2018-2019 Kindergarten

Family Handbook (Room 18)

Dear Families of Room 18,

 Welcome to “Back-to-School-Night!” This will be my sixth year teaching at Smith Elementary. I have a nephew in 3rd grade (Mrs. Worth’s class) and a niece in kindergarten (Mrs. Shortridge’s class). I love having family members here as Smith Cougars! Kindergarten is such a fun year of growing and learning and I am honored to be your child’s teacher this year! This packet will explain how I run the classroom and what one should expect this year.

Each student in the classroom is part of a community of learners, which includes teachers, other staff, students, and parents who may join us. I delight in the fact that each person has something unique to offer others. I emphasize a classroom atmosphere which values differences between levels of attainment in the areas of social, emotional, and academic growth. This becomes the basis for building trust, respect, and responsibility. With these things in place, we can strive to meet our goal of promoting decision-making, success, cooperation, problem solving, responsibility, and comfort in taking risks and making mistakes.

**Contact Information** is: kbell@lvjusd.org or I can also be reached at 925-606-4750 ext. 18

**Kindergarten Schedule:**

AM 8:30-1:30 (M, T, Th, F) PM 9:15-2:15 (M, T, Th, F)

Wednesdays: 8:30-1:30

**Curriculum- The Common Core Standards website:** [**www.corestandards.org**](http://www.corestandards.org)

Curriculum is based on the state and district standards in all areas. Lessons focus around themes, which integrate the subject areas of language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, and the fine arts. Study of all areas emphasizes appreciation and a sense of discovery and takes into consideration the developmental abilities of students.

**English/Language Arts:** Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, Social Studies, and Science.

Reading and comprehension is a complex process that differs for every child. Students will focus on letter and sound recognition, encoding (putting sounds together to make words), and decoding (taking sounds apart to figure out a word), as well as more complex phonics work. This also includes a rich literature base for whole group, guided small groups, and self-selected reading. Our writing will focus on handwriting and genre writing: narrative, how-to, and persuasive.

**Science:** Earth, Physical, and Life Sciences

Topics: Investigations (apples/pumpkins), owls, weather patterns, plant life.

**Social Studies:** Maps (symbols, neighborhoods and relative location), Working Together, Past and Present Lifestyles, Holidays, and Jobs.

**Blended Services:**

Blended services is a learning model where all kindergarteners will be grouped by their specific language arts and reading needs. For example, some students may be working on letter recognition, while others may be practicing reading skills or blending sounds. All K teachers will be working with the students during this time, which allows us to create smaller groups and provide more individualized attention to each student. The groups will be flexible and students can move through them depending on their academic needs.

**Math:**

The math goal is to produce mathematically empowered thinkers and problem solvers who are confident and feel comfortable using math in their daily lives. Learning concepts through the use of concrete materials is an essential part of the program. Your child will be thinking, writing, talking, and doing math. Topics: Numbers, Geometry (2D and 3D shapes), Measurement, Sorting, Comparing, Classifying, Simple Addition, Simple Subtraction and Problem Solving.

**Physical Education:** Sportsmanship, Large Motor Skills and Small Motor Skills

**Visual and Performing Arts:** FAME, End of Year SING

**Character Counts and Awards:** Our school-wide program includes learning about the six following character traits: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. We will learn and practice these traits and a select few will earn an award for regularly showing their understanding of the trait. Not every student will receive a character trait award, which is a good life lesson to learn. Every student has the opportunity to earn a perfect attendance award for coming to school everyday. There will be perfect attendance awards given per trimester.

**Discipline**

I believe in positive discipline and allow students to monitor their own behavior. This year we will be using Class Dojo to track individual behavior. We have discussed our classroom rules together and if a child chooses to break a rule, they will lose a point on Class Dojo. If a child is “caught being good” they may gain a point on their Dojo account.

As a whole class we earn smiley face tallies towards free choice days (mostly Wednesdays and Fridays).

When a child has difficulty following classroom agreements, I will work with the child to…

1. Determine why the problem is occurring.
2. Identify possible alternatives and strategies to prevent the behavior occurring again.
3. Identify an appropriate consequence for the behavior.

Appropriate consequences may include loss of a classroom privilege or an office referral (only for serious violations of school rules or repeated behavior issues).

Communication between home and school is essential and I will make every effort to contact you if an appropriate behavior is persistent or serious. Working together is the key to success.

**Homework**

Please make sure that your child brings his/her backpack and MONKEY binder each day to school. The binder is essential to parent/teacher communication. Each Monday a new homework packet will be placed in your child’s homework pocket in their MONKEY book. Homework typically consists of 1-2 nightly assignments and 15 minutes spent reading with your child. Your assistance with your child’s homework is necessary. Directions are often too hard for a kindergartener to read; therefore your help is needed.

**Star Student of the Week**

Each week I will select a “Star Student of the Week.” Please help your child complete their poster and return it to school when finished. Please have them use lots of color, stickers, and pictures. When your child has been selected, their poster will be displayed on a bulletin board. The Star Student of the Week has special jobs and has time to share with the class about what makes them so special. They will receive a Star Student bag to fill with items to share during their presentation. Some popular items include: toys, trophies, favorite books, pictures, etc.

**Birthdays**

Birthdays are a big deal to kindergarten children! Some students send in a treat for the class that they get to pass out. The treat is passed out during our snack time at 10:00. Due to recent guidelines implemented by LVJUSD, no homemade treats are allowed. If your child is having a birthday party and would like to invite his/her classmates, I would be happy to send invitations home for you provided that every child is invited in the class or at least the same sex is invited. Please do not send invitations for some and not others. These should be mailed from home as they cause hurt feelings among students.

**Change of Clothes**

Please label and pack a clear, gallon-size bag with a change of clothes for you child. One pair of underwear, shorts, shirt, and socks would be ideal. We can switch out these summer clothes for “colder weather” apparel in the winter. I will keep these bags in the classroom for when accidents occur.

**Volunteers**

The first couple of weeks of school are a period of adjustment for kindergarten children. Leaving home, getting to know new friends, and learning about the classroom and school are very big steps. This adjustment can be made easier if parents postpone visiting the classroom until after the first few weeks of school. Once the adjustment period is complete, I will welcome parents in our room and love having the extra hands, especially on center days. Please see the volunteer sign up sheet if interested.

You must complete a volunteer packet and have a current TB test on file in the office in order to work in the classroom. The tests are provided free of charge through the district office. Check the school office for dates.

**Supplies**

Your $50.00 donation will buy all of your child’s supplies for this year. These supplies include: binders, notebooks, crayons, pencils, markers, colored pencils, glue sticks, snack bags, ear buds, etc.

**Class Website-**

**Upcoming School Activities:** <http://smith.schoolloop.com>

**Smith Family Carnival** Friday, September 15 5:00-7:00 pm

**Halloween Costume Parade** Wednesday, October 31st at 8:45 am

**Smith Treasures Fundraiser-** October 21st at Garre Winery

**Thank you!**

I consider it an honor to be your child’s teacher this year and I am eager to start the year and watch your child grow and learn!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Bell