

McKinley Elementary School

Back-to-School Night

September 18, 2008

Dear Parents/Legal Guardians,

Here is an outline of information for your fourth/fifth grade child in Portable Excellence for the 2008-2009 year. Besides mastery of California State Standards in Language Arts, Math, Social Sciences, and Science, our goals for the year include learning to be honorable students and citizens by living up to the Seven Core Values of Portable Excellence: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

SUBJECTS TAUGHT

READING: Major emphasis will be placed on learning to enjoy good literature and sharing that enjoyment with others, while developing basic skills and comprehension.

LANGUAGE ARTS: English grammar, mechanics, composition, speaking, listening, spelling, and handwriting (emphasis on good cursive form).

MATH: Review all basic operations. Learn problem-solving strategies, data representation and analysis, geometry, measurement, fractions, and mental math.

SOCIAL STUDIES: Study of United States and California Geography and Cultural-History.

SCIENCE: Life, Earth, and Physical Sciences are taught and assessed.

VOCAL/INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC: Students have Vocal Music with Mrs. Maier on Tuesdays. Instrumental Music is taught by Ms. Maier and Mr. Wright during the Music Wheel on M, T, F.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Students have P.E. with Coach Youngblood on Mondays and Fridays. Proper shoes are required when taking part in P.E. activities.

ENRICHMENT: Students have Art in the art room on Thursdays with Ms. Moose.

TENTATIVE DAILY SCHEDULE

8:15	Music (T), Physical Education (M, F), Art (TH),
9:00	Opening/Physical Training/Language Arts
10:30	A.M. Recess
10:45	Universal Access/Silent Reading
11:15	BoardMath/Math
12:15	Lunch
1:00	Class Meeting/Sharing/Teacher Reading
1:20	Social Studies/Science
1:50	P.M. Recess
2:00	Instrumental Music/ELD Platooning/Science/Math Wheel
3:00	Dismissal (M,T,TH,F) - 1:50 Dismissal (W)

GRADING SYSTEM

Our grades are based on a numerical system. The achievement scores used are 5 (90%-100%), 4 (75% - 89%), 3 (65% - 74%), 2 (26% - 64%), and 1 (0%-25%). Students must do outstanding work to receive a high score of 5. A low score, 2 or 1, is only given if work is consistently unsatisfactory. Students should be encouraged to always work to the best of their abilities.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned Monday thru Friday. Students are instructed to take home unfinished class work, study math facts if they need to, and read a book for 30 minutes or more each night. As the year progresses, some long term assignments will be given in social studies, science, and literature. Homework is expected to be turned in on time, in good condition, and checked. There is no excuse for missing homework other than a family emergency. Students who miss more than one assignment in a given week will be placed on a Homework Contract.

READING LOG/BOOK REPORT PROJECTS

I expect that every night your child will read for 30 minutes from a book of their choice and record what they've read and the number of minutes read daily. This reading log must be signed by you every night. Please make sure that your child reads daily at home and fills in the reading log. Failure to complete the assignment or turn in the necessary papers will be counted as four missed assignments in my homework checklist. Book report projects will also be assigned during the year. I will give the students complete instructions on how to do each assignment.

BINDER ORGANIZATION

1. Children's work is to be kept in their binder, as explained in my letter that went home on the first day of school.
2. Students keep track of their work to be done and check it off as they complete it.
3. Binders should be kept neat and organized! I do occasional binder checks in class!

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Classroom rules are necessary to promote a safe learning environment for the students. The rules of this classroom are based on respect, hard work, and responsibility. Students are responsible for their own behavior. Children who follow the rules will be recognized positively.

CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR

1. Warning - Yellow Card
2. Recess Cleanup Duty - Red Card
3. Noon Recess Cleanup Duty/Wall - Orange Card
4. Note Home - Blue Card

Severe disruption may result in student being sent immediately to the principal.

REWARD SYSTEM

Students who receive "GOOD" in all three areas on their weekly progress reports will be placed on the *Honor Roll* for the following week. During that week, they will receive special privileges. Students will be able to earn Medals of Honor for their efforts in getting on the Honor Roll. To foster group cohesiveness, students are able to earn points for their groups when they all work well together. There will also be class rewards as the year progresses when the class as a whole is doing well

EDUCATIONAL FIELD TRIPS

School field trips are an excellent way of extending the students' learning beyond the walls of the classroom and the pages of their textbooks. It is in your child's best interest to attend every field trip with her or his class. You will always receive a parent permission slip one to two weeks prior to a field trip. The admission cost, if required, varies with each field trip and will be specified on the permission slip. If funding for a particular field trip is a hardship, please write a note explaining the situation to me. As always, students are expected to be on their best behavior on trips. Serious misbehavior may result in a student being prohibited from attending future field trips. We usually need 2-3 parent chaperones for each field trip. I will solicit chaperones on the permission slips.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION CAMP

Fifth graders at McKinley School have the wonderful opportunity to attend Outdoor Education Camp. We will attend Walker Creek Ranch Outdoor School in Marin County run by the Marin County Office of Education. Students will attend camp for four days and three nights towards the end of January 2009. The educational program is exceptional, with trained naturalists leading small groups of students on hikes and in activities in a variety of outdoor habitats. After hours, students live in modern cabins heated and equipped with bunk beds. Outdoor Education meets and exceeds the requirements of many state science standards.

The cost of the camp is about \$245.00 per student, including camp program fees and transportation costs. Students will be given the opportunity to raise ALL of their money for camp through a variety of fundraisers. Outdoor Education promises to be a wonderful experience for all who attend! More information will be coming soon!

SCHOOL-HOME COMMUNICATION

Every Friday I send home a weekly progress report on your child's progress for that week. The progress report covers classwork, homework, and behavior. The rating in classwork includes work done in class, participation, and use of class time. The rating in homework determines the frequency of work turned in, not the quality. Your child's goal is to receive "GOOD" in all three areas. Any work that is missing may be turned in the following Monday for credit. After that, it will be considered an "1" in the grade book. These reports are to be signed by you and returned the following Monday. Please write down any comments or questions that you may have so that we can keep communication open between home and school.

I also attach a Friday Memo to the weekly progress report informing you of what we are doing in Portable Excellence. Please expect it and take the time to read it. Also, please feel free to write, phone, or talk to me in person. The best time to reach me in the classroom is before and after school everyday. You may also reach me in the classroom during non-classtime at **(510) 618-4320 (EXT. 2955)** or via electronic mail at **LTRUONG@SANLEANDRO.K12.CA.US** (preferred).

SCHOLASTIC ARROW BOOK ORDERS

One of the best ways to ensure that your child has good books to read **AND** to help our classroom is by ordering books from Arrow. By ordering books for your child from Arrow, you also help the class by earning free books for our classroom library! I will send home a new Arrow book order form every month. To order books, simply follow the directions in the order form and remit full payment. Make personal checks payable to Scholastic Book Clubs. Although exact cash amounts are accepted, personal checks are preferred so that orders can be processed faster. Thank you!

SELFLESS SERVICE: RECYCLE FOR AMERICA:

This year, we are continuing a year-long Selfless Service Project started four years ago called "Recycle for America." Students are asked to bring in empty aluminum cans and plastic bottles (PETE #1). When the containers are full, I will take them to the redemption center. Whenever we accumulate \$10.00 worth of cans, we will send a check to a *student*-chosen charity. This way, students can contribute to the cause that they care most about! With everyone's selfless service, I know we can help those in need!

ATTENDANCE

Everyone knows that children benefit most from school when they are actually IN school and are participating. Whenever your child is late or absent, he or she must have a parent's note upon returning to school. You may also call the school's attendance phone line at **(510) 618-4321** to report absences!

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Thanks to all the families who've students have started wearing uniforms. If you haven't done so, please provide uniforms for your children as soon as possible. Our uniforms consist of white or light blue tops and navy blue bottoms. Please ensure that your child wears appropriate footwear for physical education and other physical activities daily. No open toe shoes, please!

CLASSROOM WISH LIST

Due to the ever increasing costs of supplies, I've made up a list of items I would like to have in my classroom for all the students to enjoy and benefit from. If you already have these items and would like to donate them for the students, would like to purchase them or contribute, any donation is truly appreciated and will be used for my class. Thank you!

1. 3rd-5th grade level chapter books
2. Various small treats (i.e. lollipops, Tootsie Rolls, Fruit Roll-ups, etc.) for rewards
3. Goldfish food (flakes or pellets) for aquarium
4. Decorative accessories for aquarium (i.e. decorative rocks, fake plants, sunken ships, etc.)
5. Marineland Rite-Size™ Filter Cartridges for Penguin® 110 Power Filters for aquarium
6. Chlorine removal water conditioner for aquarium (Tetra AquaSafe or similar)
7. Copier machine paper; various art supplies
8. Sports equipment (i.e. baseball gloves, softballs, bats, etc.)
9. Glade Plug-ins or AirWick refills (or similar)
10. Microwaveable popcorn for classroom rewards.
11. Classroom indoor plants

Your junk might be our treasure! Please ask if you are unsure if we can use something.

Thank you for taking the time to read this thoroughly. Your support of your child's learning and cooperation is greatly needed and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mr. Luan Truong