

Dear Parents/Guardians,

First of all, I would like to welcome you and your child to third grade. I am certain that we are going to have a wonderful year! Please feel free to communicate with me as needed. If there is anything that I can do to help your child better succeed in school, I am happy to work with you on your child's behalf. My number at Nelson Prairie is 815-462-2874/Ext.6236, and my e-mail address is keaker@nlsd122.org. You are welcome to send in a note with your child, as well. Finally, Seesaw is another option for contacting me at any time.

Next, I put together this handbook as a resource to provide you with the expectations and routines in third grade. I want it to be a useful tool, so if you have any suggestions, please let me know. You will also find information about classroom procedures and a subject synopsis in the following pages. I believe you are your child's first and most important teacher, and I value your input! Therefore, please let me know if there is anything you want to share about your child or how they might be more successful.

Finally, while I ask for your support in accomplishing our goals this year, I want you to know I am committed to doing all I can to help your child succeed at Nelson Prairie School. I welcome your input and am truly looking forward to working with you and your child this year! Thank you for the chance to do so and welcome back!

Sincerely,

Ms. Kelly Eaker



Policies & Procedures

Homework

The goal of homework is to give your child meaningful practice to reinforce skills taught and practiced in class. Homework assignments should take no more than 30 minutes. *If a homework assignment is especially challenging for your child, please write me a note explaining the issue so that I can work with him/her in class.* Students will be assigned homework Monday through Thursday. If students complete their homework on those nights, they will have the weekend off. Most weeks, your child will have four math homelinks and will be expected to practice the week's spelling and vocabulary words each day.

In addition to assigned homework, students are expected to read at home. I don't want this to become a chore, instead I want to instill that reading is important and fun! That being said, I would recommend that your child read for 15-20 minutes per session on four-five days during the week for a total of about 300 minutes/month. (Note: See "At Home Reading Programs" for additional information.)

Finally, I will be keeping a homework log of missing work. If a student misses an assignment, an "oops" note will be sent home, and the assignment will be due the next school day, along with your signature on this note. If homework is repeatedly missed, we will schedule a parent-teacher-student conference so that we can work together to resolve any issues.

Grading Scale

B = Beginning

D = Developing

S = Secure

Birthdays

As per the District Wellness Committee, birthday snacks will not be allowed in the classroom. Our school has developed a list of appropriate trinkets for birthdays: stickers, pencils, erasers, pencil grips, bookmarks, \$1.00 books, a class game donation, a class birthday book donation, playing cards, etc. Please contact me if you have questions about appropriate items.

Whether or not your child brings a birthday trinket, we will sing "Happy Birthday", the office will gift your child with a book, and I will be giving each student a small gift as well...😊.

Birthday Books

To make your child's birthday a meaningful one, while adhering to the District Wellness Policy, I would ask that you consider treating our class to a "birthday book". The birthday child may bring a book (wrapped in birthday paper and tied with a ribbon if you wish) that he/she would give to the class. Your child or myself will then read the book to the class before placing it in our classroom library. Since the book will become a permanent part of our classroom library, please glue a picture of the birthday child on the inside cover of the book and/or print his/her name and birth date. Please note that you are not obliged to do provide a birthday book. This is just an idea for commemorating your child's birthday in a way that many others will enjoy for years to come.

If your child's birthday falls outside the school year, you may choose to pick a day during the school year for us to celebrate. Just inform me before that special day, so I can be prepared to celebrate with your child.

Behavior

Behavior is a choice. Therefore, if a student chooses to make inappropriate decisions, there are consequences. I use a color-coded clip system in my class. At the start of each new day, all students will begin on green. If a student makes a poor behavior choice (after verbal warnings), he/she will be moved to yellow. If the behavior continues, the next step would be orange for "stop and think". For a further infraction, the student moves to red and will receive an appropriate consequence, such as a time out, removal from an activity, or a change in the student's seat assignment. In the unfortunate event that this move occurs, I will call the child's parent/guardian to discuss ways to help the child to make good choices in the future. The student will also be asked to complete a reflection log to address his/her poor behavior choices. However, all of my students will have the opportunity to reverse the color-coded clip process by demonstrating good behavior subsequent to poor behavior choices. Finally, students making positive choices will be moved up the chart from green to blue, followed by purple, and ultimately to pink for

showing "super star" behavior. All super stars will receive a prize ticket, trinket, or other appropriate recognition. You can check your child's behavior color daily in Seesaw.

The rules of our classroom are: arrive on time, prepare to learn, eyes forward and listening, raise your hand to speak, be respectful, ask questions, always try your best, try new things, believe in yourself, and work hard and have fun. In general, I expect my students to be kind, caring, and respectful at all times!

Snack

We will be eating a snack in the classroom each day at about 10:15 A.M. Students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks. I will be reading aloud to model fluency and expression and working on comprehension skills during this time.

Assignment Notebooks

Students must fill out and bring home their assignment notebooks every day to inform you of any homework to be completed and the date each assignment is due, as well as to provide you with information regarding upcoming tests. While the majority of test preparation will occur during class, a few minutes of review at home will benefit your child greatly. Advance notice of testing will also be given in my weekly newsletter, which is published both on my web page each Friday and through Seesaw. *Please look it over with your child to ensure their homework is completed each day. You may check the actual notebook or look at it on Seesaw each day.*

Specials and Mask Breaks

Each day we have a special from 10:45-11:15 A.M. We have blue days and green days, and the colors alternate. On the green days, the students will have Art or Music; on the blue days, students have P.E. Every two weeks, we rotate between art and music. Finally, our library resource time is from 2:00 to 2:30 P.M. on each Thursday. The specials schedule for the week can be found in my newsletter. Additionally, we will take two mask breaks each day: one in the morning and another in the afternoon.

Lunch and Milk Money

Your child will either receive a box lunch from school or bring a cold lunch from home. If your child forgets his/her cold lunch, we will try to contact you. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contacts you provided us to ask them to bring your child a lunch. Box lunches include milk. Lunch milk for those bringing a cold lunch is 30¢ (cash only).

Dismissal

It is **very important** that you send a note or contact me and/or the office if there is going to be any change in your child's typical dismissal plans. I will not let your child go with another parent, take a different bus, or otherwise change their normal dismissal plan without your permission. This is for the safety of the kids. Also, if you need to pick up your child early, please send in a note so that I can have your child ready.

Vacation

For vacations during the school year, I would encourage your child to complete a daily vacation journal, practice multiplication facts, and/or read. *If requested by you*, independent work may be sent along for your child to complete. Otherwise, important learning worksheets and missed assessments will be completed upon your child's return.

Important Information

On my web page, you can find my weekly newsletter, spelling words, vocabulary words, our daily schedule, and other important information, as well as some general information about myself. Please go to the district website at www2.nlsd122.org. Then, click on Nelson Prairie under the "Schools" tab. Once you arrive at the Nelson Prairie page, just go to Staff-Third Grade-Kelly Eaker. My newsletter explains what we will be working on each week, advises you about upcoming assessments, and gives you the specials schedule for the week, along with any other important school happenings. My newsletter will also be posted each Friday on Seesaw. **Please take a moment to review the newsletter each week.**

Subject Synopsis

Reading

I have implemented "The Daily Five" reading program, which is a research-based literacy program that focuses on fostering reading independence. Students will work in five different stations during our reading block: read to self, read to someone, work on writing, word work (spelling/vocabulary), and listen to reading. "The Daily Five" is student driven with high student engagement and provides for meaningful, consistent reading and writing practice.

While the students are engaged in their Daily Five activities, I will be working with small groups of students or individual students to improve their skills and challenge them at an appropriate level. I will also be assessing students or working with students who have been absent during this time.

Each student will be expected to have books to read available at his/her desk each day. In addition to the school library, I have a classroom library available in my room for student use. Having a variety of books at a student's reading level is a vital piece in creating independence and a love of reading. Therefore, you are welcome to send books to school with your children, too.

Additionally, our district utilizes the ReadyGEN curriculum by Pearson. ReadyGEN is an integrated literacy curriculum which engages students by utilizing authentic, rigorous texts. It fosters the connection between reading and writing to help your child develop into a lifelong learner, thinker, and communicator. The ReadyGEN curriculum incorporates a variety of reading genres, foundational skills, informative/narrative/opinion writing, spelling/phonics, grammar, and vocabulary into a comprehensive literacy program. This program will be used in conjunction with the Daily Five centers to cultivate your child's ELA proficiency.

Finally, reading at home has been shown to help students in overall school performance, assisting in the development of comprehension and higher order thinking skills. *Therefore, I highly encourage my students to read at home.* In October, I will begin the Book-It reading program. Monthly

calendars will be sent home with your child for use in tracking reading minutes. Your child must read at least 300 minutes per month in order to receive the Book-It Pizza Hut coupon and a no homework pass from me.

Additional Spelling Information

The ReadyGEN word lists will be available on my web page. The students will practice these words at school each day during their Word Work center. However, these words should also be practiced at home daily.

Social Studies

Our district utilizes the TCI series. This program teaches students about the world around them and how our cultures were created through interesting and engaging activities and lessons. *Social Studies Alive! My Community* teaches students the basics of geography, economics, and citizenship in the context of learning about their local community.

Science

TCI is also now being used for our science curriculum. It is designed to drive student engagement and to teach students to consider, question, collaborate and to create. This hands-on curriculum promotes data interpretation and analysis through the study of habitats, weather systems, life cycles and traits, and forces and motion.

Math

Everyday Mathematics is the series we use in our district. This program focuses on problem solving, higher order thinking, practice of basic skills, and the use of games to apply the skills and concepts. Everyday Math revisits these concepts regularly throughout the year. We will cover number and numeration, operations & computation, data & chance, measurement & reference frames, geometry & patterns, functions and algebra through the use of activities, discussions and games. Additionally, students will be expected to memorize basic multiplication facts, 1 - 12. While we will work on these facts at school using Reflex math, at-home practice of the facts is essential. *Working with the multiplication facts for 5-10 minutes on three days per week will greatly benefit your child and lead to his/her mastery of the skill.*

Handwriting and Keyboarding

Students will learn cursive handwriting through the "Handwriting Without Tears" program which aims to make cursive writing easy and automatic for all students. The program is simple to learn and uses unique strategies to teach good letter formation, spacing, neatness, and cursive letter connections. We will also practice keyboarding skills this year.

Character Education

We are continuing our character education program. Character Counts focuses on six ethical value pillars: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. We have also added a pillar on bullying. Each month we will focus on one of the pillars.

We're Going Back To School

