

August 2015

Dear Fifth Grade Parents and Students,

Welcome to fifth grade! This year at Bishop John A. Marshall School is going to be fun, exciting, challenging, and rewarding. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of what to expect for the upcoming school year.

### **Introduction**

My name is Julie Rapoport. My undergraduate degree is from the University of Vermont in Elementary Education. I received my Master's Degree from Johnson State College with an endorsement as a Reading/English Language Arts Specialist. I began teaching sixth grade at Richford Elementary School and then taught fourth and fifth grade at Montgomery Elementary School for seven years. I love teaching and am looking forward to my third year at Bishop John A. Marshall School. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call, email, or send a note, and we can schedule a time to meet.

### **Homework**

Students will have approximately 60-90 minutes of homework Monday through Thursday night. This does include reading. Research states the following three purposes for giving homework:

- To give students opportunities to practice skills
- To prepare students for a new topic
- To elaborate on introduced material

If your child is struggling with homework beyond the first month of school, please let me know.

Each student is expected to provide a Student Planner to record homework that is filled out in class daily. Please ask to see your child's planner and have him/her explain the assignments to you. Each night it is the expectation that the student will have their parents sign their planner indicating that they did their **full reading** and completed their homework. This is also an opportunity for you to communicate with me regarding questions surrounding homework and/or general communications. If your child forgets his or her homework, he or she will lose recess time. Recess time will be used to make up the homework. Please look for a homework contract to sign and return within the first week of school.

### **Math**

We will be using the Saxon Publisher text for fifth grade math. This textbook covers a large number of topics ranging from basic facts to more complex concepts involving algebra and geometry. Your child will generally have math homework 4 times a week and they will be using the Saxon textbook for this. When the math book comes home the first time please cover it, as they are new and we'd like to keep them in the best condition as possible. Please do not put tape on the books! Tests are given every 5 lessons. Your child's grade will be tallied using test grades **and** homework.

During the first week of school, students in fifth grade will take a math placement test to determine the best fit for their aptitude. We take several variables into consideration: the

placement result, Terra Nova score, and the recommendation from the previous year's teacher.

### **Language Arts**

We will use a program called Scott Foresman. This program is an anthology of short stories that focuses on different elements of literature (setting, cause and effect, compare and contrast, etc.). Students will participate in silent, oral reading. Comprehension activities will supplement the program. After each short story students will be assessed on vocabulary and comprehension skills taught throughout the story. Occasionally students will read a chapter book. This will be done mainly in class, and will include reading, discussion, and an end of the book project.

This year we will be using Wordly Wise as our word study program. The Wordly Wise program is used for vocabulary development. Students will practice vocabulary in a workbook and through daily activities. Assessments will be given on Friday.

This year we will be using Spellography as our spelling program. Spellography teaches concepts explicitly, systematically, and cumulatively. Spellography will teach an understanding of spelling concepts in order to help them remember a word's spelling, meaning, and grammatical role. At the beginning of the year each student will take a placement test, which will give me information on where your child needs help in spelling.

Your child will be expected to complete monthly book reports. They will cover the different genres (fiction, biography, mystery, etc.) At the beginning of each month students will choose a book. Once students have selected a book, they will need to have it approved by me prior to reading it. This is to ensure that the book is at an appropriate reading level and is the correct genre. I will provide a calendar to the students and calculate how many pages should be read per night in order to complete the book and project by the due date. Finally, a book project must be completed. Along with each book project, a completed *Book Review* needs to be handed in. Project requirements will be provided at the beginning of each month. The purpose of the book report is to show student comprehension, writing skills, and creativity. Please keep this in mind when working on the monthly book reports that they are the students' not the parents. If your child is struggling with putting thoughts together please see me as I have some ideas that will make this easier.

Please look for more information regarding book reports in the first few weeks of school

Reading grades will be based on projects, assignments, and assessments.

### **Writing**

Students will use the Common Core English Language Arts Standards for writing. A final draft, perfected in content and grammar through conferences and revisions, is part of the process. Some of these revisions will be done at home. Types of assignments include opinion, informative, narrative, and poetry.

### **Theme**

Theme encompasses both science and social studies. For two marking periods, students will be focusing on science themes. The science curriculum is inquiry based and incorporates

projects that will be completed both in school and at home. Science topics address energy, physical and chemical properties of matter, organisms, and the Earth. For the other two marking periods, students will be focusing on social studies themes. Students will learn about the history of the United States. The social studies and science curriculum integrates language arts and relies heavily on reading for meaning.

### **Religion**

The “We Follow Jesus” program is the foundation of our Catholic religion curriculum. The student text contains vocabulary lists, concepts of faith, Scripture-based and contemporary stories as well as related activities and projects. Students will have in class work and tests.

### **Technology**

We will be using the computer lab quite a bit this year in all areas of study. Students will use their Google Account that was created for them last year for word processing and to sign up for other online tools. If you haven't provided me with a flash drive, the technology contract, or the Google Account permission slip please do so, so we can use the lab sooner.

### **Uniform**

Your child is expected to follow the Uniform Policy that is provided on the school's website. In the event that your child is repeatedly not in uniform, an infraction sheet will be issued. Please be sure to overview the uniform policy in the student handbook that will be sent home in the first weeks of school. New for fifth grade is that boys need to wear a belt.

### **Pick Up/Drop Off**

Your child may be dropped off at 7:30 and should arrive no later than 8:00. Students who arrive later than 8:00 (this means students must be IN THE CLASSROOM at 8:00) will be marked tardy on the attendance sheet. Our first class starts promptly at 8:10, so it is beneficial to your child to arrive with enough time to prepare for class and the rest of the day.

Your child is to be picked up in the fifth grade room by 3:15 unless he or she will be attending the After School Program. If your child is not picked up by 3:15, he or she will automatically go to the After School Program and you are responsible for payment whether it was your intent for your child to attend the program or not. A call to the office will let us know if you are running late, and arrangements can be made.

If you have made arrangements for your child to be picked up by someone else, you must write a note, or your child will not be released. Many times students will tell me that an aunt, uncle, or family friend is picking them up; I can't accept this for their own safety. Documentation in writing that your child is authorized to ride with someone else is required.

### **Supplies**

The majority of school supplies are provided, however I have included a short list of items I would like your students to bring to school on the first day:

- 1 box of tissues, hand sanitizer, and Clorox wipes
- 1 box of crayons for your child
- 5 two pocket folders (One that will work as a homework folder so it needs to be sturdy).

- pencils for your child
- erasers for your child
- Student planner (the best ones are that show the week, not month).

### **Snack/Lunch/Milk**

Your child will have a snack break each day. Your child may purchase a snack in the cafeteria, or he or she may bring one from home. Please do not allow your child to pack candy or soda.

Your child is encouraged to keep a beverage on his or her desk throughout the day. I ask that it is only water.

Lunch may be brought from home or purchased in the cafeteria. Milk is available for purchase as well.

### **SUMMER WORK**

Please note that on June 5th, I spoke to students about summer work. I am requiring all students to read at least three books this summer. Please be prepared for a book report assignment to be given the first week of school.

### **Closing**

If you have any questions regarding this packet, please feel free to ask. I also have created a website that will include a log of the information here plus other tools and websites that will be helpful throughout the year. Please note that it is not 100% up to date as of this mailing. It is: [sites.google.com/site/mrsrapoportwebsite/](http://sites.google.com/site/mrsrapoportwebsite/). Or, if you'd like to search for it type in, "Mrs. Rapoport's website." Please take a moment to fill out the attached information sheet and send it in with your child on the first day of school.

Again, I am very excited to be at Bishop John A. Marshall School and am looking forward to another great year! Once again, please feel free to contact me with any questions. I can be reached at 888-4758 x229 or [jrapoport@bjams.org](mailto:jrapoport@bjams.org).

Sincerely,

Julie Rapoport

**Fifth Grade**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers to reach you at: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address:

I will send newsletters this way along with reminders.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_







