

**Dear Room“4”family,**

Welcome to Kindergarten! It is my pleasure to be your child’s teacher this school year. Although this is only my 2nd year teaching at McKinley, this is my 18th year teaching Kindergarten! I love teaching Kindergarten and believe there is no better grade to teach. The students come to school excited to learn and I thrive on seeing their growth throughout the school year.

I hope your child is excited about beginning the school year, too! All of the anxieties about the “newness” will soon disappear as your child learns our classroom routines and makes new friends. I am sure you have many questions about your child’s Kindergarten year, and hopefully this newsletter will answer many of them. You are also welcome to email me at:

[mthompson@slusd.us](mailto:mthompson@slusd.us)

**Kindergarten Common Core Standards:**

**There are many Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies standards your child will be expected to meet or exceed these important standards in order to be best prepared for 1st grade and beyond! It is our job to help our students become “adventurous explorers…” on a quest to find new ways to solve problems and show what they know! You may soon notice many new and different approaches to learning, and we are excited to share more about our program with you at Back-to-School Night on Thursday, September 14th.**

**Kindergarten Schedule:**

**For the first 8 days of school (August 16th-August 25th) all Kindergarten students will attend school between 8:10 and 1 1:40. The Kindergarten teachers will be testing all students in early literacy and math skills after school on these days. Please make sure that you sign up for a time for your child to be tested. The sign-up is located on the class’ Parent Board, which is directly located across from our class’ front door.**

**On Monday, August 28th, we will begin the regular Kindergarten schedule:**

**Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays: 8:10-1:50 Wednesdays: 8:10-1 1:40**

**What to Bring to School: Students should bring a backpack to school every day. Please write your child’s name on the backpack in case it gets lost. All learning materials will be provided at school. At home, please make sure to have pencils, erasers, scissors, paper, white glue, glue sticks and crayons. If you are not able to provide these items at home, please don’t hesitate to let me know.**

**Toys: Please leave all toys at home! At this age, children can be very distracted by their own toys and can easily misplace or break them. I have a large assortment of play items in the classroom that will delight and engage your child. If your child is going to participate in a “show and tell” time, I will be sure to let you know that it is okay to bring something on that given date.**

**Friday Folder:**Every Friday your child will bring home a red folder with his/her weekly homework packet, our weekly newsletter, and important communications from the school. Please look for this folder and help your child keep it neat and organized! The empty folder is due back to school on the following Monday but the homework packet is not due until Thursday of the same week! Homework will begin on September 8th.

**Yellow Folder:**Every day your child will bring home a yellow folder with his/her daily work. The empty folder is due back to school on the next day. If you need to send communication to me, please place the note in the yellow folder and I will get it that morning. We will begin using the Yellow Folder the week of September 18th.

Homework:

Homework Packets are sent home every Friday and are due back to school the following Thursday. These packets are designed to be a review of skills we have practiced in school. In order to keep the homework load manageable, students should work on 1 or 2 pages from the packet each night. The first homework will be sent home on September 1 5th..

**Clothing:** Students have recess, movement and often messy art or craft activities every day! For your child’s safety and comfort, please make sure he/she wears comfortable clothes that you don’t mind getting dirty, and appropriate shoes, such as sneakers or tennis shoes. Please label all coats, jackets, and sweaters.

**School Meals:**

Students should bring a snack to school everyday to eat at our 9:30 snack time. Please make sure it is a small nutritious snack, such as fruit, cold vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.), a healthy muffin, or water. *Please do not send cookies, candy, or sweets. Students will eat lunch at school on Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays, and Fridays. Your child can either bring a lunch from home or purchase lunch from the school cafeteria.* To apply for free/reduced lunch, check the district website ([slusd.us](http://slusd.us)) or obtain an application from the office and turn it in as soon as possible. Breakfast is served every day beginning at 7:50.

**Closed Campus** **& Safety:**

In order to keep our students safe, McKinley’s campus is closed from 8:30 am-3:30 pm. This means all gates and entrances to the school are locked except for our main entrance at the front of the school. For the first few weeks of school, while everyone is getting familiar with the classroom procedures, parents may bring students directly to the classroom line in the hallway at the start of school. After Back-to-school Night, all students will line up outside, at our designated spot on the blacktop (students will learn where this spot is during the first days). At the end of the school day, all parents and care providers should come to the classroom no earlier than 5 minutes before dismissal. Please wait quietly in the hallway for students to be released from the classroom. Because our school has a closed campus policy, it is important to exit the school promptly after picking up your child.

For your child’s safety, always let me know when there are changes made to his/her after school schedule or pick-up person.

Any adults visiting campus during the closed campus hours must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor or volunteer badge!!!

**Volunteers:** Our work is not possible without volunteers….I NEED YOU! The more help we have, the more creative we can be with activities for your child. We will send home more information about volunteering next week. Any amount of time you can spare - whether an hour or an entire day, will be very helpful!

**Discipline: McKinley School (and all schools in San Leandro) has implemented a positive behavior support system. The system will provide consistency of expected school rules, consequences and incentives across all grade levels. At McKinley, our school-wide positive behavior support system is called S.O.A.R., whereby all students will learn rules and behaviors to help keep them SAFE, ORGANIZED, ACHIEVING and RESPECTFUL! Just like our McKinley mascot the mighty eagle, we expect all students to S.O.A.R. each and every day! We look forward to sharing more about the S.O.A.R. system with parents at Back-to-School Night on September 15th.**

**Birthdays:**

Instead of celebrating individual birthdays with cupcakes and other treats, we are going to have a **monthly** celebration on the first Friday of each month. On this day, we will honor each child who has a birthday in that particular month. Families will be welcome to bring food items for this group celebration.

**Parent-Teacher Partnership: Your child will have every opportunity to learn and thrive in Kindergarten! It is my goal to get to know your child very well within the first few weeks and find out about his/her strengths and unique interests. You play a critical role in helping us learn about your child. Please take a few moments to complete the attached questionnaire and return it by Monday, August 21st. Frequent communication throughout the year will be essential to your child’s success in Kindergarten and beyond! Mark your calendar for Back-to-School Night on Thursday, September 14th** to learn more about the wonderful things to come in this school year!  
  
Sincerely,

Michelle Thompson