

# First Grade Flash

## Welcome to First Grade!

This is the first edition of the first grade newsletter you will be receiving each month. It will update you on what your child is doing currently in the classroom and upcoming events that we will be embarking on in the near future.

The first grade team consists of 5 teachers: Mrs. Deutsch, Mrs. Hope, Mrs. Madison, Mrs. Rix and Mrs. Frank. We coordinate planning and other activities as much as possible to provide consistency across the grade level and ensure that all students are enjoying the benefits of our various experiences. We are extremely excited about working with your children this year. The first few weeks will be spent establishing routines and making new friends. We will also use this time to extensively test each student individually on their reading skills.

### What is Reading Initiative?

Reading Initiative is how we make our class sizes smaller for Language Arts. In school, we often refer to it as Book Club. Mrs. Deutsch, our Reading Initiative teacher, takes approximately 4-5 students from each of the four first grades and has them for a three-hour block in the morning. This allows us all to provide the small group instruction that fosters reading and writing success. Her class is not remedial, nor is it enrichment. She has a range of students, as do the rest of the classes. Formal reading testing is completed three times a year, and it is possible that the classes for Language Arts may change to create a narrower range of reading abilities in each classroom. This will allow for even more focused instruction. If you have any questions about this please feel free to call and talk to any one of us about Reading Initiative.

### Reminders:

**Water bottles:** Students are encouraged to keep water bottles at their desk so as to cut down on runs to the water fountain. A "sport top" is preferred to keep it from spilling. Please do not send juice or milk.

**Homework:** Please be sure to check your child's homework each night and return it to school the next day. The homework routine is attached to use as an extra reference.

**Forms:** Please return all discipline forms, parent-child re-unification forms, and yellow cards as soon as possible.

### Birthday Celebrations:

Please try to make your snacks healthy and peanut free! A list is provided inside!

### What we will be working on this month...

**Language Arts**—On September 1, we began testing each student individually. While this process is time consuming, it provides valuable information which shapes our instruction. Guided reading will start sometime towards the end of September. In the meantime, we will be doing an author study on **Kevin Henkes** and continuing to review letter sounds, sight words, and reading strategies. In **writing**, we will be working on expressing ideas and adding details.

**Math**—Our first unit covers number sense, the concept of one more and one less, story problems, and the use of various tools such as the number line and the hundreds chart to solve problems.

**Science**—Our science unit this month is **Constructions**. We will be exploring different building materials and classifying them by strength, weight, and other properties, as well as investigating the physics of force and motion by constructing walls, towers, and bridges.

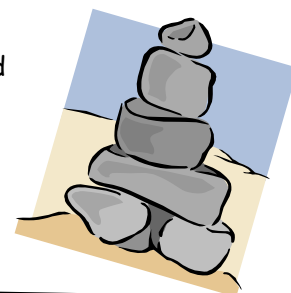
**Social Studies** - Our first unit focuses on making laws and decisions which we have used to explain our Panther Pledge and to create our classroom rules. We will also explore national symbols and historical figures that helped to shape our government.

### Important Dates:

**Thurs. 9/17** Back to School Night

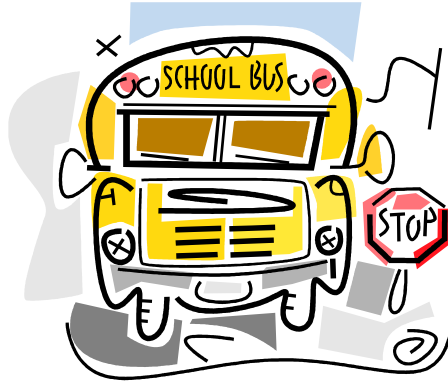
**Mon. 9/28** No School Yom Kippur

**Fri. 10/2** Early Release—Dismissal 12:35 p.m.



## Play Dates & Transportation

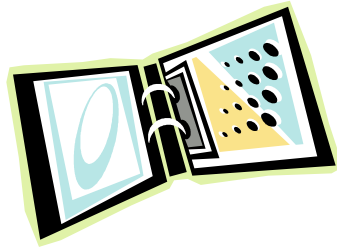
Due to the fact that so many of our buses are at or close to capacity, Ritchie Park now has a school policy that students who ride different buses and have "playdates" after school must be **picked up by a parent**, rather than presenting a note to the bus driver to allow an extra



student on the bus. Students who ride the same bus that are going home together are permitted to get off at the same stop as long as they have a note. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact your child's classroom teacher or the office.

## First-Grade Keepers

By now, you may have noticed your child's First-Grade Keeper. It is the binder that we use to keep all of our folders, papers and homework organized. **Your child's First-Grade Keeper should come home every night.** It is where you will find any papers or newsletters from the school or county, homework,



and your child's behavior folder.

The behavior folder is part of a school-wide initiative to keep you aware of your child's behavior through-out the day. **Please be sure to initial the appropriate box each**

**night when you check your child's homework.** There is another copy of the behavior letter attached to this newsletter that was sent home at the beginning of the school year if you need to review how we use this folder in class. Please be sure to return the entire binder to school **everyday**. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your child's classroom teacher.

## Homework Routine

**Monday - Make and Break -** In their First-Grade Keeper there is a folder labeled Make and Break. Students will bring home a sentence we created using sight words. It will have been cut up into individual words, and their job as homework is to glue it onto the paper in their notebook. Then they should practice writing it 3 times to work on proper sentence structure and handwriting. This homework will begin Monday, September 10th.

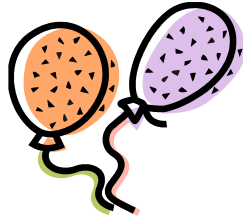
**Tuesday -** Respond to a story in writing. A paper with a writing prompt will be sent home. Students should draw a detailed picture and write at least one complete sentence. Please encourage them to work independently (but under your supervision) and try their best. We are not looking for perfect spelling but, rather, for them to write the sounds they hear, which will give us a better indication of where they are in their writing skills.

**Wednesday -** A math worksheet will be sent home. Please check it with your child.

**Thursday -** Read for 10 minutes and talk about the book. You have several options. You can read to your child, they can read to you, or you can take turns. Any book from home is fine. When we start guided reading, students will bring home "book bags" with books appropriate for their reading level, so you may choose from them as well. Have your child retell the story to you as best they can and talk about what they did or didn't like about the book.

## Birthday Treats

Students' birthdays will be recognized in the classroom by the homeroom teacher. If you choose to send in a treat for your child to share, please try to make it peanut free and healthy. The treat will be passed out before lunch and taken to the cafeteria. If you would like to be a part of your child's celebration at school, please join your child for lunch in the cafeteria. Don't forget to sign in at the



Happy  
Birthday!

office. A list of healthy treats follows. Please have treats individually packaged so that it is easy to serve and transport to the cafeteria.

- Graham crackers
  - Dried fruit/raisins
  - Veggie chips
  - Yogurt
    - Apple sauce
    - Fresh fruit
- Don't forget to re-

mind your child's teacher **at least one day ahead of time** that you will be sending in a treat .

Thank you so much for your cooperation in keeping our first graders safe and healthy. If you have any further questions, please contact your child's homeroom teacher.

Please note that this policy may change after further discussion at Back to School Night. This will be the policy adhered to until any changes are made.

# Thank You!

for helping our year get  
off to a wonderful start!

We have really appreciated your timeliness in returning forms and sending in supplies. Your continued support will no doubt make this year a success!

Thank you again,  
The First Grade Team

## Ritchie Park Elementary School

Primary Business Address  
Your Address Line 2  
Your Address Line 3  
Your Address Line 4

Phone: 555-555-5555  
Fax: 555-555-5555  
Email: xyz@microsoft.com

► Your business tag line  
here.

We're on the Web!  
example.microsoft.com



## Back Page Story Headline

This story can fit 175-225 words.

If your newsletter is folded and mailed, this story will appear on the back. So, it's a good idea to make it easy to read at a glance.

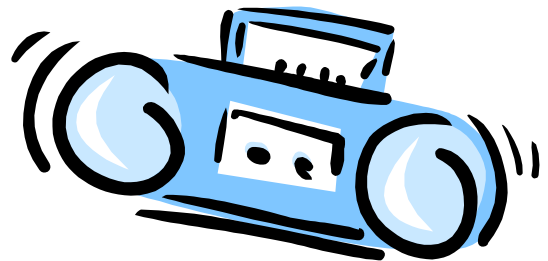
A question and answer session is a good way to quickly capture the attention of readers. You can either compile questions that you've received since the last edition or you can summarize some generic questions that are frequently asked about your organization.

A listing of names and titles of managers in your organization is a good way to give your newsletter a personal touch. If your organization is small, you may want to list the names of all employees.

If you have any prices of standard products or services, you can include a listing of those here. You may want to refer your readers to any other forms of communication that you've created for your organization.

You can also use this space to remind readers to mark their calendars for a regular event, such as a breakfast meeting for vendors every third Tuesday of the month, or a biannual charity auction.

If space is available, this is a good place to insert a clip art image or some other graphic.



Caption describing picture or graphic.

This would be a good place to insert a short paragraph about your organization. It might include the purpose of the organization, its mission, founding date, and a brief history. You could also include a brief list of the types of products, services, or programs your organization offers, the geographic area covered (for example, western U.S. or European markets), and a profile of the types of customers or members served.

It would also be useful to include a contact name for readers who want more information about the organization.