



**My Philosophy of Teaching:** In my classroom, I believe that the foundation of learning is having a positive classroom community and building relationships with the students and their families. Each student is unique in how they learn and grow. Getting to know each student will enable me to support him or her in the best possible way. I want to meet students where they are at and create lessons that support every child. This will be done through differentiation and providing students with choice in various activities. I strive for every student to feel supported and cared for not only in the classroom, but in their faith as well. I also believe learning should be an adventure, done through discovery, and enjoyable. Students will be encouraged daily to grow academically, as people, and in their faith.

**The Fourth Grade Classroom:** Fourth grade is going to be an exciting adventure. My classroom is very structured. In the first few weeks of school, we will establish routines and go over expectations. As a class, the students will help create their own classroom rules together. This will promote ownership and teamwork. I believe your children have great potential so I will encourage them daily to do their very best. Every student learns in their own way and has a unique set of strengths, my biggest expectation for them then is to give their best effort. Character and leadership development are important to me. These aspects will be implemented into my class each day. My biggest expectations for this class is to treat others with respect and kindness, and to grow each day.

**Communication:** Parent, teacher communication is essential for your student to have a good year. Please feel free to contact me before, during, and after school at my email address [kkapustka@sjsknox.org](mailto:kkapustka@sjsknox.org). Feel free to send questions or concerns and I will get back to you as soon as possible. Your child's Friday Folder and Assignment book will be a great way to keep up with academic progress along with classroom conduct. You can also message me through Class Dojo. I will be sending home a weekly newsletter each Friday with updates, upcoming events, and any announcements from the week. This newsletter will also be emailed.

**Arrival:** Parents should plan to drop off students at a time that will allow them time to walk to the classroom, put away books, and be ready to start the day at their desk by **7:45 a.m.** Please refer to the Parent Student Handbook for additional details.

A+ = 99-100	C+ = 84-85
A = 95-98	C = 79-83
A- = 93-94	C- = 77-78
B+ = 91-92	D+ = 75-76
B = 88-90	D = 72-74
B- = 86-87	D- = 70-71
	F = below 70

**Grading:** Our numerical grading scale is as follows. We weigh Classwork and Homework 50% and Tests and Quizzes 50% of your student's overall grade for the semester.

**Assignment Books and Homework:** Students in fourth grade can expect 30-45 minutes of homework each night. Students will have homework every night of the week and occasionally on weekends. Homework counts as a completion grade, which makes up 50% of his or her final grade in each given subject. A homework average grade for each module will be calculated and put in RenWeb every 3 weeks. **All homework should be written daily in the student assignment book.** Each day students will be given the chance to start homework during "Homework Helpers" the last 20 minutes of the day.

Students are responsible for writing down their homework and bringing home all materials they need each day. Please help encourage your student to be responsible in the practice of taking the time to ensure they have all the materials they need when they pack up at the end of the day and that they bring all materials with them back to school the next day. Incomplete assignments due to forgetting materials at school or leaving them at home will still earn a MA or IA mark. Please sign/initial your student's assignment book each night. If your child has received a behavior mark for that day it will be noted in the assignment book. A stamp means great classroom behavior. Students have a mark code sticker on the inside cover of their assignment book.

### **Curriculum:**

Language Arts (Reading, English, and Spelling)

*The Language Arts curriculum is broken into 12 modules. Each module consists of 3 weeks of themed stories, literacy skills, spelling, and grammar lessons. The themes for each module are shown below. Every Friday will be testing day. We will be testing on spelling words, reading, and grammar. We will also be doing 3 novel studies over the course of the year.*

- 1st Quarter: Module 1: What Makes Us Who We Are?, Module 2: Come to Your Senses, Module 3: Rise to the Occasion
- 2nd Quarter: Module 4: Heroic Feats, Module 5: Art Everywhere, Module 6: Marvels of Nature
- 3rd Quarter: Module 7: Tricksters and Tall Tales, Module 8: Food for Thought, Module 9: Global Guardians
- 4th Quarter: Module 10: Communication Nation, Module 11: Genre Study- Nonfiction, Module 12: Genre Study- Fiction

## Math

- 1st Quarter: Place Value and Whole Number Operations, Multiplication and Division Problems
- 2nd Quarter: Extend and Apply Multiplication, Fractions and Decimals
- 3rd Quarter: Fractions and Decimals, Operations with Fractions
- 4th Quarter: Two-Dimensional Figures and Symmetry, Measurement/Data/Time

## Science

- 1st Quarter: Energy Conversations
- 2nd Quarter: Vision and Light
- 3rd Quarter: Earth's Features
- 4th Quarter: Waves, Energy, and Information

**Accelerated Reader:** Students will be given goals for each nine week grading period for Accelerated Reader (AR). Goals the first nine weeks of AR will be a little lower due to the set-up time. A grade will be taken in Language Arts each quarter for the average score on all AR tests. A grade will also be taken for students meeting the point goal for the nine week grading period. Your child can access his or her account from home to check on progress towards this goal. AR login information can be found inside the student's red homework folder.

**Reading Log:** Students are expected to complete 1 hour of reading outside of the classroom each week. I recommend 10-15 minutes each day. Your student has a reading log that they keep in their red homework folder. Please be sure that you sign their reading log each weekend that they have it each Monday morning. This is a weekly homework assignment.

**Criterion:** Throughout the year, students will write several passages using an online program called Criterion. Through this program, students will learn about different genres, practice the writing process, and receive immediate feedback so that they can edit their writing. This program is used entirely in the classroom as part of our Language Arts block.

**Novel Studies:** In Language Arts, we will read, analyze, and discuss a novel each semester. Before each novel study, students will be given an outline of due dates and will be responsible for having pages read and activities completed by each deadline. The first book will be *Tales of Fourth Grade Nothing* by: Judy Blume.

**Friday Folder:** The Friday folder will contain all of your student's work that he/she has completed within the classroom. Some of the work will be looked over but no numerical grade will be given. Stamps may be placed on some of the work, other papers will have a numerical grade, and your student will check

some papers during class with his/her red pen. Friday Folders will also contain your student's behavior Tier for the week.

Please sign the Friday Folder in the indicated spot and return it with your student on Monday. Signing the folder means that you have viewed all work and grades on your student's papers and reviewed the weekly behavior Tier. I can make mistakes so if you see that I have made a mistake on one of your student's papers please let me know. Please remove and keep all the papers that are sent home with the exception of the Tier Sheet.

**Folders:** Please do not remove any work from folders inside your child's binder. The homework folder and the Friday Folder are the only folders that parents need to remove papers from. This will help your child to take responsibility for his or her own organizational skills.

Red: Homework

Orange: Social Studies

Yellow: Math

Green: Language Arts

Blue: Religion

Purple: Science

**Schedules:** Please see weekly schedule in your child's Assignment Book

**Discipline:** The goal in the intermediate unit's discipline policy is to provide a safe environment conducive to academic excellence. It also serves to assist students in their moral development. In both academic and moral development, we have high expectations for students because we believe that they are capable of high achievement. We want students to understand the importance of making good decisions, but also be in an environment where they learn to grow from their mistakes. The intermediate discipline policy will be based on the following tier system:

Tier 0: Students who have received 0 to 1 mark during one school week.

Tier 1: Students who have received 2 to 3 marks during one school week.

Tier 2: Students who have received 4 to 5 marks during one school week.

Tier 3: Students who have received 6 or more marks during one school week.

The following infractions will result in one mark:

- Talking out of turn (ET)
- Failure to follow directions (FD)
- Uniform violation (UV)
- Unauthorized possession of toys, electronic devices, etc. (PT)
- Missing Assignment (MA)
- Incomplete Assignment (IA)

- Missing supplies (S)
- Poor Choice (PC)

The following infractions will result in two marks:

- Dishonesty (DH)
- Inappropriate language (IL)
- Disrespect to a teacher/staff member/fellow student(DR)
- Cheating (CH)
- Roughhousing or destruction of property (RHD)

Daily communication of their behavior will be documented in your child's assignment book. Please sign the assignment book daily. The above letter abbreviations will appear in your child's assignment book to indicate what behavior infractions your child has committed that day. If your child receives a stamp in their assignment book, this indicates that no behavior infractions were committed that day.

To recognize those students that display positive behavior in the classroom, the following rewards may be earned:

- Fantastic Friday – students on Tier Zero or Tier One (3 or less marks) will be able to participate in Fantastic Friday during our Homework Helpers time at the end of the week. Fantastic Friday will be one of the following activities: extra recess, games, movie, an extra snack time, karaoke, technology time
- Class Dojo Rewards- Throughout the semester, students may redeem Class Dojo points that they have earned for positive behaviors for small treats, toys, or rewards. More information under the Class Dojo section.

**If your child is on Tier 2 (4+ Marks) or above, they will be required to walk laps at recess and will lose Fantastic Friday privileges.**

If your child is on Tier 3 you will be contacted that day by the teacher and Mr. Zengel will meet with your child. They will also walk laps at recess and will lose Fantastic Friday privileges. Further consequences will be discussed with the teacher, principal, and parent.

**Class Dojo:** This year, the Intermediate Unit (3rd-5th grade) is using ClassDojo to encourage important skills, like working hard, participation, respect, and helping others. Students can earn points for demonstrating these positive behaviors throughout the school day. Throughout the semester, students will be able to redeem earned points for small treats, toys, and rewards.

We'll also use ClassDojo to communicate with you: this is the easiest way for you to see how your child is doing at school and to get in touch with their teacher through private messages. You will be able to see what skills your students are earning points for. We can instantly share messages and updates from our class with you through the Class Story page. We can also share photos taken by the teacher in class on either the unit camera or personal devices. All photos taken on personal devices will be shared only on our ClassDojo class page and will be deleted immediately upon sharing.

**School Websites:** In fourth grade, we will occasionally use iPads and educational websites as a means of digital learning. Students may choose to use some of these for additional practice at home. Logins for educational websites used at school can be found on login sheets in their red homework folder.

**Google Classroom:** This year, the intermediate unit is using Google Classroom as a means of digital learning. This platform will mainly be used for home learning, but will also be used periodically within the classroom. Students are expected to be able to log into Google Classroom to complete assignments as necessary for their current learning environment (digital or on-campus). This is an area where we are really pushing independence this year. Students are responsible for completing all assignments given to them on Google Classroom. Logins for Google Classroom and all other educational websites used at school can be found on login sheets in their red homework folder.

**Technology:** All students have been assigned a Chromebook for the year. For on-campus learners, they will leave their Chromebooks at the school each evening. While they are using their Chromebooks during the day, they are expected to treat the Chromebooks carefully and only visit school-approved websites. The use of Chromebooks for purposes not approved by the teacher may result in losing Chromebook privileges and a double poor choice (PC) mark. With an increase of technology use in the classroom, it is our goal to encourage safe internet practices and digital citizenship for all students.

**Birthdays:** Students may bring a treat to share with the class on their birthday. Pre-cut or pre-portioned treats are preferred for ease of passing them out. Students may only pass out invitations at school if they are inviting the whole class.