

# THE CLASSROOM CONNECTION

1 September 2020

-4th Grade-St. Germain Elementary

“Everything we do in here is for a reason!”



Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians:

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 4th Grade at St. Germain Elementary School located in room 106! I am very excited to be here and delighted to have your child in my class this school year. Your child has many exciting and rewarding experiences to look forward to throughout the coming year.

I have developed this newsletter to present a few classroom guidelines. I will be going over this with the students on the first day of school, but I feel it necessary for you to do the same at home so we are all working together with common understanding.

I will be communicating with you often throughout the year. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns at any time, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to an exciting, learning, and fun filled year, so let's get started!

## Classroom Discipline Plan

Classroom rules are as follows:

**DO WHAT'S RIGHT**

**DO THE BEST YOU CAN**

**TREAT OTHERS RIGHT**

Appropriate behavior will be positively reinforced with praise, recognition, positive calls/notes home, and chances to receive classroom rewards.

Inappropriate behavior will be negatively reinforced with students receiving a colored strike stick (popsicle stick):

**Green strike means initial warning.**

**Yellow strike means student uses a time out or recess to complete a goal sheet and conferences with the teacher.**

**Red strike means a parent/teacher contact occurs and the goal sheet will be sent home for parent involvement and signature.**

Severe misbehavior may result in immediate removal from the classroom or school.

## Highlights of the week to ask your child about:

- √ Learning Management System (LMS) Schoology
- √ Announcements
- √ Snacks/Snack milk
- √ Materials
- √ Transitions
- √ Showcase
- √ Social Distancing
- √ Masks
- √ Washing Hands
- √ Sanitizing
- √ Specials
- √ Schedule
- √ Lunch/recess routines
- √ School/classroom routines
- √ New Staff/students
- √ Water Bottles

## Homework

I typically assign schoolwork as opposed to homework however, homework may be necessary at times. Homework will be given to reinforce what has been learned in class, prepare students for upcoming lessons and extend and generalize concepts, teach responsibility, help students develop positive study habits, or if schoolwork hasn't been completed during school hours. At times homework may not be graded, simply viewed as practice. Other times homework will be graded as such:

\* (star) meaning work completed, demonstrates full understanding of skill or concept,

./ (check) meaning work completed, but mistakes show some misunderstandings,

- (minus) means work is incomplete, or complete misunderstanding.



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## School Routines

PBIS- PBIS is a systematic approach to establishing a positive school culture. PBIS is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors. Brain research continues to show that student learning cannot be maximized unless students feel comfortable, safe, and welcome. PBIS has helped create positive learning environments in schools across Wisconsin and the country and we will continue using it to improve the learning environment in the St. Germain Elementary School. The PBIS matrix is posted in each of our classrooms and throughout the school.

Virtues-A character education program that we use to promote and celebrate positive behaviors is called Virtues. Students are recognized immediately for displaying the virtues by staff members and also in a drawing at our Color Days throughout the year. A virtue is highlighted each week and posted in the classrooms and throughout the school.

Technology-Students are 1:1 with Chromebooks while in school. Whether in school, at home, or when internet/WiFi is available, students have log-ins for Google Classroom, Discovery Ed, Prodigy, ConnectED(Reading/Language Arts program), Bridges (Math), Epic, Google Drive, Typing Agent, and Spelling City. See your child for their log-in information and always practice good internet etiquette.

If students are misusing the technology I use a progressive approach. First offense-students are given a verbal warning, second- their device is taken away for 1/2 a day, third- device is taken away for a full day, etc...You will be notified once their device is taken away. If a serious misuse occurs their device may be taken away and their account disabled according to the technology agreement form signed at the beginning of the year.



## Grading Scale

Assessing student work will take two major forms; formative and summative. Formative work can be considered as daily work or "practice" work. Although not all practice work will be graded, I will use the following scale for graded work:

\* (star) work is completed and meets expectations. You are done.

./ (check) work is completed, but mistakes show some misunderstandings. Make corrections and hand back in.

- (minus) work is incomplete or complete misunderstanding shown. Please redo after further instruction and hand back in.

Summative work can be considered as end of unit projects, tests, or culminating activities. I will use the following scale:

4-Exceeding the Standard

3-Meeting the Standard

2-Progressing toward the Standard

1-Area of Concern



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## Responsive Classroom

This year you and your child will hear and see us implementing Responsive Classroom practices. Responsive Classroom practices teach children essential skills, incorporate fun activities in learning, structure the day, teach discipline, and build academic engagement. Our focus is on bringing together social-emotional and academic learning throughout the day. This research proven approach offers:

- Engaging academics,
- Builds positive community,
- Effectively manages classrooms, and
- Matches instruction to student's developmental strengths and needs.



I will continue to share more information about Responsive Classroom throughout the year in my weekly newsletters.



### Routines

Please take a few minutes to read and discuss the following classroom routines. This certainly doesn't contain all routines and is subject to change based on student/class needs. I want to explain some major routines so we are all on the same page in regards to them. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments please contact me any-time throughout the year.

**Math:** In math class, students are asked to complete work in pencil and correct in red pen. This year we will use the Bridges Math series. This math series teaches math using a combination of whole-group, small-group, and independent activities that are problem centered. Students engage in 6 kinds of activities. **Problems and Investigations** are whole-group, problems and investigations start as whole-group then move to individual and partner work. **Work Places** are engaging partner games. **Math Forums** are whole-group number talks. **Problem Strings** are fast-paced exercises focusing on using efficient strategies. **Number Corner** is a whole-group quick daily skills activity. **Assessments** are both observational and written. **Mastering basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts 0-12 is essential!**

**Reading/Language Arts:** Students will work on the quality and quantity of reading and writing this year. We focus a lot on written language. Students will be required to write in all subjects. Writing for all subjects will be assessed using the 6+1 Traits format.

If I am unable to read it, I am unable to grade it and it will be returned for a rewrite. Often students will have a choice of print, cursive, or typed form. Spelling will be embedded into the whole curriculum this year. We will also focus on sight/trick words. Students will practice their keyboarding skills using an online touch typing program. This can be accessed and practiced online. See your child for login information.

We will be using a comprehensive reading/writing/spelling and vocabulary series entitled Wonders. This

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program has leveled readings and books, trade books, practice workbooks, vocabulary lessons, spelling lessons, incorporated activities across the disciplines, among others.

Your child also has access to an independent, self-paced, and online reading library called Epic. See your child for login information.

Finally we are partnering up with the PTO, Vilas County Sheriff's Department, Plum Lake Ambulance Services, and Plum Lake Fire Department for a school wide reading program called Reading for Heroes.

Science: In addition to our new various units of study in science, we will be going to our Habitat Area weekly to collect and analyze a variety of data. We will record this data and discuss it according to our science themes. We also look forward to an environmental based field trip to a local nature center at the end of the year. We look forward to using an engaging online science supplement called Mystery Science and Mystery Doug.

## Routines

Take-Home Folder/Agendas: Students will have a "Take-Home Tuesday Folder" where all important papers to go home will be placed. For example, notes home, book orders, and work passed back- among others. Please look for this on Tuesdays. Student agendas or study buddies will come home everyday with class assignments and/or work to do. I ask that you go through their agendas **and sign or initial them daily**. I will mark their work with either a check (work was done in school) or a circle (work didn't get done in school). I will send out a short/simple weekly newsletter each Friday to let you know what we did during the week as well as, looking ahead to the next week. Included in the newsletter, each student will fill out what they did well during the week and what they will work on for the next week. Look for this on Friday's in their Take-Home folders.

Social Studies: We will focus on studying the regions of Wisconsin and Wisconsin government. We look forward to a field trip to Madison each year. Students will be working collaboratively to put together presentations about what they learned during each unit of study.

## SNACKS

Each day around mid morning students have the opportunity to bring their own snack from home and/or purchase a milk from school while I do a class read aloud book. While students reenergize and listen to a good story, we practice good oral reading habits and skills.



## Contact Information:

Northland Pines School District

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

St. Germain Elementary School

[http://www.npsd.k12.wi.us/stgelem\\_main.htm](http://www.npsd.k12.wi.us/stgelem_main.htm)

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Again, I am very excited to be here and to be working with your child. I look forward to a fun and learning filled year. If you ever have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

