Dear Fabulous First Grade Parents,

Welcome to first grade! I’m very excited to have your child in my class and I look forward to an enriching and successful school year. Educating a child is a team effort, so I value our partnership. Anytime you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. The best way to reach me is through email at kwhelan@wcpss.net – I typically view email before and after school (and during school hours if I get the chance). Many of my notes to you will be sent via email and through Seesaw, so please make sure I have your information on file.

**Information for Parents**

**Transportation**

* **Bus students** – Regular dismissal time is 3:45 pm. Early release dismissal time is 1:15 pm.
* **Walkers and Car Riders** – Dismissal from the classroom is approximately 5 minutes prior to the dismissal bell.

\* **If there is a change in your child’s transportation, please specify with a note at the beginning of that day or a call the front office! Please do not email me regarding a change in transportation, since I may not be able to get to email during the day.**

**Personal Belongings**

* Please label your child’s coat, sweater, backpack, lunch box, etc. with his/her name.
* **Medicine** – School officials may administer medication to students if the following criteria is met:
	+ The Parent Request and Physician Order for Medication Form (1702) is completed and in the possession of school officials.

**Snacks**

Please send in a small snack for your child each day. Children may bring in fruits, crackers, vegetables, and other nutritious foods. **Please do not bring in sweets or soft drinks. If your child brings his/her lunch, please make sure your child knows what food is for snack and what food is for lunch.** Youmay want to use two separate bags to avoid any confusion.

**Special Classes**

This year we have 5 specials–Art, Music, PE, STEM, and Reader’s Theater. Our class will be split; half of our class will go to specials with Mrs. Griswold’s class and the other half will go to specials with Mrs. Inagaki’s class. More information will be sent home, so that you are aware as to which group your child will be going with.

**Please note that I am currently working with Mrs. Vaughn for a specific day and time each week that we could visit the library to check out books (for the whole school year).**

**Lunch and Breakfast**

* Our regular lunch time will be 11:40-12:10. On Early Release days, lunch will be earlier and will be in our classroom.
* Lunch will be $2.75. For those who wish to eat breakfast, the cost is $1.25. Money may be put into a lunch account for your child and your child will be given a lunch number to use when buying lunch each day. Checks should be payable to Northwoods Elementary Cafeteria. You can also pay online at [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com) – you can also receive alerts as to when your child’s lunch account is running low in funds.
* **If students do not have money for lunch, they will be served fruits, vegetables, and water.**
* A monthly lunch menu can be found online at [www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net) – just click on lunch menus or the Northwoods website at <http://northwoodses.wcpss.net> (click on parent tab at the top). Please help him/her decide on their daily lunch choice.
* We would love for you to come and have lunch with your child (**after the first two weeks of school, since we are practicing our routines**). When you do decide to come, please send us a note that day. There are “special” tables off to the side that you can sit at with your child (if available). I do allow your child to also pick one friend (if they would like to-sometimes they want you all to themselves).
* Students **may not** bring sodas or be brought “fast foods.”

**Absences/Latenesses**

**Absences** - When your child is absent, please send an email to me that morning (preferably before 8:45) telling the reason for the absence. According to the Wake County policy, an absence is excused for these reasons:

* Illness or injury
* Death in the family
* Medical/Dental appointments
* Court (if a child is under subpoena)
* Religious observance
* Participation in a valid educational opportunity (must be approved in advance)

If you do not have documentation that your child was absent for one of the above reasons, I will have to mark the absence unexcused. **Family vacations will be UNEXCUSED absences.** All work that was missed due to an absence will be given to the student when they come back to school.

**Late to school** - The first bell rings at 8:45 and the second bell rings at 9:15. **Your child must be sitting in the classroom at 9:15**, or they will be marked late. This is a school wide policy. Please keep in mind that children do “morning work” as soon as they arrive, so it is important to have them in the classroom as soon as possible.

**Classroom Information**

Your child will have a weekly newsletter that informs you of what we are learning in class. Please discuss these topics with your child to enrich/extend their learning. Your child will bring home his/her work daily in their notes home folder. Please review the work and review any concepts that your child had difficulty with.

**Classroom Behavior Plan**

Please refer to the detailed behavior plan titled “A Penny Saved is a Penny Earned”.

**Star of the Week**

Each Wednesday, we will pick a name from our “star box”. Your child will not start being “our star” until the following week, but we choose early to allow your child adequate time to fill out an All About Me poster (which they will present in class). Each day includes something special, so be on the lookout for directions when your child is chosen.

**Classroom Rules**

On the first day, the students and I will create a set of classroom rules (“Classroom Promises”). A copy of these rules will be sent to you, in hopes that you will review them with your child.

**School-Wide Expectations**

**CLIMB** stands for

* **C**ares for others
* **L**istens to learn
* **I**nteracts safely
* **M**akes good choices
* **B**ecomes successful

**I look forward to discussing all of this and more at our Open House,**

**Mrs. Whelan**