

# Mrs. Benecke's Handbook for 4K/K Parents/Guardians



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Dear Kinder-Parents/Guardians,

Welcome back to an exciting new school year! I'd like to take the opportunity to let you know how excited I am to have your child in my 4K/K multi-age classroom this coming school year! As our numbers stand right now, we will have 16 students in our class ~ 5 in 4K and 11 in 5K. Our 5K students will be coming Mondays – Fridays, and our 4K friends will be coming Mondays - Thursdays.

For those of you who don't already know me, my name is Cathy Benecke, and I have been teaching Kindergarten for the Northland Pines School District since 1992. Although the majority of my 30+ years of experience has been teaching strictly Kindergarten at the Land O' Lakes Elementary School, I have also taught several years of multi-age classes (4K/5K and a year of Kdg/First Grade). I have also previously served as Title I teacher for the District at the preschool, first and second grade levels, and have also taught in two area child care centers. I graduated from Winona State University in 1991, but the learning did not stop there! In addition to taking grad classes and attending educational conferences periodically during my career, I received my Master's Degree in Elementary Education in 1999 and my 316 Reading Teacher license in 2014.

In our time together, your child will be encouraged to explore, to make discoveries, and to learn about themselves and the world around them. We will work to help your child to develop social skills, to learn responsibility, and to make good choices. It is my goal to help your child develop an "I CAN!" attitude and an enthusiasm for life-long learning.

I am looking forward to working with your child, and am excited for the school year ahead. I am also looking forward to working with you, their parents/guardians... your child's first "teachers"... so that we can make this a truly memorable year for your child! As always, please feel free to contact me if you should have any questions, comments, or concerns throughout the year!

☺ Mrs. Benecke

## Mrs. Benecke's Contact Information:

Phone: 715-547-3619 (school office)  
Classroom Extension (6105)  
715-479-2244 (home)

Email: [cbenecke@npsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cbenecke@npsd.k12.wi.us)

Classroom Website: [www.npsd.k12.wi.us/faculty/cbenecke](http://www.npsd.k12.wi.us/faculty/cbenecke)

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## Emailing Me:

Please note: If I am at school, my email program is opened, and I check it periodically throughout the day when time allows. If I see emails from parents, I do my best to respond at my earliest convenience (i.e. recess, when kids are in specials), but sometimes this may not occur until after school, depending on our schedule. A “rule of thumb” to follow is, if you didn’t hear back from me, I haven’t read it yet.

If you are contacting me with **urgent** information that needs immediate attention (i.e. Tommy will be picked up today), please feel free to share this information with our school secretary, Sherrie, via phone (715-547-3619) or by simply including her address ([smcfarland@npsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:smcfarland@npsd.k12.wi.us)) in your email to me, to insure that we both get the message before the end of the school day.

## Seesaw:

As a way for us to share some of your school life with you, we use Seesaw ~ your child’s individual online journal. Throughout the year, I use Seesaw to communicate with individual parents/guardians and/or send out class announcements. I also use Seesaw to share links to the MANY MANY pictures I take during the year. I will also be teaching your child how to easily share pictures, videos, etc. with you using our classroom iPads. I encourage you to join our Seesaw class! Please let me know if you have any trouble signing up!



**Classroom Website:** ([www.npsd.k12.wi.us/faculty/cbenecke](http://www.npsd.k12.wi.us/faculty/cbenecke))

On our classroom site, you will find some information and links that Parents/Guardians may wish to check out throughout the year.

Our website also features a “Links for Kids” page, which your child is welcome to visit from home as well. This page features educational web-based games appropriate for 4K & games that our 5K students.

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**District Website** ([www.npsd.k12.wi.us](http://www.npsd.k12.wi.us).)

Our District’s also has a website to provide information about the schools in our District, our School Board, and information from Food Service. The District website is also where to look for monthly lunch menus, as well as activities calendars for the District. And should school need to be cancelled, you will see a message indicating that school has been cancelled/delayed due to inclement weather (snow, ice, etc.), on the home page. NPSD also has a Facebook page, in case you’d like to follow it for info and updates.

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### **Classroom Rules**

At the beginning of the school year, our class will discuss our classroom rules, also known as “The 4 Be’s”.

## **Our Classroom Rules**

1. **Be** a good listener.
2. **Be** kind to everyone.
3. **Be** safe.
4. **Be** the best student you can be!



We will refer to the classroom rules often, especially early in the school year, to discuss if a given behavior is following them. For example, we may discuss if taking another child's marker without asking is being kind (rule #2), or we may discuss if a student running in the hallway is being safe (rule #3). Through these discussions, your child may begin to self-regulate their behavior to decide if their behavior is following our established rules.

### Classroom Behavior Plan

Understanding that our class consists of students ranging in age from 4-6, I try to keep our classroom rules and our classroom behavior plan as easy to understand as possible. Students who stray from our classroom/school expectations, after being given several gentle reminders, will have their name written on the board under "Talk to the Teacher".



At some point during the day, when it works into our schedule, the child and I will meet to discuss the behavior that they did to get their name written on the board, to discuss the classroom rule that was broken, and to come up with alternative choices they could make in the future if a similar situation should come up. Once the situation has been discussed/resolved, the student will be asked to erase their name off the board.

If the reason for their name being on the board is somewhat serious (i.e. intentionally hurting someone, lying to the teacher, stealing, etc.), the child may be asked to write an apology note. With teacher-help, the child will compose an apology note to the person they have wronged. Copies will then be made so that each person involved gets a copy, as well as the teacher and possibly the school principal.

If a student is consistently having trouble following the rules/expectations, we may need to set up a parent/teacher conference to discuss the child's situation and to work together to come up with a plan that will help the child make better choices at school.

## **Daily Backpack & Folder Check**

It is very important that you get in the habit of checking your child's backpack each day. Your child may sometimes be bringing important notes home that may need your immediate attention - which I will try to put on bright-colored paper, so they are easier to locate among the rest of their "mail."



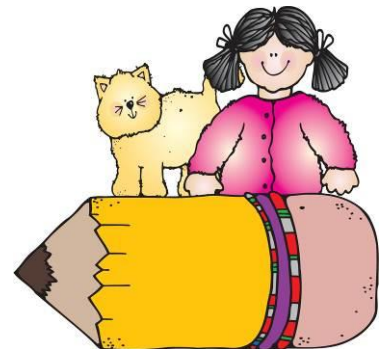
This may also be a good time for you to review the work that your child is bringing home, so that you can discuss with him/her the things we are learning about at school and to note any skill areas your child may need some extra at-home help with.

We will be using a folder each day to help transport papers/notes to and from school. Each morning, students will be asked to bring their folders into the classroom, where I will check them for any notes, lunch money, etc. from home. Don't worry; I usually count the folders daily to see that all of them make it into the classroom each day. At the end of the day, your child will pack up any notes, school work, etc. from school, for you to see.

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## **Weekly Newsletters**

Newsletters will typically be sent home on Mondays. Our newsletters are a way of letting you know what we are learning about in school each week, any possible homework assignments, as well as important dates to keep in mind. I will also be posting a digital copy of these newsletters in Seesaw.



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## **Monthly Calendar**

Each month a calendar will be sent home with your child. These calendars will highlight some important dates (PTA meetings, field trips, special presentations, school closings, etc.). I will also be posting a digital copy of these calendars in Seesaw.

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## Homework

As you know, homework is an extension of what is learned at school and can be a great way to share what we are learning with you! There will be times throughout the year that your child may have homework to complete that your child may need you to help with, such as testing family smoke detectors for Fire Safety Week or going outside to collect different kinds of leaves for an art/science project.



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## Learning to Read Books

Beginning in October, 4K students will be bringing home books for each letter of the alphabet that they have worked on learning to read at school. It would be great to give your 4K child the opportunity to read these stories to you at home as well. These books can be kept at home in a “reading basket/box” that your child can easily add their new books to each week.

Beginning in September, 5K students will be bringing books home. These books are ones that we have read together here at school. It would be great to give your 5K child the opportunity to reread these stories to you at home as well. These books can be kept at home in a “reading basket/box” that your child can easily add their new books to each week. By providing the opportunity for your child to repeatedly read these stories may help your child build their reading skills, such as turning the pages, using the pictures to help with unknown words, and to begin to recognize sight words (I, a, the, is), but may also help your child develop their confidence and “I Can” attitude toward reading.

Although we will allow a little time for coloring many of our books at school, some children may need some extra time to work on their books at home. Our school rule for coloring is, if there is a picture on each side of the page, we cannot use markers. Please let me know if you are in need of some crayons for your child to use to color their books at home.





## **Breakfast & Lunch**

A copy of the breakfast/lunch menu will be sent home with your child each month. It is also available on the District's website, under the "Food Service Information" link and on their Facebook page. Each day, your child will be able to choose from a variety of breakfast and hot lunches options, which are listed on the lunch calendar.



Please note that we do not refrigerate or microwave student cold lunch items. Also, students having cold lunch can either bring a beverage from home (no glass containers and no soda please) or they are welcome to select a milk to have at lunchtime.

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## **Daily Snack & Milk Break**

We will have a snack and milk break every day. Periodically, throughout the year, the children will be asked to bring in a snack for the class. It is preferable that you send in larger packages of food, because they are less costly and can last a long time. For example, a box of cereal would last us SEVERAL snack periods. Examples of large-package snacks that have been popular with the kids include cereal, graham crackers, Goldfish crackers, cereal bars, saltine crackers, fruit bars, cookies, pretzels, or any frozen treats.



Please know that you are also more than welcome to send in perishable snacks like cheese, yogurt cups, or mixed vegetables. We would just make sure we use those right away. We do have a fridge in our classroom to keep our milk and snacks cold.

And, of course, we would welcome any special occasion snacks, like if you'd like to send a special treat on your child's birthday or if you just get the urge to bake something up for us. 😊

When our snack supply is running low, I will send out a "Snack Alert" sheet asking for more snack items and will also post it digitally on Seesaw. Please write your name on your snack donation, so we can be sure to say "thank you" to your child at snacktime.

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## Library Books

Our class will be going to the library one day each week. During our visits, your child will get to listen to a story that is read to the class and then your child will be allowed to check out a library book, provided that he/she does not already have a book out. When your family has finished sharing the book, please return it to school, so your child may check out another book. If a book is lost or damaged, please notify the school. A replacement fee may be charged for lost or damaged books.

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## Book Orders

Book orders will be sent home with your child each month. For every dollar spent, our class will earn bonus points. These bonus points are then used to acquire books & other educational materials for our classroom.



To order, simply fill out the form found on the back page of the book order brochure. Return it to school with a check made out to the book club, “Scholastic.” Please do not send cash.

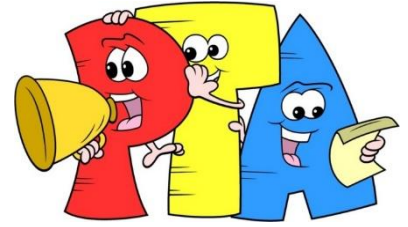
You may also place your book orders online using the Scholastic Book Clubs site at [www.scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://www.scholastic.com/bookclubs). This link is also available on our classroom website in the Parent Resources section. You will simply need to provide some registration information to verify who you are. You will then be provided with a username and password that can be used all year. During your registration process, you will also need to enter our unique Class Activation Code ~ **H4R6Y**.

You will then be able to use the same username and password each time you log in and place your orders throughout the year, using Scholastic’s secure server. Book orders can either be delivered right to your home or delivered to our classroom and sent home with your child.

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## PTA

Please consider joining our Parent Teacher Association. It is a great way to become involved in your child's school! Please feel free to attend some or all of these meetings... your input IS important! The PTA typically sponsors several special school events (presentations, field trips, Field Day, etc.) throughout the year, so whether you decide to join or not, please consider volunteering to help.



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## But Wait... There's More!

I realize this booklet has just touched the surface of many of classroom and school procedures that you may be wondering about. Please know that I will send informational notes home during the year that will describe some of our other classroom practices once they have been established (and tweaked where needed).

If you should have ANY question, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. You may also contact our principal, Carie Brock, by calling (715) 547-3619 or emailing [cbrock@npsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cbrock@npsd.k12.wi.us).



Thank you for taking the time to look over our informational booklet! I look forward to the year ahead of us, and I hope you are too! 😊