

Fourth Grade Parent Handbook
2011 - 2012

Ms. Cindy Hall

720-561-4526

Cindy.hall@bvsd.org

Mr. Mark McCarthy

720-561-4534

Mark.mccarthy@bvsd.org

Mrs. Sue Myers

720-561-4537

Suzan.myers@bvsd.org

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Fourth Grade. We believe that this is a year of increased student responsibility and independence. Our goal is to empower your child in that journey with a foundation of positive learning behaviors and knowledge of tools and strategies that will remain with them throughout their educational career.

We are excited about the year ahead of us. It will be filled with growth opportunities, fun, and learning challenges. This packet has been compiled to provide you with information pertaining to your child's education that is specific to Fourth Grade.

"ROCKS"

The acronym for Coal Creek's positive behavior system. Ask your 4th grader and he or she should know the words and behaviors we attribute to each of the letters:

R - Responsibility

O - Ownership

C - Cooperation

K - Kindness

S - Safety

As classroom communities, we review, discuss and students model both appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and expectations for the classroom, cafeteria, and hallways, and on the playground. In establishing a PBS system at Coal Creek, we believe that positive learning behaviors will become the expectation, focus and norm of both students and teachers. Once a month, individual students will be recognized as **ROCK STARS**.

Habits of Mind

Embedded in the Boulder Valley Curriculum that is taught at Coal Creek, we infuse lifelong learning and living strategies. These habits include:

Applying past knowledge to new situations

Listening with understanding and empathy

Remaining open to continuous learning

Responding with wonderment and awe

Creating, imagining, innovating

Thinking and communicating with clarity

Questioning and posing problems

Gathering data through all senses

Listening with understanding and empathy

Managing impulsivity

Thinking flexibly

Finding humor

Thinking about thinking

Taking responsible risks

Thinking interdependently

Striving for accuracy

Persistence

Team Teaching

Coal Creek students are introduced to the team teaching concept in fourth grade. Team Teaching allows us to get to know all the students, and the students become very familiar with us. In addition, moving to different classes provides students the opportunity to practice changing classes. We will have a three teacher rotation with Social Studies, Science, and the Wheel which will include several short rotations of topics including Health and Safety, Grammar and Conventions, Poetry, Technology, and Research.

Student Expectations

The expectation is that fourth graders are responsible for completing their nightly homework and returning it to school the following day, thoroughly and accurately completing their planners each morning and getting a parent signature in the planner each evening. This increased responsibility is part of the maturation process. We expect that parents work with us in ensuring students learn and accept their responsibilities, without placing blame on parents or teachers for something that has been forgotten or not completed.

Homework Policy

Most weeks, Fourth Graders will have homework Monday through Thursday evenings. This year, homework will focus on reading, writing, and math.

- The math homework is due the following morning and reinforces what has been taught during the day.
- The Reading Log will be turned in every Friday and will include a log of your student's nightly reading and short observations. This log must include time and pages read, observations, and a parent signature.
- The Writing Assignment will be a weekly paragraph that will incorporate writing, editing, spelling, grammar and conventions, and cursive. Each Monday, the students will receive a topic for the paragraph as well as a list of words to include. They will write a rough draft one night, proofread and edit it another night, revise and rewrite it in their best handwriting another night, and turn it in on Friday morning.
- Math homework is due the next day. If not turned in, your student will miss recess that day. The Reading and Writing Homework due on Fridays will also result in missed recess on Friday if not turned in. Your student will miss recess the following week until the Reading and Writing are complete for the prior week. Missing and late assignments are indicated on the Friday folder sheet, and will affect the student's grades. We understand that

there may be a need for an exception. If for some reason your child cannot complete his or her homework, please write a note explaining the situation.

- Please review and sign your child's planner nightly upon reading/homework completion. It is a great way to communicate about what is happening in the classroom and in the various content areas.
- Special assignments may come up as the year progresses to cover work not completed in class or special projects.
- If your child is sick and needs to stay home, do not worry about homework that day. Upon return, the student will be responsible to get the missed assignments, and will be given two school days to complete the missing work.

Snacks and Birthdays

Many fourth graders get hungry prior to lunch. We know that they can get irritable and tired when their stomachs are empty. Mid-morning we provide time for the students to eat a **small, healthy** snack. Ideas for snacks include fresh vegetables and fruits, cheese, and popcorn.

We enjoy celebrating birthdays. Students are welcome to bring treats to share with their classmates. Those students having summer birthdays may 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 and tests, as well as understanding toward 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

Notes from Coal Creek and the classroom and some completed and graded student work will be sent home in the Friday Folder. The Friday Folder sheet indicates missing and late homework and classroom assignments, a Habit of Mind the student felt he demonstrated that week, as well as teacher comments. Please sign the Friday folder sheet prior to its return to school on Monday. Much of our school to home daily and weekly communication is accomplished with the Friday Folder sheet and the student planner.

Newsletters

Fourth Grade newsletters will be uploaded to the Fourth Grade website monthly (Aug/Sept; October; November; December; January; February; March; April; May) with an overview of the activities, events, and curriculum studied.

Teacher Websites

Additional information can be found on our individual websites regarding assignments, upcoming events, and activities. Included are several educational websites that students are encouraged to use at home. Our websites are linked to the Coal Creek Homepage and the Fourth Grade page. The Fourth Grade page will have all newsletters as well as copies of documents that are used by all the classes. Please use our websites as supplements to the Daily Planner.