

We are very excited to welcome your families to our team. Together we are going to help your children succeed and grow as learners. The following is a handbook that includes valuable information that will also assist you in understanding the ins and outs of our classroom.

**Take Home Folders**

Each child will be using a plastic folder that was purchased at registration for his or her take home folder. The students will bring their folders home every night in their backpacks. One side of the folder will be labeled “Keep at Home.” The other side will be labeled “Return to School.” Please assist your child in removing the “Keep at Home” items nightly. Anything that needs to be sent to school can be placed on the “Return to School” side.

I will include a communication log in the binding of the folder. Please feel free to use the form to jot me a note. I will add notes about important events and will also include reminders about needing gym shoes and returning library books. Please record the number of minutes that your child reads each night. Second graders should read a minimum of 20 minutes per night. This can include reading at home from books sent home in book bags, books from the school or public library, or books from home. I ask that you record the minutes nightly, so if I notice a child isn’t reading, I can encourage him or her to read and help find reading material that is appropriate and that he or she may enjoy. Second grade has a monthly goal of 400 minutes.

**Newsletters**

A newsletter will be sent periodically to help keep you informed about that which is happening at school. Please be aware that a great deal of information is included in the monthly newsletters, so please take the time to read them.

**Birthdays**

When your child celebrates a birthday, he or she is welcome to bring a **store purchased** treat to school, but it is not necessary. If the snack requires utensils, etc. please be sure to send those with the snack. Unfortunately, I do not have a supply of such items in our classroom. Please save cakes to enjoy at home.

**Star Student of the Week**

When a student is the star student he or she is “highlighted” for a week. During your child’s week, I ask that he or she completes a poster I will send home to tell about him or herself so that we can all learn more about one another. I will try to schedule each student’s week near his or her birthday. If a child has a summer birthday, I will schedule him or her between other students’ birthdays. I will be sending home additional information about the star student activities approximately one to two weeks before it is your child’s turn.

**Daily Schedule**

8:30-9:30 – Math

9:30-9:45 – Snack

9:45-10:45 – Reading

10:45-11:15 – WIN

11:15-12:00 – Recess/Lunch

12:00-12:15 – Science/Social Studies

12:15-1:15 – Specials

1:15-2:15 – Writing

2:15-2:30 – Science/Social Studies

2:30-2:45 - Recess

2:45-3:15 – Science/Social Studies

**Specials Schedule**

Monday – Guidance and Olweus

Tuesday – Art

Wednesday – Music

Thursday – Phy. Ed.

Friday – Tech Time

**Snack and Milk Break**

The students will take a snack and milk break in the morning. Please feel free to send in a nutritious snack. Please refrain from sending candy or soda. The school also offers a breakfast and/or milk. If you choose to allow your child to have the school breakfast or milk, your family’s school lunch account will be charged accordingly. If you participate in the free/reduced lunch program, please contact the office if you would like information regarding the fees associated with breakfast and/or milk break.

**Reading**

The focus this year in reading will be on comprehension. As the students become more fluent with their reading, they need to focus more intently on understanding the information they are reading. There are many strategies that they learned in first grade that we revisit. The children will also be learning many new strategies this year. Please encourage your child to read as much as possible and model reading when he or she is with you. When reading together, please ask your child questions about the books he or she reads. This is an easy way to help build comprehension of text.

Our reading lessons are based on the Literacy Common Core Standards. We will also be using a resource called the Lucy Calkins Units of Study. Within the framework of The Lucy Calkins Units of Study we use a balanced approach, which includes a combination of focused strategy lessons, guided reading, and whole group mini-lessons. Students will read both fiction and non-fiction books.

**Reading Book Bags**

Book bags will be sent home by the end of September. The book bag books offer an opportunity for children to read and discuss “good fit” books at home. In order to allow for books to sit “out of circulation” for a few days between families, your child will bring their choice books home for the week on Mondays. Bag books will be handled a little differently than they were in first grade, as the books may not be exactly your child’s reading level, but will be in your child’s reading “range.” The focus will be on using and mastering the strategies we are discussing in class. **Guided reading books will also be sent home several nights a week, in addition to your child’s “choice” books, as the year gets underway**. Please be sure to prioritize the guided reading books so that your child is able to participate in discussions about them.

**Word Study**

 During the month of September, we will begin our review and practice of words which relate to particular phonics patterns. Each week, your child will be working on the phonics patterns during word work time. Understanding phonics patterns assists students in both reading and writing.

**Writing**

 Students in second grade will focus on developing stronger writing skills in a variety of ways. As in reading, we also use Lucy Calkins Units of Study resources in writing. The students will be focusing on the process of writing more than the “products” themselves. Please know writing pieces will be coming home in which the children have focused on different areas of the writing process, so not all of their spelling will be corrected in every piece and there may sometimes be grammatical errors. If it happens, please don’t be alarmed! Your child will learn the importance of proper spelling and grammar, but not in every single piece he or she writes. In certain products your child may focus on including details, in others he or she may work to improve his or her use of transitions or dialogue. Again, the process, not the product, will be the emphasis.

**The following are some of the skills/strategies we will focus on in writing:**

* Writing complete sentences: “painting a picture” for readers
* Topic statements
* Transitions
* Conclusion words and conclusions
* Informative reports
* Creative writing
* Editing writing

**Math**

We are using the series My Math for our core math instruction. Your child will learn about a wide range of math topics this year including, but not limited to: place value, addition and subtraction with regrouping, multiplication, division, fractions, measurement, geometry, and representing and interpreting data.

Your child will bring home workbook pages that were completed in class. Often times the entire workbook page will not be completed. We do not always feel it is necessary to complete all the problems to demonstrate an understanding of a concept or skill. The workbook pages will offer you the opportunity to see that which your child is focusing on in math. It also offers you the chance to see how well he or she understands the skills/concepts. If your child brings home a sheet that required several corrections, your child may benefit from extra review or practice at home.

Memorization of addition and subtraction facts 0-20 is also an expectation of students in second grade. Your child’s progress will be measured with a periodic timed test**. It is important for your child to spend time practicing math facts.** Please encourage your child to practice his or her math facts regularly as fact mastery (memorization) will not only make it easier for him or her to do more difficult problems in the future, it will also give him or her more confidence in math. In addition to math fact practice, please encourage your child to practice counting money and telling time. There are many fantastic math website links on our school district’s homepage ([www.elkhorn.k12.wi.us](http://www.elkhorn.k12.wi.us)). Using the websites for skill review is a fun way for children to practice.

**Science/Social Studies**

Most of the work we do in these subjects is hands-on. We will be doing in-class projects, reading literature and having great discussions. Please read the monthly newsletters sent home for more information pertaining to the specific ideas being studied in science and social studies.

**Our science topics are as follows:**

Grids and Games (technology programming)

The Changing Earth (erosion)

Properties of Matter

Form and Function

Life Cycles and Survival

Environmental Changes

**Our social studies topics include:**

People & Places - Community

Places Near & Far – The World & You

Ways of Living – Traditions, Customs & Diversity

People at Work- Earn, Save & Spend

America’s Past- Exploration, Settlement, New Country

America’s Government- Rights & Responsibilities

**Homework**

Homework is essential for reinforcing class work. I consider homework to be reading 20 minutes nightly and practicing math facts. I ask that you help by supervising your child while he or she is completing homework. Your child will become more confident and independent as the year progresses.

Some tips for completing homework are as follows:

* Create a quiet, comfortable place for your child to work. Turning off the T.V. often helps.
* Be available for your child in case questions arise.
* Stress the value of completing homework.
* Snuggle up at bedtime and read together. It is a perfect opportunity for your child to connect with you and share information about his or her day with you.
* Ask your child questions about that which he or she is reading. Reading independently is okay **on occasion**, but the large majority of your child’s reading time should be spent reading with someone so that he or she can discuss the books being read.
* Be positive - CELEBRATE even the smallest accomplishments.

**Odyssey/Edgenuity**

Odyssey/Edgenuity is an online computer learning program that the Elkhorn Area School District provides for students. The content of the learning program is aligned with state and national standards. It offers a variety of instructional approaches which support multiple learning styles and levels of achievement. The great thing about Odyssey/Edgenuity is that your child can access this program from both home and school by going to the district website- [www.elkhorn.k12.wi.us](http://www.elkhorn.k12.wi.us) Please click on the Odyssey link. Then a login screen will appear. Your child’s login and password will be sent home for your convenience

**Grading**

Grades are based on a combination of class participation, assignment quality and completion, test scores and effort. I will contact you if any concerns or problems arise. Feel free to contact me to check on the progress your child is making.

**Discipline**

I attempt to focus on positive behaviors in our class. Students can earn “Friday Free Time Minutes” by making good choices. When I catch someone “being good” or, if, as a group, the children are behaving appropriately, they can earn a minute for the class. On Friday afternoons we add the minutes and celebrate by having additional recess time or game time.

If there are discipline problems, it will be your child’s responsibility to write a note home informing you of the problem and the solution. If there is a serious or habitual problem, I will contact you directly.

**Contact Information**

Please feel free to contact me by phone or email if you have any concerns or questions. I am available mornings from 7:50 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. or after school from 3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Please feel free to email me as well. However, if there are changes in your child’s end of the day routine, please call the office. I usually only have the opportunity to check my email and phone messages in the morning before school and in the afternoon once the students have left.

Phone: 723-3297 ext. 1310

Email: foxel@elkhorn.k12.wi.us

 Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. I look forward to working closely with you this year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lis Fox-Feucht

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