

Please  
read  
and  
heed.

# Tattler



**GKES Mission Statement:** The Geilenkirchen Elementary School community of students, educators, and parents is committed to excellence. Together, we will educate our students to be responsible, productive, and ethical citizens with the skills to think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively, work cooperatively, and learn continuously.

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## Super Stars

The bulletin board by the girls' toilets in Building 92 features the Super Stars in this building. Last week we honored **G. R.**, while the week before belonged to **C. W.**. This week we will celebrate **K. W.**. In 2B3A, the Super Stars chosen by me on Mondays are selected because of their performance the previous week. (Other teachers choose their Super Stars differently.) Regardless of how the teacher makes his/her selection, the GKES Super Star program is just one way in which we recognize the efforts of our students to demonstrate their "Falcon Pride." In our class, a Super Star is a student who:

- ☆ tries to do his/her best;
- ☆ treats others with respect;
- ☆ does what's right, even when no one is watching;
- ☆ follows school and classroom rules;
- ☆ is helpful and friendly to others;
- ☆ respects property;
- ☆ helps out without being asked;
- ☆ is honest and trustworthy.

Doesn't that sound like the kind of person that you like to be around?

## Open House

Please make an effort to visit our classroom from 2:00-2:45 on Friday, September 12. At this time, the students will act as tour guides, showing their families around the classroom and answering questions. This is an event that, historically, has been fun and valuable for parents and for students. **It is not a time for parent-teacher conferences.** Please respect your child's privacy by *not* asking me how s/he is doing in school. A sign-up sheet will be available, in case you don't wish to wait till the regularly-scheduled conference period in November.

I hope to see you enjoying your child's tour on Friday!

## Nut Allergy

In 2B3A we have a student with an allergy to peanuts. Although this is not an airborne allergy, please keep it in mind, when you pack snacks and lunches for your child. As long as this child does not touch or ingest peanuts, there is no problem, and the child is very much aware of the situation. Let's just all be aware of and cautious about this allergy.

## APO Boxes

At the Open House on Friday, you will have another opportunity to provide your APO box number, **if you wish**. Please remember that this information is provided **voluntarily** by those parents who trust that it will not be shared beyond 2B3A families. As stated, it is to be used mainly for invitations and/or thank-you notes. After the Open House, I will update the list and then distribute it next week.

## Homeroom Father

I am pleased to announce that Mr. T. E. has kindly volunteered to serve as Homeroom **Father** for 2B3A. This is a first for me, as I have enjoyed the support of homeroom *mothers* for 38 years, but never that of a dad.

Thank you so much, Mr. E., for stepping up to help out in this way. Parents, most of you provided your phone number and/or e-mail address for me to pass on to the homeroom parent. I will complete this list after the Open House and provide it to Mr. E.. He just may contact you for help, when we have special events in our future. Besides serving as our Homeroom Father, Mr. E. will supervise the third graders as they begin daily keyboarding lessons. DODEA expects that, through daily practice, third graders will achieve the goals of at least 15 words per minute and a minimum of 75% accuracy. Mr. S.'s and my third graders will practice from 2:10-2:40 almost every day from now on. His students will work in the computer lab, while mine will use the seven work stations in the classroom and workroom, as well as three units that will be available in his classroom. Since I will be working simultaneously with the second graders in our classroom, Mr. E. will be able to focus on the students in Mr. S.'s room. Still, if you are on campus and would like to help us with this, feel free to join us. With so much going on at the same time, we will surely be able to use an extra pair of eyes.

Still on the topic of volunteering, I have yet to establish a routine that allows me to have all my next-week's lessons planned by Fridays. That is why I have not contacted any of you wonderful folks who volunteered to help me on Fridays. It is my hope that this routine will fall into place within the next few weeks. Please know that I am ever-so grateful for your willingness!

## DRA Testing

DODEA requires that all third grade students be given the Developmental Reading Assessment at the beginning of the year (pre-test) and again at the end (post-test). At GKES, we administer this assessment to *all* students in grades 1-3, with Kindergarten children participating in the spring. My two recent absences allowed me to focus on the testing, while Mrs. E. S. very capably carried out my lesson plans in the classroom. Since I completed only the third grade testing on those two days, Mrs. F., our reading specialist for primary students, has offered to test the second graders for me. At our conference in November, we can discuss the results of your child's assessment.

## Homework

I am pleased to report that this class, as a whole, has been doing a great job of completing and returning homework assignments on time – and, of course, following the directions. The students know that, if all children complete and return on time – and follow directions on – an assignment, then the class earns a marble for that assignment. In addition, if *all* students complete and return *all* assignments due on a day, then the class earns a letter from the word "ERFOLG." These "bonuses" help to increase the motivation to be responsible about homework. Of course, they also mean that the class is *very* disappointed, if one student "spoils" the chance to earn marbles and a letter. Please help to support your child in his/her effort to make positive contributions to the class. Please make sure that the *neat and*

satisfactory completion of homework assignments is a high priority at your house.

Sometimes parents are not sure about how much help – if any – they should give their child on homework. In a perfect world, a child would remember exactly what was covered in class and complete the assignments with little or no intervention from parents. Even in that perfect situation, I think that parents of children in second and third grades should at least glance at the completed assignments – if for no other reason than to *show the child that what is being studied in school is important to the parent*. Further, if a child is clearly confused about a concept or skill, the parent has the perfect opportunity to – on a one-to-one basis (a luxury that a teacher doesn't have) – help the child to clear up his/her confusion, before the next skill is added on. This helps to build a strong foundation and prevent minor confusions from growing into big problems, such as major gaps in understanding.

Since our world is *not* perfect, children will sometimes forget what was covered in class or not understand it well enough to proceed independently with the homework. When that happens, it helps the child immensely, when the parent looks over the assignment and re-explains the concept or skill.

Then the parent should *leave the child to his/her own devices* for the completion of the assignment. Still, it is a good idea to look over it, *after* the child has completed it. If the child clearly still does not understand, then I would wait a day before trying to help anymore. After all, by this time, the family will have already spent plenty of time on homework, and everyone will need a break by then! Even if it means that the child turns in homework with lots of mistakes, at least s/he will not be totally frustrated, negative, and closed-minded. A day later, after a break, that same child just might “pick up” the concept/skill with no difficulty.

If it is at all possible, please make sure that your child has a daily homework routine and a comfortable, quiet place to do homework. I realize that many children are involved in music, sports, scouts, etc., but **the first job of a student should be his/her schoolwork and learning**. Since homework is an integral part of both of those, it should *never* be pushed aside for the sake of extra-curricular activities. By allowing the extra-curricular activities to be an excuse for not doing homework, a parent sends a pretty clear message that school is not all that important. I don't think that is the message parents *want* to “send” their children. If homework seems to be the last thing on your family's to-do list, please reconsider your priorities and – together with your child – brainstorm ideas for how to give homework the attention it deserves.

You'll be showing your child that you value his/her learning and are willing to make adjustments that will optimize his/her school success.

## **“Long-Range” Assignment**

This week, third graders are talking about milestones and practicing reading timelines. Today your child was given a 1 X 3-foot rolled paper that s/he will use to make a timeline of the important events in his/her life so far. This project is due on Thursday, September 18, so there is plenty of time to do a super job on making it interesting and attractive. Tonight your child is bringing home the *Literacy Place* book, where you will find step-by-step instructions on pages 36-39. The book must be back in school tomorrow, as we will be using it in class, but it will come home again on Friday so that you will have it as a reference over the weekend.

Please use this advance notice to plan the presentation and begin gathering photos and/or other items to make this project fun for creators and viewers alike. By *planning* a little bit each day, students can budget their time, savor each memory, and let their creativity unfold. The “research” and gathering of materials should be a **family affair**, but the children themselves should do the writing, cutting, drawing, coloring, gluing, etc. All milestone charts will remain on display in the classroom or on the walls of Building 92 for the duration of the school year.

### **L.A. and Math Skills to be Studied this Week**

- o expanding reading vocabulary (all);
- o predicting (2)
- o identifying author's purpose (3);
- o using action verbs and capitalizing I (2);
- o using present tense verbs and naming yourself **last** (3);
- o spelling words with /ch/, /th/, /sh/ (2);
- o spelling words with /ch/ and /sh/ (3);
- o narrowing topics for writing (all);
- o using a topic sentence (all);
- o writing in complete sentences (all);
- o skip-counting (all);
- o finding sums and differences (2);
- o using illustrations to find needed information (2);
- o writing numbers in standard, expanded, and word forms (3);
- o exploring place value through hundreds, thousands, and hundred thousands (3).

## **Important Dates**

**Friday, September 12** – Open House from 2:00-2:45 P.M. in the classrooms

**Friday, October 3** – Teacher In-Service (No school for students)

**Mon.-Fri., October 20-24** – Fall Break