

Fifth Grade Parent Handbook 2011-2012



**Mr. Bud Harris
Mrs. Erika Morreale
Mrs. Caitlin Thomas**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Fifth Grade. We believe that education is the root of all life experiences. We want to aid in the development of your child, both academically and socially, so that they may not only succeed, but thrive in today's dynamic society.

We look forward to the year ahead of us, which will be full of excitement, challenges, and growth for your children. We have compiled this packet to provide you with information pertaining to your child's education that is specific to Fifth Grade.

OUR GOAL

Our goal is to create a learning environment that inspires students to be passionate learners. A passionate learner possesses the following qualities:

- asks questions
- goes beyond what is asked
- takes risks
- expresses natural curiosity

These four qualities empower students to actively participate in learning. For this reason, we will strive to incorporate strategies that promote these qualities into every aspect of what we do in the classroom.

Beside these four qualities, we will also be looking at the "**Habits of Mind**." These habits are life long learning strategies that will assist students in their pathway of learning. The Habits of Mind are:

- Persistence
- Managing impulsivity
- Listening with understanding and empathy
- Thinking flexibly
- Finding humor
- Thinking about thinking
- Striving for accuracy
- Creating, imagining, innovating
- Taking responsible risk
- Questioning and posing problems
- Applying past knowledge to new situations
- Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision
- Gathering data through all senses
- Responding with wonderment and awe
- Thinking interdependently
- Remaining open to continuous learning

TEAM TEACHING

We believe that team teaching is a vital step in preparing students for the transition to middle school. Team Teaching allows us to offer students more depth in subject areas. It also gives your child exposure to practice changing classes and to interact with several teachers. We will have a three teacher rotation with Social Studies, Science and Language Arts with your student's homeroom class remaining the same.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

It is important that students are responsible for themselves and their actions. To ensure that the classrooms run smoothly. The expectations are:

- respect the rights, feelings and beliefs of others
- take responsibility for finishing school work and homework
- follow classroom and school rules
- understand their actions have direct consequences either positive/negative

It is essential that we help children learn to take responsibility for their actions and work. As part of the transition to middle school, it is important that the responsibility for communication and completion of assignments shifts primarily to the students. The role of parents and teachers is to help the student fully realize this responsibility.

HOMEWORK POLICY

We believe that homework is an essential part of your child's education. It reinforces what is taught during the day. The students will have homework Monday through Thursday. A major focus of Fifth Grade is teaching students to take more responsibility for their school work and homework, particularly completing and turning in assignments. Missing and late assignments will effect student's grades. We understand that things happen in life, so if for some reason your child cannot complete their homework assignments on an emergency basis, please write a note about the situation.

This year for Fifth Grade homework we will try to stick to a predictable routine. If classwork is unfinished, it will be sent home as homework.

Monday- Students will receive a Reading Log and Writing Assignment. The Reading Log will have an "Observation Topic" that the student will have to use each day of that week. Students will read 30 minutes each night, record their time and pages read, and write an observation. The Writing Assignment includes a "Word Bank" where students will write their Spelling words. Then they will write a response to the "Question". They will need to include their Spelling words in their writing.

Tuesday- Students will continue their Reading Log. On their Writing Assignment they will edit in color on their rough draft.

Wednesday- Students will continue their Reading Log. On their Writing Assignment they will reread their rough draft, then write a final draft fixing all edited corrections on the back side of their paper.

Thursday- Students will continue their Reading Log. Any unfinished piece of their Writing Assignment must be finished tonight. All Reading Logs and Writing Assignments will be collected on FRIDAY MORNING. Students will also practice a “Visualization” approach to studying their Spelling words. The cards they use for this assignment do not need to be turned in to their teacher. Spelling tests will be held on Friday mornings.

Friday- Typically there is no weekend homework. Although, there will be ongoing assignments that may be due at a later date. Such assignments will require students to manage their time wisely. Notes will be sent home to inform parents when students are working on lengthy assignments that are due over an extended time. We also encourage a minimum of 30 minutes of reading over the weekend. This will not be included on their Reading Logs. *Friday folder comment sheet should be reviewed and returned on Monday.

One way to help your child manage their homework is to review their planner with them regularly. By establishing a planner routine, it will help your child be successful in 5th grade and in middle school. Planners will be checked on Thursdays or Fridays for a parent signature. Please review your student’s planner during the course of the week and sign it at least once. This will ensure that you noticed what the student’s assignments were for the week and what is missing. Failure to turn in homework when due will result in the student staying in for recess that day and, if needed, they will stay after school. If students need to stay after school, they will be making a phone call home. If your child is sick and needs to stay home, don’t worry about homework for that day. However, it will be the responsibility of the student to get the missed assignments when they return. Your child will have two school days to complete the missing work.

SNACKS AND BIRTHDAYS

We have found that a child’s stomach can get quite empty before the end of the morning and with an empty stomach comes lack of attention, irritability and tiredness. So by letting the child have a **SMALL, HEALTHY** snack, they are able to maintain a better attention span and work harder throughout the morning. Therefore, the student will be able to bring a snack to eat in the morning.

When your child has a birthday to celebrate, they are welcome to bring in treats to share with the class. Those children who have summer birthdays are encouraged to pick an “un-birthday” to celebrate.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is aligned with district and state standards. The purpose of the grading system is to help children evaluate their work, and clearly communicate academic progress. Students will receive a progress grade as well as an academic

performance grade. Their grades are based on daily assignments, projects, quizzes, tests, and overall effort and motivation as well as understanding towards concepts.

Student Progress

E = Demonstrates excellent progress
G = Demonstrates very good progress
S = Demonstrates some progress
N = Demonstrates no progress

Academic progress

- 4** Advanced achievement of the standard:
Skills and concepts are accomplished **INDEPENDENTLY** and **CONSISTENTLY**.
Create products that are unique and demonstrate in-depth and critical thinking.
- 3** Proficient achievement of the standard
Grade level standard; skills and concepts are consistently accomplished with minimal or no assistance; creates products that are of high quality and demonstrate thought.
- 2** Partial achievement of the standard
Student is performing near grade level: skills and concepts are emerging with practice and with teacher assistance; creates products that need refinement.
- 1** Does not meet the standard
The student is not making adequate progress toward grade level standards, skills and concepts need repeated practice and frequent guidance from the teacher; inconsistent quality of related problems.

FRIDAY FOLDER

The school and classroom notes will be sent home in the Friday Folder. You will also receive some of their work in the Friday Folder. There is also a parent comment and signature sheet that will go home in the folder during the first trimester. Please try and find some time to go over your child's work with them, sign the folder each weekend and send the folder back on the following Monday. This should help to keep parents and teacher informed about your child's progress. As the year progresses, we will phase out the comment sheet and shift much of the communication and responsibility to the student.

WEBSITES AND NEWSLETTERS

Fifth grade has a grade level webpage that displays the BVSD fifth grade curriculum, standards, and expectations. You can also link from the fifth grade page to each fifth grade teacher's individual webpage. Please check the various teacher websites for updates, assignments, and upcoming events.

5th grade newsletters will be online at the beginning of each month with an overview of the activities and events.

CONTACT INFORMATION

These numbers ring directly to the various teacher's classroom. Please remember that during the school day, your child's teacher may not be able to answer or return phone calls until after school. Please leave a detailed voicemail.

Attendance 720-561-4502
Main Office 720-561-4500
Bud Harris 720-561-4527
Erika Morreale 720-561-4536
Caitlin Thomas 720-561-4510

5th grade extensions:

In fifth grade we have a variety of extensions that are available to the students. One of those extensions is Instrumental Music. Instrumental Music is offered twice a week and is taught by middle school band teachers. If the students do not take Instrumental Music, they will not be given that opportunity in middle school. They will be taking choir in 6th grade. Please look for notices and dates from the band teachers.

Kindergarten Buddies is a great way for fifth grade students to mentor and support younger students. Starting in mid-September, the fifth grade students will be supporting a kindergartener in reading, writing, technology and math.

Outdoor Education is a science rich experience for fifth graders at Coal Creek. During Outdoor Education, the students will be participating in team building activities. We will be attending Outdoor Education in May. Exact dates will be sent home as soon as they are confirmed. More information on OE activities and schedules will be sent home in the Spring. Scholarships are available. There will also be a parent information meeting regarding Outdoor Ed in the beginning of April.

We are looking forward to a GREAT year working together with you and your children. Please contact us with any questions.

Thank you,
The Fifth Grade Team
Bud, Erika, and Catie

CURRICULUM FOR FIFTH GRADE

Language Arts

1st trimester

Author Study: Avi
Literature Circles
Picture Book Authors
Personal Narrative
Biography

2nd trimester

Historical Fiction
Literature Circles
Survival Fiction
Research Paper
Persuasive Essay

3rd trimester

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry
Immigration Historical Fiction
Independent Read
Memoir
Poetry

Math

1st trimester

Mathematical Thinking
Computation
Geometry

2nd trimester

Fractions, Decimals, %
Graphs and Tables
Measurement

3rd trimester

Rates of Change
Probability and Statistics
Patterns and Algebra

Social Studies

1st trimester

Constitution
Current events (TFK)

2nd trimester

Civil War
Current events (TFK)
Western Expansion

3rd trimester

Immigration
Current events (TFK)
Industrial Revolution

(TFK - Time Magazine for Kids)

Science

1st trimester

Scientific Process
Landforms
Eco-Cycle

2nd trimester

Science Fair
Variables
Food Chain

3rd trimester

Human Growth and Development
Mixtures and Solutions
Outdoor Education