

NEWSLETTER

Message from the Principal: Mrs. Coburn

Welcome back to school! The faculty and staff join me in saying that we are happy to have you as part of the Chester family. It was great to see so many of you attend Open House night and the students were clearly excited to show off their new classrooms.

We are happy to have several new additions to what we are able to offer to our students! Due to the popularity of our STEM program, this year we will be expanding it to the K-2 classrooms on a monthly basis. Our kindergarten, first and second graders will now have the opportunity to experience hands on learning that enhances the classroom curriculum.

Chester is now offering a before and after school wrap around program. Please take advantage of this resource throughout the year. Student participation will be imperative to maintaining wrap around as a service that the school can offer.

We now have full-day preschool programming! It's been a delight to have the youngest members of our school community spend the entire day with us and increase their time on learning and practicing their social skills.

Throughout the year, if you have any questions, please call the school office. We feel that open and clear communication between school and home is important to the success of our educational program and the overall well-being of our students.

Sincerely,
Megan Coburn



and



Picture day is October 19th with retakes on December 18th

Fire Safety Day will be on October 12th conducted by the Chester Fire Department



What a wonderful beginning of the year we have had in preschool! Our class has nicely settled into our new FULL DAY routine and are very busy learning new and exciting things! It is inspiring to see all of the energy and excitement our students bring to the classroom everyday!

One of the main questions we hear from parents at the beginning of the year is, "What do you do in preschool? What will my child learn?" Well, we do a lot! The students will be learning **many** new things throughout the year. Not only will they be learning "academic" concepts, such as colors, letters, numbers, etc., but they will also learn and develop language, motor, and social-emotional skills. Preschool is the time where we can begin to "set the stage" for future educational success. It is important that students are able to be independent thinkers and problem solvers. We encourage our students to figure out ways to solve problems as well as begin to understand his/her role in the classroom community. Combined with structured group activities, we use play as a means for children to explore and learn about the world around them. Children greatly benefit from being in an environment where they can learn from and along side their peers, as well as from the adults in the classroom. Preschool is such a marvelous time for young children and our goal is to instill a love of learning that will continue throughout their educational careers.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year! Thank you for sharing your children with us! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me!!!

Mrs. Thomson

Kindergarten

Happy Fall to all of our Kindergarten families as well as to the rest of our Chester families. We have been so busy learning the daily routines of our classroom! We are getting pretty savvy at putting away our belongings in our cubbies, following directions, traveling the hallways of our school, sitting, listening, learning, cooperating, sharing, making friends, and so many more things!

We have begun our ELA and Math curriculums. We just finished a unit on Realistic Fiction with many stories about the beginning of Kindergarten. The children learned that realistic fiction stories are stories that could happen but did not. We have also been talking about how to tell what the characters in the story are feeling. The children loved listening to stories that were very relatable to their lives.

We are jumping into letter ID and sounds, what the difference between a letter, word and sentence are and recognizing the different sounds in words. We are doing activities to begin our work on handwriting skills. We will begin encouraging our kindergarten students to start writing their names with only the first letter as uppercase, with all of the rest being lower case letters, however our handwriting curriculum does focus on forming the capital letters first.

In Math we have been working with shapes! We are currently working on a unit for 2-dimensional shapes and learning how to navigate our Math workbooks. The children are enjoying making puzzles using squares, triangles, rhombuses, trapezoids and hexagons. They also learned a game called "Fill the Hexagon." In this game they roll a special dice with different shapes on it and learn how to combine many different shapes to make new shapes.

We are fast becoming proficient learners, listeners, observers, cooperators, friends, leaders, followers, lunch eaters, paper cutters, writers, singers, artists, and happy students! Before long, you won't even recognize us!

Happy Fall
Mrs. Bashista



fabulous first grade

September 2018

Greetings from Grade 1!!!

The First Grade class has been busy learning new classroom schedules and routines. Several days were spent developing class rules and forming a new community. Each day we begin with a morning meeting that incorporates community building, oral language story telling, ELA (English Language Arts) and math concepts. We are working again this year on our school-wide character development program "bucket filling" and many discussions circled around filling and dipping buckets.

In reading, we have been reviewing high-frequency words or sight words learned last year. We have also begun introducing our learning centers. During this time, students are rotating through centers that practice a variety of skills. All centers are independent and it gives them a chance to improve their reading, writing, and math skills. We also have been working on listening comprehension while we are listening to our read aloud books.

We will be using Lucy Calkins' Writing Workshop again this year. We have spent some time storytelling and we have launched writing workshop.

During this time, students are working on the writing process for writing personal narrative stories, or about something that happened to them one time. The goal is to write and sequence a personal narrative across three pages, including details.

During math we have been focusing on understanding addition and subtraction. We started chapter 1 in our math program "Go Math" which is all about addition. Ipads are also used to reinforce and expand on what we learned in our lessons throughout the day.

We began Science with learning about apples. We are learning about the different types of apples and the parts of an apple. We also learned about the life cycle of an apple through all four seasons.

We started the year with a fun book character study. The students did a good job learning about their character and filling out a poster about their character's traits. Then they shared with some of the other classes about them.

Happy Fall,
Mrs. Cadigan

2nd GRADE

Reading: The 2nd grade readers are making connections to both fiction and nonfiction readings. They are also learning about different reading strategies to help them decode words to become stronger readers.

Writing: The 2nd grade authors are writing about small moments in great detail! First they verbally share with our peers about their small moments. The second step is creating a rough draft. The final steps are organizing and editing their work to be presented.

Math: The 2nd grade mathematicians are learning how to break numbers into tens and ones. They are also discovering different ways to represent numbers!

Science: These scientists are learning how plants grow! They are learning through whole group discussions, read alouds, short video clips, and hands on activities!

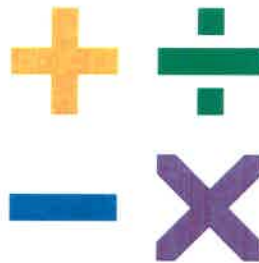
Social/Emotional: The 2nd graders are also learning how to work in large and small groups in a kind and respectful way. They are discovering how to wait, listen with respect and make connections to one another.



In 3rd grade we have been busy establishing classroom rules and routines that are expected in the classroom. We also have been continuing to get to know each other and discussing how to be a successful learner in class.

In order for students to be successful in 3rd grade, it is important that they do the following things -

- be patient with themselves since learning takes time
- respect classroom space and property
- respect and show kindness to all others in all settings



- follow directions and do what is asked
- be a good listener and don't distract
- be helpful
- focus on the task at hand
- be in control
- eyes on speaker
- complete homework
- read daily at home too
- practice math facts at home too

We have been working hard on using many different strategies in math to add and subtract 3-digit numbers. We will be graphing in the next math chapter and then moving right into multiplication.

In Reading we have been establishing procedures and routines in order to have a successful reading workshop.

In writing we have been focusing on how to write personal narratives (true stories about ourselves).

Students have also started STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) class on Fridays. We have also been working on force and motion.

Mrs. Brady



Greetings from 4th grade!

I want to take this opportunity to share some fun and creative ways to support learning at home. We use many educational and interactive websites throughout the school day. These websites support our curriculum and provide opportunities for additional practice and enrichment.

Google Classroom

Students sign in with their student e-mail accounts. I will list class codes for each subject.

Math: vguwd21

Science: sqnna

STEM: k1y6bb

www.portaportal.com

(Guest access: chester1212)

You can use our “home” page to find links for all subjects: reading, writing, language arts, math, social studies, and science. Students can use these links to practice skills learned in class or to extend their knowledge. (Students should have all of the passwords they need at home already.)

Learning math facts is extremely important! There are several sites that can be used for this. (Moby Max is a great starting point.)

These sites can also be used to come up with project ideas for homework challenges.

Encourage your child to go “above and beyond” regular homework assignments. Here is a list of ideas:

- Write a book report.
- Write a biography or autobiography.
- Write a poem.
- Research a topic that is interesting to you. Share what you learned.
- (A planet? An animal? A place like the Grand Canyon? Rocks and minerals?)
- Make a “science fair” project.
- (Weather? Simple machines? Life cycles?)
- Design a math game to play with your friends.
- Make a poster.



The possibilities are endless! Have fun!
Ms. Cabral

Mrs. Baker's Fifth Grade Class

The month of September has almost come to an end and we are off to a good start!!! Students came ready to learn and have acclimated well to 5th grade. This year takes on a whole new challenge of responsibilities and after only a few weeks students are meeting these expectations.

Thank you for initialing the agenda each night. It is important that you know what your child needs to complete for homework. Please continue to help them be successful with these new tasks.

In math we are learning about place value to the thousandths place and how to multiply by a two-digit number. Students are enjoying playing Khan, Splashmath and Prodigy online to help support their math skills. They can practice these skills at home also.

In social studies we have been immersed in the study of natural disasters. Students have been exploring the effects of floods and earthquakes. We watched some videos from the floods that just occurred a few weeks ago.

In science student are learning about the scientific method. They will soon be conducting their own hands-on experiments using physical and chemical properties/changes.

I look forward to an exciting year with your child. They are literally bouncing out of their seat with excitement and can't wait to see what the future has in store for us.





Chester Elementary School - September Nursing Notes 9/27/18

Feeling cooped up with all this rain? We're all spending more time indoors now. That means we're also in closer contact with our family and friends. So when one of us coughs or sneezes we can all be exposed to the germs. Every day now we're teaching your kids to cover their coughs and sneezes deep in their sleeves (not hands) so that others might avoid getting sick. If you notice that your child is using a hand to cover a cough or sneeze, tell them to wash their hands before touching anything else and teach them to cough into their sleeve where the germs will dry out and die. If your student is coughing or sneezing a lot, see if you can get a family member to take care of them at home that day. Students with a fever over 100 degrees and other signs of illness must be kept home from school. With your help we can try to keep all of your kids healthy and in school as much as possible.

Thanks for your help!

Bob Carlson, RN, Chester Elementary School Nurse

Fax#: 413-354-9618

Notes From Ms. Hanousek School Adjustment Counselor

One of the most common struggles that happen in the beginning of the school year is successfully creating a consistent, peaceful and productive homework time with your children. This article provides a simple template for creating a “no argument zone” during homework time.

Steps to Homework Success by Stacie Jones

1. Create a homework station. Kids, like adults, need structure. Giving them a designated place in your home for homework and projects will make it easier to stick with a routine. It will also give them their own place to put notes, assignment worksheets or even to store resources for ongoing projects. When everything is organized and “in its place”, it is a lot easier for kids to stay motivated.

2. Remove distractions. The most important and easiest of the steps to homework success is to remove distractions like electronics. This means cell phones are placed in another room, the music is turned off and the TV isn't on in the background. Distractions will not only make homework take longer and make it harder to concentrate.

3. Create a routine. Routine and structure are very important. It means your kids goes to their homework station at the same time each day to do their work. No play time first or doing things after dinner. They might even appreciate the routine after a period of adjustment!

4. Give them the right tools. Make sure you have supplies on hand for writing, drawing, measuring or research. If you don't have the tools on hand, be willing to find them or buy them. Keep their homework stations stocked with everything they'll need.

5. Help them when they struggle. Don't send them off to work without help. Be available for your kids to ask questions and seek answers if they are having a hard time. A learning curve is common with any new subject or material, and as a parent, keep your eyes open for ways you can help them succeed.

6. Reward kids for completed assignments or improved grades. No, I don't mean bribery. It's more like noticing their efforts and surprising them with a special treat, movie night out or something similar. It doesn't have to be a regular thing, but a way for you to show you've noticed how hard they have been working and that you are proud.

It boils down to being consistent, thinking outside the box when required and working with your kids' specific needs to develop a routine that works.