

THE NEW CENTURY SCHOOL

Lead Teacher: Teresa Jacoby
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Assistant Teacher/Spanish Immersion Kim Tyson

Dear K-1st Family,

Welcome to the beginning of your Elementary School Journey! We are very excited about this school year, and we hope your child is too! We are looking forward to creating a learning community unique to our K- 1st apprentices this year.

Please note:

- It is very important that your child arrives to school on time. We begin **8:30 a.m.** sharp.
- Please read and sign the TNCS Behavior Policy agreement and send to school no later than **September 19, 2014**.
- We will send out bi-weekly pictures through Picasa as well as a monthly newsletter that you will receive at the end of each month.
- Students are responsible for a snack week this year rather than a day. We will send out the snack schedule via email this week. Please make sure these snacks are **healthy** and align with our school's philosophy. The school has a no refined sugar and nut policy.
- Field Trips: **September 26th** The Confucius Institute, **November 11th** Lower Elementary will go to Goucher College to see Vocal Trash: Reuse & Recycle, February 12th Elementary will go to Goucher College to see Math- E- Magic, and we are working on a spring trip to The Robinson Nature Center (date TBD)
- Please fill out the student absence link noted in the handbook for absences.
- This winter please use the following phone number for inclement weather, 410-205-5ICE.

Monday Folders: Monday folders go home every Monday and are used to communicate important information, field trip permission slips and homework. Spelling words are sent home every Monday and spelling assessments are given the following Monday.

Communicating student progress: Students receive 2 report cards at the end of the 2nd and 4th quarter. Parent conferences will be held after the first and third quarter in November and March.

Language Arts: The **Daily 5** is a series of literacy tasks which students complete daily while the teachers meet with small groups or conference with individuals. The **Daily 5** is more than a management system or a curriculum framework - it is a structure that will help students develop the daily habits of reading, writing and working with peers that will lead to a lifetime of independent literacy.

The **Daily 5** consists of: 1) Read to Self, 2) Read to Someone, 3) Listen to Reading, 4) Work on Writing, and 5) Word Work

Reading A to Z: The website has more than 2,500 downloadable books (including English, Spanish, and French versions) and thousands of teaching and learning materials. Reading A to Z will be utilized to supplement theme units and individual reading levels.

Jr. Great Books (2nd Half of the Year): The Junior Great Books program brings **high-quality literature** and **student-centered discussion** to our classroom while providing a great framework for practicing reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing. The Jr. Great Books program uses a method of reading and discussion known as **Shared Inquiry**. The Junior Great Books program includes outstanding works of literature by award winning authors such as James Berry, Ann Cameron, and Cynthia Rylant. Stories are selected for their vivid writing and for their ability to support the multiple interpretations and thought-provoking discussions that are the hallmarks of the Junior Great Books program.

Spelling: We are using Words Their Way. Words Their Way is word study for phonics, vocabulary and spelling instruction, which focuses on the key stages of spelling or orthographic development. Words Their Way makes differentiation and independent instruction effortless.

Vocabulary (2nd Half of the Year): We are using Wordly Wise 3000. Wordly Wise 3000, focuses on improving students' vocabulary by furthering their understanding of new words and concepts. Our goal is to focus on vocabulary development which will enable students to read increasingly challenging texts with fluency and improve their chances for success in school and beyond.

Math: We will use the Daily 3 in math. We will start to use Singapore Math as our curriculum to guide instruction as well as continue to use many of the Montessori materials your children were introduced to in Primary. We will also use games and other math activities to keep skills fresh and fun. Students will be working on material that reflects their ability.

Science: We will use our major themes to help guide instruction and learning. We will use Engineering is Elementary curriculum in order to give students Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) exposure and project based learning.

Science Themes: 1) Water, Water, Everywhere-Designing Water Filters, 2) Sounds Fun-Seeing Animal Sounds, and 3) Sticky Situations-Designing Walls.

Technology: Success Maker, IXL and RazKids are other websites will be part of the reading and math curriculums.

Across the Curriculum K-1st Theme Units: 1) Community building, 2) Where We Are in Place and Time, 3) Sharing Our Planet, and 4) How the World Works.

Chinese: Welcome back to another exciting school year. I am Jewel Anderson (Xie Laoshi), and your child's Chinese teacher. After last year's experiences of teaching elementary students, and the experiences of STARTALK Chinese immersion summer camp, I am confident that we will have a fruitful and meaningful learning year once again. Please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns or questions. I also welcome all suggestions and ideas. Thank you! Here is my contact information: xie@thenewcenturyschool.com

Spanish: Hola y Bienvenidos! Welcome back to an exciting year of Spanish at The New Century School! I am Jennifer Hodapp, known as Señora Hodapp. I am writing so that I can introduce myself, in the hope that we will remain in close contact. I have a Masters of Arts in Counseling Psychology and a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and Psychology. I am fluent in Spanish and I am from Puerto Rican heritage. In addition to my firsthand experience growing up in a Spanish-speaking household, I have held numerous positions working with children and adolescents for twelve years as an educator and counselor. I have taught Spanish and also worked as an interpreter.

Here is my contact information: hodapp@thenewcenturyschool.com

Homework: Along with spelling practice, I recommend that students read at least **10 -20 minutes a night**. Ideally this should be in English; however it is also important that students read in their native language. This reading should be at the student's level and preferably for pleasure. It can be a book, magazine, RazKids, etc. The students are more than welcome to borrow leveled readers from the class as long as they return them. New spelling words will go out on Mondays and assessments will be on the following Monday.

Sincerely,

Teresa Jacoby and Kim Tyson