

September 2018

Dear Fourth Grade Families:

Welcome back to P.S. 39 and to fourth grade, the best year in elementary school! I hope that you have had a wonderful vacation full of family, fun, and relaxation.

This year marks my 25th year teaching at PS 39. I began here as a parent and moved on to become a substitute teacher while I earned my graduate degree. My first day of substitute teaching was in my son's first grade class! I loved the community that PS 39 offers from the very start and became involved right away. I've been a PTA president, and a teacher in grades 1-4. 4th grade is my very favorite grade and I've been lucky to be here for many years!

The first few weeks of school are one of the busiest times of the year. I am looking forward to getting to know your children as well as determining their individual learning needs. I will be focusing on building our classroom community and establishing classroom routines and expectations. This is a crucial aspect of building a strong and successful community of learners. As a member of this special learning community, my goal is to ensure that every child reaches their full potential, and achieves more than they may have ever thought possible!

Your child will be receiving a **T.E.A.M.** (Together Everyone Achieves More) folder in the beginning of the school year. This folder must be brought back and forth to school everyday. Please check this folder each day, especially during these first few weeks of school for important papers and class updates. This week I will be asking you to complete a student information sheet so please fill that out as soon as you can. It helps me communicate with families. Be on the lookout for other important class information and news from the PTA.

Although we will be having parent engagement night on September 13th, I wanted to outline some of the important class policies and procedures so that we can have a successful start to the school year. Fourth grade is such a great year because the curriculum is rich, students are challenged every day, and the students have fun learning cooperatively with their classmates. Your children will become increasingly independent, and feel empowered and accomplished as they persevere through sometimes-difficult tasks. I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to spend this year in your child's life. I look forward to working together to make this the best year ever!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Ottavino

Welcome to 4th Grade

Daily Classroom Routines and Procedures

Here is a brief outline of some of the policies and procedures in 4th grade:

Attendance and Lateness

- **Our school hours are 8:20-2:40 everyday.** It is very important that your child be in school and **on time** every day. If they are sick, please do keep them home and call the school to let us know. **It is important for you to send an absence note upon your child's return to school.** *If your child is absent for 3 days or longer, they must bring in a doctor's note on the day they return.* I have attached an absent note form, which can be duplicated for your convenience. Arriving to school on time is crucial in fourth grade. Try your best to have your child arrive on time because when a student arrives late they are missing valuable instructional time as well as interrupting their classmates' learning. In addition, Middle Schools examine the number of times a student is late in 4th grade, when considering a student's acceptance.

Arrival and Dismissal

- The fourth-grade classes will be lining up outside each morning in the Upper 8th Street Yard. During Inclement weather, students will be lining up indoors in Room 103. Our class will dismiss by the upper playground. **If there is a change in your child's regular dismissal routine** please send us a note or an email. If your child has a playdate, a different adult picking them up or have permission that day to walk home alone, I need that **in writing**. To ensure your child's safety, every student must shake my hand before leaving so that I know who has been dismissed. Please remind your child to do this before leaving every day!

Snack

- This year the 4th and 5th grades have lunch from 12:52 to 1:46. Because of this, we will have a working snack time each day. Students **should** bring a small snack from home.

Gym

- This year our class has gym class period 7 on Tuesdays. I ask that your child **wear sneakers to school every day** for safety at recess and in the chance that our schedule changes and gym happens on a different day.

Health Issues and Medication

- Please make sure to fill out the attached student information sheet and indicate if your child has any health issues, particularly **food allergies and asthma**. If your child needs to take medication during the school day, you must obtain a 504 form from the school nurse and have your doctor fill it out. The nurse will keep the medication with

her and your child will visit the nurse when they need to use it. They may not keep any medications in their desk or book bag, including an asthma inhaler.

Homework

- We don't give a lot of homework in 4th grade but the homework we do give is quite meaningful. Each Monday your child will receive a homework agenda outlining the homework for the week. Sometimes we add or subtract homework from the agenda but it gives you and your child a look at the week ahead so that planning time is easier.

Parent-Teacher Communication

The 4th Grade Team is extremely responsive to parent concerns. The best way to contact us is through email. We will respond as quickly as we can. We ask that you do not email us after 8:00 during the school week as we have our own families to attend to. If you are having any concerns, it is best to contact us first. We are often able to clarify any questions or concerns that you have immediately. Based on our professional experiences, we have seen issues arise due to miscommunication especially within public, social, and Internet forums. Therefore, we respectfully request that you have a private conversation with us and give us an opportunity to resolve the issue. Of course, if we cannot resolve your concern we would encourage you to speak to Ms. DePaz because often she can be very helpful. We want to work together to make sure your child has a great year! Below you will find our specials schedule for the year.

Specials
Monday: Music - Period 3
Tuesday: Gym - Period 5
Wednesday: Science - Period 5
Thursday: Art - Period 1
Friday: Science - Period 3
Email: eottavino@ps39.org

As you know Tuesday afternoon from 2:45-3:30 will be dedicated to Parent Engagement time. This 40 minute time period will be used for face to face meetings, telephone conversations, written correspondence with families, website work, report cards, progress reports and preparing for any Parent Engagement Activities.

Reading

There is a lot to say about reading, which will be thoroughly discussed during Curriculum Night. One important change you should know now relates to your child's independent reading. This year I ask that my students read only books from our class library and not bring books from home, Monday through Thursday. On the weekends, I encourage reading books from home. This applies to the books that they will be practicing their lessons with and entering into their reading logs. Of course, we encourage our students to read other books that interest them at home after they have completed their schoolwork! This is an important change because it will allow us to make sure your children have the correct level books and the right genres for each reading unit. My library is constantly being refreshed and I have more than enough wonderful books to support our literacy curriculum. All of the children will have a wide variety of choices that they will love to read!

I look forward to sharing more information with you during our Parent Engagement Night on September 13th, 2016. Don't forget our first PTA Meeting will be on Tuesday September 25th at 7: pm. I look forward to a successful year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Ottavino

ABSENTEE NOTE

Print Student's First and Last Name

Class Number

REASON FOR ABSENCE

[For extended absences or chronic conditions, a doctor's note is required in addition to the parent's note.]

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S
SIGNATURE

ABSENTEE NOTE

Print Student's First and Last Name

Class Number

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