

Fifth Grade - - Where You'll Watch Your Child Grow!



Parents/Guardians,

August 2017

It is our pleasure to WELCOME your family to our Freedom Park School 5th grade team. We are very excited to have the opportunity to work with you and your child this year. This year your child will have three teachers: Mrs. Dos will teach science and social studies; Mrs. Owens will teach math; and Ms Reed will teach English Language Arts. It is our sincere hope that your child will experience many positive, interesting, and rewarding school days. Our primary goal is to provide the best learning environment for all students.

You will be amazed at just how much your child will grow this year. Most likely, your child has had the seeds of reading, writing, and math planted, and during fifth grade, those seeds will grow and blossom, making your child an accomplished reader, writer, and math student. You will see changes in your child's thinking, as he/she becomes more familiar with abstract concepts and symbols. The change will be dramatic – just compare a tiny seed with a full-grown sunflower! That's the kind of growth you'll see this year! You will be amazed at just how much your child will grow this year!

The loveliest flowers usually have the best gardener - and that's you! Staying involved in your child's education is the key to a successful year. Engage your child in conversation about his/her day, but know that children won't always give out much information. Students will come home with their "MOOSE" notebook every evening. You can use this as a springboard for discussion; instead of saying "What did you do at school today?" (The answer is often "nothing!"), you can say, "Oh, I see you're learning about.... what did you find out?"

Another way to stay involved is to check your child's "MOOSE" notebook EVERY evening. You'll usually find it packed with schoolwork and homework, projects, flyers, notices from the office, as well as notes from us. As daunting as it might be, try and sort through them and read each one; they often contain important information and reminders. Please make sure all homework is placed back in the homework folder each night to ensure it is returned to school on time. Homework will NOT be accepted otherwise. Please check and SIGN your child's agenda each night, and make sure that it is returned to school the next day.

Please contact us (dosje@richmond.k12.ga.us, owenssa@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us, reedca@boe.richmond.k12.ga.us) if you have any concerns or issues. We are confident that we can work through your concerns together at team/class level. Please send notes, EMAILs, or contact us via telephone (706-796-8428). Keep in mind that we are teaching your child during the day and will get back with you as soon as we can.

You may also use our website to answer your questions. Expect regular EMAILs from us to keep you informed! Class DOJO will also be used this school year to enhance our communication with you.

Below you will find some general information about our 5th grade team. Individual teachers may provide additional information.

5th Grade Course Description: Students will engage in a variety of topics in English Language Arts (ELA) related to reading, writing, grammar, and spelling/vocabulary. They will also discover and gain a more in-depth knowledge of math operations including place value, addition/subtraction, multiplication/division, fractions, geometry, algebra, and measurement operations. Students will also discover a range of science topics including physical and chemical changes, electricity/magnetism, earth surface features, classification of organisms, plant/animal cells, and micro-organisms. Social studies lessons will include a study of our American history from the Civil War through our present-day history.

Student Pick-Up: To help keep things growing "weed-free", it helps to remember our procedures. If you are picking your child up from school, or someone else is, please send us a signed and dated note with your child's full name on it. If your child will be riding a different bus than usual, a note each time is needed. If you are picking your child up early remember to go to the office and sign him/her out and the office staff will call for your child in the classroom. This will truly be appreciated!

Instructional Philosophy: Our instruction includes a performance-based, student-led, small group environment filled with engaging differentiated activities/projects. We will use as many researched-based strategies as possible to ensure the success of students. We have very high expectations for all students and encourage them to surpass their own expectations of becoming independent learners.

Major Course Goals: The Georgia Standards of Excellence will be used to facilitate instruction and learning in selected ELA, mathematics, science/health, and social studies topics. Once skills in these topics are mastered, students should gain an ability to use reasoning and thinking skills to better learn and understand other curriculum requirements that supports their academic success.

Major Course Projects and Instructional Activities: Students will use assigned rubrics to complete selected assignments. These assignments will require students to plan, research, write, and possibly present their assignments to the class.

Course Assessment Plan: Assigned rubrics will be used to assess students' projects and other selected activities. Students will also be given formative and summative assessments to assess their ELA, mathematics, science/health, and social studies skills. These assessments will be either computer-made, textbook-made, or/and teacher-made. Group/individual participation, conduct, homework assignments, class work, group work, presentations, and other assigned activities will also be assessed.

Classroom Expectations: Students are rewarded for following classroom and school rules (ritual and routines) at all times. This is part of their conduct grade. The FPS and Richmond County handbooks are filled with key information to help you and your student stay on track (dress code, electronic usage, etc). There are positive consequences for following the rules and also not so positive consequences for breaking the rules. Students have a choice! We have a responsibility to ensure that the classroom environment is conducive to teaching and to learning for all students.

** Students may bring in healthy snacks and plain bottled water to eat/drink during our afternoon snack time.

** Please ensure your child is dressed in accordance with the Richmond County dress code (proper dress, skirt and shorts length-even with leggings; leggings should not be worn alone with t-shirts/blouses, jeans should not contain holes; etc). Use a dollar bill IAW the Richmond County dress code manual to determine proper dress, skirt, skort, and shorts length.

Supplies and Materials Needed: Students will receive a separate list for supply/material requirements which includes pencils, scissors, glue, lined paper, colored folders, composition notebooks, spiral notebooks, 3-ring binder, dividers, etc.

** Please, please ensure your child comes to school with proper school supplies. Periodically ask your child if he/she needs additional paper, regular pencils, colored pencils, tissue, etc.

Homework Policy and Grading Scales: Students are rewarded for completing nightly homework, including some limited weekend requirements! Homework completion is part of the conduct grade. Please review and sign your child's agenda nightly. Homework is always written/typed in the agenda. So if your child tells you that they have no homework, something is wrong. If nothing else, 20-30 minutes of reading/logging is required nightly! Students will grade some homework/class work in class.

** For grading purposes, vocabulary work is worth 15% of students' reading grade. Spelling is worth 10%; writing is worth 25%; grammar is worth 10%; and reading comprehension activities are worth 40% of students' overall reading grades. Math requirements are broken down into homework/participation for 10% and class work/group work/assessments are 90% of the math grade. For science and social studies, 30% of grades are derived from assessments/projects/etc. Assessments make up 70% of the science and social studies grades.

** Students are rewarded for completing all class work. This is also part of their conduct grade. If work is not completed, students must make up the work some time during the day or for homework. If students miss class, they must make up all missed work. This is a student responsibility.

** Expect to see weekly graded paper folders every THURSDAY. Something is wrong if you don't see this folder and have not heard from us (via email, telephone, DOJO, or note in agendas) that folders will not go home. Please ask and check for it! Once you review the papers with your child, return any papers annotated to be returned, sign the folder cover sheet, and sign the behavior/academic cover sheet attached to the papers. A team newsletter may also be attached, or we may email to you or post it online if a newsletter is produced. The goal is to have all folders back on FRIDAYS (MONDAY at the latest). Students are rewarded for FRIDAY turn-ins.

** Students are also rewarded for reading 25 books this school year. Students are required to read every night (Myon or hard bound books) and to complete a summary/main idea/theme/etc of their reading on the reading log. Parents/Guardians should sign the log nightly. At times, students will also respond to their readings in other ways. Science and Social Studies homework readings may count toward this reading requirement on selected days.

Extra Help: Daily reading and math intervention will be provided to enhance students' academic learning. Extra help is also provided daily in the classroom. Please remember that homework is also considered extra help because it allows students to review skills learned/practiced in class. We will notify you when before school or after school tutoring is offered at school.

Time and Place to be Reached by Parent: As mentioned earlier, parents may contact us via the school website, class DOJO, email, note, or via the FPS office number.

Thank you in advance for your support and open communication this school year! We're looking forward to a successful year filled with lots of fun and rigorous instruction and learning! Students' success today will help them to become the leaders we will need to lead our country tomorrow!

Mrs. Dos, Mrs. Owens, and Ms. Reed