

May 14, 2020

Dear First Grade Families,

I'm so happy to hear from so many of you that you've received the learning packets that are making At Home Learning a little more organized and a little less complicated for you and your children. Some first graders and parents commented that the math seemed easy. To that I say, "Good!" That means your child has retained what we taught and what he/she learned, which is our goal during At Home Learning. We know that long periods of time away from learning cause a backward slide, and we want to avoid that by providing materials that will keep those concepts fresh and strong. Some parents have asked if it's okay to make things more challenging, and to that I say, "Of course!" Please check the bonus activities each week for those more challenging activities that might take more time or thought.

This week families are also picking up student materials from school. We encourage using those math books, writing folders, reading packets, and anything else that comes home. Some first graders will fly through the math book, some will move at a slower but steady pace, and some might struggle. Let your child guide you, and if something in there causes frustration (keep in mind that challenging and frustrating are two different things), close the book, find something else to do, and please ask if you have questions. Remember, working on anything other than the recommended 30 minutes a day from our At Home Learning Checklist is OPTIONAL.

Several families have commented that keeping their children engaged and motivated is becoming harder. To that, I give a knowing nod, smile and say, "Welcome to May!" This is typical, and we see this in our classrooms every year. They've worked hard, spring looks and feels good after a long winter (I see some 80s in the forecast, folks!), and they're ready for a break. You can pace those targeted, focused learning minutes across the whole day. Do what works for your family.

As we move closer to the end of first grade, many questions are coming up about next year. We don't have any news to share with you about what that will look like. We dislike the unknown and uncertainty just as much as you do. What we do know is that when we return children will have been out of a school building for six months. Learning has slowed down, social skills with peers might be getting rusty, and routines are very different. We'll take the time necessary to determine what every child needs, and we'll have a plan for how we'll meet those needs. For now, just keep them safe, happy, and healthy.

Take good care,
Monica