# **WELCOME TO THE**



# **TEAM**

MR. BEEMER MRS. MACFARLANE

5TH GRADE **2025-2026** 



Welcome! We are excited to be granted the privilege of teaching your child this year. Fifth grade is a pivotal year of learning, and our goal is to give your child the tools he or she needs to be a successful, lifetime learner. The teachers, Mr. Beemer and Mrs. MacFarlane, will often coordinate and plan lessons and team activities together. Sometimes we will teach together or work with small groups, depending on needs. *Please save this document* for future reference. Thank you for partnering with us; we look forward to a great year!

# CURRICULUM

## Math and Science, taught by Mr. Beemer:

**Math:** We will use Everyday Mathematics to cover several topics from the Common Core State Standards in Math during the course of the year.

**Science:** Fifth grade has several engaging units with hands-on investigations and explorations, including Force and Motion, Life Systems, and the Solar System. We will meet these unit standards through hands-on, innovative projects using the Battle Creek Science Kits as well as other resources.

### Language Arts and Social Studies, taught by Mrs. MacFarlane:

Language Arts: Students will generally write daily, in all subjects. My goal is for them to become fluent, confident writers, with increased stamina and volume, and an emphasis on organization, voice, grammar, and mechanics. Writing genres include: personal narrative, informational, and opinion/persuasive. The fifth grade writing program is based on Writing Units of Study, (Calkins). We will also use Word Journeys (Ganske,) as a basis for word study and spelling. Grammar and punctuation are incorporated into all units. Most writing will be completed in class, where I can best assist students, but at times your child might need some time to complete word study or writing tasks at home.

**Social Studies:** The fifth grade text is *Social Studies Alive! America's Past.* The main topics of study are: geography of the United States, the history of the American Indians/Indigenous People, the exploration of the North American continent and subsequent European colonization and fight for our independence from Great Britain, and the system of government formed as a result. During the course of the year, students will enjoy activities that make the study of our country's history "come alive."

#### Reading (Students are taught by the home block teacher:)

Reading instruction is in the form of focused mini-lessons, guided notebook activities, discussion, book clubs, thinking, and writing about our own reading. The fifth grade program is, *Reading Units of Study* (Calkins.) Our goal is for all students to increase their reading level, stamina, and overall reading enjoyment. The best way to improve reading skills is to READ as often as possible. As an important part of our reading program, in general, we expect students to read 20-30 minutes per day at home. At school, we will work with students to select quality books.

#### **Specials Classes**

Students will attend Music, Physical Education, Spanish, and Art.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**



Fifth grade is a time where students generally make big gains in the area of responsibility. We use an approach to classroom discipline that enables students to learn to make good decisions about their own behavior, so all students have the opportunity to learn in a supportive, nurturing environment. Part of this plan is creating an enthusiastic and positive learning environment where students feel safe, respected, and treated fairly. In order to achieve this, we expect students to:

- 1. Be respectful of self, others, surroundings, and learning environment.
- 2. Be responsible for their actions and their belongings.
- 3. Be ready to learn.

#### Classwork:

Students will usually be given time at school to begin their assignments in class. Homework is reserved for finishing classwork, practicing new skills, reading, and/or preparing for tests. If your child is *consistently* spending a lot of time working on things at home, please contact one of us, so we can evaluate this together. Assignments are expected to be turned in on their due dates.

## Fidget Toys:

Please require your child to leave ALL toys at home. While fidget toys can be a benefit for certain students in controlled situations with teacher direction, more often they create a distraction in class. Items such as slime, putty, and "Pop it Fidgets," are not needed in the classroom. Thank you for your help with this matter.

# **ABSENCES**

If a student misses school due to illness or family emergency, he/she will be provided appropriate time to make up missed work upon his/her return to class.

#### **Extended Absences:**

**Per FHPS:** Families are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. It is very difficult to replicate the type of teaching, thinking, and interactions that occur in the classroom, and it can be hard for students to readjust and catch up upon return. If a family event must be scheduled during class time, please note, we will not send work with your child but will do our best to catch him/her up upon return. Thank you for your understanding and support.

## **Early Dismissal:**

Please contact Mrs. Smith in the front office regarding picking your child up early OR for messages for your child. While we frequently check email, there are times when we are not near our computers. Calling the front office will ensure your child receives your message. (616-493-8790) aismith@fhps.net or cwattendance@fhps.net. Please arrange after school plans with your child ahead of time whenever possible, and remember that it can be difficult for students to begin or finish the school day well when they frequently arrive late or leave early. Thank you for your cooperation with this matter.

## COMMUNICATION

## **School handouts**

Please watch for papers from the week to come home with your child each Friday or the last day of the school week.

## **Email Updates**

We do our best to stay connected with our email throughout the day. This is often the quickest way to get in touch with us. We will do our best to reply within 24 hours. Please come to us with any concerns throughout the year. Thank you in advance.

We'll send group emails approximately every other week. Depending on what's happening at school, we may have more or fewer announcements.

Mr. Beemer: wbeemer@fhps.net

Mrs. MacFarlane: dmacfarlane@fhps.net

Phone:

Central Woodlands Main Office: 616-493-8790



# OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

<u>Electronics</u> <u>Students must have earbuds or headphones to be kept at school. We'll use</u> Chromebooks daily for many class activities and assignments.

**Forest Hills Policy:** Students may not use cell phones or smart watches in the building for any reason. E-readers (Kindle, etc.) are allowed but not encouraged, as the school cannot be responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen devices. (Students may call home from the school office only during the school day with teacher or office staff permission.) Per the **Forest Hills Acceptable Use Policy**, students are expected to be responsible with their Chromebook. We'll provide structure and clear guidance, but please know that students who deviate from the policy for non-school purposes can lose their device privileges at school.

#### ID Cards

The student ID should be kept at school, as it is used in the media center and the lunchroom. A replacement card costs \$5.

#### Snacks/Lunch

We encourage **healthy** snacks at school, such as granola bars, fruit, crackers, cheese sticks, etc. and a water bottle in class. Water is the only drink allowed in classrooms. If students bring candy or desserts, they will be able to eat them at lunch. **Due to the increasing number of student food allergies and sensitivities, and other restrictions, we would prefer to avoid birthday treats in class. We are a <b>NUT-free zone**.

# **Encouraging a Successful Fifth Grader**

In our experience, there are two main areas to consider in order for your 5th grader to meet and exceed the basics of fifth grade. We work to foster these important skills needed for middle school, which is just a couple of short years away! Both of these areas fall under *RESPONSIBILITY*. Some of these might be different from elementary school expectations, but encouraging the following traits will go a long way for your child, and partnering with you is so important!

## **Communication and Self-Advocacy:**

- For routine tasks, allow your child to be the key communicator
  with the teachers. This means encouraging him or her to talk
  with us about matters such as work completion, assignments,
  materials, and other similar questions, rather than a parent
  sending an email. Even if it feels a bit new or uncomfortable,
  self-advocating is a critical skill at this age. We will work with
  your child to teach good communication throughout the year.
- After an absence, please encourage your child to talk with us about what was missed in class.

## **Accountability:**

- Encourage excellent attendance.
- Check in on work quality.
- As a part of a routine, establish a regular reading time and location
- Encourage organization of materials, including bringing needed materials back and forth to school.
- Even though it can be hard, allow your child to make mistakes and experience minor consequences. Leaving a folder at home or forgetting a snack is a small but valuable lesson in responsibility. No need to bring these items to school for your child.:)

Above all: notice and praise your child when they demonstrate these great habits!

Thank you for partnering with us!