



Mrs. Niewald's

5TH GRADE

Handbook  
2017-2018

# WELCOME

Dear Fifth Grade Families,

Welcome to Fifth Grade at Longfellow! I hope this letter finds you well and eager to start an exciting year of learning.

Fifth grade is an exciting and challenging year in which students are transitioning from elementary school to middle school. Being the oldest students in the school, and therefore the role models for all other students, the expectation is that fifth grade students at Longfellow act respectfully, responsibly, and safely. Every fifth grade student is held to this high standard and expected to perform to the Longfellow ideal, using these "Bear Necessities."

It is my job to make sure that your child is safe and striving to reach their full potential in fifth grade. However, in order for me to be successful, I am going to need your support. Throughout the year, you, your child, and myself will need to collaborate and work together as a team in order to ensure your child's success.

In order to keep you informed about our classroom and enlist your support, I have created this guide of classroom policies and procedures for you and your child. Please read through it carefully and keep it somewhere safe throughout the year. This guide may help answer some of your questions and help facilitate our conversations together.

I look forward to working with each fifth grade family this year. Thank you in advance for all of your support, and I look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,

Liz Niewald  
708.524.3060

[eniewald@op97.org](mailto:eniewald@op97.org)  
<http://tinyurl.com/y9n3t4ha>

## Grading

Students will be graded per trimester with opportunities for Parent/Teacher conferences at the First and Third Trimesters. Students will receive performance standard based grades. These grades are based on whether each student is meeting the Common Core/State Standards. The grade assignments are as follows:

- E – Excels**
- M – Meets**
- P – Progressing**
- N – Not Yet**

Please remember that throughout the course of the year, students will be graded for the standards that must be achieved **by the end of the fifth grade year**, therefore students may not be proficient on all standards during the First Trimester.

## Absences

If your child is absent, please contact the office as early as possible on the day that your child is absent. **The office number is 708.524.3060 or you may email at [longfellowattendance@op97.org](mailto:longfellowattendance@op97.org)**. Also, upon their return, please be sure to send your child with a note in order to excuse the absence (doctor's note, etc.). When your child has an excused absence they will have the same number of days that they are absent to complete their make-up work (i.e. if your child is absent one day, they will receive one day to complete the work). However, we ask that you please try to keep your child's absences to a minimum. As fifth grade is an important transitional year, we do not have a single day to waste and it is imperative your child is at school **on time** daily.

## Supplies

Please note that in order to inspire our fifth grade students to work collaboratively as a team, some of your student's supplies may be used as communal supplies. These supplies may be, but are not limited to: post-it notes, Kleenex, wet wipes, zip-lock bags, pencils, pens, and lined paper.

## Homework

Students will have a red folder designated as their homework folder. Students are responsible for bringing their homework assignments back to school on a daily basis. Because of the hard work we accomplish every day in school, our homework activities should take approximately 60 minutes each night (with an additional 20 minutes of reading per night). If your child is taking longer than this amount of time to finish homework each night, please contact me and we can work out an alternate plan if needed. Also, please note that if students have four or more late or missing assignments, they will be asked to attend a

"Homework Skills Club" during the lunch hour in order to learn good organizational and time budgeting skills. You will be notified through email in regards to any missing homework. Assignments and resources are posted weekly on our Class Webpage (<http://tinyurl.com/y9n3t4ha>).

### Classroom Website

We have a classroom website to relay information to parents. To access this website, simply type <http://tinyurl.com/y9n3t4ha> into your web browser and click on "Mrs. Niewald". On this site you will find homework assignments, and content for each subject as well as announcements and student work samples. Please feel free to explore this website at any time and use it to keep up-to-date on homework assignments and classroom activities.

### Parent Volunteers

In order to sustain an active, hands-on school environment, I may request parent volunteers to help in the classroom throughout the year. I will ask more specifically for help at various times throughout the school year in the form of group work, field trips, lesson preparation, as well as guest speakers. However, please keep in mind that if you need to visit the classroom at other points in the year, I ask you please send me a quick note, e-mail, or phone call and let me know, in advance, when you will be coming. When you do come in to visit the classroom, make sure to sign in at the front office before making your way to the classroom.

### Field Trips

We will be taking many field trips this year. Parent volunteers are a wonderful addition to our field trips. All parent chaperons will be required to complete a background check facilitated by the front office. I will ask for volunteers closer to the actual date of the trip. Thank you in advance for your help!

### Birthdays

We love to celebrate birthdays with each student! On their birthday, all students will receive a birthday certificate and pencil, as well as a ribbon and book from the office. If your child would like to bring something special to school for his/her birthday, they may bring little tokens or goodie bags for their classmates or a healthy snack from the party snack list (We do have a few food allergies in our classroom, so if you choose to bring a snack in for your child's birthday, please check with the teacher first). If this is the case, please be sure to send enough items for each student in the class. If your child has a summer birthday, we will be celebrating it on or near their ½ birthday.

## Box Tops

As a school, we will be collecting Box Tops. Each Box Top adds 10 cents to the PTO budget in order for the PTO to provide our school with all the great services they have over the year.

## iPad

In fifth grade, each student will receive an iPad mini. Students are responsible for the care of their iPad. They will be assigned work in class and at home to be completed using the iPad. It is expected that each student will take the time to charge their iPad at night so that it is ready for class the next morning. Parents will be notified by email in regards to any misuse of the iPad.

## PBIS/Bear Necessities

At Longfellow we follow the "Bear Necessities." The Bear Necessities are a guideline for success, which students follow in order to be productive citizens in our school environment. Our Bear Necessities are: **Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe**. If students are following the Bear Necessities they have an opportunity to receive a Bear Necessity (which can be earned throughout the entire school building) to cash in for prizes each week in the Bear's Den. In addition to the school wide program, we also have a classroom system. Our classroom system will be monitored through Class Dojo, which is explained in detail in the next section. Each week if students are being good leaders/role models they will have an opportunity to earn additional Bear Necessities from me. In order to earn Bear Necessities in the classroom, students must exhibit appropriate behavior, arrive to school prepared for the day (ex: iPad charged and at school, homework completed, etc.), and be exemplary leaders in our school community. Then, each month, students will get an opportunity to cash-in their Bear Necessities for rewards within the classroom as well.

## Class Dojo System

I feel that a positive, safe, and fun learning environment based on mutual respect and individual responsibility is key to each student's success in the classroom. In order to foster this type of environment, we use Class Dojo to track student behavior throughout the year. Each day, your 5<sup>th</sup> Grader has the opportunity to earn positive and/or negative points based on his/her behavior. Students will be able to access Class Dojo from their iPad to track activity in their account. Class Dojo Messaging allows me to send quick messages straight to your cell phone as well. Class Dojo also provides an opportunity to view individual student work and general classroom updates, including pictures! This is a great way to check in on your student's daily behavior. All parents should have received individual invites to join through email. Please let me know if you have not received this invite - I'm happy to resend it. You do not need a smart phone to receive messages. Classroom information such as class specific information, conference reminders, major due dates, etc. may be sent home through the Class Dojo Messaging System.

As a class, we will discuss and create guidelines for our classroom expectations and how they will be reflected in the Class Dojo Points. Your 5<sup>th</sup> Grader will record this information in our handbook for future reference.

## In Conclusion

There are so many fun and exciting events that will be happening in our class this year! The website will help keep you up to date. Please try to have your child communicate to you what they have learned on a daily basis. Reflection is a key ingredient to the learning process. I am very excited about the learning that will take place in the year ahead of us and I hope you are too. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me at school (708.524.3060) or email me anytime (eniewald@op97.org). I try to check my email and voicemail throughout the day, but please give me 24 hours to respond. I appreciate your support and hope to keep you informed throughout the year. Together we can foster a community of mutual respect in which your child will excel to their highest potential!

Liz Niewald  
eniewald@op97.org  
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<http://tinyurl.com/y9n3t4ha>

## Behavior and Discipline

As a class, we will discuss and create guidelines for our classroom. We will determine appropriate Positive, Negative, and Neutral Class Dojo Points for our school year. Some areas of this form are already completed. Please record our classroom expectations below for future reference.

### Our Classroom Rules

1. **Listen when others are talking**
2. **Follow directions**
3. **Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself**
4. **Work quietly and do not disturb others**
5. **Show respect for school and personal property**
6. **Work and play in a safe manner**

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### Our Classroom Guidelines

*(Excels)*

To earn a Bear Necessity, a student must earn at least \_\_\_\_\_ **Positive** Dojo Points per day.

*(Meets)*

If a student earns a range of \_\_\_\_\_ **Positive** Dojo Points per day, they are demonstrating appropriate 5<sup>th</sup> Grade behaviors.

*(Progressing)*

If a student earns a range of \_\_\_\_\_ **Negative** Dojo Points per day, they may receive a warning or Parent Notification / Parent/Teacher Conference.

*(Not Yet)*

If a student earns a range of \_\_\_\_\_ **Negative** Dojo Points per day, they will receive a referral to the Assistant Principal.

## Class Dojo Behaviors

Positive Behaviors:

Negative Behaviors:

Neutral Behaviors (aka Reminder Needed):

We have reviewed these policies as a class. The students are aware of the rules we have in our fifth grade classroom as well as the consequences for breaking these rules. If at any time any of these rules are not followed, the student will receive a warning and a redirection. In some situations, all class redirections and initial directions may be considered to be the warning. If the behavior continues, the student will earn **Negative** Dojo Points. If the student's behavior continues for an extended period of time or is considered a major infraction (see Parent Handbook), the student will be referred to the Assistant Principal for further disciplinary action.

Any student who earns \_\_\_\_\_ **Positive** Dojo Points for the entire week has a chance to earn additional Bear Necessitates. Thank you in advance for your cooperation, collaboration, and support both inside and outside of the classroom with these policies.