We cannot send your child home a different way unless we have verbal or written permission from a legal guardian. **If a plan changes during the day, please notify the office or I as soon as possible to make sure we are aware of the change.**

Curriculum:

The district has provided us with a guaranteed and viable curriculum to help prepare your child to be a productive citizen, a lifelong learner, and a resourceful problem solver. Be sure to visit the Parkway School District web page for curriculum information and other district news.

<http://www.parkwayschools.net/pages/ParkwayC2>. If you do not have computer access, let me know and I will get you a copy of the information. Please see general information about the curriculum below.

READING UNITS

- Interpreting Characters
- Reading the Weather, Reading the World
- Reading to Understand the Views, Values, and Cultures of Others
- Reading Nonfiction to Become Experts
- Historical Fiction
- Poetry

WRITING UNITS

- Writing Arc of a Story-Realistic Fiction
- Persuasive Essays
- Poetry
- Informational Article
- Literary Essay
- Historical Fiction

WORD WORK

- Commas and quotation marks in direct speech and quotations
- Synonyms and Antonyms
- The use of dictionaries and thesauruses
- There, their, they're, your, and you're
- Recognize and correct fragments and run on sentences
- Use of common Greek affixes and roots as clues to word meaning
- The use of commas before coordinating conjunctions in compound sentence
- Simple similes and metaphors
- The use of transitional words and phrases
- The use of words or phrases that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being
- The use of topic specific vocabulary
- Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs

Reading, writing, and math are taught in a workshop format. This consists of the following three parts.

Mini-lesson - a short, focused lesson taught in whole group format, which teaches a strategy, skill, or classroom routine.

Independent Time - a period of time in which individual students are engaged in reading at their independent reading level or writing. During this time, the teacher is conferring with individual students or small groups to provide direct instruction.

Share/Debrief/Celebrate: a time for students to share great thoughts they had about their reading, learn from each other, or share their accomplishments.

MATH CONCEPTS

- Numbers, Operations and Algebraic Thinking: Multiplication and Division
- Measurement and Data
- The Four Operations
- Numbers and Operations: Fractions (ordering, equivalence and operations)
- Geometry: Lines, Angles and Angle Measurement

SCIENCE UNITS

- Life Science-The Human Brain
- Earth Science- Dynamic Earth
- Physical Science- Energy and Collision (Module 1 and 2)

SOCIAL STUDIES UNITS

- The Early Settlement of Missouri and Exploration
- Missouri Statehood and Westward Expansion
- Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction
- The History of Missouri since Reconstruction
- Checks and Balances: Government in the Show Me State
- MO Money: The Economy of the Show Me State

Effective communication between parents and teachers is essential to your child's success in the classroom. This truly is a partnership that must have an open line of communication. Listed below are ways that information will be communicated.

Phone Calls and E-mails: Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Email and DoJo are my preferred ways of communication. I check my e-mail before, after, and periodically throughout the school day. It is much easier for me to check and respond to emails during the day than it is to check voicemails. My email: areiss1@parkwayschools.net

We are going to have a fabulous year!