

Dear Fourth Grade Parents,

We are honored to have the privilege of teaching your fourth grade student this school year. The next nine months promise to be ones of excitement, discovery, and challenge as we guide these curious and motivated students to academic achievement in all subject areas.

The fourth graders will have Mrs. Kovatch for Language Arts and Science, Mrs. Sullivan for Math and Religion, and Miss Garrity for Reading and Social Studies.

We will continue with the Go Math series this year. The curriculum includes interactive lessons and technological supports for the students. The students will have a username and password to log-on and access the series' webpage. Also, regular flashcard practice of all four math operations, especially multiplication and division, should be done on an on-going basis. We recommend you practice with your child several times a week. The fourth graders will have fifteen to twenty minutes of Math homework each night.

Our Reading curriculum in fourth grade is based on the Scott-Foresman series. Weekly tests will be given on the stories from our reading series. In order to promote a personal reading habit and enhance comprehension skills, all students will be required to take and pass eight Accelerated Reader tests per trimester. A passing score is a 70% or above. In order to foster an interest in different types of books and to incorporate the reading of more informational texts, one of the tests taken each trimester is to be a non-fiction book of the student's choice. Students will also be assigned a variety of book reports throughout the year. In Reading this year, we will also be implementing a new program called "Raz Kids." Students will be given the opportunity to read books and take quizzes online with this interactive program. This new program will be a fun and engaging way for students to strengthen their reading comprehension skills.

English class will focus on an increased study of the parts of speech and punctuation. The students' writing skills will also be enhanced through a variety of writing projects designed to increase their ability to write narrative, descriptive, opinion/persuasive, and expository reports.

The Religion series provides a combination of engaging bible stories, profiles of saints, morality lessons, and prayer to foster the spiritual development of every child. Grades in Religion will include: quizzes, tests, and projects. The Fourth graders will attend mass on Thursdays, but we also encourage attendance at weekend mass.

In Science class this year, students will be learning about many exciting topics including: Light, Electricity, the Animal Kingdom, The Human Body, and the Solar System. The tests will come directly from the notes given in class.

Social Studies class will begin with a study of the geography of the world and map skills. Students will also learn about the geography of the United States, including a study of our country's regions and the fifty states, as well as their capitals. This year, students will also study the history of our country and our state.

Spelling and Handwriting will be taught in homeroom classes. Spelling tests will be given every Friday. Handwriting will be an important skill practiced throughout the year.

This year, as a school community we will continue to work on extended responses in all subject areas. You will be hearing the acronyms SLAM, ACE, and CER throughout the year. SLAM will be the acronym used for extended response questions in all subject areas, except Math and Science. In SLAM responses, students are expected to restate the question, answer the question, locate evidence to support their answer, and make a meaningful connection or conclusion. ACE will be the acronym used in Math extended response questions. In these responses, students will be expected to answer the problem in a complete sentence, show the computation of their work, and then explain how they got their answer. CER will be the acronym used in written responses in science. We will be working hard to support and explain our thinking in all of our subject areas.

The 4th grade specials' schedule is as follows: Monday-Gym, Tuesday-Music, Wednesday-Computers, and Friday-Library/Art.

In grade four, we will continue the practice of sending a weekly student folder home on Friday. Please be sure to remove your child's papers and sign the weekly record sheet.

The technology component of our school includes e-mail, as well as teacher blogs. We believe these services can help parents and teachers communicate more effectively. You may e-mail us at PSullivan@sifschool.net, or LKovatch@sifschool.net, or CGarrity@sifschool.net. Also, each teacher's personal blog will help keep parents aware of fourth grade news. Each teacher's blog can be accessed through the Saint John Fisher School website.

We look forward to an exciting and fulfilling year with your student.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Sullivan, Mrs. Kovatch, Miss Garrity