

1st Grade - October Newsletter

Dear Parents,

We have completed our first month of school and are now happily well into our Fall Semester studies. Most children have moved into static addition with golden beads while others are catching up with place value. Once your child is able to identify the place value (e.g. What does the "3" mean in the number "4293"? The correct answer is 3 units.) The child will have felt the tiny golden bead in their hand and tactically placed it in muscle memory. With help from other senses - sight and touch - the child will soon automatically know that the tiny unit bead represents the number "one." As we are becoming familiar with static addition (i.e. with no exchanges) each child will go on to dynamic addition. There is one other aspect of addition: Memorizing Math Facts. I encourage you to spend 5-10 minutes per night working with your child on math facts using flash cards available at most grocery stores and also at Lakeshore Education Supplies in San Leandro. This will take us to the end of the year for our 1st grade! The ultimate goal is to perform dynamic addition with no materials and to memorize math facts to +9's."As you can imagine, there are many steps between identifying place value to performing abstract dynamic addition with no materials at all. Each child has received a Math Homework with instructions to do 1 page a night, Monday thru Thursday.

We write a lot in 1st grade. We write a daily journal. An important aspect of writing is form and sound. Our 1st graders are currently learning about the form of a paragraph:

- Indent the first word in the first paragraph.
- Place a "." at the end of each sentence.
- Capitalize the first word in each sentence as well as the name of a special person, place, or thing.
- We require that most of the sounds of each word can be found on the page. ("apl" is acceptable for "apple", but "spl" is not.) As appropriate, help your child sound out the word."

We will also create books to document our cultural lessons. In the Montessori Elementary program we begin with the general (everything that exists) to the specific (How do fish breathe in the water?) We follow this path for all of our Cultural Studies: Geography, Zoology and Botany. As the children complete projects in each of these subjects, you can begin to build your collections of Cultural Studies Projects for display at home. We have nearly finished our examination of "Everything" which includes .. well... EVERYTHING: all Living and Non-living Things on earth. We have made books about what all living things must

do to stay alive: Eat, Excrete, Grow, Move, Sense, Reproduce, and Breathe. This is true for ALL LIVING THINGS including the bumble bee and an elephant! And, of course, your family as well! In **Zoology** we will spend the year learning about 10 phyla (families) including vertebrates and invertebrates (those living things that have a backbone and those that do not.) In **Geography** we will learn the names of the parts of our earth that are either made up of water or land. In **Botany** we will learn the many names and functions of parts of plants that help them stay alive.

-Upcoming Events-

Parent Conferences will be held on **Thursday and Friday, October 21st and 22nd**. I will be sending a sign-up sheet this week. Conferences are 20 minutes. It is a time set aside to discuss with you how your child is adjusting to First Grade. I will also show you some of your child's work.

Our annual **Elementary Historical Halloween Parade** will take place on Friday 29. It will be very fun to be able to once again have our parade! First Graders will dress up as an historical character. We have books you can borrow or you can visit your library to get some background on your child's character. However, during the parade your child will be required to only say the name of his character. No writing will be required.

Tuesday, Oct. 19th -Theme dress day! Golden State Warriors begin their new season today. Anyone with a Warriors shirt or jersey may wear it today instead of their uniform. Go Warriors!

Thurs & Fri, Oct. 21st & 22nd Parent Conferences; no regular classes or daycare

Friday, Oct. 29th - Historical Halloween Parade - 1:30 at the central lawn area. Parents are welcome to attend.

One last note about **COVID testing days**. Things went well last Friday, but we've thought of a few things to make it go even more smoothly. We will have the nurses set up their testing station at 8:30 at the lunch tables in front of our room. If you normally come at 8:45 we would ask you to please come 5 or 10 minutes early on Fridays so that the testing can be completed by 8:45 and thereby not take up too much of our morning class time. We'll see how this works and let you know if we make further changes. Thank you so much for being a part of this important work!

Much to look forward to in the coming weeks!

Best regards,

Toni