

September 8, 2016

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Rehoboth Elementary School! I am really looking forward to having your child in my classroom this year. We are going to have a wonderful year together full of learning and fun! I want to let you know about a few things that will be going on in our room. If you have any questions please let me know!

Each Friday, starting with this week, we will have Show-and-Tell. This may be anything your child wants to show his/her classmates…. except live, hairy animals (of course stuffed ones are fine). If your child doesn’t want to bring anything or forgets then he/she can tell us something that might be important to them at the time…or simply pass. After they share they call on another child in the class that may ask a question or comment about their show-and-tell. They really look forward to this fun activity each week. We talked about it today and they are all very excited!

During the year, we will go through the alphabet learning all of our letters and sounds in many ways. The children will participate in many types of activities learning/practicing our letters and sounds such as using manipulatives, playing games on iPods or the SMARTboard, phonemic awareness activities, just to name a few. Additionally, we will learn how to write the letters and hold our pencil correctly. We will participate in a handwriting program called, Handwriting Without Tears.

We will begin reading pre-decodable books that contain high-frequency words. These words become part of our classroom “Word Wall” as a resource for the children. I will send home a list of the words that we have learned in class every so often so you can practice them with your child. When a book comes home you will see a signature page attached to the front. Your child needs to read the book to three people or three times and then return it to school for a reward. Read, read, and read! It is so much fun! I let them pick one small treat from my treat bucket, which consists of some small wrapped candy, small tattoos, and some other small items. I will accept any donations for our treat bucket…thank you, thank you, thank you! Please let me know if there are any foods that your child cannot have so that I can avoid them.

For children that are already reading upon entering kindergarten or become more independent during the year, I have many books at different levels for them to read. Our school also uses Accelerated Reader, which is a wonderful program for our readers!!! The children read books at their level, take a comprehension test independently on the computer, and then receive immediate feedback. It is really great! Parents will have online access so you will know how your child is doing. If you have any questions please let me know.

In math we will be exploring many math manipulatives that will be used in our math program throughout the school year. It is very important that the children are given ample time to explore and feel comfortable using them before we get into the lessons in our program. A portion of our math is done during daily calendar activities, such as the date, counting the number of days in school, and graphing the weather, just to name a few.

Each day I will have a helper in my classroom. I choose the helper by going right down my class list in alphabetical order. The helper is responsible for leading the class whenever we leave the classroom, checking/coloring the weather graph, reading our morning story from the SMARTboard, helping me pass out materials, taking the attendance to the office, helping with snack, and anything else that comes up that I may need assistance with during the day. Everyone will get several turns throughout the school year. I know the children really look forward to this important job. If they happen to miss their turn to be the helper because they are not in school I will give them a turn when they return to school…so no worries!

One of the most important parts of your child’s success in school is keeping open communication between us. I really encourage parents to come in to see me, send in notes, email or call me whenever you have a question, comment or concern. You can reach me during the day at school at 227-3068. If I am with my class when you call, please leave a message with the office and I will get back to you. You can also email me at maria.gaito@cape.k12.de.us. Don’t ever hesitate to get in touch with me. I am also using Remind this year. It is a quick, easy way for me to send out a short message to everyone, and chat if needed. If you haven’t accepted my invitation or received one yet please let me know. We must keep the line of communication open! ALWAYS! IT IS SO IMPORTANT!

We will have a small snack every day after specials. It will usually consist of a few cookies, crackers, pretzels, Goldfish, etc. I ask that each student bring in a snack for the class to share every so often. Anything you can send in will be greatly appreciated, especially by these hungry kindergarten children. Again, please let me know if your child has any food allergies so we can avoid any problems. I welcome birthday treats so if you want to send/bring in a special treat for your child’s birthday, just let me know so I can plan a few extra minutes for snack. Birthdays that will occur next summer will be celebrated at the end of the year on a special day.

Please make sure you remember to send in the supplies that went home with the letter in August as well as the important information needed by the school. Make sure both sides are completely filled out and signed where needed. I did receive many of them already! THANK YOU!!!

Breakfast will be served each morning. Please tell your child whether or not they are to eat breakfast at school. If you aren’t sure they can remember, which is very normal at this age, please write me a note. At the beginning of the year, I often have children tell me they are supposed to go when they have already eaten at home. I don’t want anyone to go hungry all morning, but I also don’t want to send someone when they don’t really need to go. You may also want to look at the menu together and decide what your child will order for lunch, if buying. You may want to send me a note for this at first, too, if they may not remember. They will get used to it after a while. It gets much easier after a few weeks.

Make sure your child carries a cleaned out book bag to school each day. It is important in case papers or projects need to be sent home or brought back to school. It is easier for them to hand in things when there isn’t other “stuff” crowding their book bag. Thank you for your help with this. I really appreciate it. They may leave the folder in there so they have a place for their papers. If you have written a note to me, please remind your child to hand it in upon arrival to school. I do ask them if they have anything for me and check book bags in the beginning, but they don’t always know it is even there. They will all become more independent with this after a short time.

Please send a note in to school with your child if he/she will be picked up from school instead of riding the bus. Don’t forget to include my name, date, your child’s first and last name and the name of the person that will be picking them up from school. I need to have a note or your child will have to be put on the bus. Of course things come up during the day…please call the office to make arrangements. The office will let me know of any changes. We want to make sure everyone gets home safely.

If your child has been absent from school please send in an excuse note/doctor’s note upon their return to school. If your child is going to be absent from school due to a planned, family trip please fill out and turn in a vacation form **at least** five days before you go so it can get approved in advance. If you have any questions about this please do not hesitate to call or stop in and ask the office.

I am so happy that so many of you were able to visit our classroom on Meet the Teacher night! It was so nice to meet everyone and I am really looking forward to a wonderful school year together! In case you didn’t meet her yet, Mrs. Sandy Monigle is my terrific assistant who will be working with your children too.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Gaito ☺

\*Please put your child’s bus tag on them each day for at least a week. I really appreciate your help with this.

