

Miss Nichols'

First Grade Handbook



2017-2018

Hello First Grade Families,

I need your help! Help me become a partner in your child's education. I would love to make a contribution that lasts a lifetime. I believe great things can happen when we work together! I want to make this year a success for all of us. After all, this is the #BestYearEver!

As the year progresses, you may notice that our classroom doesn't run like other classrooms. We will be learning through Whole Brain Teaching, a research based system the utilizes all areas of the brain, keeps children engaged throughout their lessons, and helps them retain much more information than the standard lecture-discussion model. Whole Brain Teaching is a highly interactive form of instruction that delivers information to students in short "chunks". Kids then teach what they have learned to their peers, using hand-gestures to help remember specific vocabulary. While students teach each other, I walk around the room to discover who understands the lesson and who needs more instruction. Research shows that children retain more information when they have the opportunity to put it into their own words and use gestures to emphasize key instructional units...plus, it's amazingly fun! ☺

Now a little bit about myself, my name is Kennedy Nichols and I was born and raised right here in Waynesville, Missouri. I am a Waynesville alumna (GO TIGERS!) I received my Bachelors of Science in Elementary Education from Central Methodist University in Fayette, Missouri. I currently live in Waynesville with my dog, Yadi and my cat, Moe. This will be my first year teaching at Freedom and my third year in the district.

I am so excited about working with you and your child this year! The environment I strive to establish in my classroom will allow your child to bloom and enrich the lives and learning of others. My communication with you is open, so please, feel free to contact me anytime with questions or concerns. As the leader of our classroom community, I am dedicated to giving your child the best learning experience possible!

Sincerely,

**Miss Kennedy Nichols
knichols@waynesville.k12.mo.us
(573) 842-2100
#MissNicholsFirsties
#LeadingTheWayEveryday
#BestYearEver**

In this handbook is a copy of my classroom discipline policy. Please read it, sign, and return the slip on the last page to me as soon as possible.

Arrival

At 8:05, students are dismissed to go to their classrooms. Breakfast is served at school, free of charge, everyday. Those eating breakfast will pick it up at stations in the hallway and proceed to their classrooms. School officially begins at 8:30. After 8:30, students must be checked in at the office.

Dismissal

Parent pick-up students are dismissed at 3:20. Bus riders are dismissed at 3:30. Please expect busses to be running a little behind the first week of school.

Transportation Changes

Life happens. If plans change for your child's after school transportation, the office **must** be notified in writing. Only in emergency situations will phone calls be accepted for transportation changes. **Without a written note, students are required to go about with their normal plans.**

Lost & Found

Kiddos are forgetful. As much as I try, it is hard to keep up with 25 different backpacks, lunchboxes, coats/jackets, etc. Please put names on everything!

T.I.G.E.R Folder

Your first grader will bring home a black folder each day. This is where all homework, completed assignments, notes, etc. will be placed. This should be checked nightly (and emptied when necessary,) placed back into the child's backpack, and returned to school each day. When sending anything to school, please always place it in the T.I.G.E.R folder. It is imperative for your child to have his or her folder every day.

Absences

Regular attendance is imperative. Students miss out on a lot of instruction in just one missed day. When your child is going to be absent, please call the office and inform them.

Lunch

You are welcome to eat lunch with your child anytime! The cost for an adult lunch is \$2.70, which needs to be paid in the office before going to eat with your child. I have enclosed a schedule for our class lunch times (our lunch time is at 12:06-12:29). Please meet your child in the cafeteria, after checking in the office, during our lunchtime if you plan on eating with them.

Specials

Each day your child will have special classes from 1:15-2:05. These classes are set up on a rotation. Students should have tennis shoes on P.E. day and should bring their library books on library day. The following schedule we will use throughout the year:

Art (Day 1)
P.E./Music (Day 2)
Counselor/Library (Day 3)
Music/P.E. (Day 4)

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a very special day. We can reserve a little bit of time at the end of the day to celebrate ☺. If you would like to bring in a treat for your child's birthday (during snack time), please let me know ahead of time so I can prepare accordingly. I can inform you of allergies and the current class counts. Cookies, mini cupcakes, or some other small pre-packaged treats work the best.

Classroom Parties

We will be having two parties this school year, a Winter Party and a Valentine's Day Party. I will send home information about these prior to the event(s).

Newsletter:

I will send a newsletter each week. My newsletter is completely digital. I use the website, Smore. My newsletter contains important resources and information. Please watch your emails for the link to our newsletter. I also post the link to my webpage through the district's website. I will send the link out on Friday or sometime during the weekend. My goal is always Friday but life happens and I might get a little delayed ☺

Snacks

We will have a snack each afternoon. If your child would like to take part in our community snack, I ask that at the beginning of each month, you would send in enough snacks for 25 kiddos. We have a "snack tub" where all our donations will be placed and students will be able to choose a snack from the tub each day. Your child is allowed to bring their own individual snack each day if so desired. However, they will be responsible for bringing it each day. Please be aware all snacks must be prepackaged.

Homework

I am not a fan of homework. I understand that life gets very busy and we all have things we are trying to balance on our plate. My homework is *not* mandatory but encouraged. Please remember a happy first grader that had a good night's sleep is more important to me than a grouchy one with homework in hand.

I think of my homework as fun, though I might be a little biased 😊. Homework will be sent home on Monday and will be returned that Friday. Homework will consist of a weekly Journal prompt and 20 minutes of nightly reading (if nothing else do this! Reading is a *HUGE* part of first grade and at this point, they should be starting to read more independently.) The journal will be a family journal 😊 More info to come later.

Spelling

Much like homework, spelling words are not my favorite either. I think there is better time spent elsewhere than hounding your child to spell a large list of words correctly. However, spelling is a grade this year, so I've compromised and cut down the list each week considerably 😊. In my weekly newsletter, I will send a list of five, (that's right, only five!!!) spelling words for the upcoming week. These words will be found in our weekly story. We will take our spelling test at the end of the week, on Friday. Please try to find time during the week to help your child learn these words.

Remind

I will send text reminders using the Remind app. This app lets me text reminders and messages directly to your phone! (without sharing any personal information) I use Remind frequently and ask for you to be signed up so you do not miss anything 😊.

Instagram

We will showcase all our work, activities, successes, and just our first grade adventures using Instagram. You may request to follow my private account @MissNicholsFirsties. We will also be using the hashtags,

#LeadingTheWayEveryday and #BestYearEver. I will only accept followers from parents/guardians. On the discipline policy, there is a place for you to fill out the usernames you would like for me to accept. I will **NOT** use student's names with pictures and will not give out any personal information. The Waynesville R-VI School District Technology Release Policies will be followed and I have the rights to remove any followers from the account.

Leadership

This school year, we have implemented the 7 Traits of Happy Students developed by Sean Covey. Leadership will be used throughout the building and students will work to demonstrate the 7 Habits. Below are the 7 Habits we will use in our classroom and throughout Freedom:

- Habit 1: Be Proactive
- Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind
- Habit 3: Put First Things First
- Habit 4: Think Win-Win
- Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood
- Habit 6: Synergize
- Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw

Super Improvers Wall (Whole Brain Teaching Component) I love the Super Improvers Wall and so will my students!! Why? The best person to compete against is you! This is an additional piece to help students become motivated to do their best every day! When a student improves at something, they will earn a ticket. When they earn 10 tickets, they will move up a level in the Super Improver Wall. You will be notified so you can be a part of your child's success! Each level will have its own reward 😊

Classroom Discipline Plan

In order to provide a positive learning environment for your child, it is critical to maintain a level of discipline. Our district has adopted the PBS (Positive Behavior Support) system, which uses positive strategies whenever possible. Also, within my classroom, I use the Whole Brain

Teaching rules and practices. Below is the list of our specific classroom rules. Our class will run more smoothly if the students know what is expected of them. After reviewing this policy with your child, please sign and return the last page to me.

Classroom Rules

(Each rule has a corresponding gesture)

Diamond Rule: Keep your eyes on the target.

1. Follow directions quickly.
2. Raise your hand for permission to speak.
3. Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat.
4. Make smart choices.
5. Keep your dear teacher happy! 😊

Practice Cards:

If a student breaks one of the five rules, they will be given a verbal warning. If the problem persists, they will pull a yellow warning card. They will have to practice the rule and corresponding gesture during recess for two minutes. If the behavior still persists, they will pull a white card, practice the rule and gesture for 5 minutes of recess and a behavior note will be sent home that must be signed and returned.

**I look forward to a wonderful year
with you and your kiddo!!! 😊**

Miss Nichols' Schedule

2017-2018

8:05-8:55	Breakfast/Morning Work/Morning Meeting
8:55-9:05	Bathroom Break
9:05-10:35	Reading
10:35-10:45	Phonics Dance
10:45-11:00	Recess
11:00-11:30	RTI
11:30-12:00	Writing
12:02-12:29	Lunch
12:30-12:45	Science/Social Studies
12:45-1:00	Recess
1:00-1:15	Bathroom Break
1:15-2:05	Specials
2:10-3:10	Math
3:10-3:30	Snack, clean up, pack up, & dismissal

I have read and discussed Miss Nichols' Discipline Policy

With _____ on _____.
Child's Name Date

Parent Signature

Instagram Accounts approved to accept:

@ _____

@ _____

@ _____