

September 2020

Dear Parents,

It is a pleasure to continue my work here at Nativity as the first grade teacher, and to have your child in my class! To start the year off right, I am sending you this parent survival packet. This has been assembled to help you understand our homework assignments, behavior management system, and other information that will enable us to make this a very positive and rewarding school year. I feel that open lines of communication are a key component to success in school. You can help by sending me well-rested children with full tummies, and a hug and a kiss still fresh on their minds! This sets the stage for a fantastic first grade day!

Please feel free to contact me at any time if there is a question or situation you would like to discuss. My e-mail address is dcatanese@nativityofmaryschool.org, and my school phone number is (716) 633-7441 ext. 311. I look forward to building a relationship with you and your child and thus providing the best education possible.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Dana Catanese



Our First Grade Weekly Report: Every week your child will bring home a First Grade Weekly Report. This will keep you updated on your child's behavior, homework assignments, what we are learning, and other important information I need to pass along. Please initial your child's report every weeknight. This shows me that you have noted their behavior and that they have completed their homework. If I need to write you a note, I may do it on there; and I encourage you to do the same. On the following Monday I will take the old report out, and put a new report in. It is a wonderful way to communicate throughout the school year!

OUR FIRST GRADE WEEKLY REPORT

Week of: _____
Name: _____

Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns!
Mrs. Calrese
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

Behavior and Homework:

	My homework tonight is	Today at school my behavior clip landed on	Parent initials
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			

Learning Spotlight

Reminders

Drinks: I allow students to keep a water bottle at their desk throughout the day if they wish. Please send this fully-filled them in the morning, and they will bring it home with them in the afternoon. This is very important, as the drinking fountains at school are closed.

Snacks: Although in years past we have had snack in first grade, this year we will unfortunately not have one. This is to reduce the number of times all of the students in the class have their masks off simultaneously; to reduce hand to mouth contact throughout the day; and to reduce how often we need to sanitize our desks. Although I think this will be a tough our class at first, I am hopeful that with a hearty breakfast and lunch they will adjust.

Homework: Once we start our usual daily routine, your child will have homework on Monday through Thursday nights. Once in awhile they will have homework on Friday nights, but I try to save weekends for family, friends, fun and faith! Weekday homework includes math and reading. Your child will also have a spelling notebook with activities they must complete throughout the week. I am planning on starting math and reading homework next week, and spelling homework the following week. Although I strongly encourage students to complete their homework as assigned, I completely understand that sometimes life gets busy. Should your child not complete his or her homework for one reason or another, no worries! Please just complete it and return it to school as soon as possible.

Behavior Management System: We use a zoned clip chart to manage behaviors in our classroom. In the morning all of the students start on the first green zone (or glitter green!). Throughout the day they can move their clip up or down depending on the choices they make. There is one gold, two green, two yellow and two red zones. Some zones have consequences and others serve as a visual warning or motivator. At the end of the day, I use a BINGO dauber to mark what zone your child landed on in their weekly report. If they have a gold sticker, this means they landed in the gold zone. You should be SO PROUD of them, as I would be too! If they have green daub, they landed on either green zone. If they have a yellow daub, they landed on either yellow zone. If they have a red daub, they landed on either red zone. If you see that your child has landed on the yellow or red zone, please take the time to discuss the poor choices they made during the school day, and how they can make better choices in the future. I use this system because it gives my students many visual cues as to how their day is going, and provides parents with a simple snapshot of the end result.



Specials: Our specials schedule is as follows:

- Monday: Art.
- Tuesday: Physical Education.
- Wednesday: Computer.
- Thursday: Music and Mass.
- Friday: Physical Education and Spanish.

Tests: Your child will have math, science, social studies, religion, reading and spelling tests in first grade. Reading and spelling tests are weekly, and usually on Fridays. I am planning on starting these in two weeks.

Special COVID considerations: Due to the requirements set forth by the state, this year in first grade will look different than it has in the past. Just some of these adjustments include social (6 ft.) distancing, the use of plexiglass barriers, extra handwashing, extra sanitizing and wearing masks.

- Hand sanitizer: Each child has been asked to bring in a small hand sanitizer that they will use often throughout the day. When it is empty, I plan on using our bigger sanitizers to refill them.
- Towels: I would like each child to bring in a small towel ASAP; it can be a bath, beach or hand towel. Just make sure it is small enough to fit folded in your child's desk, but big enough for them to sit cross-legged on. We are planning on using these to do some outside learning while the weather is nice. These towels will go home frequently for washing. It is very important to send in a clean replacement in the following school day.
- Masks: Each child has been asked to bring in spare masks to keep in school; and they will also need to wear one to and from Nativity. Please make sure your child knows how to properly put on his or her mask; to adequately cover their nose and mouth. If your child is using reusable masks please make sure you wash them regularly. Your child should have a clean mask every day. If you'd like, you can send your child into school with a breakaway mask lanyard attached to their mask; this will help them keep better track of it throughout the day. There will be a few times in our school day where everyone is wearing a mask, because there is too much movement to appropriately social distance. That being said; for the most part groups of students will alternate taking mask breaks throughout the day to keep everyone safe and comfortable.