



January 9, 2012

Dear Parents,

January is shaping up to be a very busy month. There is a lot to share and I will highlight the month for you.

- ☾ This coming Friday, the 13th is a teacher workshop day. There will be no school for students
- ☾ Monday, the 16th is the MLK holiday...no school
- ☾ I will be assessing students for independent reading levels this week and next. We also have a math assessment coming up this week.
- ☾ Monday, the 23rd our first grade class will be going to the Patten Free Library for a class field trip in the morning. If you would like to join us and have been pre-approved by the office, please let me know.
- ☾ Report cards will be out at the end of the month (I believe on Friday, the 27th)

We are studying about the relationship between the sun, earth, and moon. Students are learning about the phases of the moon, the rotations of the earth and moon and how day and night happen. Please ask your child to talk to you about our science study to help him/her rehearse what he/she is learning. Our class wiki has a page devoted to this topic. Your child can log in by going to: www.mmbay.net and clicking on the wiki link. Your child needs to sign in using the following username...dnbrown(and your child's class number). The password is buzzy(and your child's class number).

Students should be reading at home nightly. When they complete a book two times with me, I send it home for them to share. Students are encouraged to read and reread any paper books I have sent home plus any appropriate books you have on the bookshelves. If you need more books for your child, please let me know.

We are beginning to focus on spelling. I will be sending home a first grade spelling list your child will be expected to know how to spell by the end of the year. I will also send home a sight word list your child should be able to read by the end of the year. (These lists are for average first grade readers/spellers...some students will do much more and some won't be ready to accomplish all of this just yet.)

Some students were having a difficult time settling in last week. Loud voices, fighting with each other, and sloppy work were just a few things we dealt with. Please do not be surprised if you see 2's on the report card indicating (we are working on this but not where we should be). 2's are not failing and they are not comparable to a letter grade. Think of them as "a work in progress". If you are concerned after you view your child's report card, please call me and set a date and time for a conference. I am more than happy to sit down with you to discuss your child's educational program.

Please be aware when your child arrives late or when your child is dismissed early, he/she is missing instruction time. I cannot stop what I am doing to chat with you when you arrive. Nor can I stop to help your child acclimate to the classroom or prepare to leave. That would not be fair to the rest of the class who are present. We are having a high number of tardy students and some early dismissals. This interruption is problematic over time.

A big thank you to those of you sent thoughtful gifts to me for the holidays. I usually send a note asking parents not to do that and I just forgot this year. Your kindness and generosity is deeply appreciated

but my greatest gifts are the cards, notes, letters, and pictures your children write and draw for me.

This is, traditionally, a very important learning time in first grade. Students need to be settled, focused, and improving in all subject areas. Please help me by making sure they get enough sleep, exercise, and healthy food. Students who arrive at school rested, nourished, in shape, and rehearsed will be more successful than those who do not. Teachers cannot be the only educators. Parents are a very important part of their child's learning process. Through our partnership, we help them succeed, together.

Wanda Brown

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