

Welcome to First Grade!

2019-2020

Mrs. Miller

Buffalo Elementary School

Room 5

500 Sarver Road

Sarver, PA 16055

724-353-9577, Ext. 4005

[miller@freeport.k12.pa.us](mailto:miller@freeport.k12.pa.us)

Welcome

First Grade is a year of new adventures and challenges. You and your child may be experiencing feelings of excitement, anxiety, or both. The routines and expectations will be a bit different than Kindergarten, so I have included a lot of information in this packet so some of your questions may be answered. Please keep this all school year so that you are able to refer to this when needed. Feel free to contact me regarding anything at any time.

About Mrs. Miller

I have been teaching for 19 years. This will be my 17th year at Freeport. I have taught Kindergarten for 12 years at the Kindergarten Center and 2 years of Kindergarten at South Buffalo. This will be my 3rd year at Freeport, teaching 1st grade. Previously I taught in Rochester NY, which is where I am from, for a couple of years. There, I taught 1st grade and Kindergarten. I am looking forward to advancing the skills learned Kindergarten so that your child can become a better reader, mathematician, scientist, and responsible student.

I live in Shaler Township with my husband, Brian, and my children, Kaitlyn (11) and Colin (8). Most of my family lives in Rochester and I enjoy going to visit occasionally. I also enjoy reading and crafting!

Buffalo Procedural Reminders

* School Starts at 8:50. The late bell is at 9:00.
* Your child will get a take home folder with a “bring back” side and a “keep at home” side. Any papers, homework, or notes to/from me will go in this folder. BRING YOUR FOLDER EVERYDAY!
* Visitors need to have their license with them for the visitor management system.
* All chaperones and volunteers will need clearances (Act 34, Act 151, and a FBI criminal background check). Please send these to the office when they are obtained. Links to these can be found at [www.freeport.k12.pa.us](http://www.freeport.k12.pa.us) (the district website).

First Grade Curriculum

\***The emphasis is on developing reading and math skills but there will be lessons in social studies, science, music, art, computer and physical education.**

Language Arts

**\*“Journeys” (Houghton Mifflin) is the reading series we use daily but we will supplement with other reading and language arts materials. These are some of the topics covered:**

* Expanding sight word vocabulary
* Memorize and correctly spell 130-150 words.
* Read fluently at a rate of 60 correct words per minute
* Write in complete sentences with correct basic punctuation.
* Print legibly
* Recall the sequence of events in oral and written stories.
* Discuss story elements like plot, characters, events, setting, and problem/solution.
* Identify main idea and details in a story.
* Recognize singular/plural nouns, verbs, and adjectives.
* Differentiate between fiction/non-fiction stories

ECRI (Enhanced Core Reading Instruction)

* Phonics program which enhances reading instruction
* Goes along with the phonics portion in Journeys
* Skills are repeated daily so it becomes second nature
* Breaks down words so the children can see the phonics chunks to help in reading whole words

Math

**“My Math” (McGraw Hill) is the series we use. The set up is very similar to Kindergarten. There will be a math homework page almost every day.**

* Recognize and write numbers up to 120.
* Mentally add and subtract numbers to/from 20
* Recognize simple mathematical symbols
* Understand greater than, less than, lighter than, heavier than, the same as, etc.
* Count by 2s,5s, 10s to 100.
* Tell time to the hour and half hour.
* Equal Shares
* Use simple graphs to record information.
* Understanding Place value to the hundreds place.

Social Studies

* Locate the USA and demonstrate some knowledge of flag, states, and historical places in the USA
* Construct/interpret simple maps with directions and a key.
* Demonstrate awareness of current news.
* Participation in group decision making.
* Understand traditions of American families and other cultures.
* Create charts/timelines demonstrating past and present events.
* Recognize goals and values as students in the same community.

Science

Our series is called FOSS. It is a hands on approach to learning concepts in science. Although we will not be doing science everyday, it will be approximately 3 days a cycle rotation. We will be investigating Air and Weather, Light and Sound, and Plants and Animals.

Ways you can help:

* Set aside time each day to go over your child’s daily work. Let your child tell you about what he/she did at school that day.
* Be positive and point out your child’s successes, even if they are small. This will keep your child enthusiastic and motivated to learn.
* Read to/with your child every day. This will allow your child to build on his/her vocabulary and foster a love of reading. Eventually, you can have your child read to you!
* Point out things in the environment that your child may be able to read or sound out.
* Do some basic shopping and discuss math in everyday life and how it relates to what your child is doing in school.

Responsibility

Allow your child to be responsible for bringing in homework and the necessary items each day. Ultimately, in first grade, it is their responsibility to have these items each day and to be responsible for their own academic successes as well as their own behavior.

Your child will experience success and failure. Each child will progress at his/her own rate when developmentally ready. Building a secure foundation is a priority in our first grade and a positive environment is the key to our successes!

Parent/Teacher Communication

* Throughout the year I will communicate with you through notes, calls, email, progress reports, nine week report cards and conferences.
* If you have any questions or concerns at any point, please contact me at 724-353-9577 ext. 4005 or through e mail at [miller@freeport.k12.pa.us](mailto:miller@freeport.k12.pa.us) . I check my email at night and on the weekends, so if anything comes up, please e mail me at any time!
* Please fill out the page that comes home with this packet. This will help me understand your child better. If there is anything specific that I need to know as far as health concerns or anything, please let me know!

Parent Participation

* There will be various special activities and celebrations. I encourage you to attend these functions, if possible. You can also be of support by sending in the needed supplies and treats.
* Your support of school activities shows your student that you value their education and you take it seriously.
* There may be opportunities to share your career, read to the class or do special projects. Please feel free to contact me about any special talents you can share with the class.

School Attendance

* Regular and prompt attendance is crucial to your child’s success in 1st grade!!!!
* Your child will get the most out of learning when there is student –student interactions and teacher-student interactions. This cannot be made up at home.
* Please make it a priority that your child is only out of school when he/she is ill or there is an emergency. If you have a trip planned, please make sure you fill out the proper paperwork from the office and let me know in advance.

Mrs. Miller’s Classroom Rules

1. Keep all of your body to yourself.

2. Treat others how you want to be treated.

3. Listen.

4. Use kind and respectful words.

5. Raise your hand when you have something to say.

6. Be safe.

Please review these with your child and discuss what they all mean!

There will be a packet coming to sign and return stating that you have talked with your child about these and you both understand what is expected of your child.

Consequences and Rewards

* Warning (beginning of year)
* 5 minutes off recess
* 10 minutes off recess
* No recess in an extreme case-note or phone call home
* Discuss with Mr. Poleski
* Rewards-praise, clothespins for table groups, stickers, extra recess time, prize box, special jobs/privileges.

Homework

* Homework is very important. It reinforces what we do in class and introduces good study habits.
* First grade students are expected to do 15-20 minutes of homework a night. Homework may include math problems, phonics drills, and/or spelling activities. It is recommended that you study the spelling words nightly with the monthly spelling activities that you will receive. Even if your child knows the words, continue to practice good study habits. In addition, please encourage your child to read or be read to for 15 minutes a day.
* Your child should be able to complete the assignments independently with little assistance. Please only give help to your child and do not do the work for your child.

Schedule for Homework/Tests

* Vocabulary lists come home every week-please cut apart and keep these in a special box or bag at home so that you can study them regularly. It helps to have a special spot that they are kept for easy access if/when someone else is in charge of helping him/her.
* Take home books will be sent home for homework. Please read these nightly. One will come home everyday.
* Spelling lists will come home for every story. Please use the monthly spelling activities sheet to help and the weekly practice book.
* A weekly reading test will review all subject material learned throughout the week. This will take place on Day 6, usually.
* Math tests vary in regularity.
* A newsletter will come home every Friday highlighting the next weeks reading, spelling, math, science, and special activities.

Grades

* Grades are determined based on tests, homework, classwork, and performance tasks.
* Grades are taken on work that the students have had enough practice on to be assessed. You will know which pieces have been grades because there is a score on them. Ex. 60/60 or 4/5
* Grading scale:

91-100 A

81-90 B

70-80 C

60-69 D

0-59 F

District Assessments

* DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)

-Tests comprehension and fluency

-Usually tested in September and May

* DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills)

-Tests phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency

-Usually tested in September, January, and May

* MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)

-Tests completed online in math and reading in computer lab

-Usually tested in September, January, and May

Classroom Procedures

* Take home folders-check these daily and send notes to me in these
* All About Me Posters-Coming home on the first day, to be completed neatly and creatively. Information about these will come home on the first day.
* Student of the Week-reverse alphabetical order starting the 1st full week of school. Look for note coming home the FRIDAY before your child’s week.
* Snack time- daily around 2:00ish, bring in your own snack and/or small drink
* Book Orders-sent home monthly
* Newsletters-sent home the last day of the week
* Flex groups/centers-2-3 times a week

Special Area Classes

Special classes will take place every day from 12:40-1:20.

Day 1: Art

Day 2: Music

Day 3: Library

Day 4: Gym (please wear sneakers)

Day 5: Library (9:40) Art (12:40)

Day 6: Computer

Outdoor Recess

* We will be going out for recess unless it is raining or extremely cold/snowy/icy. Please keep this in mind when you are helping your child decide what to wear to school that day.
* Please do not allow your child to bring toys to school, unless it is a special day, and they have been asked to bring something in. I would like the children to learn to interact and be creative with what they have at school.

Transportation

* If you plan to have your child picked up instead of riding the bus or you want them to ride a different bus, you must send in a written note. Do not rely on your child to tell me this information correctly.
* If a note is not received, your child will be sent home by his/her usual method of transportation.
* Please do not send e mails regarding a change in transportation, I may not receive/check it in time. Always send a note, or call the office for a last minute change.

Money

* Occasionally it may be necessary for your child to bring in money. Always send money in a sealed envelope with your child’s name, the amount of money, the purpose of the money, “Mrs. Miller” and Room 5. This will help avoid confusion and make sure it gets to the right place if it is misplaced.

Birthdays

* If your child wishes to celebrate his/her birthday with treats for the class, please let me know a day or so in advance.
* Please provide individual snacks. Cookie cakes and regular cakes are difficult unless they are cut ahead of time. DO NOT SEND IN KNIVES.
* Party invitations are distributed if the whole class is invited, or all the girls, or all the boys. Due to confidentiality, I am unable to give out addresses and phone numbers.
* Students with summer birthdays can celebrate a half birthday or a summer birthday at the end of the school year. Just let me know, if he/she would like to celebrate.

Thank you!

I am looking forward to a fabulous year working with and getting to know your child. If you ever have any questions or concerns about academics, social interactions, bus issues, cafeteria problems or anything else that arises, please contact me! I am always happy to help and make your child feel comfortable and loved. Please know that I will treat your child respectfully and they will be cared for as I would my own child.