

September 2, 2017

Hi Everyone,

I hope you are all enjoying the end of summer and the last long weekend until next month. The students are settling in and learning new routines and expectations. Annie and I are very much enjoying the class. With it being so small we are hoping to do a lot more activities and individualize our instruction even more.

This week we will start our monthly all-school meetings. We will be gathering all the students and staff at 8:30 on Wednesday for our September *Wacky Wednesday*. There will be class presentations, skits, or performances by different classes at each meeting. This week our class is going to be in charge of that, so that will be one thing that the students will be working on when they all get back on Tuesday.

Thursday of this week is our fall corporation meeting. I hope you will all attend both the potluck and the meeting. The potluck starts at 5:30 and the meeting at 6:00. Childcare will be provided for those of you who need this. I also hope that you all think about how best you can work your service hours and benefit the school. Several options and committees will be presented at the meeting for you to choose from. There are also three open seats on the board of directors and I hope that someone with students in my class will consider running for one of these openings. Another wonderful thing about the meeting is that new parents can meet and form bonds and arrange ways to help each other. New School friendships between families and kids tend to last many years even past when the students have moved on to other schools. The other wonderful thing about having all our new families is that they all come with great new ideas and energy to augment those of us who have been here a while.

This week we will complete the next spelling unit. Students will be given specific pages to complete since it is a short week. The August reading logs are due on Tuesday and students need to be sure they start their September log. We will begin using our reading notebooks this week and will start using our science notebooks even more as we give different students different assignments to share with the class. (They all have to find out information about the winter solstice and celebrations that occur at that time for Tuesday-just a reminder in case they have forgotten.)

Students are still required to do reading, writing and research four days per week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday). Students in grades 4-6 need to complete 20 minutes of each for a total of one hour each day, and grades 7 and 8 need to complete 30 minutes of each for a total of 90 minutes each day. They can do the reading, writing, and research parts of this as part of their work in other classes, but I do expect them to spend this much time each day working at home independently.

Annie has been reading *Artemis Fowl* to the class for the first read aloud book of the year. We will move into something space related after that to complement our science studies. Students will also start book groups and read *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle. We will also start working on grammar and proofreading skills as part of our morning message every day. I still want students to do their bullet journals to learn how to track their work and plan their time, so that will also be a daily activity and students will be scored each day by the completeness and readability of their journals.

On September 22, we will be having a multiage activity with all the students. We will be working in the INR grant garden in front of the Early Childhood Building. We will be planting native plants as well as reading and writing about gardening. If you have any activities that may

fit in and you would like to share, please let us know. We do plan to get the community involved as well, so feel free to invite friends and family to come join us and *dig* our garden. Be sure to ask your friends to check out our public Facebook page and like us and share it. Our school is often called the best educational secret in the area. Let's not keep it secret and share with others who could benefit by being a New School kid.

On Tuesday, I will be sending home the students' graded work folders. After you have reviewed their work, I need you to return both the folder and the work. It is very important for the kids to reflect on this work and to see how much they improve over time. I have also made folders for each student for them to keep the work in that they still need to complete. This should help them get it back and forth to school without being destroyed in desks and backpacks. They will have these starting Tuesday as well.

Students started working with Google Docs last week and they all are getting how it works. Some kids may take a few tries to get it down but they are all off to a good start. We will also start the Google internet safety curriculum. It will include discussion and games. We will be using the MacBooks a lot, but still work on penmanship-especially cursive. I have found that all of a student's work and writing improve once they learn cursive, so hopefully that will offset any deterioration from keyboarding.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. My email is carla@carbondalnewschool.com and you can also text me at (618) 889-5313. I hope you all have a great week and I am looking forward to seeing you all on Thursday.

Best wishes,

Carla