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**Dear 4th Grade Families, September 2, 2021**

Welcome back to school! I am looking forward to getting to know each child and how I can support, encourage and challenge them. Ms. Kelley and Ms. Clausen have told me this is an amazing group of students☺ Here are a few pieces of information for you to take a peek! If you have any questions or need to share information, please do!

**COMMUNICATION**

Communication during the school year is important for all parties on all levels (students, family, and teachers) and your child is at the center of this communication. There are different ways to contact me and for us to communicate throughout the year.

**-Email** is usually the best way to contact me. I will respond with in 24 hours, if you do not hear from me, I have not received the e-mail☹

[tani.winther@spps.org](mailto:tani.winther@spps.org)

**-My Cell Phone:** 612-203-8193 (please no calls after 9pm, or before 1 pm on Sundays, I usually go to brunch after church☺) Texting during the day with information will also work. My phone however has terrible reception in the building for phone calls.

**-School Phone:** 651-293-8770

**\*Newsletters:** Classroom newsletters will be sent weekly.

**\*Website:** Our school website will have up-to-date information with whole school information.

[**http://highlandel.spps.org**](http://highlandel.spps.org/)

**DAILY WORK**

* + Please have **ALL** needed materials in your backpack. (examples: iPad fully charged, a book to read, notebook, pencils, markers, glue, etc.) During the school day, students will do some independent work, some small group collaboration, and some activities with the whole class, on and off the iPad.

**UNITS OF INQUIRY**

As an International Baccalaureate – PYP (Primary Years Program) school, we will be digging deeply into 6 “Units of Inquiry.” During these units we will be not only be learning the content of the unit, but asking questions and doing research to extend the learning. Social Studies, Science and Literacy are integrated throughout the units. Our first unit is *Who We Are: The Human Body.* Our IB philosophy, directs classroom management and discipline is focused on making positive choices and using effective problem solving. We use Responsive Classroom which is a teaching approach that strives to bring together social and academic learning throughout the school day. We will use many strategies to maintain a positive and productive learning environment: morning meetings, interactive modeling, logical consequences, academic choice, guided discovery, collaborative problem-solving, and class-created rules. We will also learn about growth mindset and focus on embracing productive struggle to strengthen our brains.

**LITERACY**

**CAFÉ/ Daily 5**

This is a reading structure that is in place to help support your child to be come an independent reader.

\*The “**Daily 5”** is a structure that helps students develop the daily habits of reading, writing, and working independently that will lead to a lifetime of literacy independence. It is separated into parts where students are able to choose: **Read to Self, Read to Someone, Work on Writing, Word Work or Listen to Reading**

**\*CAFÉ** is an acronym for **C**omprehension, **A**ccuracy, **F**luency, and **E**xpanding Vocabulary, and the system includes goal-setting with students in individual conferences, posting of goals on a whole-class board, developing small group instruction based on clusters of students with similar goals, not reading levels. It also involves targeting whole-class instruction based on emerging student needs and fine-tuning one –on- one conferencing.

**MATH**

* Students will be working on the Minnesota State Standards. The areas of focus in 4th grade are multiplication, division, fractions, and problem solving.

This is sure to be an AMAZING year!

Sincerely,

Tani Winther



**\*Distance Learning** this fall will be different from what we experienced in the spring.

* + Children will start each school day with a Morning Meeting at 9:30 A.M.
  + During the school day, students will do some independent work, some small group collaboration, and some activities with the whole class.
  + You can expect your children to be busy working both on and off the iPad throughout the entire school day. This is a change from what they may have experienced in distance learning this past Spring.
  + I will guide your children through each school day and be available during those hours to answer their questions and help them if they get stuck on anything.
  + I will send out a weekly email so you will know what your children’s learning goals are for the week.
  + Email communication is crucial during distance learning. Please make sure your information is current on Campus so I can share updates and information with you. If you prefer a different mode of communication, please let me know.