



Mrs. Blackmon's Fishy Class

ABC's of Kindergarten

2014-2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new year of school at Paschal Elementary! My name is Stephanie Blackmon and I am beyond excited to be your child's teacher!

Each Kindergarten classroom here at Paschal Elementary has a mascot. Our classroom is the Fish Class so throughout the year you will receive communication that refers to the "Fish Class".

Kindergarten is a time of new beginnings, making new friends, and learning many new things each and every day. Our days will be filled with many wonderful experiences and opportunities for learning and growing.

As with most new beginnings, you may have many unanswered questions. To help, I have prepared this handbook that should answer many questions that you have concerning our classroom. As always, if you have further questions, please feel free to call me, write a note to me, or email me.

I look forward to a fantastic year with you and your child. I am delighted to have your child in my class! It is my pleasure to work with them and make sure they start their school career on a positive note with a life full of successes! I greatly appreciate your help and support throughout this year.

Mrs. Blackmon

A

Absences

If your child is sick, you may send me an email to let me know they will be absent. If your child is or will be out for several days, please also contact our receptionist (Ms. Carter) or our attendance clerk (Mrs. Goodridge), and let her know. It is important to send a note to excuse the absence once your child returns to school, as the office keeps these on file.

Arrival

Students should arrive to school no earlier than 7:30 AM. There is not student supervision before this time. They are picked up by me from the cafeteria at 8:00. Our instructional day begins at 8:15. Tardies are noted after 8:15.

Attendance

A successful school experience is the responsibility of the child, the parent, and the school. Your child's progress, both academically and socially, is influenced to a great extent by daily participation. Regular attendance without tardiness is a key.

B

Behavior Folder

I feel it is extremely important that you are aware of your child's behavior both appropriate and inappropriate. In order to keep you informed we will maintain 'behavior folders'. Everyday your child will bring home a **blue folder** that will be known as his/her behavior folder. This folder will contain a calendar and a parent/teacher communication page. The calendar will be used to show daily behavior. The following colors will be used for behavior:

Gold/Silver Star- Super Star Day! These will be more challenging to earn. These are for days when a child goes ABOVE and beyond what is expected of them and does so without having to be asked or reminded to do so.

Green-Great Day! They did all they were expected to do. (I will write if they received a warning.)

Yellow- O.K. Day- more than 1 warning and the student needed to slow down and think with a time-out.

Red- More than 2 warnings and re-direction without improvement *or* a serious offense has occurred or they caused harm to another student (parent will be contacted.)

Regardless of what your child receives for the day, **please initial the behavior folder calendar daily** so that I know you are aware of your child's behavior. The teacher/parent communication page located behind the calendar can be used for both you and me to write small reminders, to ask questions, or to send a small note when needed. Please keep in

mind that if there are any major concerns I will call you and you are *always* welcome to call me. Although my email is the easiest way to get a hold of me (sblackmon@scuc.txed.net)

Parents, the behavior folder is where your role becomes *very important*. It *really* matters to your child that you notice his/her behavior at school both appropriate and inappropriate. If your child has great behavior all week, then praise him/her for it. Make a big deal out of it and perhaps come up with a family reward system. Your praise for your child's good behavior gives your child more motivation to continue having good behavior. Young children seek and love praise! In just the opposite, you should also speak to your child if he/she brings home a 'sad' note concerning inappropriate behavior. Discuss the rule or rules that were broken and how to improve behavior. Then you can work together to set a behavior goal for the next day of school (or the whole week of school). If the children have goals for themselves *and* know that you have goals for them to get a good note then they will have more motivation to achieve that goal for themselves and for you.

Also it is best if you put any important notes for the office or me, including the prepaid envelope for the cafeteria, in the left pocket of the behavior folder. I will check this folder every morning and will be sure to see any of these items.

Birthdays

We know how special birthdays are for you and your child. We recognize birthdays at school in an appropriate manner. You are welcome to send a treat for the class to enjoy to help celebrate. I will send home a paper to notify you of when we can celebrate your child's special day as a class. It is completely optional to send a treat.

When you are choosing a treat you may only send mini-cupcakes, cookies, mini-muffins, or donut holes. These items **MUST** be store bought and must contain the packaging labels with the ingredients clearly stated on them due to allergies. Please **do not send** regular or large cupcakes, full sized cakes, or drinks. I will pass the birthday treat out during our afternoon recess. If your child has an allergy please feel free to send in a treat box for them to keep in the classroom. They will be able to keep treats that are safe for them here at school and when we have birthday treats, they will be able to choose an item from their box that is safe for them.

If you plan on sending invitations for a party, please send one for each child and contact me for a class count. I will send home the invitations in the blue take home folder.

Book Clubs

I will be sending home book orders throughout the year. Please do not feel obligated to purchase. However, book orders are a wonderful way to build your child's home library, encourage reading, and improve reading skills. If you order, please send it to me with a **check** (payable to the book club) or cash inside a sealed and labeled envelope, placed in your child's daily folder.

C

Conferences

I will schedule conferences throughout the school year. In the meantime, if you need to contact me, please call the school, send a note, or e-mail me to make arrangements for scheduling a special conference. My conference period is 10:50-11:40. Near the end of the first nine weeks grading period, I will contact you to make arrangements for a parent/teacher conference. We will discuss your child's accomplishments, strengths, and overall progress as well as the kindergarten report card.

Curriculum

I follow all state and district guidelines when planning the curriculum for my classroom. I also take into account the needs of the individual student.

Students will take part in many different methods of teaching/learning including: large and small group instruction, one-on-one instruction, teacher and student-led instruction, hands-on instruction, computer-led instruction and free exploration opportunities.

Students are regularly assessed using a checklist, the Kindergarten Report Card, I-Station, the DRA, and teacher observations in order to lead instruction. I will send you more information on these topics later in the year.

D

Discipline

Our Fishy Laws:

1. Be a good listener.
2. Follow directions.
3. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
4. Raise your hand.
5. Treat others with kindness.

We also use the Magic 5 Rule to help teach the students how to be good listeners. These are the expectations:

1. Sitting Kindergarten Style (legs "criss cross applesauce")
2. Eyes watching
3. Ears listening
4. Hands in Lap
5. Lips Locked

At the beginning of everyday, each student starts with his/her name on the green section of our behavior chart. This indicates that the student is having a good day. After the first occurrence of inappropriate behavior, the student will receive a verbal warning. If the behavior continues, he/she will move their color to yellow to indicate that he/she needed another warning and reminder that the student needs to slow down, think, and change the behavior. The student will receive a 5 minute time-out. If the behavior continues or another offense occurs the student will change his/her color to red. This indicates that the poor behavior needs to Stop and the parents will be contacted. These color changes will also include a private one-on-one talk with me to discuss the negative behavior, and what the student needs change.

Only after all of the aforementioned methods have been utilized *and/or* in severe cases (biting, fighting, hitting) will the child be sent to the principal's office on a discipline referral. With the exception of the severe case (biting, fighting, hitting) this step should never occur without your having some forewarning of a behavior issue. I will give you a daily report of your child's behavior in the folder and *will* always contact you if there is a problem.

Dismissal

Paschal Elementary dismisses at 3:15. Those riding buses and daycare vans will walk to the cafeteria and be picked up in the bus circle. Parent Pick-up children can be picked up in the gym or by using the drive through circle by the gym. If your child is a parent pick up, please have your white car tag that you were given during registration. This will aid in getting them to you more quickly. If your child's means of transportation should change, please send a note with them that morning or contact the office as soon as possible-no later than 2:30. This will help prevent any "late day" mix-ups. Please do not remove the going home transportation button on your child's backpack. These are very important to make sure your child gets to the right place at the end of the day and home safe.

Dress Code

Students should dress in accordance with the SCUCISD dress code.

E

E-mail

You may contact me via my school e-mail address: sblackmon@scuc.txed.net .

I check it several times throughout the day, on weekends, and on holidays. If you need to discuss something urgently, please call me at the school instead.

Emergencies

It is imperative that the office and I have current emergency contact numbers. Please remember to let the office and me know if numbers should change at any time during the year.

F

Fieldtrips

We will schedule at least one fieldtrip this school year. I will inform you as soon as we know when and where we will be going. If you plan to chaperone, a criminal history form will need to be submitted.

FMNV (Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value) Policy

There are guidelines from the United States Department of Agriculture concerning foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV). These guidelines restrict what the school is allowed to hand out for snack and classroom parties. Due to this, you must follow the FMNV policy when providing snack for your child. **Please remember that healthy snacks tend to give children the best nutrition.** For more information, see www.squaremeals.org or www.agr.state.tx.us.

G

Guided Reading

Your child will learn to read this year. If they are already reading, they will be increasing their reading level. I will be starting small group reading instruction soon. Please practice any take home books your child brings home and remember to read together at least 20 minutes per day.

H

Handwriting

We teach D'Nealian handwriting at Paschal. I will send home a sample handout of it at a later date.

Homework

Your child will be given a homework packet that will go home Monday and come back to school on Friday. This will not begin until January. Beginning of the year homework will be sent home during the first weeks of school. It will have a different activity/skill to focus on each night. Although Kindergarten seems a bit early to be starting homework assignments, it is a good habit that if started early, and supported by you, will last throughout your child's academic career.

I

Illness

I know it is difficult to decide whether or not to keep your child home from school, however it is important to keep them home if they are ill. This helps keep your child comfortable and prevents others from getting sick. Also, we all know that children function better in the classroom when they are healthy. "If your child is sent home from school with a fever (temperature of 100 degrees or higher), diarrhea, vomiting, or other viral/flu-like symptoms, it is requested that the child remain home from school for 24 hours after symptoms have resolved (without the use of medication). This may help to prevent your child's illness from making another child ill. Parents are required to pick up their child as soon as possible should the child develop a fever at school, or exhibit other symptoms of illness, injury or conditions of communicable disease (rash, pink-eye, head lice, etc.).

If your child is sent home for an undiagnosed rash, suspected pink-eye or other related problem, a physician's note allowing return to school or resolution of symptoms will be necessary for your child to return to the classroom. Again, this is to prevent the spread of illness among students. A child suspected of having, or being able to transmit, a communicable disease is excluded from school upon the advice of the principal or school nurse. The student will be readmitted when he/she presents a physician's certification or upon completion of the period of exclusion required by the State Board of Health." (SCUCISD Elementary Student/Parent Handbook pg.41)

J

Journals

We keep several journals in class to use during our academic day. You will see growth in your child's writing throughout the year. It is a good idea to keep a spiral notebook at home for them to write in and illustrate stories. You will be amazed at the progress they will make throughout the year with their journals. We will also have a journal for math and science. These would be fun to use at home too!

K

"Keeping Up"

You can "keep up" on all our class information by checking your child's blue daily take home folder. They are responsible for bringing this folder to school each day. All communication from our classroom will be inside this folder (newsletters, notes from me or the school, homework, etc...). Please help your child take care of these folders.

L

Lunch

Our lunch time is from 12:35-1:05. If you plan on having lunch with your child you can do so by checking in with the front receptionist. You and your child only can sit at one of the round tables in the cafeteria. Please do not invite your child's classmates to join you. You are welcome to sit at the long class table with your child, so you can dine with the group. It is okay to bring in outside food for your child but please, due to food allergies, **do not** bring food for other children.

Lunch ID Numbers

Each student in the district is assigned an ID number, which also doubles as their lunch number. Please help your child memorize it as soon as possible. This number will remain with them as long as they are a student within the SCUCISD. You may deposit money into your child's lunch account at any time. Check the district website for lunch menus and lunch account information.

Lunch Money

Lunch money should be taken to the office or sent in the blue folder. Be sure that it is in a sealed envelope and is clearly labeled with your child's name and my name. If you cannot get the money to school yourself and do not feel as though your child is responsible enough to turn it in, you may also set up an online account through Mealtime. This allows you can manage your child's account online. Please be sure to keep your child's account current. The cafeteria allows no more than 3 charges. If you have questions concerning lunch charges, contact the cafeteria directly. (Cafeteria Manager #619-4513) Thank you for your help!

M

Math

Our school will be using the Pearson Envision Math as well as Investigations Math. We will work on math skills during our calendar and math time each day. We will be doing lots of group activities and hands-on type activities through the use of manipulatives. The math program emphasizes conceptual understanding of mathematics, it explores a broad mathematics spectrum, not just basic arithmetic, and it is based on how children learn and what they are interested in as we prepare them for their future mathematical needs.

N

Newsletters

I will send home a weekly newsletter each Friday called "The Fishy Times". The newsletter will be in your child's blue Friday folder and will contain many updates, activities, and themes for the week. It will also be available on our classroom website.

Nurse

Mrs. Wesp is our school nurse. She tends to the students' medical needs throughout the day. For more serious injuries and sudden illnesses, she will take care of your child until you can be reached to pick them up from school. She also administers all medications to students during school hours. If your child has any medical conditions or allergies that we need to be aware of, please contact her as soon as possible. Again, make sure your contact numbers are always up to date, in case of an emergency.

O

Open Lines of Communication

Please let me know if you have ANY concerns or questions throughout the year. I feel it is our job to work together as a team if we are to enhance your child's education and make their first year a successful one. I can be reached at 619-4500, or you can email me at sblackmon@scuc.txed.net. My voicemail is 619-5197. My conference time is 10:50-11:40.

P

Parent Involvement

Your support of school activities makes your child feel important, and also sends the message that you value school. We are always happy to have your help for special activities in the classroom.

Parties

We are allowed three "party" days this school year and I will let you know when they are. I will be asking for your help with these events, as I can always use extra pairs of hands and goodies.

PE

If for any reason your child is unable to attend PE (Physical Education), send a note to the office ASAP. Please understand this will also excuse your child from recess participation.

Q

Questions

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child.

Quick Good-byes help keep Dry Eyes

It is best to say good-bye quickly in either the cafeteria or the parent drop off line. Kids do best with this rule of thumb ☺.

R

Recess

Your child will have recess every morning and again in the afternoon. Please see that they are dressed according to the weather. If for any reason your child is unable to attend recess/PE, please send a note. I recommend tennis shoes everyday to prevent slips, trips, and falls on the playground.

Report Cards

We are on a nine week grading period, at which time your child will receive a report card. I will meet with you near the end of the first nine weeks to discuss our report card in detail.

Rotations

Our Specials rotations will be from 10:50-11:40 each day. Please refer to the weekly newsletter or rotations schedule on the school and class websites to see where your child will go. Please make sure they wear tennis shoes on our PE days and every Friday for Structured Movement.

S

Schedule

I will send home a copy of our daily schedule once our procedures are in place. It will also be posted to my website. If it should change during the year, I will always send an updated copy home.

Snack Time

Students are responsible for bringing a snack and water bottle each day for our afternoon snack. We will have a short snack and recess each morning. Please send a simple and healthy snack for your child only. Due to state guidelines and many different food allergies, students are not allowed to share their snacks. Also, please do not send spoon snacks or yogurt.

Student Belongings

Please label all of your child's belongings with their name using a permanent marker. This includes, but is not limited to: coats, sweaters, backpacks, lunchboxes, and other large items. If items are lost, please check the school's lost and found located in the back corner of the cafeteria.

T

Toys

Toys are not allowed at school. Please leave them at home. They can be distracting, and can get broken or lost. As the year progresses, the children will be encouraged to bring special things from home that are related to our letter and number of the week for weekly Show and Tell. I will always send a request for any show and tell items and give you notification of what the students can bring and when.

Transportation and Transportation Buttons

You should have filled out a form at registration on which you stated how your child would be going home each day. **I must go by whatever this form states.** If your intention is for your child to go home in any method other than what you originally put down on this form, you must notify the office to make a transportation change. Simply changing the button on your child's backpack does not indicate a change of transportation. I must receive a transportation change from the office in order to allow your child to go home in any method other than what you put on the transportation form. Unless there is an emergency, all transportation changes should be made by 2:30 p.m. the day of the change. Please be sure that your child's transportation tag remains on their backpack at all times. **Please leave this tag attached the entire year, as it is very helpful to identify where the children need to be.** If your child loses their tag, please let me know so that I can replace it for you.

U

Unique

Each child in our class is unique and wonderful. In Kindergarten, we learn about how we are all unique and special. It is important that we celebrate our differences and similarities.

V

Voicemail

You can leave a voicemail for me anytime during the day at 619-5197.

Volunteers

Volunteers are welcomed and loved at both Paschal Elementary and in the Fishy Class! If you would like to volunteer, please let me know when you are available so that I am able to plan ahead for your visit.

In order to keep the children safe, all volunteers must submit a criminal background check for processing. If you need forms, please let me know and I can send them home in your child's folder.

Please remember that if you are coming to school as a volunteer, you must sign in at the office and receive a visitor's sticker. This also applies to your coming to eat lunch with your child.

W

Water Bottles

Your child may bring a water bottle to school. When they are empty, I will fill them up for the children. We will send home water bottles on Friday to be either washed or replaced. I recommend disposable water bottles be replaced each week. Please label the bottle with your child's name.

Website

Please check the Paschal Elementary website and my classroom website regularly for the most up to date school and classroom information. The school website address is: www.scuc.txed.net/Campuses/Paschal/ and our class website address is: www.scuc.txed.net/webpages/sblackmon/.

Wish List

Throughout the year, I may be asking for donations of extra items or supplies that we will need in class. It is never required that you donate anything, but please know that whatever you can do to help out is greatly appreciated. I also have a wish list on our class website that I will update regularly.

X

eXciting eXperiences

We will have many wonderful eXperiences this year such as crafts and art projects, science eXperiences, playing learning games, and making class books. They are all fun and eXciting!

Y

Yearbook

You will have a chance to buy a school yearbook, please look for order forms in your child's blue folders.

You!

You can help to make your child feel successful this year by doing some of the following:

*Reading a book to your child each day- it encourages them to become good readers.

*Discuss your child's day at school - Ask questions like, "What are you getting better at?", "What was the best part of your day?", "What center did you go to today?", and "What did you do in that center?" These questions help your child reflect on their day. Show enthusiasm as you ask them about what happened! Remember that we do a lot of things every day, so don't accept "Nothing" as an answer!

Z

Zzzzz's

Remember that we all function better with a good night's rest! Establish an early bedtime routine and stick to it. This lets your child start the new day refreshed and ready to have a happy and successful experience.