

Mrs. Schmuker's 4th Grade Class Handbook



2021-2022

Dear Families,

I desire for your child to feel safe, loved, included, valued, capable, and successful. I desire for your child to allow *others* to feel safe, liked, included, valued, capable, and successful. I desire for your child to know that s/he is an important member of our class. I desire for your child to know that our classroom community is better because s/he is part of it. I desire for your child to enjoy school and enjoy learning.

I believe students thrive in structure, but that flexibility within structure is also important. I believe that when students make poor choices, they need to be guided with consistency, but also gentleness and kindness. I believe that what works for one child, may not work for another.

I am passionate about getting to know your child. I am passionate about teaching. I am passionate about your child's learning. I am passionate about my own learning. I am passionate about your child's well-being and social-emotional health.

In order to build on my beliefs and act on my desires and passions, I have developed and am continually fine-tuning my classroom policies and procedures, in conjunction with Oakwood's. I'm hoping this handbook will give you an overview of some of the important parts of your child's day and year.

I value your partnership in education and believe wholeheartedly that a strong partnership will help your child to be successful in *all* aspects of his/her day this year. In order to help us begin to build that partnership, I'm hoping you will take the time to read through this handbook and ask any questions it might bring up. I also encourage you to read Oakwood's Handbook for additional school-wide information. Some of my most important improvements as a teacher have been the result of parent input. I am, and always will be, continually learning and believe that collaboration is a key component to true growth.

Thank you for your time, and welcome to Oakwood!

Sincerely,

Leah Schmuken

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Contact Information



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Oakwood Intermediate

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If you need to get a hold of your child or me quickly during the school day due to an emergency, please **call the office** and our secretary can relay the message.

Student Drop Off/Pick-Up

Please see communication from our principal for this important information!



Typical Daily Schedule

Time Topic

8:23 Bell Rings

8:23-8:28 Students Walk to Class

8:28-8:40 Morning Work

8:40-8:45 Morning Meeting

8:45-9:10 Math Interventions

9:10-10:10 Math

10:10-10:25 RECESS

10:25-11:00 Science with Mrs. Gravelyn (T-F); Character Education (M)

11:00-11:30 Social Studies (T-F); Character Education (M)

11:30-12:15 SPECIALS (Art, Music, PE) – in that order

12:15-12:50 LUNCH/RECESS

12:55-1:25 Reading Interventions

1:25-2:00 Reading Lesson

2:00-2:30 Writing

2:30-3:15 Independent Reading

3:15-3:21 Close

Absences and Tardiness



8:15 Students go to the classroom upon arrival. Students should not be dropped off to school prior to 8:15. There is no supervision available before then and doors are locked.

8:23 Morning Bell – Students walk to class

8:28 Students in Desks – Students arriving after 8:28 are marked tardy

9:30 Students arriving after 9:30 are marked as ½ day absent

2:30 Students who leave before 2:30 are marked as ½ day absent

3:21 Dismissal Bell

Oakwood officially starts at 8:28. However, this means that students are expected to be in their seats and working by **8:28** each day. The bell actually rings at **8:23**. Therefore, **arriving to school by 8:20** helps to ensure you're child will complete morning check in procedures on time. Those who are just getting to school at 8:28 tend to start the day out more anxiously trying to quickly catch up. Our morning meeting will begin at **8:40**. Work not completed in class due to tardiness is either completed at recess or becomes extra homework.

Please note that students participate in 7 lessons nearly every day. There is not extra time built into the school day to catch individual students up on skills and concepts missed, so numerous absences can be very challenging to catch up from. Therefore, your help at home will be relied upon in helping catch your child up and to learn the missed skills and concepts.

Classroom Management

My favorite part of classroom management is developing a trusting, respectful relationship with both you and your child. We will participate in many community building activities both in the beginning of and throughout the year. I will also work very hard to engage and challenge your child.

Oakwood's classroom management plan gives students specific expectations for each daily activity through the use of a **CHAMPS** chart, so students are not guessing what behavior is acceptable. It also empowers students to make and monitor their own choices. Students will be made aware that every choice they make results in a consequence, whether positive or negative, and that they are accountable for that choice and responsible for the consequence.

CHAMPS

Conversation Level (Can I talk? What volume?)

Help (How do I get help if I need it?)

Activity (What type of activity is this? Partner? Group?)

Movement (Can I move around the room?)

Participation (What should I be doing?)

Success! (Being a "CHAMP" leads to success!)



Tallies

Every Friday, students are provided with 20 minutes of free choice time. When a student violates an expectation during the week, s/he is given a tally. The tally serves as a redirection tool and also allows us to track and monitor types of behaviors should a pattern arise. Each tally represents minutes lost from Friday's free choice time. Tallies for behaviors that have a greater impact result in greater loss of time. The chart on the next page shows this more clearly. The codes are meant to help track behaviors more precisely. The week's tallies are erased after Friday's free choice time. Students must also have no missing assignments and a tidy desk and locker before starting their free choice time. Missing assignments will be worked on during the Free Choice Time.

On Fridays, your child will bring home a **Weekly Reflection** page, which will give details about your child's success that week with our expectations, homework, and more. Please look for this every Friday, review it with your child, sign it, and send it back to school on Mondays!

BEHAVIOR REDIRECTION PROCESS

Oakwood has developed a consistent plan for the use of tallies. If a student has **two tallies** in the same day, s/he will briefly meet with the teacher to discuss a "Redirection Record" as a way to stop and think about making good choices for the remainder of the day. If a student has a **third tally** during the same day, s/he takes a timeout and completes a Refocus Form, which is a more detailed reflection of the poor choices and of a plan needed to be successful the remainder of the day. If the student has a **fourth tally** in the same day, s/he will report to the office and meet with our principal (Mr. Bol) or assistant principal (Mrs. Luban). Parents will be notified by phone.

It is quite typical that students tend to "test the waters" during the first couple weeks of school. I am *very* consistent with this management plan (but also sensitive to student needs), so please do not be alarmed if your child receives tallies in the beginning of the year. *Most* students who do so early on only do so a few times and then quickly learn that the expectations are enforced. If your child continues to have difficulty making positive choices, I will contact you so we can work together to help your child consistently make good choices.

Tallies & Coupons System

Class Coupons	How to Earn a Weekly Coupon	Possible Coupons	
At the end of each week, your child will have to opportunity to pick a class coupon!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No missing or late work that week No "Redo" work due to lack of effort 0-3 tallies total for the week no Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> show and tell wear a hat chew gum extra snack time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> swap seats special chair skip a homework indoor recess

Tallies				
-1 minute	-3 minutes	-5 minutes	-10 minutes	No Free Choice Time
A = active listening B = blurting C = conversation level F = following directions M = movement violation O = off task R = responsibility S = misuse of Supplies U = unprepared	G = goofing around N = negative attitude Q = quality work or effort T = tipping in chair W = whining	K = keeping hands to self P = politeness/unkind V = DisruptiVe behavior X = obnoXious Y = cooperation	D = disrespectful E = defiance H = cheating L = lying	I = inappropriate language or behavior J = physical aggression Z = bullying (repeatedly and intentionally picking on someone)

# of Tallies in a Day	Consequence
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of free choice minutes as detailed above
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of free choice minutes as detailed above redirection record presented to student brief discussion with teacher
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of free choice minutes as detailed above Timeout & Refocus Form
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of free choice minutes as detailed above Conference slip Office Discipline Referral (ODR)

Positive Incentives

Authentic Praise

I believe in building students up and helping them to see their strengths, believe in their strengths, and build on their strengths. Therefore, I will continually seek opportunities to acknowledge your child's positive behaviors, strengths, and most importantly – efforts. I have seen, and research shows, that attitudes change, efforts increase, and behaviors improve through a 1:5 ratio. That means for every one correction or redirection I might give, I work hard to follow it up with 5 positives throughout the day. Keeping the praise *authentic* is key though!

CHAMPS Time

Students start the week with 20 minutes of Friday Free Choice Time. Poor choices during the week reduce the number of minutes each student keeps.

Coupons

In fourth grade, your child has opportunities to earn class coupons. How to earn coupons is listed on the previous page. Our typical coupons are listed on the previous page as well. Coupons will be selected on the Weekly Reflection Form during our Friday Free Choice Time (explained on a previous page). Coupons are only passed out on Mondays, so in order to get the coupon, if it is earned, the Weekly Reflection must be returned to school on Monday.

Random Rewards

I try to keep rewards to a minimum because the goal is for students to make good choices simply because it's the right thing to do and to do their best just for the sake of doing their best. However, I do random rewards sometimes to acknowledge the good choices and best efforts to those who did so even when they didn't think there was a reward attached :).

Communication

NEWSLETTERS

I will email our weekly newsletter every Friday, detailing the upcoming week's events and curriculum studies. Please read this important information each Friday.

PLANNERS

Please check *and sign* your child's planner every night to check for homework and important messages. Your signature lets me know that you were aware of your child's homework responsibilities for the night and any important information. We often make changes (add items, cross things off, or modify) to the typed out planner throughout the week, so please do not sign a day ahead of time. You can write me notes on it as well. **I check planners first thing each morning as students are working on their morning work. If your child is late, I may not have time to check it.**

CORRECTED WORK

Your child's binder will have a Corrected Work folder. Assignments that your child self-grades will be scored with his/her checking marker. Work graded by me will also go in the Corrected Work folder. Please empty and go through your child's corrected work folder each night in order to monitor how your child is doing! Daily math homework pages are part of a large packet that should always be kept in the homework pocket. Your child will record math homework scores on a separate page in the binder each day. **Please check in on these each night and let me know if you see any discrepancies in how your child is self correcting :).**

MAIL

Your child's binder will also have a mail pocket. Notes, informational fliers, etc. will be in your child's mail pocket. Please empty and go through your child's mail each night in order to stay informed.

WEEKLY REFLECTION

Every Friday, your child will bring home a reflection form, with information about your child's success with our expectations, homework completion. Please sign and return this each Monday.

EMAIL

I will send out updates, important tallies, questions, and other important information through email from time to time. Please feel free to email me as well!

OTHER

If you would like to meet in person to discuss a concern, please call me, email me, or jot me a note so we can set up a day and time.

'WISE OWL' Binder

Your child's **WISE OWL** (We're Informed Successful Engaged and Organized While Learning) binder will come home *every night*. It should become your child's responsibility to take you through the binder each night, but **please help your child establish this habit during the first month**. This binder is meant to serve as your primary connection to daily school happenings and to how your child is performing behaviorally and academically. It works not only as a great communication tool between parents and teachers, but also between you and your child. You will find the following items in the binder:

Homework Pocket

This will hold any homework that needs to be completed for the next day. Your child will also bring home study guides from time to time. **Homework not turned in during the week will be completed during our Friday Free Choice Time.**

Math Homework

A math packet will stay in your child's homework pocket during each unit. The planner will list which pages are to be completed each night. At the end of our math lesson, we will circle the problems to be completed. If your child brings home the assignment with no problems circled or your child was absent, your child is expected to complete them all. The purpose of the homework is to reinforce skills from the day's lesson, as well as review and maintain previous skills and concepts. The assignment is checked on a credit/no credit basis, and students will usually self-correct it when we go over it the next morning. Students receive full credit for completing the assignment on time and with personal best effort. Please have your child attempt the homework independently at first, but feel free to help after that. If your child is really struggling with a problem, jot me a quick note on the assignment and **leave it blank**. I do NOT want your child to reach the point of tears and frustration. We go over the math homework in various ways first thing each morning (partners, whole class, or groups) so if your child does not have the homework, s/he will be missing an important part of our math time. If your child becomes inconsistent with homework completion, I will contact you to see how I can help.

Science/Social Studies/Math

Your child will bring home vocabulary cards or study guides from time to time to help prepare for an upcoming test or quiz. Our vocabulary words are always uploaded to a vocabulary practice site which provides great online practice. Usernames and passwords will be provided.

Unplanned Homework

Unfinished class work, assignment corrections, and absentee work may come home from time to time as well. Your child or I will write this type of homework on his/her planner by hand, which again is why it's important to check the planner every night and not sign ahead of time.

Reading

Time spent reading has a tremendous influence on school success. Your child is highly encouraged to read at least 20 minutes at *home* each day, or a total of 100 minutes per week. Many students choose to bring their books back and forth to school each day so they don't have too many books going at once. I will confer with your child throughout the week about his/her reading, and I would LOVE if you would have conversations about your child's books throughout the week too. Talking about what is being read further helps comprehension and accountability!

Planner

The planner lists the homework for each night and any other important comments or tallies. A parent signature is expected each night. Your signature lets me know that you have gone through everything in the binder and were aware of your child's responsibilities. We often make changes (add items, cross things off, or modify) to the typed out planner, so please do not sign a day ahead of time. You can write me notes on it as well. **I check planners first thing each morning, so it's a great way to make sure I'm informed. If your child is late, I may not have time to check it.**

'WISE OWL' Binder Continued...

Corrected Work Folder

Your child will put tests, quizzes, and corrected work in this folder each day. During the day, your child will correct a lot of his/her daily work with a checking marker or pen. These assignments will also be in the corrected work folder. Please check this folder EVERY NIGHT and remove papers. It should come back to school empty each day. This process is an important one in monitoring how your child is doing day to day! If you notice that your child does not seem to be correcting his/her work accurately :), please let me know. Acknowledging and correcting mistakes is an important part of the learning process.

Mail

Informational notes, fliers, work not corrected, etc. will be located in the mail pocket. This folder should also be checked nightly.

Please go through your child's binder with him/her each night in order to monitor the night's homework, check for any notes from school, and to *remove graded work and mail.*



We're
Informed
Successful
Engaged and

Organized
While
Learning



Toys/Unapproved Objects

Your child should only be bringing things to school that will assist with the learning process and are approved by the teacher and you. Anything that is *not* on the **4th Grade Supply List** is not allowed in the classroom without special permission. If your child has something in his/her backpack (electronics, stuffed animals, toys) because s/he is bringing it to an after school care program or babysitter, the rule is that it does not leave the backpack and should therefore not be seen during the school day. We've had issues in the past with these kinds of things getting lost, taken, or just being a distraction. Instructional time will not be used to look for missing items.



Over the last few years, the popularity of various **fidgets** has impacted our students in the classroom. The fourth grade teachers ask that the use of a fidget in class is discussed with the teacher prior to it being brought into the classroom. It will be allowed if it is deemed potentially *beneficial* to your child's comfort, focus, and/or productivity, AND if it is *not* a distraction to his/her classmates. **For example, the "pop-its" fidget pictured to the left would NOT be approved because it is a noise distraction to those nearby.** As with all belongings brought from home, it is the student's responsibility to keep track of his/her property.

If your child brings something to school *without* permission the following actions will be taken:

1st Time: The object will be sent home with a reminder letter.

2nd Time: The object will be retained at school and a parent will have to pick it up in the office.

Outdoor recess toys such as footballs, basketballs, and jump ropes are acceptable to keep in backpacks/lockers and then played with at recess. Standard baseballs/softballs and bats are not allowed at school per the Oakwood Handbook. However, your child may bring a tennis ball or softer style baseball/softball to play catch with at school.

We will have coupons students can earn allowing them to bring in special things for a day such as stuffed animals, a share toy, etc. If your child has the coupon, that is considered permission for that day!

Birthdays

If you would like to send in a small treat for the class to celebrate your child's birthday, please feel free to do so. Students also love fun pencils, pens, or erasers. Another option is to donate a book to our classroom library! Please contact me if you have any questions!

Grading

Like the elementary school, we have standards based report cards that will be sent home on a semester schedule. We will be reporting to you how your child is progressing in each of the essential standards we are teaching throughout the year. Essential standards are the skills that are most important for your child to know in order to be as successful as possible in fifth grade, and are therefore re-taught to mastery if your child struggles. We use the following scores:

- 3 = consistently meets the standard with independence (75-100%)
- 2 = progressing toward the standard with support (60-74%)
- 1 = limited progress toward the standard (0-59%)

While report cards will come home two times this year, you will see work coming home **daily** that will show your child's mastery as well. Daily work is often corrected by your child. Your child will also frequently assess him/herself in regards to how well s/he thinks s/he is understanding a particular skill on an assignment. They will score themselves in the following way:

<p>4 EXPERT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I can teach othersI can explain it in my own wordsI can apply it to new ideas or problems 	<p>3 MASTER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I understand and can show my understandingI can do it by myself. 
<p>2 APPRENTICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I understand parts of itI still need some coaching 	<p>1 NOVICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">I don't understand it YETI need help 

Therefore, please take time to look through your child's work on a daily basis. Have discussions about why they scored themselves a certain way versus a different way. Finally, paying attention to how your child is doing with homework will be very insightful. The homework will always contain things that your child has already been taught. If you have a concern about your child's progress please contact me right away.

Assessments

In order to help us identify student needs (both intervention and enrichment) and monitor student progress, we give several assessments here at Oakwood.

iReady Test: The iReady test is a computerized assessment that your child will take in **math** and **reading** three times this year. The first one is administered in September. These tests help us track progress and plan for re-teaching and enrichment.

Quizzes: Your child will take 2-3 quick quizzes during each math unit. These are followed by a day of re-teaching and extension activities.

Summative Assessments: Your child will take summative assessments in math, science, and social studies. Study guides will be sent home 3-5 days prior to science and social studies tests. In math, students will take unit assessments immediately following the end of a unit. Upon completion of the assessments, those who have not met the standards consistently will participate in reteaching groups. Continual re-teaching of essential standards throughout the year will take place during our math intervention time each day.

State Test: The state test, the M-STEP, will be taken in May and will test what your child has learned through fourth grade content and skills. In fourth grade, your child will take the reading and math tests. **Testing dates will be May 3, 4, 10, and 11 of 2022.**

Curriculum

Fourth grade is an exciting, busy year of growing and learning. Students begin to make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Accountability for learning is monitored DAILY and interventions are administered as needed. While I put great effort into teaching engaging lessons that consider various learning styles and prior knowledge, the responsibility to attend to each lesson and work hard to learn is your child's. This responsibility for one's own learning is modeled and discussed frequently throughout the year.

Our district's ELA and math curriculums are aligned with the Common Core State Standards. These are specific skills and concepts that students are expected to master by the end of the grade level.

Math

We are fortunate to have our K-5 math program called Math Expressions Common Core. This program is not only aligned to the common core state standards (CCSS), but more importantly, it incorporates best math practices into its daily instructional components. Students will engage in daily math explorations, partner/group discussions, and ample practice and reflection. Students will not only become more skillful and gain greater conceptual understanding, but they will also be challenged to reason their ideas, make connections, extend their learning, and defend their thinking.

We have 8 units. Each unit has 2-4 big ideas. Each big idea has 3-5 lessons. Students will take a quiz after each big idea and a unit test after the completion of each unit. Quick Quiz results guide needs for reteaching, enrichment, and math intervention time grouping within a unit.

At Oakwood, we are fortunate to have an *additional* 25 minutes of math re-teaching, practice, and enrichment four days a week. During this time, students will participate in various learning activities while small groups are run by myself and our math interventionists.

Reading & Writing

70 minutes will be devoted to reading, and an additional 30 minutes will focus on writing. We will be using a program called ReadyGEN. ReadyGEN is a comprehensive core English language arts curriculum for Grades K-5 built specifically for the Common Core Standards. The program uses deliberately organized text sets and routine-based instruction. The goal of ReadyGEN is to build strong readers and writers through a lesson structure that develops an understanding of big ideas in social studies and science concepts through conceptually coherent text sets. Text sets are a collection of texts deliberately organized around these topics. Students will have 40 minutes of independent reading time every day. At the core of

ReadyGEN is reciprocity between reading and writing to promote student thinking and understanding through citation of text-based evidence. Students write every day, and instruction is closely linked to reading, using the text as the model.

An *additional* 30 minutes will be a differentiated block of time in which your child will either stay in our classroom or go to a different one. Where your child goes is based on what your child's greatest need is in reading. If your child demonstrates above average reading skills, s/he will participate in reading enrichment. If your child is struggling with a reading skill, s/he will participate in a support group focused on that skill. If your child demonstrates on target reading skills, s/he will participate in reading activities that will continue to build and enhance those reading skills.

Social Studies

Students love learning about the United States in fourth grade! The following units will be studied:

US Government
Michigan History and Geography
US History and Geography
Economics

Science

Students will use many hands-on explorations connected with informational reading in order to learn the fourth grade science concepts. Our units are:

States of Matter
Electricity/Magnetism
View from the Earth
Organisms

Goal Setting



Setting and monitoring goals helps to foster self-directed learning, accountability, and growth. Students will set academic and behavior/work habits goals throughout the year. For example, in math, your child will receive feedback on standard mastery, pick a standard to work on (one they haven't received a 3 on yet), write a SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely/Time-bound) goal, make a plan, and work toward reaching the goal.

Part of our math groups time will be devoted to working on individual goals. Students will use Google Classroom to access websites, worksheets, and how-to videos on the math standards they are working on. Students will frequently reflect on their goal progress, adjusting their plans if needed.



Medications



Our handbook states that students are not to bring any medications to school. Parents are asked to bring this to school and fill out the proper paperwork that accompanies the medicine. Medicine is then kept in the office. Students should **not** have aspirin, cough medicine, **cough drops**, inhalers, etc. in their lockers or backpacks. Yes, even cough drops need to be monitored by the office. :)

I-CHAT

If you would like to volunteer for field trips or to be a classroom helper, please fill out the ICHAT forms in the office. You will need to come in person and present your drivers license. If you completed an ICHAT in the past five years, you will not need to do it again. **Due to COVID, we currently are not allowed to have volunteers in the classroom and field trip status is unknown.**



Chrome Books



Your child will have his/her own Chrome Book again to use while at school. The school's Chrome Book is used as a tool, not a toy. Before your child is allowed to use it independently, you and your child must read and agree to our district's acceptable use policy by signing it and turning it in. Chrome Books are used for math practice, math tools, projects, research, collaborative work, assignment completion, self-directed learning, and more! Using Chrome Books at school is a privilege and must be met with responsibility and trust. **Students will not be using them during indoor recesses or free choice time unless it was earned as a special reward.** They are strictly for class assignments. When a student is irresponsible and/or untrustworthy with the Chrome Book, the privilege to use it is taken away. The following steps will be taken:

Offenses	Consequences
1 st Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 day loss of Chrome Book • parent notification
2 nd Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 days loss of Chrome Book • a refresher lesson on Chrome Book etiquette and responsibilities during recess • parent notification
3 rd Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 week loss of Chrome Book • parent notification
4 th Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 weeks loss of Chrome Book • a refresher lesson on Chrome Book etiquette and responsibilities during recess • parent notification
5 th Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consequence to be determined by teacher and administrator • parent notification

Some infractions may require a more severe consequence earlier on. Minor infractions may result in a tally rather than losing Chrome Book privileges, unless they become repeat offenses.

Water Bottles

Due to COVID restrictions, all drinking fountains will remain off this year. So, your child should bring a **filled** water bottle to school each day. Water bottles will be kept in lockers, and students will have several opportunities throughout the day to get drinks. Students will be expected to take their water bottles home every day in order to be cleaned.

