

# welcome

Dear Parents,

Today is the first day of new beginnings for your child. This will be a rewarding experience that will bring about a renewing of the mind through engaging and challenging experiences.

Third grade is a big milestone in your child's life and can be a bit scary. We want to let you know that everything will be absolutely fine. Part of the transition to third grade can be a challenge. Students are expected to be more responsible for their actions, work, and learning. You and I will work together to give your child all the tools he/she will need to be successful. YOUR CHILD'S job is to use those tools to ensure his/her own success.

We have a lot of exciting things to learn and some challenging work ahead of us. We look forward to building a relationship with you and your child. We are going to have a great year!

Please feel free to contact us at any time there is a question or concern.

The Third Grade Team

Mrs. L. Johnson  
Reading/Language/Spelling  
[johnsle@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us](mailto:johnsle@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us)

Mrs. A. Connell  
Writing/Science/Social Studies  
[conneas@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us](mailto:conneas@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us)

Ms. R. Rogers  
Math  
[rogerro@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us](mailto:rogerro@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us)

## Work Habits

### **(Having Everything Ready and Organized)**

Students are responsible for bringing their binder and agenda to school daily. The agenda is used for recording homework, parent/teacher communication, and behavior for the day. **Please sign agenda daily.** This helps us know that you are aware of daily expectations and your child's responsibilities. It is very important to check the agenda and binder every day! **Please help your student to keep the binder organized by spending time each week discarding unnecessary papers and keeping the sections in order.**

For students to do their best they will have to work hard and put effort into everything they do. **Nothing is done halfway.** Students are here to learn and in order to do that; they will have to put a lot of effort into paying attention, listening, and working. I believe that my students can do almost anything they want to do if they are willing to work hard enough for it.

All work turned in **must** be neat and on time. All papers must have the student's name, the date, the subject, and the assignment written on the left-hand side of the paper.

## Classwork

It is important to remain on task and get all class work completed. Each student will have ample work time to complete assignments and ask questions. If the work is still not completed and turned in by the designated time period, the student will receive a score of 1 (beginning learner).



## Academics

### Reading/Language/Spelling

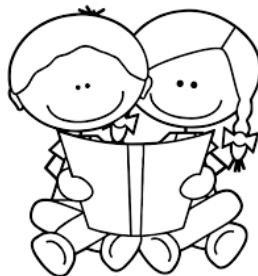
This year students will focus on advancing comprehension and extending vocabulary understanding. Students will also work on improving fluency, decoding skills, and spelling. The work we do in class is critical as students will move away from selected responses (multiple choice questions) and begin learning how to write constructed responses (written responses). Assessments are given in reading, language, and spelling.

Many of the language skills students will learn this year should be familiar to them. In third grade the language skills learned previously are built upon and extended. Students will learn how to write in cursive this year. By spring, students will begin writing most of their assignments in cursive.

Typically, students are given a list of spelling words that they memorize and then will take a test on at the end of the week. Students will have a list that can be used to understand the spelling pattern. The spelling test will include some of the words from the list, but most of the words will be unknown and will require the student to apply what has been learned about the spelling pattern to spell correctly. When students understand the patterns of spelling it helps when orally decoding unknown words and when writing.

Reading and writing are an integral part of our school day. Students who read extensively become better writers. When students read a variety of genres, it helps them learn text structures and language that they can then transfer to their own writing. Reading also provides students with prior knowledge that they can use in their stories. One of the primary reasons that we read is to learn. When students write they are engaged in the act of transmitting knowledge in print, we must have information to share before we can write it. Reading plays a major role in writing.

Students are required to read daily Monday – Sunday. Research shows that the amount of free reading done outside of school has **consistently been found to relate to growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency, and general information.** Students who read independently **become better readers, score higher on achievement tests in all subject areas, and have greater content knowledge than those who do not.** Students will complete a reading log of the books read during leisure time and are sometimes required to write a response to their reading.



## Writing

Students will learn the writing process, habits of good writers, and strategies of good writers. Students will gain knowledge from reading a variety of genres and authors. These experiences will help students learn about text structures, writing styles, and use of particular language that they can apply to their own writing. Students will write informational/explanatory, opinion, and narrative pieces. Writing is assessed on the Georgia Milestones EOG and includes extended responses and extended constructed responses. Students will practice writing extended responses. These responses require students to analyze two texts and use details from each to write an in-depth opinion or informational/explanatory response. Students will also practice writing extended constructed responses. These responses require students to use details from a passage to write a narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience. Student writing is assessed in class using a rubric based on third grade Georgia Standards of Excellence in writing. As students write throughout the year, samples of student writing are analyzed to determine student proficiency toward meeting the standards in writing.



Third graders will do a LOT of reading and a LOT of writing both in the classroom and at home! **BUT - we will have fun and grow as readers and writers.**

The Georgia Milestones End of Grade Assessment begins in third grade. Students must pass the Reading/ELA portion of the Georgia Milestones EOG for promotion. The EOG requires a lot of independent reading and writing from students. Being able to sit for a period of time and read and write uninterrupted is a beneficial habit to develop. Children who read and write daily perform better on standardized tests because they have built up their stamina.

## Social Studies and Science



In Social Studies, students will learn about American Indians, European exploration, British Colonial America, national and state governments, representative democracy, productive resources, and interdependence and trade. Students will broaden their map skills by locating the equator, prime meridian, lines of latitude, and line of

longitude. Students will further use their map skills to locate major rivers and mountain ranges in the United States. Learning to use maps is essential when retrieving social studies information. In Science students will engage in hands-on experiences and learn more about the scientific method. Students will learn about Georgia habitats, rocks, soil, fossils, magnets, heat, and pollution and conservation. Students in third grade are required to participate in the science fair.

Students will engage in reading and writing about these topics. Students will become critical thinkers - drawing conclusions, analyzing, and making generalizations - about the information related to the social studies and science topic. They will then apply this information to solve problems and make decisions.

Students will demonstrate learning in a variety of ways such as projects, performing skits, group discussions, assessments, class work, and homework.



## Math

Welcome to MATH where critical thinking will be vital. Students will engage in meaningful activities that will be differentiated in place value, numbers and operations, geometry, measurement, fractions, division and multiplication. Students will be expected to explain their mathematical thinking and justify **WHY** as they make connections, generalize, discover patterns, work through stuck points, listen to, understand, and reflect on their new knowledge. Being able to explain your thinking in math is a higher-level skill and shows deeper understanding. Technology is very important, as I will have practice websites on my class page and students will be expected to work nightly, as often as possible on I-Ready and First in Math. To enhance problem solving skills students will work nightly on constructed responses and complete interactive journal activities weekly. Please make it a part of your evening routine to listen to your child speak about the mathematical concepts. Math will be assessed on the Georgia Milestones EOG assessment.



## **i-Ready Reading and Math**

Throughout the year students are assessed using i-Ready. The program is designed to determine areas of strength and weakness in students' reading and math. Though students will complete i-Ready lessons at school, it is crucial that students complete 45 minutes of i-Ready Reading and Math each week at home as well. This is about 3 lessons a week (Monday – Sunday). In our experience, i-Ready is beneficial in helping students grow when done consistently and with accuracy.

The Educational Research Institute of America (ERIA), conducted a large-scale study on the relationship between i-Ready Diagnostic and the 2017 Georgia Milestones. The research found a high correlation between i-Ready Diagnostic scores and the Georgia Milestones scores. We often have students comment how a lesson completed on i-Ready was just like the lesson that was taught in class. Using this program can only help your child succeed.

## **Awards Day Recognitions**

At the end of the year, students are recognized for their achievements for the year. Students should set goals and work hard to meet the criteria to achieve these awards.

The following awards are given in third grade:

**i-Ready Scholar** – achievement above grade level in ELA and/or Math on EOY i-Ready Diagnostic

**Outstanding Growth** – outstanding growth in ELA and/or Math in i-Ready Fall to Spring Diagnostic.

**Outstanding Achievement Award** – highest ELA and/or Math score on EOY i-Ready Diagnostic

**Perfect Attendance** – missed zero days

**Perfect Presence** – missed zero days without tardies

**Most Improved** – Improvement in academics and/or behavior

**Citizenship** – Displays traits of a good citizen

**Enrichment Award** –selected by each enrichment teacher



## Standards-based Grading

Students no longer receive traditional percentage/letter grade. Instead, to provide parents and students with more accurate information about students' progress toward meeting the standards, we use standards-based grading. Students will receive an achievement level score. This score is based upon the students' level of proficiency on meeting the Georgia Standards of Excellence. Standards-based grading measures what students know or are able to do in relation to grade level skills, behaviors, and objectives. Students will have multiple assessments to determine the level of proficiency on a standard.

### **Achievement Levels**

Level	Expectation	Score
Distinguished Learner	The student demonstrates <u>advanced proficiency</u> in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level as specified by the standards. The students are <u>well prepared</u> for the next grade level.	4
Proficient Learner	The student demonstrates <u>proficiency</u> in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level as specified by the standards. The student is <u>prepared</u> for the next grade level.	3
Developing Learner	The student demonstrates <u>partial proficiency</u> in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level as specified by the standards. The student <u>needs additional academic support</u> to ensure success in the next grade level.	2
Beginning Learner	The student demonstrates <u>minimal proficiency</u> in the knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level as specified by the standards. The student <u>needs substantial academic support</u> to be prepared for the next grade level.	1
*Not Demonstrated	The student <u>does not demonstrate evidence</u> of knowledge and skills necessary at this grade level as specified by the standards. For example, the <u>assignment was copied or incomplete, the assignment was not attempted (blank), or the information provided was too limited, off topic, illegible, or incomprehensible.</u>	0

\*Assignments with an achievement level of not demonstrated will receive a score of 1 if assignments are not corrected and turned in after a designated time period.

## **Supplies**

Please provide adequate supplies for your child during the school year. The supplies we request at the beginning of the year are used to help organize your child and help him/her be successful in third grade. We use pencils, scissors, glue, and paper often for different activities in class. Those supplies will need to be replenished periodically through the year. Supplies may be kept in a pencil pouch. Do not send supplies in pencil boxes. The boxes are too big to fit inside of the desks and take up too much room on top of the desks. Purses may not be used to keep supplies, snacks, or lunches in. Students must leave purses hanging with the book bags until dismissal. Please do not allow your child to bring supplies that double as toys. These items are a distraction and will be taken away. Handheld pencil sharpeners are **not** permitted in the classroom and will be taken away and discarded.

## **Homework Policy**

Every day the homework assignment is displayed on the board. It is the student's responsibility to copy his/her homework and make sure the necessary materials have been taken home. Students will have homework every day. Homework is important. It allows students the chance to practice what they learned in school and gives you the chance to see what your child is learning. All homework assignments are to be completed by the student and are due daily.

**Late homework is not accepted. It must be turned in on time at the beginning of class or the homework is considered late and points are deducted from Class Dojo. Students are not permitted to return to their homeroom class to get assignments. The teacher will not check student book bags, binders, folders, or desks for assignments. It is also important that students put their name on their papers. Papers without names are discarded.**

Student papers are checked and sent home on Tuesday with a behavior report to be signed. **Please discuss, sign, and return these papers on Friday.**

Routines are established for turning in all assignments. These routines are modeled, practiced, and reinforced in class on a daily basis. It is important that students learn routines in class for turning in assignments in order to avoid any loss homework points.



## Behavior Expectations

For students to learn, our environment must be reasonably free from distractions and disruptions. There are behaviors that support learning that the students are expected to follow.

- \* Follows oral directions the first time they are given
- \* Follows written directions
- \* Works independently
- \* Works cooperatively – uses kind words, waits turn, gets along with others, polite
- \* Participates in class - asks and answers questions, copies notes, engages in activities, comes prepared with supplies – pencils, papers, assignments, etc.
- \* Completes class work in a timely manner
- \* Completes homework and turns it in on time (beginning of class)
- \* Produces best work – work is neat, clean, and accurate
- \* Demonstrates self-control - keep hands, feet and other objects to self, raises hand before speaking, stays in seat until given permission, does not engage in disruptive behavior such as outbursts or tantrums, assumes responsibility for actions

When the rituals and routines are followed, the rewards are as follows:

1. Choose from the treat box.
2. Receive a satisfactory report.
3. Earn a good behavior ticket.
4. Receive Class Dojo points

Students begin each week as a Super Student (0 tallies). Each time a rule is broken, students receive a tally. Each time you receive a tally a certain consequence will follow.

The consequences are listed below:

<b>Tally Marks</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
<b>1-3</b>	Warning
<b>4-7</b>	Silent lunch
<b>8-11</b>	Silent lunch; -10 minutes recess; minor incident report
<b>12 or more</b>	Silent lunch; no recess; parent conference

**When a student receives 3 Minor Incident Reports, he/she will receive an office referral.**

Each behavior that supports learning will receive a score at the end of each nine –week period. We have found it beneficial to address behavior issues in a timely and consistent manner. Students have more productive school years when they realize that misbehaviors at school are not tolerated.

## **Tardies and Absences**

Please remember your child needs to be in school and on time, as every day a student is absent or tardy he/she gets behind on assignments and misses important lessons. This is especially true since students are changing classes. Leaving early results in the student going home without the instruction needed to understand and complete assignments. Please keep early dismissals to a minimum.

**Picking up your child early from school is counted as a tardy.** The tardy will be unexcused unless it is for a medical appointment or family emergency. **If a student is absent or leaves early, a note is required when returning to school.** The absence or tardy will be considered unexcused without a note. Only 5 written parent excuses are accepted, after this point a student will need a doctor's excuse. Students with 11 or more tardies will not be eligible for perfect attendance and are placed on probation.

## **Dress Code**

Every child in a Richmond County elementary school is subject to the dress code policy. Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the dress code. **We do enforce the dress code policy in our classes and students who violate the dress code are required to call home to request the appropriate dress.**

## **Cell Phones**

Elementary students are not permitted to have cell phones on campus. If you need to get in contact with your child, please call the main office at (706) 823-6950. The office staff is expedient in relaying messages concerning the welfare of your child to the teachers. Further details concerning the cell phone policy can be located on the school website - click on PARENTS and then POLICIES.

## **Transportation**

If your child's transportation changes, we **must** have a written note from the parent or guardian. Changes to transportation cannot come from a student. If there is no written notification, the student will have to follow his/her usual means of transportation. **Please do not email changes in transportation, as we may not see the email before dismissal.**

## **Birthdays**

Birthdays are special times for all students. It is acceptable for your child to bring small, easy-to-serve store-bought birthday treats (cupcakes, donuts, or popsicles) to share with the entire class in recognition of his/her special day. If your child is planning a birthday celebration outside of school, he/she will not be permitted to distribute invitations to select groups of classmates while inside the classroom. This causes hurt feelings among uninvited classmates who become aware of their exclusion.

## **Conferences and Infinite Campus**

Communication between home and school is extremely critical towards providing an effective instructional environment for students. As parents, you provide valuable insights regarding your children's education, which enables us to better address your child's needs. If you would like to schedule a conference, please send a note with your child or contact Mrs. Schnorbus, the data clerk. Conferences are scheduled for 15 – 20 minutes. If additional time is needed, we are happy to schedule a follow-up conference.

Please make sure you have access to Infinite Campus. Infinite Campus gives you access to your child's performance on assessments, class work, homework, and behavior. An Infinite Campus app can be downloaded on your phone and parents can request that notifications are sent concerning performance. We recommend setting up an account if you have not already. Mrs. Schnorbus can assist parents with establishing an account or answer any questions regarding Infinite Campus.

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Please take a few minutes to discuss the handbook with your child, then sign and return the attached agreement within the first week of school. We are looking forward to working with your family this year!

- Mrs. L. Johnson
- Mrs. A. Connell
- Ms. R. Rogers