Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! We are looking forward to a fun and successful year in Kindergarten. This is an exciting time for you and your child because so many incredible things happen in these next, ten short months. You’ll be amazed at the things your little one will accomplish this year!

Transportation
Your child has been assigned a bus to take to and from school each day. You may also drop off and/or pick up your child from school. Please fill out and sign the Dismissal Procedures form included in your Gradual Entry Conference Packet. Anytime there is a change in this routine please send a note in with your child in his or her red folder (you may also call the main office if there is a change). **We are unable to let your child go home with a friend or change the usual dismissal procedure without written permission from you.** If your child is in a club or after school activity please send a note each day or one note listing the dates your child is to attend the club/activity. This will help to ensure the safety of your child, which is our priority. Students may only ride home on their assigned bus. You may also call the school office with dismissal changes. Please note that dismissal instructions are most important. It is not necessary to let me know if your child’s morning routine changes.

School Work
It is important that you look in your child’s backpack each evening. All school news, notes and assignments come home with your child in their red, “Take Home Folder”. This folder will come home daily and is to be sent back to school each morning. Each night, please empty the folder of all “Leave at Home” items and check for any items that need to be returned to school. This is our best line of communication. Please place all notes, money and other important items in this folder, it will be checked each morning. Your child will be responsible for unpacking his or her red folder every day.

Most of the work your child has done will be sent home in their red folder (also be on the look out for awesome work displayed around our classroom and in the hallways outside our room). Take some time and go over the work your child has done. Be positive and value the hard work your child has done at school.

Monthly Newsletter
A newsletter will come home at the beginning of each month highlighting what we’ve done in class and what the coming month will bring.

Class Tag
Our class utilizes an app called “Class Tag” to communicate classroom events and updates with parents. If you have a smart phone, you may download the free app to access this account or simply have the announcements and updates emailed to you. Information about how to join our class will be shared with you in the next few days. Please take a moment to see all that this app has to offer, as we will be using it all year. You can read about it at [www.classtag.com](http://www.classtag.com).
Curriculum Components

Each day your child will participate in Word Work (phonics), Reading Workshop, Literacy Centers, Writers Workshop, Independent Reading and Math. Along with the core subjects, students will also take part in Science/Health and Social Studies activities throughout the week as well as classroom guidance lessons. Our days are packed full of great things, please ask your child about their school day.

Sight words and “decodable” books are part of our phonics program. Decodable books are small paper books which will come home most weeks as part of your child’s homework. These simple stories utilize the sight word(s) learned during the lessons that week. Please read the decodable books with your child when they come home and practice the sight words as often as possible. These books are to be left at home.

Lunch

Lunch will be in the cafeteria each day. Cafeteria hostesses will be there to assist the children with anything they may need. Lunch may be purchased each day or your child may bring his/her lunch. Please label lunch boxes or sacks with your child’s name.

Lunch times are as follows:
- Gregory/Lippa: 12:05-12:35
- Stevens: 12:10-12:40

Snacks

There will be a small snack each morning. Please make sure that your child has something small and simple to eat (granola bar, cut up apple, small bag of crackers) and drink. This should be separate from what they will eat for lunch. We ask that you send something nutritious for your child to eat in order to “power” them through the day. To save time and clean up, yogurts, applesauce and snacks which require spoons, lids, straws etc are best to be eaten at lunch. Please be mindful of allergies and send a snack that will keep everyone in the room safe.

Class Meeting/Independent Reading/Quiet Time

In addition to a Morning Meeting each day, our class will meet, read independently, or rest quietly at some point each afternoon, especially during the first quarter. This is a great time for the students to get to know each other and discuss their feelings about school. Please send a small (child sized) towel to be kept at school for your child to sit on while reading. The towels will be sent home periodically to be washed and will come home permanently after conferences in November.

Schedule of Specials

This year your child will be participating in Library, Physical Education, Music and Art with the special area teachers. Additionally, the class will spend some time in our school’s Makerspace. Specials are every day from 9:55-10:45. See the enclosed schedule for our class this year.

**Tennis shoes are required on Physical Education days.

Homework

Homework will be sent home on Tuesdays and is to be returned to school on Friday (or the last day of the week). Homework will be sent home in your child’s green folder (this was part of the school supply list) and will have two parts. The left side of the folder will
feature work your child should do during the week which coincides with what we are doing in class. This will include a handout from our phonics curriculum and a poem with specific activities which focus on phonological awareness. The right side will have our sight word(s) and decodable book (if applicable) for that week. Practice the word(s) and read the short story repeatedly during the week. The work on the left side of the folder should be returned to school on Fridays. Please keep the book and sight word(s) at home for your child to review.

**Appropriate Kindergarten Dress**

We get messy in kindergarten and go outside everyday (weather permitting). Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that can get a little dirty and send in jackets, gloves, hats etc when the weather begins to change. Tennis shoes are absolutely the best shoes to wear. Flip flops are not allowed on the playground equipment. Please no Crocs. It is also important to note that the temperature in our classroom is unpredictable and fluctuates often. Dress your child in layers. You may consider leaving a jacket/sweater in your child's cubby.

**Progress Reports and Conferences**

Kindergarten report cards are called "Progress Reports" and are distributed at a parent and teacher conference. These conferences will take place twice during the year, once in the Fall (Friday, November 22nd, 2019) and again in the Spring (Monday May 4th, 2020). A sign-up will be posted on Class Tag at the beginning of October for November conferences. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress at any time please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Birthdays and Treats**

Birthdays are wonderful! You may send in Birthday Prizes (no food items) with your child to be distributed at the end of the day or you may come into our room as a "Guest Reader" to read one of your child's favorite stories. Please let your child's teacher know what you'd like to do so that we can schedule your time with us if you so choose. Summer birthdays will be celebrated as "half birthdays", six months (or so) before your child's actual birthday.

**Behavior and Discipline**

During the first week of school our class will discuss what some of our classroom rules should be. We expect that all children can follow classroom rules and understand the reasons behind these rules. For all students to have the best chance at success, our classroom needs to be a safe place to learn, make mistakes and explore. We strive to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment in which we all work together as a team. This includes following our student pledge to be "respectful, responsible and kind to others."

This year the Kindergarten classes are utilizing the "Safe Pocket System" to help students make safe choices in our classrooms. There are five "life skills" that will be discussed during the first days of school, there are: helpful, careful, respectful, responsible, and patient. Each child will have a "Joey" which will live in our class's "safe pocket" at the start of the year. This classroom procedure will evolve as the school year progresses. You can read more about this behavior management technique here:

Fighting, disruptive or inappropriate behaviors which are invasive or keep others from learning will be reported to our Assistant Principal, Mr. DeHart. Please note that inappropriate behaviors may require removal of a student from the classroom. Either Mr. DeHart or your child’s teacher will contact you in the event that your child has had to visit his office. It is important that to keep the lines of communication open and work together to meet the needs of your child.

**Extras**

*Star Of The Week*~ Your child will be recognized as our ‘Star of the Week’ one week during the school year. You will receive more information about this when it is your child’s turn to be Star of the Week.

*Room Parents* ~Interested in the position? A room parent will have the responsibility of planning and contacting parents to help with parties, asking for donations of items for the classroom and helping with PTA events. You will act as the class representative to the PTA. Two parents may wish to work together as a team for this very important job. We appreciate your support!

*Donations* ~ We will be doing lots of fun projects this year! If you are interested in donating any of the following items to our classroom please send them to school with your child at any time. Thank you!

- *gluesticks*
- *Paper towels*
- *Play-Doh*
- *Wipes*
- *Hand Sanitizer*
- *Tissues*
- *Dry Erase Markers (black, green, blue, red), rounded point.*
- *White Cardstock*

**Correspondence**

Feel free to contact your child’s teacher if there are situations that need to be discussed. The school’s phone number is (410) 887-5947. You may also send a note to school with your child, or send an email. If you prefer to contact through email, please keep in mind that most of your child’s teacher’s day is spent engaged in activities with the class. We cannot guarantee how often email will be checked. Please do not email with time sensitive information such as dismissal changes. Instead, call the Main Office.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year!