



I hope this will answer some questions you may have as we begin the school year.

Specials:

Monday: **Music** with Mrs. Palumbo

Tuesday: **P.E.** with Mrs. Vogan (Be sure to wear tennis shoes and no dresses or skirts.) and **Chapel, Outreach, or Prayer Groups** (wear honor shirt)

Wednesday: **Computer** with Mrs. Doty

Thursday: **Library** with Mrs. Bell (return books)

Friday: **Art** with Mrs. Van Dyke

Please visit the school website to access and read the GCS Family Handbook for dress code information and more! Also, I strongly encourage you to participate in the Honors Reading Program. More information is available on the school's website.

Snack: We will have a snack time each day, even on early dismissal days! Some ideas include fruit, vegetables, cheese, and crackers but please save sweets for dessert at lunch. Your child needs to bring a water bottle daily but please, no juice.

Lunch: Our class has lunch from 12:10-12:35 each day. Although we are equipped with a microwave oven, please try to limit lunches that need to be heated, since 15 students heating for 2 minutes each would take the entire lunch time.

Spelling: In late September, spelling words will be introduced in class on Monday and included in the weekly class newsletter. Please help your child study each night. A practice test is given on Thursday and the final test on Friday. During the week, we practice in our spelling workbook and do word work. Spellings tests consist of 9 spelling words, one sight word to memorize, and a dictated sentence. After the first few weeks, points are deducted for not having proper capitalization and punctuation.

Handwriting: Children learn pre-cursive handwriting. Grades are O (outstanding), S (satisfactory), and N (needs improvement.) Proper letter formation and neatness are encouraged.

Saxon Math: We will cover many concepts, using math manipulatives, songs, flashcards, and games. After a concept is introduced, we do a practice sheet (side A) and the back (side B) is often completed as homework. Please check your child's homework. If they are struggling with a concept at home then put a note next to it so I will know. When we start math facts we will be sending flashcards home for extra practice. Flashcards can stay at home. Math assessments are given after every 5 lessons and a newsletter goes home every 10 lessons. Students are given grades on homework, tests, daily work, and math facts.

FACTS-SIS (RENWEB): has grades, as well as report cards, lunch ordering, and school directory. It is important that everyone has access and checks it on a regular basis. Grades on FACTS-SIS/Renweb: math, Bible, spelling, and phonics. Not on FACTS-SIS: Heritage, Science, and handwriting (Scored: O, S, N) and reading (A reading progress report is sent home 3 times a year.)

Heritage and Science alternate throughout the year. Heritage includes map skills, historical figures, patriotic symbols, etc. Science includes push and pull, senses, tame and wild animals, etc.

Phonics: We spend a lot of time learning word attack skills, new word families, sight words, and grammar rules. Students will learn to write using complete sentences with correct punctuation. In January, we begin doing daily sentence edits.

Bible Verse: This information is located weekly on the class newsletter or "Bible Letter." Grading: 1 or 2 points off (depending on the length of the verse) for each "help" or prompt the teacher has to give. If a student needs 8 "helps" to recite the verse, he/she will be asked to practice the verse over the weekend and recite again on Monday, with 2 points deducted as a late grade. Students should recite word for word with reference (book, chapter, verse). I often use sign language or pictures to help students but they are not required to learn the sign language. Every morning we read a devotion and have a class prayer time. We practice our memory verse daily. We have a Bible lesson where students are graded on participation, workbook pages, and of course, reciting memory verses on Friday.

Playground: Tennis shoes are required for PE and closed-toe shoes for the playground. Students are not allowed to run around and play during recess if they are wearing sandals. They will only be allowed to walk around the play area or sit and visit with friends. Girls need to wear shorts or pants on PE day. Please discuss with your girls the importance of modesty, especially on the playground.

Homework: On nights when there is reading homework, have your child read the designated pages aloud to an adult. Remember to ask questions and discuss stories to strengthen comprehension skills. Please don't read past the assigned pages but your child is welcome to reread past homework assignments again. Green cards are in the back of your child's reading homework indicating assigned pages. Please initial the card and return the next day with reading material.

All math homework should be checked and initialed by a parent. Your child should be able to do math side B independently with only little guidance from you, such as reading directions. When checking homework, you are welcome to leave me notes with concepts your child is having difficulty with and then have your child correct the work. Points are not deducted from the grade if a child has corrected a wrong answer.

Please check your child's blue homework folder for occasional mid-week office notices. You may also send notes to me in this blue folder.

There is no homework on Wednesday or Friday. In addition to math homework and reading (Mon., Tues., Thurs.), students should review Bible verse and spelling words. Homework should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes per night.

Absences: Please call the school at 886-0937 when your child will be absent. Email me when possible. If your child will be leaving school early for appointments, please email me or call the office so I may have your child prepared to go home.

Monday folders and Class News: Each Monday, a white correspondence envelope will be sent home containing class work, parent information, and other notes. Please keep the papers each week, but return the envelope with your child the next day, signed and dated. Not all work is graded and many papers are completed as a class.

Our class news is sent to your e-mail account by Monday afternoon. This weekly Bible letter contains important class information such as the Bible memory verse and later, spelling words to study. I recommend you print it and keep a copy in the car or anywhere you can use it to study, or be able to access it on your phone. Please see the weekly Warrior newsletter for school reminders, as well as the GCS website.

Birthdays: Birthdays are very special for first graders! Students choose several items from the birthday bag and the class makes a special book for the birthday child. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate in May. We do not celebrate birthdays with food in the classroom due to food allergies.

If you choose to send in party invitations you must send in one for each child in the classroom. Another option is to invite all girls or all boys from the class. Neither children nor parents should distribute invitations to students at school.

Lost and Found: Please label your child's belongings such as lunch box, backpack, jackets so if they turn up in lost and found they can be easily returned.

Behavior: Students begin each day with their name on "Ready to Learn" on our class behavior chart.

- Ready to Learn (green)
- Wasting Learning Time (yellow, warning)
- Wasting Learning Time (orange, consequence)
- Wasting Learning Time (red, consequence/ office visit)

Names can be moved for interrupting repeatedly, disobeying, playing during learning time, etc. Consequences include meeting with the teacher to discuss the problem and how to improve and loss of recess time or related consequence. Daily behavior will be charted and parents notified if the same behavior continues to occur.

Polite-mites are given by special teachers for showing honor, respect, and following class rules. The class turns these in weekly to the office. When a school goal is met, the elementary school receives a "No Homework Night."

In addition, our class works together towards earning "gumballs" to earn class rewards such as extra recess, a movie, craft, or treasure box. Gumballs are added for everyone returning white envelopes the next day, math homework signed, reading books returned and more!

We also make a point to verbally recognize students who are showing honor by treating others as special, having a good attitude, and doing more than what is expected of them. We remind the students of our motto "Coram Deo:" "To live *coram Deo* is to live one's entire life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, to the glory of God."

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at
kgingerich@gcswarriors.org

Cell phone: 471-9107 Please leave a message if you get my voicemail and I will return your call before 9:00 pm. You can also reach me between 7:00-7:30 am.