WELCOME TO THIRD GRADE

We are excited to welcome you and your child to third grade. Third graders will begin departmentalizing instruction this year, your child will have two teachers: Mrs. Dominick or Mrs. Evans will teach your child reading, word study, and writing. Mrs. Keppeler or Mrs. Sferlazza will teach your child math, science, social studies, and health.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our curriculum is guided by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), a set of clear, high-quality academic expectations that define the knowledge and skills all students should master at the end of each grade level. For more information, please visit: mdk12.org

Our classrooms are set up to provide students with opportunities to develop responsibility and make choices. At times, students will have the opportunity to choose from flexible seating, work partners, and tasks to demonstrate learning. Additionally, each student will have daily access to personalized learning and research on a Chromebook.

Students will be taught to assess their own learning and understanding as we work. They will set goals and work towards them each day. Through our curriculum, students will be provided with goals to reach during literacy and math units, together we will refer back to these goals during instruction.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Please be sure your child arrives to school by 8:45 am each day, our learning activities begin at 8:50 am. A BCPS automated phone call will occur for each student marked absent, regardless of the reason. All absences require a note to the office. No class work or homework will be given in advance of planned absences or vacations.

Our classroom rules follow the Whole Brain Teaching methods:
1. Follow directions quickly
2. Raise your hand for permission to speak
3. Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
4. Make smart choices
5. Keep our dear learning community happy

GRADING

Third grade follows the BCPS Primary Achievement Scale:
100-80% = Consistently Demonstrating
79-40% = Progressing
39% and below = Needs Development

Grading occurs after students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Unit grades are based on a body of evidence and may be graded using a rubric. Marking-period grades will be based on achievement of grade-level standards. Classroom conduct, work completion, and ability to work with others is reported separately using the BCPS Skills and Conduct Indicators.

Students and parents are encouraged to check grades often on Schoology. Any missing or incomplete work will be noted in the grade book.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

As per BCPS policy, students will have nightly homework. Homework is scored for completion and effort. Students will be assigned to read nightly for 20 minutes, complete word study (spelling or vocabulary) weekly assignments, and focus on math skills development (textbook pages, multiplication fact fluency, and review pages).

In late fall, students will begin reading comprehension and writing homework assignments as well. More information will be sent to families at that time.

TENTATIVE FIELD TRIPS

Fall Pennsylvania trip: visit Lancaster, Amish farm, and Herr’s Snack Factory
Spring Baltimore trip: visit Fort McHenry, Fells Point, Federal Hill, and The Star Spangled Banner Museum

Chaperones are randomly selected and space is often limited. BCPS Volunteer Training must be complete before submitting a chaperone interest form.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
Students will work in small, flexible groups within our mixed ability classrooms. Students will participate in meaningful independent activities, such as developing research skills to extend learning, throughout each ELA unit. Each unit will end with a performance based culminating activity and/or digital product. Fountas and Pinnell guided reading levels follow alphabetical order. The third grade range is N, O, P. Students will have access to iReady for personalized learning.
In third grade, students will follow the writing workshop model to focus on grammar and writing skills. Paragraph (essay) writing and response logs will correlate with our ELA concepts and lessons.
Word study focuses on both spelling instruction and vocabulary. Word study instruction will alternate weekly.

MATHEMATICS
Students will complete six units of study and cover the eight mathematical practices (CCSS). Our third grade focus is on understanding concepts, applying a variety of strategies, and explaining your thinking. Students will learn to solve two-step word problems, understand multiplication and division, fractions, and much more.
Our BCPS curriculum is based on Envision Math and Pearson Realize, along with the use of digital tools. Each unit will begin with a pre-assessment and parent information letter. Students will engage in hands-on learning, small group lessons and discussions, and collaborative tasks to develop an understanding of math concepts. Students will have access to Dreambox for personalized learning at school and home.
In a shift from prior grades, unit assessments are not read aloud to third grade students. Students work at their own pace to read and complete math assessments. Each unit assessment contains two parts: a computer test and a paper version.

SCIENCE
Our lessons focus on group work and collaboration as we follow the engineering design process to solve problems together. Our units focus on:
Mayfly Mayhem: build a filtration system to protect an ecosystem
Safe Racer: build a recycled racer while applying the concepts of force and gravity
Extreme Weather: understand weather and climate as we build a structure

SOCIAL STUDIES
Students learn about government, geography, and cultures as we explore continents and countries. We will also apply concepts of civics in action as students learn about civic responsibilities and local government.
New this year, students will develop personal financial literacy skills by understanding savings plans, goods and services, and types of markets.

HEALTH
Our lessons focus on giving students the knowledge necessary for a healthy lifestyle. Our units will focus on:
A Healthy Start: goal setting, personal responsibility, and communication
Healthy Relationships: conflict resolution and personal relationships
A Healthier Me: Nutrients, food, and fitness
Safety and Injury Prevention: Good decisions, caffeine, and tobacco

CONTACT
We are in need of room parents to help across the grade level, your support will make certain classroom activities and celebrations possible. It is important to us that we work together as a third grade team for all celebrations. If you are interested in volunteering as a room parent, please let us know.
As we work throughout the school day, email is often the easiest way to contact us:
Mrs. Evans: revans5@bcps.org
Mrs. Dominick: mdominick@bcps.org
Mrs. Sferlazza: hsferlazza@bcps.org
Mrs. Keppeler: ckeppeler@bcps.org
Thank you for all that you do, from packing nutritious lunches and gathering supplies for the school year to checking your child’s planner, monitoring homework, and reading with your child each night.