

2019-2020

# Good Foundations Academy

4<sup>th</sup> Grade

Handbook



*“Aim High, Work Hard, Be Great!”*

# Introduction

We are looking forward to a great year in fourth grade. It will be filled with fun and adventure through the exciting topics we study. Our goal is to keep you as informed as possible about your child's education. The purpose of this handbook is to help you and your child know and understand the expectations during this exciting school year. Our expectations are high, but very realistic.

## Classroom Expectations

- Follow the rules and foundation stones of the school.
- Come to school prepared and on time.
- Complete all assignments in a quality and timely manner.
- Participate during class.

## BMW Plan

B.M.W. stands for Behavior, Material, and Work. Students will receive red, white, and blue cards at the beginning of each quarter representing each of these areas. Their goal is to behave appropriately, be prepared with materials at all times, and to turn in assigned work on time which will allow them to keep the cards. If the student fails to comply with one of these areas, a card will need to be turned in to the teacher.

The cards will be kept in the student's planner at all times. When all the cards are present, students, parents, and teachers know the student is on track toward a successful year. If the student has at least one color of each card at the end of the quarter, he/she will be allowed to participate in a special activity. If the student has needed to turn in several cards, he/she will meet with the teacher and complete a plan in hopes of redirecting the challenges. This plan has room built in for mistakes and opportunities to make improvements. All students will start each quarter with a new set of cards to get a fresh start.

## BMW Cards

	<u>B</u> ehavior - <b>Red Cards</b> are lost for behavior problems in and out of the classroom.	<u>M</u> aterials - <b>White Cards</b> are lost when student is not prepared with materials needed for class.	<u>W</u> ork - <b>Blue Cards</b> are lost when assignments are not completed on time.
1st Quarter	3 RED cards	5 WHITE cards	5 BLUE cards
2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> Quarters	3 RED cards each quarter	4 WHITE cards each quarter	4 BLUE cards each quarter

\* Out of school suspension = No reward activity

\* Cards are to be kept in planner **at all times**. When the BMW cards (at least one of each color) are visible, students, parents, and teachers know the student is on track toward a successful year of learning.

\* The goal is to have 1 of each BMW card left at the end of each quarter to participate in the celebration activity. There is room for errors and mistakes. We learn from our mistakes.

\* During quarters 1-3 students can have a contract to earn a card back if they have lost all of their cards in a certain color. It is more difficult to earn a card back than it is to avoid losing them in the first place. With each quarter it becomes more difficult to earn back a card. Quarter 4 will not have any contracts as to prepare them for 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

\* All Behavior, Materials, and Work cards will be returned at the beginning of each quarter to get a fresh start.

# Medals

At GFA we follow the seven foundation stones in our classrooms. To help our students model these behaviors we will use a system of medals.

Each student starts off their day with a gold, silver and bronze medal. In the event that they choose to break one of the foundation stones a medal will be taken starting with the gold, then the silver and finally the bronze. Every afternoon each student will write the highest medal that they kept in their planner for parents to check.

To interpret what each medal means:

**GOLD** -- I had a great day!! No problems.

**SILVER** -- I had to be reminded or redirected once.

**BRONZE** -- I had to be reminded or redirected twice and have included in my planner what law was broken.

**NONE** -- I had to be reminded or redirected three times. My teacher and I talked to you after school, sent an e-mail, or you should be expecting a call from her.

**\*PLATINUM\***: I went above and beyond what is expected of me. My teacher saw me being an exceptional student. (This medal is rare accomplishment, not given daily.)

\*In the case of severe offenses (fighting, any type of violence, extreme disrespect, immediate need for redirection, etc.) the student will have a visit with administration.

## Tardy Policy

It is very important for us to start each day on time. We ask that each student is punctual for class every day. Medical appointments can often interfere with normal routines of a school day, and we understand the challenges in scheduling, but minimal conflicts are greatly appreciated. See school handbook for updated policy.

◆ 8:00 Morning Greet begins

## Absent Policy

When your child is going to be absent, it is very important that you contact the front office to report the absence even if you have told the classroom teacher. If you would like to pick up your child's work for that day, please contact us by phone before 7:30 am or by email before 9:00 am. This will allow us the time we need to receive the message and prepare the materials. The

work will be ready for pickup at the end of the school day after 3:00. For the school's absent policy, please refer to your parent handbook.

## Restroom Policy

In order to reduce missed class time and lessons and minimize interruptions, we have a firm restroom policy in place. Students have many opportunities to use the restroom throughout the day. If it is needed, students are to use the restroom during recesses. These chances to use the restroom should reduce "emergencies" during focused class time and lessons.

## Grading

97 - 100 = A+	87 - 89 = B+	77 - 79 = C+	67 - 69 = D+	49 below = F
93 - 96 = A	83 - 86 = B	73 - 76 = C	60 - 66 = D	
90 - 92 = A-	80 - 82 = B-	70 - 72 = C-	50 - 59 = D-	

### Grade Weight

#### **History/Geography and Science**

- 40% of grade based on class work
- 60% of grade based on tests, quizzes, and projects

#### **Math**

- 40% of grade based on topic quizzes
- 30% of grade based spiral review quizzes
- 30% of grade based on summative assessments

#### **English/Language Arts**

- 30% of grade based on writing
- 20% of grade based on spelling/vocabulary
- 20% of grade based on reading classwork
- 30% of grade based on reading assessments and book reports

## Progress Reports

We will not be sending progress reports home because you have full access to your child's grades at any time via SIS. You will be provided with information of how to access SIS. Please take the time to check the website at once a week. You can set email alerts to remind you to check grades. If an assignment is missing, it will have a "M" for the grade. If we have it, but haven't graded it yet, it will be BLANK. (Do not worry if it is blank, only worry if it has an "M".) We will usually update SIS, with the grades, within a week.

# Planner

- ✓ brought to school everyday
- ✓ parents sign planner each night to verify homework and medal level

## Red Homework Folders

Red Homework Folders should be returned to and from school each day. On the left hand side you will find papers that need to be “left” at home. On the right side you will find papers that will need to be returned “right” back to school.

## Homework and Late Work Policy

The average time for homework in 4<sup>th</sup> grade is 40 minutes per night plus an additional 20 minutes of reading. Some evenings may require a little more time or a bit less time. If your child is spending an excessive amount of time on homework, or repeatedly coming home saying there is no homework, please let us know immediately.

- ◆ All homework is due the next day unless otherwise stated.
- ◆ Guidelines for late or missing work:
  - ◆ 40% grade reduction for the first 2 days
  - ◆ zero credit after 2 days but still required to complete
  - ◆ loss of blue card
  - ◆ will not attend recess until assignment is turned in
- ◆ No Name = loss of a white card

## Reading

It is our goal for all students to read at or above grade level. Reading grades are taken from reading comprehension worksheets, daily reading work, book reports, and tests/quizzes. Students are required to read 20 minutes each night in addition to their regular homework. This means students should have a total of 100 minutes per week. Students can make up minutes on the weekends to meet the 100 minute goal. Each month students must read one book from the assigned list. Please refer to the Book Report paper found in your child’s red folder.

# Spelling

Students will have 15 spelling words each week. The words come from our 4<sup>th</sup> grade core words and subject content. A pretest will be given on Monday and students will be responsible for practicing any misspelled words before the test on Friday. The spelling list and pretest must be turned in on Friday morning. If your student spells all 15 words correctly, they do not have to complete any spelling activities, but are still responsible for turning in their pretest and spelling sheet on Friday.

Students are responsible for correctly spelling any previous spelling words and words that appear on the assignments they are completing. Because of the importance of being an accurate speller, each misspelled word will result in a deduction for the grade on the assignment based on teacher discretion.

# Vocabulary

In addition, there will be vocabulary words weekly. These words will specifically relate to academic content that is currently being covered in class. For instance, there may be a week where all of the words relate to rocks and minerals or the Middle Ages. Each week students will be completing a worksheet to help them learn these words or complete 5 activities on Spelling City. There will be cumulative vocabulary quiz each Friday. That means that any word that has been a vocabulary word can be on the test. It is a good idea to make a set of flashcards to keep at home so that your child can practice any old words each week.

# Math

In addition to our regular math curriculum, Eureka Math, we hold the students accountable for mastery of their math facts. We have found that students who practice and know their facts well have a better understanding of skills and concepts in math. If any students are below the necessary level, additional practice will be provided for them to improve their skills.

# Penmanship

Our expectation is that all assignments are completed neatly. Any assignments that are not neatly written will be returned to be redone. Returned assignments may be counted as late.

Cursive writing will be taught and practiced throughout the year. Some assignments may be required to be written in cursive later in the year. There may be times when the teacher accepts print on certain assignments.

## Writing

We do a great deal of writing in fourth grade. We will focus on argumentative and expository essays in a 5 paragraph structure. We type most essays on Utah Compose, a writing platform provided by the state.

## Snacks

Students are encouraged to bring healthy snacks to school each day. They will be allowed to eat a snack at morning recess. We have found snacks to help students stay more focused and energized during the day. Our request is that snacks are healthy. Some suggestions are: fruit, vegetables, yogurt, granola bars, trail mix, and cheese and crackers. Though we all love cookies, chips, and candy bars, those can be enjoyed during lunch.

## Birthdays

Students are welcome to bring in treats in celebration of their birthdays, but it is not required. The most important condition for these tasty delights is that they are **store bought items**. Due to allergy reasons, we are also asking that the treats do not contain any peanuts or peanut oil. Please help us keep our children safe by closely checking the ingredients.

## Field Trips and Special Events

There will be several field trips this year. Some field trips will be off-site, while others will occur at school. Information regarding the events will be sent home prior to each field trip including parent volunteer sign up. We will need parents to drive students to the field trip so if you can help with that, let the teacher know. Field trip dates are:

- Bear River Refuge: September 25
- Natural History Museum: TBD
- This is the Place: April 29



Some special events that will occur throughout the year include castle building, Middle Ages Day, Chinese New Year celebration, Arts and Humanities Festival, and science fair. This list is not all inclusive, but is only an example of what our 4<sup>th</sup> grade year might look like.

## Study Tips

Fourth grade is a large transition year for most students. It is the time when they are striving to become more independent. Our job as teachers is to provide the students with the tools they need to succeed. It becomes the responsibility of the students to use those tools to help themselves succeed. Our vision of a parent's role is to be there as support for a child that is having difficulty using resources that have been provided to him or her. A great deal of the work that we will be giving the children will be challenging, but it is well within their reach. Below is a list of tips we believe may be helpful to keep in mind as the year goes on.

### Helpful Tips:

- Have a quiet work area.
- Have a specific study time.
- Ask probing questions when your child is confused on something rather than giving an answer.
- While reading, have your child use the phonograms or break up unfamiliar words into syllables rather than telling him or her how to say the word.
- Check over an entire assignment, not checking as each problem is done: this allows your child to maintain the focus they need to complete the assignment successfully and develop the self-sufficiency they need for future success.
- Don't point out exact mistakes on work they are having you check. Example: When checking writing, it is helpful to say, " There are \_\_\_\_ number of errors on this page. Check it over to find them." Slowly narrow down the locations of the errors. It seems time consuming at first, but it will help the students become self-reflective.
- Discuss the importance of the long term effects of having good grades and work habits, and celebrate those well-earned grades in the process.
- Empower your child by encouraging him or her to speak to the teacher if there is a struggle rather than you owning the problem. This applies to all areas from social to academic.

These are a few areas that we have found that can be a real detriment to a child's education:

- Directly giving answers to a child on assignments
- Focusing on the problem instead of helping determine a solution.
- Having a student project with parent help become a parent project with student help: The Science Fair project has the potential for this problem if you are not extremely aware at all times.

Please ask if you have any questions about these tips. Feel free to give suggestions on tips you feel should be added or edited.

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Please tear off this page, fill out the form below and return it with your student once you have read this handbook. Thank you ☺

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand  
the 4<sup>th</sup> grade handbook on \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(date)

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_