

Welcome to Second Grade!

September 1, 2010

Dear Families,

Welcome to the second grade! We have an action-packed year ahead of us, and I'm eager to get started. This summer I've been picking berries, backpacking, tutoring children in mathematics, and learning from my sons, Gavin and Tarver, how to see my world with a curious mind. I've also been working with the fabulous Lincoln school staff to prepare for our year. At the end of this year I want your child to be excited about learning, academically and socially prepared for the third grade, and aware of how he or she learns best.

Curriculum night: Please join me for an informational evening on *Wednesday, September 22 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.* here at the Lincoln Community School. This will be a time for all of us to talk about our goals for the year and to answer any questions you might have. This meeting is for adults, there will be child care available in the library.

Communication:

- ❖ **Notes Folders:** Your child has received a plastic "notes folder" that will go home every night and return to school daily Monday through Thursday (whether it is empty or full). When your child brings the notes folder to school each day, it really helps keep our communication smooth.

Tip: Take a moment to plan how this folder can be part of your child's daily routine and development of personal responsibility. Many children find it helpful to unpack their notes folders upon arriving home and place it in the same place every day where a parent can quickly see it (like the kitchen counter). Many families have had success encouraging their second grader to pack his or her notes folder and backpack as part of evening chores or a bedtime routine.

- ❖ **Classroom Blog:** I'd like to use our classroom blog (<http://www.lincolncs.org/2nd-grade-blog/>) to communicate with you about upcoming dates, and share the great learning that happens in our classroom. You can help to make this blog more exciting by **reviewing the school's technology release form and returning it to school by Friday, September 3.**

Welcome to Second Grade!

- ❖ **Newsletter:** I will send home a classroom newsletter with important information every other week, or as needed. Newsletter information can also be found on our classroom blog.
- ❖ **Reaching Justin:** A hand-written note, an e-mail, or a phone call are all good ways to contact me.

Learning Time: Learning takes time, and we have lots to learn here in second grade! It's essential that your child is at school, unpacked, and ready to start learning no later than 8:05. Children are welcome in the classroom for quiet independent reading beginning at 7:45 each morning. Just as crucial to our schedule is the end of the day- we'll be learning and contributing to the community until 3:00 daily. Students will be available for parent-pickup from 3:00-3:15 on the second grade porch. If you arrive early to pick up your child, please join us in the classroom, supporting the end of the day activities.

Homework: An essential part of second grade is your child becoming an independent and invested reader. Your second grader will need to read independently for twenty minutes Monday through Thursday evenings at home. I will send more information about this reading homework on September 13th. Your child will have a weekly mathematics home activity beginning September 13th. Homework is accepted at any time, but the weekly homework assignment will always be due on the last school day of the week (this is usually a Friday).

Tip: Make a plan now for when and where reading and mathematics homework will happen. What will adults and siblings be doing during this time? How will you support the completion of homework on evenings when extra-curricular activities are planned? When you create an inviting and distraction-free environment you send a powerful message to your child about how important learning is in your family. Make a plan now and your child will be set up for success!

Snack: We are starting a new school-wide snack program Monday through Thursday. A communal snack provides many learning and community-building opportunities. Please see the attached snack letter from all the teachers about our new snack program for details. **Fridays will be family snack day. Please sign up to provide a healthy snack for the class on the Second Grade bulletin board in the hallway.** If your child has special nutritional needs or food allergies, please write me a note.

Field Trips: Our class will be taking a field trip to the Middlebury Farmer's Market on *Wednesday, September 15th* in the morning. I will be sending out more

Welcome to Second Grade!

details soon, and will be looking for parent volunteers to drive and chaperone the trip.

Parent Involvement: Our year will be packed full of field trips, art projects, and outdoor learning that require parent volunteers. I'll be asking about your family's hidden talents and how you'd like to help out in the near future. **I'm looking for a class parent who would be willing to organize and manage parental involvement throughout the year, please contact me by Friday (9/3) if you'd be interested in taking this on.**

Help your child be prepared: All school supplies will be supplied by the school and shared in the classroom community. **You can help by providing your child with a backpack** for carrying books, homework, and projects to and from school. Due to the curriculum's emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning, I ask for your help providing the following:

- ❖ active, outdoor footwear, should be worn or brought to school every day.
- ❖ Have your child prepared to go outside everyday (we go outside twice a day in all weather except for thunderstorms).
- ❖ **a change of clothes in a plastic bag** labeled with his or her name. Please label any outdoor clothing in permanent marker with your child's name.

One of my major goals for working with you (parents and guardians) is that you are invested in our community's learning activities, feel comfortable becoming involved, and empowered to understand your child's development. I look forward to working with you, and getting to know your child as a learner!

Sincerely,

Justin

e-mail: jmay@anesu.org

work: 453-2119

home: *omitted for web publishing*

class blog: <http://www.lincolncs.org/2nd-grade-blog>

Welcome to Second Grade!

Second Grade Parent To-Do List

- Return Student Publishing Form to Justin by Friday, 9/3
- Bookmark the 2nd Grade Blog on your web browser
<http://www.lincolncs.org/2nd-grade-blog/>
- Establish a notes folder unpacking/packing system (when and where) that works for your family
- Establish a homework plan (when and where) so your family will be ready on September 13th for reading and mathematics home learning.
- Make sure your child has a backpack with his or her name on it
- Send a change of clothes in a Ziploc bag labeled with your child's name to school by Friday, 9/3
- Mark your calendar for the 9/15 Middlebury Field Trip (drivers needed) and the second grade 9/22 Curriculum Night (6:30-7:30)
- Read beginning of the year informational packet from LCS
- Contact Justin if you're interested in being the class parent (fun, really)!
- Sign up for the Friday Family snack day on the 2nd Grade bulletin board (in the hallway just outside the second grade room).
- Return soccer sign up sheet to Justin by Friday, 9/3 (the first practice for second graders is Wednesday, 9/8) (optional)
- Return after school program sign up to Justin and pay outstanding balance by Friday, 9/3 (applies to some of you)
- Return LCS lunch bills with an outstanding balance to Justin by Friday, 9/3 (applies to some of you)
- Breathe. Smile. And know that we're just starting on a year-long voyage together. (required)