

The mission of Las Lomas School is to provide a foundation, with an emphasis on math and literacy, for all students to achieve their maximum potential in order to become independent life-long learners and positive contributing members of society.

August 27, 2013

Dear Parents,

Welcome to third grade! I am sincerely looking forward to working with you and your child this year. Below is some information about the curriculum and class procedures we will use in Room 32 this year.

Please visit our third grade website for in-depth information about our third grade curriculum and the state standards for third grade. You will also find a link to the school handbook and some great resources for students on our website. Also, please check out our classroom website for up coming events, resources, and photos of what is happening in Room 32. Please check it out!

### **Reading/Language Arts**

For reading/language arts I am using *SRA Open Court Reading*, guided reading at individual reading levels, teacher read aloud, and independent/silent reading. This will be done in whole class, independent, group and/or partner learning settings. Students who are ready will be given the opportunity to extend their learning through novel studies and other activities. I am also requiring at least twenty minutes of reading at home every week night as part of our homework.

### **Spelling**

Spelling words will come home as part of the homework packet. Please have your child study the words they missed on the pre-test. Spelling tests will usually be given each Friday. We will use the *Spelling Connections* practice workbook to practice spelling skills.

### **Writing**

We will be spending time each day working on writing assignments. I usually teach a min-lesson to the whole class on a given writing focus/topic (i.e. ideas, organization, topic sentences, punctuation) then the students will work independently, with partners, or in small groups on writing assignments and/or journaling. We will be writing narratives, summaries, friendly letters and notes, information reports, and response to literature.

### **Math**

We are using *Primary Mathematics*, a balanced program of hands-on exploration. Math will be taught using manipulatives, creative problem-solving activities, direct instruction, memorization, computation practice and quizzing of basic math facts. This will be done in whole class, independent, group and/or partner learning settings.

We will pay special attention to mastering the basic multiplication and division facts throughout the year. Students will take weekly time tests in class. Students are to practice these facts every night as part of their homework.

### **Social Studies**

We will be studying geography, local community history (Native Americans, pioneers, and explorers), and basic government/economy using the adopted textbook *Harcourt Reflections for California* and supplemental articles/materials.

## **Science**

We will be studying the Solar System (objects that move in the sky), adaptations of living things (plants and animals), and matter, energy, and light. Many of the science activities and lessons will be hands-on, using the FOSS Science Kits.

## **Art**

Students will experience art through instruction focusing on the elements of art. We will be using a variety of media. We will have several art lessons with Mrs. Ettinger.

## **Music – Specialist – Ms. Martha Lampert**

We will go to music every Friday at 9:45 – 10:15. Please visit Ms. Lampert website for information about her music program and schedule of performances (not available yet).

## **P.E. – Specialist - Mrs. McGee**

Students need to dress appropriately on P.E. days. They should wear comfortable safe shoes and clothes. Our P.E. is scheduled for Monday 2:50 – 3:30, and Tuesday 9:45 – 10:15, and Thursday 2:15 – 2:45 (100 minutes per week).

## **Technology**

We have four classroom computers and a SMARTboard that are used to supplement our daily learning. Our class is scheduled to go to the computer lab every Monday 9:05 – 9:40. We will use software programs that emphasize a number of skills, including the basic use and operation of a computer, research, and word processing.

## **Library – Specialists - Ms. Sharon Kelly and Ms. Bonnie**

We will go to the library every Thursday from 9:05-9:45. Students need to bring back their library books on this day.

## **Enrichment Activities**

Third graders will have the opportunity to participate in the following enrichment activities: library buddies, P.E. helpers, kindergarten playground buddies, pen pals with La Entrada students, and recycling program.

## **Homework**

Most homework for the week will be given to students in packets on Monday (or the first school day of the week). Nightly homework assignments should take approximately 20-30 minutes (plus 20 minutes of reading) to complete and are typically assignments that your child should be able to finish on their own. An adult needs to initial/sign the homework cover each night after checking that all the night's homework is neat and complete. Any unfinished homework will be completed at the Quiet Zone during recess. Students should keep their homework in the plastic folder I provided and bring it to school every day to be corrected.

## **Extra Credit Work**

Extra credit work will be offered on a continual basis to those who are ready and interested. The weekly homework will include at least one extra credit opportunity.

## **Testing**

Third graders are expected to take multiple reading, math, and writing assessments throughout the year. The state standards multiple choice STAR test will be given in May.

## **Dismissal Change**

If your child is to be dismissed in a different way from their official plan on a particular day, please write me a note for that day.

## **Classroom Management**

Along with academic achievement, students need to fulfill behavioral expectations in order to succeed in class. I have five rules that I expect students to adhere to at all times:

1. Raise your hand when you wish to speak
2. Stay in your assigned seat
3. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself
4. Treat property with respect
5. Do your personal best

We spent time going over each of these standards and what following them “looks like” and “sounds like” the first couple of days of school. After each break, we will have a class meeting to discuss them again as well.

While I do not expect many students to choose to break these standards, the following consequences are in place in the event that a standard gets broken:

- first time: friendly verbal warning
- second time: move stick to yellow
- third time: move stick to red - write class standards at home and parent signature

Consequences for repeated breaking of classroom standards may include student/teacher conference, phone call/e-mail to parents, parent/teacher/student conference, student/principal conference, and parent/principal conference.

## **Absences/Late**

Please inform the office of any absences. Our mornings start promptly at 9:00 am, so it is important that your child is at school a little before 9:00 am ready to come to class. It is difficult to find time for your child to make-up missed assignments, so please try to schedule routine appointments after school or during breaks. Reminder, if your child arrives after 9:00 am, they must check in at the office and get a green dot.

## **Water**

Students may bring a small sports-type bottle of water from home each day to keep at their desk. If the water bottle becomes a distraction they will lose the privilege of having it at their desk.

## **Birthdays**

We will recognize each child’s birthday in class. Summer birthdays will be recognized on the student’s half birthday, or close to it. Please remember that our school policy asks that you do not bring treats or distribute birthday party invitations on campus.

## **Lunch and Breaks**

Morning break is from 10:15 – 10:35. Students may bring a small snack to eat at morning break. A snack should be healthy and be able to be eaten in about 5 minutes. Students need time to go to the bathroom and move around a little during their break.

Lunch break is from 12:06 – 12:50. Our class will eat at the first seating at our assigned table. During this time they are expected to stay seated, eat, and appropriate socializing is encouraged. After they eat they have time to play, go to the bathroom, drink water, tie their shoes, etc.

Afternoon break is from 2:05 – 2:15. Students may bring a small snack to eat at afternoon break. A snack should be healthy and be able to be eaten in about 5 minutes. Students need time to go to the bathroom and move around a little during their break.

### Field Trips

We will be taking several field trips this year to support and deepen what we learn in class. On field trip days, please have your child come to school on time, dressed in layers and wearing comfortable shoes. So far the third grade team has planned field trips to the Woodside Store, the Planetarium at DeAnza College, La Entrada, and several guest speakers/programs that will come to our classroom.

### Classroom Help

I count on parents to help out in the classroom and am looking forward to working with you this year. Please look for notes in the Monday envelope for help needed for special projects/activities that come up during the year.

### Home School Connection

**Monday Envelope** – The Monday white envelope will contain important school notices and class work. Please have your child return the empty envelope on Tuesday.

**Classroom Newsletter** – I will be writing a newsletter every few weeks to let you know what is going on in our class. Look for it on our classroom website.

**Conferences** - The district has scheduled conference times in the fall and again in the spring. I will notify you about conference dates and times. During conference days, the school operates on a minimum day schedule. The parent-teacher conference is an important way for me to communicate information about your child's progress during the school year. It also provides you an opportunity to share with me information/concerns about your child. I look forward to meeting with you.

**Report Cards** - Report cards are issued three times during the year: November, March, and June.

If you have any additional questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact me.

Again, I look forward to working with you and your child this year!



Sincerely,

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