

# Welcome to Christ the King Academy

## First Grade Friends

### Swing Into First Grade - We're Bananas About Learning!

Welcome to first grade in room 408! Your child has arrived at school with a wealth of knowledge and background that you have provided them over the past six years. I hope to build upon those experiences and create a positive, safe, successful and FUN first grade year for your child.

At Christ the King Academy we recognize that God has made all children unique, with varying physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs. Through curriculum, social interaction and skill building, we will provide a developmentally appropriate education for your child.

#### Curriculum

Our classroom curriculum, discipline and even the way we play are Christ centered. The ABeka curriculum is used for Reading. It is a phonetic approach with systematic skill presentation. The program is designed to have reading, writing, language, phonics and spelling work together to reinforce the skills, sounds, and vocabulary introduced. We will review letters and sounds for a brief period at the start of the year. As soon as I have enough assessment information we will begin with reading groups. In addition to this approach we will integrate a **large** selection of children's literature.

Our math curriculum is published by Bob Jones University. We have found it to be a well sequenced, thorough program. The content includes number identification and value, sorting, counting, graphing, classifying, patterns, time, calendar, money, measurement, addition and subtraction "math facts", basic geometry and fractions, and two digit addition and subtraction.

We will be using the D'Nealian or modern manuscript for our printing in first grade. This has been found to provide a much easier transition to cursive, which will be introduced at the end of second grade and/or the beginning of third grade.

We are thrilled to be starting a new Science curriculum published by the "Purposeful Design" division of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). We will be focusing on Unit 2: Physical Science and Unit 3: Life Science - Human Body. Social Studies is also ABeka curriculum coupled with a wide variety of other literature.

P.E. is great experience for all CKA students and Mr. Gilman is an asset to CKA. Please have your student wear tennis shoes on the P.E. days listed on the calendar. First Grade Friends may want to keep a pair of shoes in their backpack to switch into on Wednesday, our Chapel days.

### Values

I value relationships that are reciprocal, learning that is ongoing, self-responsibility, and inclusive communities. These things are foundational to a successful education and to effective teaching. I want to see that students' needs are met. My goal is to create an environment of invitational education which is centered on the following concepts:

1. People possess untapped potential in all areas of human development.
2. People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.
3. People, places, policies, procedures, and programs all invite people to realize their fullest potential.

We will be participating in activities that develop a warm and welcoming community that leaves room for students to make mistakes and learn. I also recognize the influence that parents and home-life have on a student and their learning, and I want to maximize the relationship as much as possible! By teaching self-responsibility students will become more motivated and driven while they are a part of our classroom. They will be a part of the goal setting for the classroom and in establishing "Classroom Beliefs" that will serve as our guide throughout the year. Giving students more influence or say in what they are studying, makes their learning more meaningful and they will take more ownership and pride in their "job" as a student.

### Classroom Management

My hope would be that as we develop a community that values respect, inclusiveness and learning that students will need fewer and fewer external reminders to behave. I do however recognize the need for discipline measures in the classroom. I will clearly establish my expectations in my classroom, and remain consistent throughout the year. My desire is that the consequences students face for misbehavior will be dignifying and effective, and be directly related to their behavior. I will first ask what the student needs, give quiet correction, (**See Card System**) or simply request a change in the student behavior. If the misbehavior continues and the student decides not to cooperate then they face a "card turn." I then ask the student to make a choice. They can correct the behavior or face further consequences.

Our classroom thrives off of routines, well established expectations, and the students' commitments to self-responsibility. Anything you can do to foster these things in your child is greatly appreciated.

## **Bible**

We have a Bible lesson daily with the exception of Wednesday which is Chapel day. (Please see parent handbook for chapel attire requirements). Each day we will have a lesson, pray, and practice our memory verses. We will be memorizing many verses this year in room 408. The verse will be announced in the First Grade Friends' Friday Fix, our weekly newsletter. The First Grade Friends also learn key words in America Sign Language to aid in retention. Please review the verses with your student, maybe at the dinner table or when getting ready for bed.

## **Snacks**

I ask that you pack a healthy snack item in your child's lunch each day. There will be a designated snack time during which I will dismiss them to take their snack item out of their lunch box and they will have about 5 minutes to eat. Each snack should be consumable in that amount of time. I will encourage them to pick something nutritious out of their lunch as their snack item. If you desire that they eat a certain designated item for their snack please discuss this with your child personally so they know what your expectations are.

**Birthdays** are the exception to healthy snack rule! Feel free to send in whatever your child wishes to share with the class. Cupcakes or cookies are preferable to sending a cake. Summer birthdays may be celebrated at the half or in June. Please send in napkins, plates or whatever is necessary for serving.

- A note on Birthdays. These are such important events for any child, whether it's their birthday or they've been invited to a party. We understand that it is difficult at times to invite everyone or at least all of one gender to a party. To avoid hurt feelings, we ask that invitations not be handed out in class unless everyone (or at least all of your child's gender) is invited. If you wish to have a small party, please mail invitations to the child's home. All mailing addresses are in the CKA directory and will be given out the first week of school.

**Water bottles** should be provided weekly. Please have your student bring one in on Monday, with their name on it. They may refill it during the week. Pull top lids are preferable to screw tops that can fall over and make a mess. On Fridays, disposable ones will be thrown away, others will be sent home for washing.

## **Lunch**

Lunch is from 11:20 to 11:50 each day. I designate the first 15 minutes as a quiet eating time, and some days will read a story to them. I do this so that the focus is on eating; later they will be allowed to visit and socialize but must stay in their seats during the lunch period. "Seats in your seats, back to your backs." Their lunch must be finished in the half hour period as they are not allowed to take lunch outside to the playground and I will be out of the room.

### Recess

All children go out for recess unless we have a written note from home. The children play outside unless it is too rainy; therefore they should always bring a warm jacket with hood or cap in preparation for windy or cool weather. If it is rainy, recess will be in the gym.

### Show and Tell

Please limit the treasures being brought from home. Students may bring books from home to read during "free reading times." Other show and tell items should be saved for the student's *Student of the Week* experience. When studying related topics, I may ask a student to bring something from home to share.

### Student of the Week

Starting in October, each student will have an opportunity to be "Student of the Week". This is an exciting week and the perfect time to "show and tell!"

*Monday* - Class interview and poster

*Tuesday* - Share a self-portrait

*Wednesday* - Classmates fill out acrostic about them; they create the cover.

*Thursday* - "Bag of Me"

*Friday* - Guest reader and they have lunch with Mrs. Henning.

### **\*\*"Bag of Me" bags\*\***

Students can bring whatever they would like, as long as it fits in the bag. Directions will be attached to the bag. Watch for it in their backpack. You'll get more information about this later.

### Volunteers

Please! We would love to have you actively participating in your child's first grade experience. We can always use an extra set of hands. If you are interested in helping as a volunteer, there will be Parent Volunteer Questionnaire attached to the getting to know your student form. There are many areas we can use you such as helping in class one day a week, completing small jobs at home, coming along or driving on field trips and helping with special classroom projects. Grandparents are welcomed too; please pass on my contact information! Oh, the list is endless! Thank you in advance.

### Homework

We introduce homework in first grade, and take it very seriously as a matter of self-responsibility. Students should be spending a minimum of 20 minutes daily reading **to someone**. This is *important* homework that you can anticipate daily. Your student will also have a little something to do, a couple of times a week. Often this more occasional homework is a Math review for an upcoming test. All homework will come home in a special plastic envelope with a sheet for you to sign and return. In the absence of homework, please spend time reading to or with your child.

The system for addressing missing homework will be introduced several weeks into the school year. If your child comes without their homework finished they will turn their card. There is a difference between a behavioral card turn and a card turn related to the issue of responsibility. However, both issues are equally important and will be addressed accordingly. If your child turns their card for missing homework or missing materials it will have an affect on their progression through the card system and thus may result in a simple warning or missed recess time.

### **Behavior Plan implemented in First grade**

CKA's lower grades (K- 4) have a behavior management plan based on a 5 color card system.

Green - You're doing great!

Yellow - Here's a little warning.

Orange - Related consequence 5 minutes

Red - Related consequence 5-10 minutes

Blue - Time for a chat with Mrs. Henning.

If a student's behavior is inappropriate, I will ask the student to go turn their card to the next color. As the year progresses students become personally responsible for turning their card if they leave materials at home or do not do their homework. Areas of responsibility increase gradually throughout the school year as will the need for related card turns. The card system is meant to manage school behavior and therefore students should not face consequences at home. It serves as information for me and your first grade friend about their classroom behavior, and the natural consequences. Our policy will be to inform you if your student needed to talk with Mrs. Henning or if there is consistent days of staying in at recess. **Every morning is a new day. Everyone starts on green in the morning.** However, we are hoping that by focusing on positive behaviors, the card chart will be used less frequently as the year progresses. If you have any concerns in this area, please let me know.

**\*\*Physical contact between children that harms another child, and is not accidental, will result in an automatic black card regardless of what color they are on at the time of the incident, and the child will have a visit with Mrs. Henning.**

### **End of the Day**

I will dismiss students at 3:00. Students going to the Christ Memorial Children's Learning Center will walk across the field to CMCLC with other CKA students. Children may be picked up at the East and West entrances (Pre-school ramp and Jr. High parking lot) but not at the Office door as this entrance is for visitors only. Please send a note if someone other than a parent will be picking up your first grade friend.

## Communication

Communication is key to our success this year. It is my desire for you to feel in the know and a part of what is happening in our classroom daily. Students will bring home a "Dinner Discussion" that is **only** told to them **orally** at the very end of the day. It may be one or two things they learned or need to discuss while at home in the evening. Be listening for the first one to come sometime in the first week.

Take-Home Folder - Each day your child will bring home a take-home. It needs to be emptied each night and at the start of the year I would expect that your First Grade Friend would need help making sure this task gets accomplished. As the year progresses I hope that it becomes more of their responsibility to bring it to you and to make sure it gets back into their backpack for the next day.

The Friday Fix comes home each Friday and is packed with information that comes directly from me for you and your First Grade Friend, it us on green paper.

The Eagle Flyer is the staff and administration's way of informing you and also comes home on Fridays, on yellow paper. (Only the youngest in each family will bring this home.)

Planners will begin the second week of school and will come each and every Friday thereafter. They are planners that guide your student's day here at school. They mark off what the finished each day and at the end of the week a goal is set. At the beginning of the year the goal is guided by me, but by the end of the year the student's are setting their own educational goals. They should be signed each weekend and returned the following Monday. There is also room here for questions, comments, and concerns.

Other Flyers - flyers from me, the office, outside sources, and Mrs. Henning also come home in your child's Take Home Folder. I usually try to print mine on colored paper so they stand out.

Conferences happen twice a year. The first is in November and the second is in April. If you would like a conference at any other time, please feel free to contact me at [alex.jacobson@ckaeagles.com](mailto:alex.jacobson@ckaeagles.com). I do not check this after business hours so please understand that if you email me after 3:30 I may not receive the information until the following morning.

If you would like to contact me I am diligent with my email and find it the most effective way to communicate, for me. However, if there is a more urgent need, or for you email is not efficient, feel free to call the school and ask for my voicemail. I will check voicemails daily.

[alex.jacobson@ckaeagles.com](mailto:alex.jacobson@ckaeagles.com)

### About Me

I am in my third year of teaching here at C.K.A. I was born in Kirkland, WA and lived on "that side of the water" until I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. (Interesting fact - I changed schools 13 times before I graduated from high school - I was really good at being the "new kid.") I attended C.K.A. in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade as a student, and ever since have dreamed of returning as a teacher.

In June of 2008 I married Benjamin Jacobson, and we live in downtown Poulsbo. We love spending time with family and friends. We are blessed to be on staff with newlife in Port Orchard and feel lucky to be a part of what God is doing in Kitsap County. Benjamin is the Music Director and I get to join him monthly on the worship team. We have two Terriers named Ipa-Mae and Marley-Moe who occupy much of our downtime. We also love to read, travel, geocache, play games, and do all kinds of things with our small group. I was created to be a teacher and feel blessed to have found myself in ministry here at Christ the King Academy.

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Please cut off and return to Mrs. Jacobson

I \_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the 2009-2010 handbook for 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Christ the King Academy.

I will contact Mrs. Jacobson with any concerns I might have, and I will review important information with my "First Grade Friend."

**It's a jungle in here!**