

"HOW WAS YOUR DAY, DEAR?"

3rd Grade Newsletter

August/September 2011

How many times have you asked your third grader, "How was your day, dear?" and heard the reply, "Fine." Then asked the question that naturally follows, "What did you do today?" and heard, "Nothing." Well...feel comforted knowing it is a *universal question* with a *universal answer!* Our newsletter is set up to equip you with timely information. In lieu of asking the *universal question*, the information will provide you with ideas for discussion with your child.

Parent/teacher/student communication is an extremely important part of your child's education. We all play an important role in the communication process. As teachers, it is our job to keep you abreast of the goings on in the classroom. Therefore, you will be receiving a newsletter periodically. Your child's responsibility is to promptly deliver the newsletter to you and return the signed portion to school. Your job is to read, discuss, and sign the newsletter. If we all work together, this means of communication is sure to be a success.

We look forward to working with you and your child! Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Anne Calabretta
Ms. Michelle Francis
Mr. Chris Higgins
Ms. Liz Hum
Ms. Yvonne Mar

We have read the newsletter.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date

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NEWS FLASH!!

MEET OUR TEAM

The third grade team is looking forward to a new and exciting year. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. This year, Mrs. Anne Calabretta, Ms. Michelle Francis, Mr. Chris Higgins, Ms. Liz Hum, and Ms. Yvonne Mar will make up the third grade team at Wyngate. We have many exciting things planned for your children for this upcoming year, and we look forward to seeing you at Back-To-School-Night.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework will be given four times a week. The assignments are typically in math, reading/language arts, or spelling. Occasionally, there will be a science, social studies, or writing assignment to complete. These assignments are reinforcement, or enrichment, to follow up on material presented during the instructional time. As such, the work should be done independently. The time it takes students to finish homework varies, but the time a third grader spends completing homework **should not exceed 40 minutes**. If your child is having trouble with an assignment, ***please send a note to the teacher so that the problem can be addressed in class.***

Addressing homework difficulty is not a parent responsibility. What should parents do? Parents should provide a quiet place at a consistent time each day for the completion of homework. Parents should also check to see if homework is complete and placed in the appropriate section of the binder. When homework arrives at school, it will be checked together as a class and then placed in the student's binder to go home. The goal of homework is to teach students how to be responsible and follow a routine. Therefore, students' homework assignments will not be graded. Students who do not complete their homework will remain in at recess until the assignment is completed.

It is suggested that all third graders purchase a STUDENT PLANNER from school (or another similar version) to record daily homework assignments in each day (**Students should bring a check payable for \$ 2.50 to Wyngate Elementary School for this student planner during the first week of school**). It is essential that students keep these assignment books in their binders at all times, and that parents check their child's assignment book each night to ensure that homework is completed.

FRIDAY FOLDERS AND PROGRESS REPORTS... COMING SOON!

If you were wondering why your child was asked to bring a pocket folder to school, well... this folder will become your child's **FRIDAY FOLDER**. In addition to completing homework, your child will be responsible for sharing the Friday Folder and **PROGRESS REPORT FOLDER** with you over the weekend. The Friday Folder will contain your child's completed work for the week. **All checked assignments in this folder should remain at home.** Long term homework assignments will be given at various times throughout the year. A student who is absent should plan a time with the teachers the day she/he returns to go over the assignments missed. This is a student responsibility. Each student will also bring home a weekly progress report. This progress report will provide parents and students with an idea of how each student is progressing in regard to their learning skills. It is our hope that through these weekly progress reports, students become more aware of the impact that the learning skills have on their academic success. Progress reports should be reviewed, signed, and returned the following Monday. Look for progress reports to begin in mid September.

DATA NOTEBOOKS

Third grade students will be keeping track of their academic progress in data notebooks. They will be able to analyze their progress in the areas of math, reading, and spelling. Therefore, students will be able to continue to work towards improving in all areas. These data notebooks will be sent home periodically so parents are kept informed about their child's progress as well. More detailed information will be provided for parents at Back-to-School Night.

EMPHASIS ON WRITING

Again this year, third graders will have writing as a separate subject from reading. Although writing will also occur during reading class, it will not be the emphasis. Writing will take place three to four times throughout the week. This year the third grade teachers are going to be keeping writing portfolios for each student. What does this mean for work coming home? Because using feedback is one of the learning skills on a student's report card, we feel that it's important for the students to keep all their previously graded writing papers in a portfolio to use when completing a new writing piece. Therefore, writing pieces will be kept in the classroom. These pieces will be shared during conference time, and will be available for parents to look through by contacting the teacher to set up a convenient time. As with all other subjects, you will be notified if the teacher feels that your child is struggling in a particular area.

MORNING LINE-UP

As Ms. Leister mentioned in *The Wednesday Monthly*, morning line-up will always be inside this year due to the large population the school currently has. Please have your children keep a book or two in their backpacks to read during morning line-up each day. With so many students in the hallway, having a book to read will help maintain order in the morning and afternoon while students are waiting. We will also speak with students about this matter.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

In addition to the previously mentioned information, we have included a Classroom Volunteer Form, and a Room Parent Form. Please make sure to peruse all papers included in this packet.

COMMUNICATION

Due to the fact that it is often difficult to reach us via phone, we have found that e-mail is the most efficient means of communication between teachers and parents. However, we realize that sometimes it is necessary to contact us through other means and we welcome all forms of teacher/parent communication. For your records we are providing you with our e-mail addresses:

Mrs. Calabretta -	Anne_K_Calabretta@mcpsmd.org
Ms. Francis -	Michelle_E_Francis@mcpsmd.org
Mr. Higgins -	Christopher_B_Higgins@mcpsmd.org
Ms. Hum -	Elizabeth_A_Hum@mcpsmd.org
Ms. Mar -	Yvonne_H_Mar@mcpsmd.org

REMINDER!!

Back to School Night for parents of third graders is Tuesday, September 6, 2011!! It is important to mark this evening on your calendar as it is our major vehicle in communicating third grade routines, curriculum, and expectations. You will receive more information about the schedule, but here is a heads up so you can plan accordingly. **The schedule will be as follows:**

7:00 – 7:10 Join the PTA for refreshments
7:10 – 7:50 Meet in Gym for the third grade presentation
8:00 – 8:40 Meet in your child's homeroom classroom

We look forward to meeting you!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!

NO SCHOOL

September 5 - Labor Day
September 29 - Rosh Hashanah

September 28 – ½ day

EVENTS

August 29 - First Day of School
September 6 - Back to School Night

IN LIEU OF... (THE UNIVERSAL QUESTION)

- What is your class job for this week?
- Which door do you exit from during a fire drill?
- What is the routine you follow when signing up for lunch?
- Who sits in your row in your classroom?
- What are the elements a bar graph should have?

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers have been a great help in the past. If you are able to volunteer for the following activities, please check them off and provide the times and days during the week you would usually be available.

Name _____

E-mail _____

Phone Number _____

Days Available _____

Times Available _____

_____ **Classroom Parties**

_____ **Classroom Activities**

Thank you in advance for your help this year. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Grade 3 Teachers