

Welcome to Back-to-School Night!
September 8, 2009

Ms. Karen Suty
Second Grade
St. Lawrence Elementary School

The following information will help you familiarize yourself with our second grade routines and hopefully make for better communication between home and school this year. Please feel free to ask any questions and keep this booklet as a source of reference to our classroom program. Together as a team we can make this school year one of personal growth, academic challenges, and fun, for your child!

This information and booklet is also available on our class website at:
www.quia.com/pages/stlawrence2nd.html

On Time and Ready

Learning begins promptly at 8:00 am. If your child is late, he or she should go directly to the office for a tardy slip. School dismissal is 3:00 pm and early dismissal on Wednesdays is either 2:00pm or 12:30pm depending on the day. Please refer to your school calendar for dates.

Attendance is vital to the success of your child. When absent, your child misses out on important learning time that cannot be made up. Please follow-up with me to obtain the lessons and homework missed so that your child can catch back up with the class quickly.

Discipline

Students are expected to follow school rules inside and outside of the classroom.

Our classroom rules are:

Be kind to your classmates.

Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking.

Show respect for teachers, classmates and school property.

Listen and respond to the FREEZE! Signal.

Positive behaviors are always emphasized and rewarded in our classroom. The students are rewarded when they are "caught doing something good" and when their table (group of desks) achieves 100 points for good behavior during the week. In each instance, the student is allowed to choose a prize from the treasure chest as a reward.

In the case of discipline, we use a behavior book in our classroom. The first time a student needs to write his or her name in the behavior book is considered a warning. This is a way to distract the student from any negative behavior and give them the chance to get back on track quickly. If the student signs the behavior book two times in one day, he or she will need to write a letter to his or her parents and sign it. This gives the student a chance to think about their action and decide what they need to do to get back on track again. If during the week your child was in the behavior book more than twice, I will notify you by email or phone call.

Homework

Homework will be sent home each night in your child's Homework Folder. Assignments will be due the following morning, unless otherwise noted. Generally, there will be math, and reading or grammar homework every night. In addition students are expected to **read at least 20 minutes a day**. Parents need to monitor the reading – have them read aloud to you. Reading is the most important part of the homework assignment! Make it fun – have them create silly voices for the characters, change character

names to their name or friend's names, or change the ending to something fun.

It is important that your child take responsibility for his/her homework assignments. While you may need to remind your child to do his/her work, please have him/her do as much as possible independently. Please do not have your child complete his or her homework at child care. It is important that you work with your child, so that you can notify me as soon as possible if he/she is having difficulty with particular homework assignments. **Please correct your child's homework with them when they are finished. Homework will not be graded -- it will be marked in class as complete or not complete.**

If there is a family emergency and your child is not able to complete his/her work, please let me know via email or note inside your child's homework folder. Sloppy work will not be accepted.

Homework Folders

Everyday your child will be bringing home his or her Homework Folder. It is important that you check your child's homework folder daily for notices and daily homework assignments. The homework folder is to be returned daily with completed homework and any notices you may have for me.

Just in case: All homework will be noted on our class website at: www.quia.com/pages/stlawrence2nd.html Please do not tell your child that the information is available on the website. It is meant as a back-up plan only and is for you to be able to ensure that your child's homework is completed. It is your child's responsibility to write down and bring home his/her homework assignments!

Field Trips

You will be notified about scheduled field trips approximately two weeks prior to the trip. We will need volunteer chaperones for each field trip. I appreciate your promptness in returning permission slips. No child will be allowed to attend a field trip without a written permission slip. This year we have tentatively planned a field trip to the Intel Museum in May. In addition, we will have two in-class field trips: Happy Hollow Zoo and The San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles.

Wish List

Posted by the front door you will find a list of items we would love to have in our classroom. I will be adding other items to the list throughout the year. Thank you in advance!

Room 2 Mascot

As part of sharing and our journal writing, each child will have the opportunity to bring home our class elephant named Chocolate. Your child can dress him, read to him, take him to your favorite restaurant or anything else he or she would enjoy. Please have your child write an entry in the travel journal and also draw a picture. Be sure your child returns Chocolate, the journal and the carrying bag on Monday; because other children are waiting to have Chocolate spend the weekend with them.

Stay in touch

Communication between home and school is key for a successful school year. Please feel free to e-mail me anytime at ksuty@saintlawrence.org. I will respond as quickly as possible (within 24 hours). I am also available most days after school to schedule individual conferences as well.

It is such a privilege to be teaching your children. This is going to be a GREAT year!

Thank you for your support!

Ms. Karen Suty

Curriculum Overview

Language Arts

Reading

Reading serves as a foundation for many, if not all, of the other academic areas. I emphasize it by reading aloud to the students with chapter books and picture books daily. Both are used for comprehension practice and to introduce writer's workshop activities, and by having the students read aloud to each other. I have also scheduled guided reading groups in the morning when we are fresh and ready to go! By June, a second grade student should be reading confidently, with some expression and attention to punctuation. We also work with students to help them develop strategies to use when reading unfamiliar words. Comprehension is emphasized and practiced each day.

Writer's workshop

Writing is the area where children progress most rapidly in second grade; as they begin to read more frequently and develop reading skills, both their vocabulary and their attention to proper structure and mechanics grows. We follow a five-step writing process: pre-writing (idea development), drafting, partner/personal revising, editing, and publishing.

Language Arts Centers

We will be continuing with Language Arts Centers this year. Weekly centers will focus on: Phonics, Spelling, Reading and Writing. Centers will change weekly and will be designed in conjunction with thematic units.

Mathematics

Our math program presents frequent opportunities to refine and master basic skills, such as addition and subtraction. New skills introduced, and in some cases, mastered, throughout the school year include:

- Telling time to 5 minutes
- Addition of 3- and 4- digit numbers (with carrying)
- Subtraction of 3- and 4- digit numbers (with borrowing)
- Measurement (both metric and English systems)
- Working with money
- Place value to 1,000
- Multiplication 2, 5, 10
- Division concepts (presented as "sharing equally")
- Fractions

Math "facts" test will be given regularly throughout the year. It is important that second graders have these facts mastered before entering the third grade. Flash cards, extra workbooks, etc. are a great way to keep up with those facts at home! Multiplication and Division concepts are introduced at the end of the year.

Math Centers

We will begin using Math centers in October. These centers will allow students to work in small groups that reinforce mathematical thinking through the use of games, workbooks, computers, etc.

Religion

As a catholic school, everything we do is centered on Christian principles, Jesus' teachings and God's love for each of us. This year students will be learning about God's gifts of the sacraments of reconciliation and first communion (Holy Eucharist). In addition, we will be "breaking open the word" weekly to discuss the bible verses and gospel that will be read at mass each Sunday.

To reinforce the principles taught in the classroom, family attendance at weekly Sunday Mass for Catholic families and weekly attendance at the Church of your choice for non-Catholic families is highly encouraged.

Science

The science unit will be taught weekly in cooperation with Michelle Varnau. The hands-on science units being studied this year will include living things, sound, the earth's surface, and balance & motion. In April we will have our second annual science fair. It's a great opportunity for the students to show what they've learned this year!

Physical Education

Physical Education is an important time for students to get some exercise and build team skills. We will have P.E. twice a week with Mr. Jordan. Please remember your child should wear or bring running shoes on these days.

Library

The students will visit the St. Lawrence library once a week. Mrs. Hunter will teach your child basic library skills and help him/her select fun and appropriate books to take home to read.

Computers

We have laptop computers in our classroom. We also have a set of interactive keyboards to teach the children typing skills. Children will use the computers to practice typing, math, language arts and science.

Music/Art

We are fortunate to have specialized instructors for Music and Art to share their expertise with our students weekly. We will be displaying their art in the classroom. The children will also participate in school-wide musical performances in the winter and spring.

Grading Scale

Students are assessed on the quality of work based on grade level standards, balanced with the individual needs of the student. Attention, cooperation, and participation are also factored in.

O = Outstanding

S = Successful Achievement

N = Needs Improvement

- * Most students are expected to receive an 'S' in a subject
- * An "O" is only given when performance is significantly above grade level
- * If an "N" is given, the specific areas needing improvement will be noted on the report card or progress report.

APPENDIX B:

**MISS SUTY'S SECOND GRADE
HOMEWORK POLICY**

Homework will be sent home each night in your child's Homework Folder. Assignments will be due the following morning, unless otherwise noted. Generally, there will be math, spelling, writing or grammar homework every night. In addition students are expected to **read at least 20 minutes a day**. Parents need to monitor the reading – have them read aloud to you. Reading is the most important part of the homework assignment! Make it fun – have them create silly voices for the characters, change character names to their name or friend's names, or change the ending to something fun.

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I have read and am familiar with Ms. Suty's homework policy.

Child's name: _____

Parent's signature: _____

Please return this signed policy when your child returns to school.

APPENDIX C:

**MISS SUTY'S SECOND GRADE
BEHAVIOR POLICY**

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- Show respect for teachers, classmates and school property.
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I have read and am familiar with Ms. Suty's behavior policy.

Child's name: _____

Consequences in our home: _____

Rewards in our home: _____

Parent's signature: _____

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Thank you!