

August 2022



Dear Parents,

Welcome to 1st Grade! I am very excited for our new school year- it will be so much fun!! First I would like to share my background- I was born and raised in Augusta, GA, but I have lived in different parts of the state and different parts of the world. I went to college at Mercer University and then taught in Macon, GA for one year. Then I returned to Augusta and taught in Richmond County for three years. As I was young, I wanted to go out and explore so I decided to join the Council for International Schools. This led me to teach in Japan for 2 years and Turkey for 6 years.

After my time abroad, I returned to Augusta to be close to family. I was particularly interested in teaching at Lake Forest Hills because I worked in IB schools while abroad and was thrilled when a position opened up for me. This will be my fourth year at LFH and my 19th year teaching!

During my time abroad, I worked at International Baccalaureate schools. This gave me the opportunity to learn about the inquiry-based curriculum and how to design units that spark student interest through engaging activities. Teaching is most powerful when students are able to pursue their curiosities and develop their imagination. I use lots of books, technology, and manipulatives to design integrated and exciting units for the students to explore.

Communication between the parents and the teacher is always very important. My favorite form of communication is Class DoJo, but I also use my phone and email. Please do not hesitate to ask questions or let me know about any issues that may arise. I try to respond to questions within 24 hours of receiving them.

I look forward to having a great year together and hope that we can support each other all year long. Thank you for letting me teach your children! It is an honor!

Sincerely,

Jane Wilkes

706-840-9388

wilkeja@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us

Class DoJo

You can either find my class on the App or use the link below:

<https://www.classdojo.com/invite/?c=CWVMVHH>

Classroom Rules

*** **Golden Rule: Treat other people the way you want to be treated.** ***

1. Pay attention, follow directions, and always listen to the teacher.
2. Respect others, especially when they are learning, working, and speaking.
3. Come to school prepared to focus, work hard, and learn.
4. Take care of our classroom materials and the school building so we have a nice, clean place to learn and play.
5. Respect the school rules and procedures.

Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is essential to student success. My favorite form of communication is through Class Dojo. Class Dojo allows you to receive and send messages to me privately at any time. I often send documents and classroom announcements this way as well. You can sign up for the App on your smart phone, go to the web site, or have notifications sent to your email. The link for my class is below. You can also send notes through student folders, but make sure to ask your student to tell me about the note immediately; otherwise it can get lost or I may not see it until the end of the day. Please allow 24 hours for me to respond. I try to reply immediately, but some days are busier than others. 😊

Class DoJo link: <https://www.classdojo.com/invite/?c=CHQZWH>

Blue folders is another form of communication. Every student has a blue folder that goes home every day. In it you will find homework, graded papers, a conduct calendar, classwork, and school announcements. One side of the folder is labeled "Send back to School". On this side you will find the homework, graded papers, a conduct calendar, and any other documents that need to be signed and returned. The other side of the folder is labeled "Keep at Home". Please take these papers out so the folder does not become stuffed with lots of classwork and school flyers.

The conduct calendar is used to let parents know how a student behaved at school. We use the same codes as the report card: 1-4 with 4 as the highest mark. If you have a question about an issue, it is best to message me on DoJo. I may not see a message written on the folder until the end of the day. On good days, a student will receive a 3. If I give a 4, it is usually on a Friday or special days (like a substitute / filedtrip).

I am available to meet with parents every week. If you would like to set up a conference, please contact the front office to set it up because often there are multiple schedules that need to be checked. The secretary will notify me of the date and time. My door is always open! 😊

Transportation

Student safety is the most important aspect of my job, and transportation is one of our biggest challenges. According to school policy, I am not allowed to send students home using a manner different from what is indicated on the transportation form unless I receive written notice. Also, please try to inform me as soon as possible and **before 1pm** so that I can make accommodations. You can send me a message thru DoJo or text message me at 706-840-9388, but please do not call because **I have to have it in writing.**

Graded Papers

Graded papers will be sent home frequently during the grading period. Please review the papers, sign the form, and **return the form and the papers**. I need to keep their graded papers in my files until the end of the year. I will also send home papers from the school such as information about upcoming events and fundraisers. Please pay attention to these papers as they have important dates and times. Also, please do not send notes to me in the folder for graded papers. Sometimes I cannot check the folder immediately which means I will not see the letter until later in the week.

Studying at Home

Students will have weekly homework, which will be sent home with a newsletter every week. This will keep you informed about what we are working on in the classroom. Students need to practice their reading and math fluency. The homework will often include sheets to review skills we are covering in class, such as practice for phonics and sight words. I also recommend reading with students at least four days a week. During this time, encourage your child to read out loud for just a few minutes, and avoid interrupting them with corrections as much as possible. Also, ask them reflection questions such as who were the characters and what did you learn. We want to develop a love of reading and gently encourage them to be thoughtful readers. For math, the homework will often include a worksheet for extra practice of our classwork or math facts. I also recommend doing flash cards for addition and subtraction. You can use traditional flash cards or web sites such as XtraMath and First in Math. Addition and subtraction are the basis for their math development and confidence, and it is essential they can calculate basic facts quickly by the end of first grade.

iReady

Students are expected to complete 90 minutes of iReady every week. This is 45 minutes for math and 45 minutes for reading. Students are given time at school to work on this, but it is helpful for them to have extra practice at home if possible. 😊

Accelerated Reader

Our school participates in the Accelerated Reader program. Students can earn points by completing short quizzes on books they have read. The goal is to get enough points to attend the AR parties in the media center. There is a party at the end of each semester, and the points start over at the beginning of the semester. When reading with your student at home, it is best to use a book on their AR level, which is determined by their iReady diagnostic. You can check the AR level of a book on the website arbookfind.com.

Birthdays, Allergies, and Special Events

If your child has an allergy, no matter what it is, you need to make sure the nurse, cafeteria, and I are notified. This is **imperative** to student safety. If you would like to bring food for a special event, please be mindful of allergies that other students have. I would hate for every student except one to get a cupcake due to an allergy. If you email me, I can let you know of any ingredients you need to be aware of. ****Also, children are not allowed to pass out birthday invitations at school unless everyone in the class is receiving one. If you want to give invitations to a smaller number, please give them to me and I will discreetly hand them out or help you contact the other parents.****