



Dear First Grade Parents,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year! We are looking forward to working with you and your child this year. Every student is unique and very important to us. Our goal is to create a comfortable, student-oriented learning environment where all students can be successful.

This handbook contains information that will help you **throughout** the school year. Please keep it in a safe place to refer back to. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact us. We look forward to a terrific year!

Sincerely,
The First Grade Team

Communication

E-mail

The best method of communicating with your child's teacher is through the e-mail system. The individual e-mail addresses are posted below as well as on the Gullledge web page.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

JoAnn Boyle joann.boyle@pisd.edu

Paula Callahan paula.callahan@pisd.edu

Alison Clements alison.clements@pisd.edu

Jana Prince (Team Leader) jana.prince@pisd.edu

Sophia Si sophia.si@pisd.edu

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBERS

(469)752-1335

(469)752-1334

(469)752-1336

(469)752-1337

(469)752-1338

<http://k-12.pisd.edu/schools/Gullledge/home.htm>

Voicemail

If you need to speak with one of the first grade teachers, you can leave a message on our voicemail. Use Gullledge's direct number (469) 752-1300 and then communicate the teacher of your choice to be connected to her extension. **However, do not leave your child's teacher a voice message concerning changes in transportation for the day, doctor appointments, etc.** because voice messages may not be checked in time to deliver the message to your child.

Take Home Folder and Agenda Planner

Please check these items daily. Students will bring home notes, homework assignments, completed or uncompleted assignments, newsletters, PTA information, etc. on a daily basis. Please read through all of the notes, and look over your child's work. We ask that you empty the folder **EACH NIGHT**, so that your child can come to school with an empty folder each day. **Please especially watch for colored notes as they will be special for you to read.** Words of encouragement for your child and review of his/her work would be wonderful follow-through. It will also encourage communication with your child and foster discussion of what is being learned at school. **We also ask that you initial the agenda planner each night.** There is also a reading log located in the back of the agenda for you to sign each night as well. If you have notes or messages for the teacher, please write them in the agenda planner in the note column, as we check the students' agendas daily.

Conferences

First grade students are "graded" via the use of a portfolio system. Your student's teacher will keep work samples and testing to share with you over the course of the year, which document and measure your student's progress. You will have four conferences during the school year.

The conference dates for the 2009-2010 school year are as follows:

Conference 1- October 16

Conference 2- February 8-12

Conference 3- Open House March 11

Conference 4- May 24-28

You will receive a first grade newsletter every six weeks. In addition, you will receive the weekly "YO" (Youngest and Only) packet containing school information.

Good Rule of Thumb

Always check with your child's teacher **FIRST** about concerns. Teachers like to be informed and will be glad to visit with you.

Homework

Your student will have approximately 10-20 minutes of written homework Monday through Thursday. In addition elementary students are expected to read 20 minutes each night. Homework will consist primarily of a nightly reading, math, and/or spelling assignment. Students will also have a "group book" to read Tuesday-Thursday nights. Your child's "Group book" reading should be read each night assigned so we can discuss the book the following day in our reading groups. Nightly reading assignments are to be read orally so please sit and listen to your child read his/her assignment aloud. **This homework is very important as the students will discuss what they read the following day in the reading group.**

The assignments will be written in your student's agenda, and a homework packet will be sent home every Monday so that you know which assignments to do each night.

Please remember to sign your student's agenda each night. This is how we know your student has completed his/her homework. **Homework given on Monday will be due on Friday in most cases.** From time to time we may have homework in math and integrated that will need to be returned the following day.

*There will be no homework the third Wednesday of every month so you and your family can enjoy Family Fun Night. Enjoy playing a game, reading, or just hanging out as a family.

Tests:

The only tests given in first grade are weekly spelling tests and Integrated curriculum assessments (every 6 weeks). All other diagnostic tests will be administered by the teacher for benchmark purposes and the results will be discussed with you at parent teacher conferences.

Grades:

The purpose of grading is to report the progress of students to parents. This progress reflects understanding and mastery of the Texas essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The TEKS are the state curriculum standards, which are based on national standards. Letter grades (E, S, N, and U), progress marks, portfolio documentation, reports, as well as parent conferences shall be used to report the progress of students.

E- Excellent Work

S- Satisfactory

N- Needs Improvement

U- Unsatisfactory

Handwriting Hints

Our school district uses the D'Nealian Handwriting program. This style of handwriting uses slightly slanted letters (to the right). Many letters also have a "tail" at the end of the letter. This style of handwriting will better prepare the student for the transition to cursive writing.

P.A.C.E. Program

Plano ISD provides a gifted program for students in grades K-12. Identification of students is conducted not to label students, but to determine which students need a varied level of instruction.

Teachers, principals, counselors, parents, or students themselves may refer students for the gifted program. Referred first grade students will be assessed at their home campus. Referrals for P.A.C.E. testing will be forthcoming. Testing will take place in the spring. Students qualifying for the program in the spring will begin receiving services the following August.

If you have questions or are interested in referring your child for the gifted program, please see Erica White, the P.A.C.E. teacher, for a referral packet.

Positive Behavior Support in 1st grade:

The students are taught the clear expectations throughout the building. In the beginning and periodically throughout the year the students will be taught through mini lessons and have consistent reminders of the expectations. All teachers will teach the same information with the same language. This way all the expectations are clear across the board. The students know what appropriate actions and expectations to have at every location. Being upfront with students and teaching them all the expectations eliminates any confusion or misunderstanding.

If a student needs to be reminded of an expectation throughout the day the teacher will help the student understand how to make better choices. The homeroom teacher may write a note in the student's agenda or call home if the student is having continuous trouble with the expectation.

Gator Grins:

Gator grins are awards given to students who are meeting the expectations for the classroom and meeting the gator goals. Gator grins can be redeemed in the office or in the classrooms throughout the week.

Gator Goals:

Be respectful.
Be responsible.

Steps Taken to Enforce Positive Behavior in the Classroom:

1. Gator Grins
2. Gator Golds
3. Gator Parties
4. Positive letters home
5. Student of the week
6. Character trait of the month



Arrival

School hours are from 7:45-2:45. School begins **promptly** at 7:45, any student who comes to the classroom after this time will be considered tardy. Students may arrive at school at 7:00 and go to the gym for supervision. They will be walked down to the first grade area by one of the school staff members. If students arrive after 7:35, they may go straight to the first grade area.

Due to new district security measures, you will need to say goodbye to your child at the front door of the building or at the gym doors if he/she arrives earlier than 7:35. If you need to take your child to his/her classroom for a special reason, you will need to sign in at the office and get a visitor badge. Keep in mind it is okay to walk the students to class the first couple days of school, but we would like the students to begin learning to go to the gym and walk with their grade level. This will promote confidence and responsibility.

Tardies

Please have your child at school on time. If your child is tardy he/she must stop in the front office for a tardy slip. A copy of the tardy slip will be stapled in his/her agenda for you to see.

Dismissal

Your child will be dismissed at 2:45 through the Kindergarten doors if they are carpool. All walkers will be dismissed at the first grade doors on the south end of the school. Daycare, Bus, and PASAR students will be walked to a designated place by a teacher each day. In the event that your child will be dismissed early, you will need to go to the office to sign the child out, and the office will contact the classroom teacher.

If it is raining and your child is a walker they will need to be picked up at carpool.

*******If your child is going home a different way, you must notify the teacher in writing ahead of time. Otherwise, the teacher will send him/her home their usual way. A child may not ride another bus or get off at any other bus stop, except for his/her own.**

If a child is not picked up by 3:00, for his/her protection, he/she will be taken to the office.

Medicine

If your child needs to bring medicine to school, including cough drops, please fill out the appropriate medicine/request/information sheet with the school nurse. Have your child bring the medication to the school nurse upon arriving to school. NO medicine will be allowed in the classroom.

Gator Grill Procedures Breakfast/Lunch

Breakfast will be served each day, for all students, from approximately 7:15-7:30 a.m. For more information please visit www.pisd.edu.

Lunchtime for first grade is from 11:15-11:45. Your child may bring his/her lunch from home or buy lunch at school. You may pay in advance for your child's lunches. The cafeteria staff uses a computer tracking system to record the lunches that your child eats. A notice or white envelope will be sent home when you need to add more money to their lunch account.

Children who bring their lunch may buy milk. Please help your child learn to open his/her lunch, drink, pull top can, and carton independently.

You are invited to join your child for lunch on **special occasions**. Please send a note with your child or call the school office before 8:30 a.m. if you are ordering a lunch. You may sit with your child at a designated visitor table or if the weather permits, you and your child may use the picnic tables on the covered patio. We suggest that you visit your child for lunch once a semester or when a special visitor is in town. We ask that you leave your child after lunch so that he/she can enjoy recess with friends.



Ice-cream

Students will be allowed to purchase ice-cream as long as it is not past the designated buying time. Ice-cream days will coincide with the student's library days. Ice-cream prices range from \$0.75-\$1.25.

Snacks

First grade has an optional daily snack time right after specials (1:45). Students will need to bring their own **healthy** snacks.

Recess

Weather permitting, all children will be expected to go outside for recess.

Please dress your child appropriately-play clothes, sweaters, coats, etc.

Please send a note to your child's teacher if there is a reason why your child should not go outside. Students **may not** bring toys to play with from home.

Dress Code

Please be sure that students are wearing the appropriate shoes for physical education. Also, shorts should be at least fingertip length and tank tops are not allowed. Please check the PISD dress code policy.

Grouping

Our students are heterogeneously grouped and remain with one teacher for the majority of the school day. However, they do attend music, art, library, P.E. and classroom guidance. In these instances they will be with a different teacher. Our goal is to reach ALL learners. Everyone learns differently and at different stages. We will work to help your child where he or she is at in their learning process.

Safety/Visitors/Volunteers

All Gulledge visitors must sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge.

*Enter through the front doors when coming to visit our school. The other doors will be locked. Please do not ask a child to open another door.

***FYI: Standard Procedure-** Criminal history checks must be completed prior to parents working/volunteering in any capacity in the building. This includes attending field trips. If you are interested in volunteering in any way at our school, please make sure your criminal history check is complete and you are cleared through the office. Check with the office for details.

First grade learning incorporates many hands on experiences. Therefore, we have a **tremendous** need for volunteers to help prepare material. In addition to the PTA volunteer list, we will provide an opportunity for you to sign up to volunteer on a first grade list only. Please contact the grade level parent volunteer coordinator if you have any questions or wish to help us out.

We appreciate any and all help!!! ☺

If you have any other questions about PISD please check out the district website at www.pisd.edu.

We are looking forward to a great year!

Thanks so much,
The 1st Grade Team

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