

KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

Coal Creek Elementary
2010-2011

*Mrs. Buffer * Mrs. Lepine * Mrs. Calabrese

Welcome to our Kindergarten Learning Community!

We are excited to have your child in our classrooms. We believe by working together we will be able to provide your child with an enriched learning environment that will nurture and challenge each individual child. This handbook is to help you understand some of the pieces that make up your child's day. Please refer to the handbook to answer many of your questions, but as always, feel free to contact us if you have other questions. Our email addresses are: wendy.buffer@bvsd.org and juliette.lepine@bvsd.org. Ivy Calabrese, our K-Care teacher may be reached at ivy.calabrese@bvsd.org. Coal Creek's phone number is 720-561-4500. Mrs. Buffer's direct line is 720-561-4517, Mrs. Lepine's # is 720-561-4549, and Mrs. Calabrese's # is 720-561-4563.

Kindergarten Literacy: Reading and Writing

At the beginning of school each individual child is tested to see what their base knowledge is with regard to reading and writing. Each day contains a literacy block that focuses on Shared Reading and Writing, Guided Reading and Writing, and Independent Reading and Writing. In these lessons we focus on letter sounds, word recognition, and many other beginning literacy skills.

Each month you will receive a newsletter that will give you a list of various themes we will be covering in literacy, such as concept books (colors and shapes), nursery rhymes, and fairy tales, to name a few. You may also refer to the District Parent Handbook and BVSD curriculum is available on the BVSD website.

*****Reading at home is a vital component to your child's literacy. We will visit the school library once each week. Your student may check out any book of their choice. There are 'just right' books for kindergarten reading levels available for check out and we encourage you to come to the library and help your student check out these books for use at home. ANY reading done outside of school is good for your emerging reader!**

*****Beginning writing is very exciting. Students move through stages that begin with drawing pictures and scribbling; to writing a few letters; to stringing letters together; to writing some words and even some simple sentences. The curriculum we use is called "Being A Writer." This is a research-based curriculum developed for students K through 5 focusing on the areas of writing, motivation and learning theory, and social and ethical development. The best way to support your child in writing that creates positive results is to help them write the sounds they hear. Don't worry about silent letters, spaces between words, and conventions such as spelling. These will come in time. As your child progresses we will keep you informed of strategies you can use to support his or her writing.**

Math Instruction

There is a very complete description of the math curriculum in the District pink handbook. At Coal Creek Elementary we use a variety of materials for learning mathematical concepts. We realize many students have learned some addition and subtraction facts. That is wonderful! Our main focus is to go deeper into mathematical concepts and have students be able to **apply** basic concepts to problem solving situations and then be able to **explain why** that works. Our main curriculum is a blend of Investigations Math and Add+Vantage Math. We use many manipulatives and some paper/pencil activities. Please watch newsletters regarding our units of study.

Trimester Math, Science, and Social Studies units

First Trimester

Building Community
Safety
Trees FOSS
All About Me
Friends
Number Sense
Patterns
Beginning Maps
Thanksgiving
Farm Animals
Fabric
Beginning Counting

Second Trimester

Five Senses
Body Awareness
World Holidays
Where I Fit In the World
Different Countries
Geometry
Large Numbers
Maps/location
Continents
Animals Adaptation
FNS/BNS

Third Trimester

Africa
Wood and Paper FOSS
Money
Where I Fit in the World
Time(hours/half hours)
Addition/Subtraction
Globes/Maps/Location
World/Continents
Plants
FNS/BNS

Ongoing Topics and Units

Weather, Seasons, Multi-cultural celebrations, Graphs, Number Sense-counting forward/backward/by 2's, by 5's, and by 10's

*in Kindergarten we revisit all our curriculum continually throughout the year

Attendance

Prompt, regular attendance at school is an important good habit to get started. It is also vital to your child's academic growth as each day we begin our learning the minute we enter the classroom. Each day builds on the previous day's learning. Class discussions, hands-on activities and interactions cannot be sent home for 'make-up' work. If your child must miss school please notify the office. The attendance line is 720-561-4502. When children do not show up for school and there has been no notification, the office will call you to find out where your child is. This is for the safety of your child. Please keep all emergency numbers and work numbers current with teachers and the office. This is greatly appreciated.

Snack

A small snack should be sent to school daily. We ask that it be simple and easy to eat. (apples should be cut, oranges peeled, and do not send anything that requires a spoon!) To help make snack time more efficient we ask that snacks be packed separately from lunches, preferably in a different pocket of the backpack-students who attend K-Care should pack 2 snacks, one for mid-morning and one for mid-afternoon. Children often take out their lunch boxes and end up eating their lunches during snack-packing them separately helps eliminate this problem! Snacks should be healthy-cookies and candy are not snacks for school. **Again, please do not send anything containing nuts or peanuts. We have children who are highly allergic to peanuts/nuts.**

Lunch Money

For those students who eat lunch at school please send their lunch money in an envelope with their name on it and the purpose for the money (so we know it is not for something else!) Many people find it easier to write a check for an entire week or month.

Friday Folders

Your child's work will come home on Fridays. Please read all material carefully and review the completed work with your child. Ask them to explain their work or project to you! After Labor Day we will start sending home a weekly Behavior Report with the Friday Folders. This report is a snapshot of your child's week. Please review and initial for the week at the bottom of each week, place the report back in the Friday Folder envelope, and return it to Kindergarten on the following Monday. Friday Folders are a great way to send items/communications to the teacher if needed. To save on energy and costs our newsletters will be on the Coal Creek website. Please check the site regularly to get up-to-date information.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special days. A special treat can be sent for your child's birthday-if you would like. Please make it simple and easy to serve and clean up. Dates will be assigned-even for those students who celebrate summer birthdays-they will be given a 'half birthday' celebration date. It is easier if you send birthday treats with your child at the beginning of the day. Some ideas are muffins, popsicles, cupcakes, cookies, rice krispy treats. **Please do not send anything containing peanuts/nuts. We have a few children who are highly allergic to peanuts/nuts.**

It is also very important that you **DO NOT send birthday party invitations** to school to be handed out unless you are inviting the entire class. The office has directories for sale for addresses. Children's feelings are hurt when invitations are passed out and they are not included. If invitations do come, we will collect them and return them home.

Show and Tell (Oral Language)

Oral language is a very important part of your child's development. Children will have many formats in which to practice expressing themselves verbally and also to be an active listener. Show and Tell is just one of the formats we have in our classrooms. To make this time more meaningful we are structuring Show and Tell in a way that will encourage all students to participate in a meaningful way. We want to avoid the "grab at the last minute" item style of sharing. Beginning in October, we will be sending home a Show and Tell Calendar indicating your child's special day. We will also have specific topics (that follow what we are studying) to help your child prepare for their Show and Tell. We feel that by waiting until October, students will feel more comfortable with their classmates and be better prepared to share some special item or work they have done. Please help your child by discussing the things they can share with the class. 😊

Star Person (person of the week)

Being the Star Person is a great way to highlight individual children. We are going to have weekly "Shining Stars" starting in September. Each week a student will be chosen to fill and decorate a yellow star with information including: My Favorite Color, My Favorite Food, and A Funny Story. A detailed letter explaining everything will be attached to the star paper. Each student will have their own week to be the Shining Star.

Homework

Homework for Kindergarten is fun and experiential, not a lot of paperwork. We believe that homework should be meaningful and should support the learning that goes on in the classroom.

Reading Logs: Each month you will receive a reading log. (September is apples!) Your child will color in an apple for every 15 minutes of reading (he reads to you or you read to him!) When the sheet is complete or it is the end of the month, please return it to us. Our expectation is fifteen minutes a night.

Writing: We would like children to do large motor writing the 1st trimester such as writing on white boards, chalk boards, coloring, sand writing, cutting on the line, and tying their shoes. Letters will be taught and practiced all year. Please encourage your child to start using upper and lower case letters when writing their name. We have attached a copy of the proper form of the letters with directionality indicated. Please start observing how your child holds pencils, crayons, and markers. (see attachment indicating the proper tripod grip.) It is important to catch and correct bad habits early-this includes directionality and grips!

Math: Please do activities that incorporate real world math skills. This could include cooking, building with a certain number of blocks, games such as Yahtzee or card games. Please let your child work with coins- this seems to be the biggest hurdle for ALL children. Our world is such a debit card society that many children have no idea what the coins are called or their values. This is true with most second graders! Additional exposure to these 'real world' activities will only enhance their math skills. We will be giving ideas in our newsletters regarding activities to support their learning.

Report Cards / Conferences

The Boulder Valley School District has adopted a standard based report card. Students are evaluated on their performance and progress of these standards.

We will collect samples of your child's progress throughout the year to share with you at conferences. These conferences will be held in October and February. Sign up is usually in the front foyer of the school a couple of weeks before the conference dates. Please watch the newsletters for more information. We always look forward to celebrating your child's progress and growth.

Book Orders

Book orders will be sent home periodically for your convenience. This is an optional, inexpensive way to accumulate some books for your child's collection. *Please make checks payable to the appropriate book club, not the teacher!* Please return the order form with your child's name on it by the due date or the Monday after you receive the form. It is not possible to add on orders once they have been tallied and sent.

Newsletters

There will be a monthly Kindergarten newsletter available on the Coal Creek website. Classroom notes/flyers will be sent home as needed. Communication is important to us and we hope you contact us if you have any questions.

Whole school newsletters will be posted on the Coal Creek website. Please take a moment to read them thoroughly. We are not always able to list whole school information in our kindergarten newsletters so reading both is essential for getting information.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an important part of the Coal Creek community. We do welcome volunteers in our classrooms for various jobs. Kindergarten will be sending out a volunteer interest form in September. Volunteering will start in October. Classroom volunteers will need to sign a volunteer confidentiality form.

Coal Creek is fortunate to have many wonderful paraprofessionals in our building. To utilize their expertise their time will be scheduled mostly in classrooms or with students. Our workroom will need regular volunteers to keep the school working at top levels. If you are interested in a regular time to work in the workroom please contact your teacher as soon as possible.

Fees and Payments

Throughout the year many expenses come up for items such as field trips. On the Student Supply list the yearly amount is listed. If you pay with a check, *make the check payable to your teacher.* There is no account to deposit a check made payable to Coal Creek. Your teacher will cash these checks and then pay for the field trips and other necessities. Thank you for your cooperation.