

MRS. MICHALSKI'S 5th GRADE SURVIVAL GUIDE

A.K.A. Stuff You Need to Know



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to 5th grade at Page Elementary! I am delighted to have your child in my classroom this year, and I am confident that we will all have an exciting and successful school year!

There are so many things to remember as we start a new year as teachers, parents, or students. It can be very exciting and overwhelming at the same time. In order for all students to have the opportunity to be successful, I am providing you with this survival guide. In this packet you will find many important pieces of information regarding my classroom policies on homework, grading and late assignments, as well as behavior expectations, discipline procedures, and general house-keeping type items. It is my hope that by providing you with this information it will help alleviate some of the confusion and stress that accompanies the start of a new year. **Please familiarize yourself with the contents of this packet and keep it handy to refer to throughout the year.** To acknowledge that you have reviewed and understand the contents of this packet, please sign the last page, and return it to school with your student. If you wish to discuss any concerns you have, please feel free to contact me via phone or email. My complete contact information is listed near the end of this guide. I look forward to a great year!



Expectations

Classroom expectations and rules are designed so that all students have a safe and comfortable learning environment. I expect my students to take responsibility for their actions and understand that following the rules is part of making our classroom an exciting place to learn. To familiarize you with our class and school expectations, I have listed some of the responsibilities of the students below. At Page students are expected to be **SAFE, RESPECTFUL** and **RESPONSIBLE** at all times.

FIFTH GRADE EXPECTATIONS

In **OUR CLASS** you are expected to be:

- * Polite
- * Quiet
- * Courteous
- * Friendly
- * Truthful
- * Honest
- * Prepared
- * Cooperative
- * Respectful
- * Responsible
- * Helpful
- * Kind



In the **BUILDING** you are expected to:

- * Respect yourself, others and school property
- * Follow directions the first time give
- * Use indoor, quiet voices at all times
- * Be in appropriate areas at all times
- * Be considerate of the safety of yourself and others

On the **PLAYGROUND** you are expected to:

- * Respect yourself, others and school property
- * Follow directions the first time given
- * Use playground equipment properly
- * Let others have a turn and include everyone
- * Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself

In the **CAFETERIA** you are expected to:

- * Respect yourself, others and school property
- * Follow directions the first time given
- * Use appropriate language and inside voices
- * Clean your eating area when finished

Classroom Discipline Program

My classroom discipline program is based on the belief that every student has the RIGHT to learn in a safe environment, free from excessive distractions and disruptions. To achieve this, I have found that my students respond well to structure and firm, yet fair, guidelines. Below you will find a list of our classroom rules, consequences, and rewards.

Rules

- *Respect yourself by always doing your "PERSONAL BEST."
- *Respect others: be kind with your words and actions.
- *Be an active listener: use your eyes, ears, and heart.
- *Work quietly and follow directions the first time given.
- *Be prepared for class every day. Turn in completed assignments on time.

In our classroom, we use a conduct card to implement our discipline program and monitor success or areas needing improvement. Conduct cards are placed on the student's desk each week and are divided into two sections: the top section is for behavior and the bottom section is for homework. When a student chooses to break a rule, they will be given a warning. If they continue the behavior, they will receive a check on their conduct card. Each check will lower their citizenship grade by half a grade. All students begin the week with an A+ in citizenship. The conduct card will be sent home every Thursday attached to their Thursday Envelope. The grade the student earned for that week will be recorded and you will be asked to sign that you have seen both the conduct card and the contents of the envelope. The following are additional consequences for students who are struggling to follow our classroom policies and expectations.

Time out and/or lose recess
Completion of a Behavior Plan
Letter or phone call to parents
Visit to the office



It is also important to recognize and reward exemplary behavior, both inside and outside of the classroom. Students receive Gotchas, PBIS tickets and other rewards when I catch them being great role models for others!

Homework Policy

After spending over 20 years in education, my philosophy regarding homework has changed quite a bit. I really believe that FAMILY TIME and PLAY TIME are essential to growing healthy human beings. By family and play time, I mean things that do not involve technology! However, there are some things that simply MUST happen outside of the school day. Normally, your student will have some small homework assignment Monday through Thursday, mainly in Spelling or Math. In general, your child should not need more than 30 – 45 minutes to complete their homework. Some nights the load will be heavier as your student may need extra time to study for tests. Assignments that are not completed during the day may also come home as homework. Please keep in mind that I will provide sufficient time in class for your child to finish assignments. Therefore, if your child is bringing home excessive homework, it may indicate a problem with organizing his or her time.

Supporting good work habits requires a joint effort. I will support your child and encourage good work habits at school. Your student will also benefit from your support and encouragement at home. Please provide guidance and input as necessary but allow your child to take pride in finding solutions and working independently. If you find your child is spending much more than one hour on homework, please contact me so that we can discuss possible solutions.

To ensure completion of **quality homework**, please try to do the following for your child:

- 1) Stress the importance of school and work completion.
- 2) Create a quiet area with few distractions, providing necessary materials for your student to complete homework.
- 3) Read and sign your child's assignment book each night so that you know what work was assigned and completed.
- 4) Establish consequences with your student if homework is not completed on a consistent basis.
- 5) Praise your child for neat and complete work!

Math/Reading/Spelling at Home

By 5th grade it is expected that students know their multiplication and division facts through 12 and can recite them quickly. This fluency is vital to your child's success in math this year. We will review at the beginning of the year, but it is important for your child to practice them with regularity at home until they are able to correctly complete 32 problems or more in 1 minute. All students have an Xtra Math account, which is a helpful fluency tool. Please encourage your student to practice each night as needed.

Reading at home for at least 20-30 minutes on a nightly basis will help increase your child's reading and comprehension skills. Unless we have a shortened week, spelling tests will be given weekly. Students receive their words on Monday and test on Friday. Students will be expected to study at home throughout the week as well as complete and return their homework packet.

Thursday Envelopes

Our Thursday Envelopes were created to help your student stay organized and keep you updated on our classroom activities. In addition, it will inform you of your child's weekly citizenship grade, which is based on behavior and responsibility/work habits.

Every Thursday your student will bring home an envelope containing completed work and/or graded assignments (please keep in mind that not everything we do in class is graded). Parents are asked to review and discuss these papers with their students. Please keep an eye out for letters, flyers, or book orders, as they will also come home in this manner.

If there are any missing assignments or papers your student wishes to redo, he or she may correct, complete, and return them for credit within one week. Otherwise, the papers are yours to keep.

Please be sure to sign your child's envelope each week so that I know you have gone over their work and have seen their citizenship grade. **Envelopes are expected to be returned to school on Friday with a parent signature.**



Planners

A planner has been provided for your student. This planner is extremely important as it encourages students to develop responsibility and turn in their assignments in a timely fashion. It also serves as a critical communication tool. At the end of every day, I write down all homework and important reminders in the planner and students are given 10 minutes to copy what I have written. It is the responsibility of the child to write his or her work in their planner. **Parents are asked to read and sign their child's planner each night except for Friday.** If you write a note for me in your child's planner, please remind your child to show it to me first thing the next morning, otherwise I may not see it.

If you find that your child has not been keeping up with his/her planner, please have a chat with your child and come up with a plan that will help get them back on track. If you are not sure about what should be written in the planner, please visit my website and click on the "Homework" tab. This page is updated daily. Students must replace lost planners for a small fee.

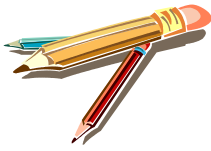
Late and Missing Assignments

Students are expected to turn in completed assignments on time, but I also understand that life happens. Late work will be accepted up to **five** school days after the due date. The first day an assignment is late, the score is less 10%, after that the student's grade will continue to go down 10% per day. After five school days, the assignment will no longer be accepted, and the score will be recorded as a zero. **It is the student's responsibility to ask if he/she has any missing assignments.** One way that students can keep track of their assignments is by writing them down in their planner every day.

Redo Policy



Students should redo any papers on which they have scored a 3 or a 4, as they are not meeting grade level standards for that assignment. When students receive graded papers in their Thursday Envelopes, they have **one week** to redo the assignment and turn it in. The final grade will replace the original grade, up to a 2. In some cases, the student will need to ask for a new sheet in order to redo the assignment. It is the student's responsibility to request a new copy of the assignment if necessary. If a student receives less than a 2 on a test, they will need to study with the help of a parent and ask to retake the assessment within one week. In most cases, the redo test will not be identical to the original. It is important that you assist your students in preparing for tests.



Paper Headings

Papers should always have the student's name, date, subject and assignment in the upper right-hand corner. The next line is to be skipped. Students should always write legibly and neatly, using only a pencil, unless otherwise specified.

Condition of Work

It is the responsibility of the student to take care of his/her work. Papers must be clean, unwrinkled, and not torn to shreds and taped back together when turned in. Please understand that a neat fold in the paper is fine, and I understand that little rips happen here and there and that too is okay. I'm talking about the kind of work that looks like it has been through the ringer. Mutilated work will not be accepted and will count as a missing assignment. Students who turn in work with illegible penmanship will be asked to rewrite it neatly and it will be counted as a late assignment.

Absent Students

Upon returning to school, it is the student's responsibility to see me to discuss any work they might have missed. When a student is absent, we place all work in an "Absent Folder" which will be on their desk on the day they return. A form with the missing assignments is included, as well as all necessary paperwork. **It is crucial that once your child returns to class, he or she goes over the contents of the Absent Folder with me to make sure they understand what is expected of them.** If there are any questions at that time, students are encouraged to ask for further explanation. All make-up work is given two days for every one day absent to be considered on time. All other policies apply.

Snacks

The students will have one or two short snack breaks each day. Please refer to our classroom schedule for those times. Please send your child with something healthy for snack each day. Appropriate snacks are granola bars, cheese and crackers, cheese sticks, fruit, etc. Water bottles are always welcome in class as long as they don't become a distraction. Please no pop, juice, or flavored water in the classroom.



Donations

If your child would like to donate any of their old chapter books to the classroom library, they are more than welcome and greatly appreciated! We would also love donations of old games that may be collecting dust at home. Inside recess happens quite often during the blustery, winter months and our game collection is becoming quite sparse.

Book Orders

Book orders will come home at various times throughout the year. This is completely optional; however, many parents have found the books to be a bargain and popular with their kids. **All orders will be processed digitally through Scholastic. Please watch your child's Thursday Envelope for more information on ordering books.**

Star of the Week

Each week a student will be chosen to be Star of the Week in our class. If your child is chosen to be Star of the Week they will come home with a letter and attached paperwork on Friday. Please help your student gather what they would like to share and send it to school with them on Monday. They will have time in class to share and will bring home their treasures on the following Monday. Please do not send anything that cannot fit in a backpack or survive a ride on the bus!



Birthday Treats

Birthday treats are always welcome, but I ask that you please check with me ahead of time for current food allergies or special needs in our classroom. Please send in about 30 treats. Often, students enjoy having extra so they may share with their favorite staff members. Students will pass out birthday treats during our afternoon snack time.

End of the Day

At the end of the day, students will be busy filling out their planners and packing their bags. This time of day can get very hectic. To minimize unnecessary distractions at the end of the day, please wait for your child in the main entry way of the school until the bell rings. If you need to check your child out of school before the last bell at 3:55, you will need to do this from the office. They will call the student down. Please do not go to the classrooms. If your child must leave early, he/she is still responsible for any homework that is assigned even if he/she is not there when we fill out planners before dismissal. Please refer to my website for daily homework posts.

Grading Information – How Will My Child Be Graded?

Our district uses a standards-based grading system to indicate how well your student is mastering grade-level standards. Please see the chart below for further details.

1	Exceeds proficiency with consistent demonstration of excellence, showing an in-depth understanding of the grade-level standard. (100%+)
2	Meets grade-level standard. Correctly and independently applies the skill or concept. (80% - 99%)
3	Student is approaching standard, but some errors or misunderstandings are evident. Student shows partial understanding of grade-level standard. (60% - 79%)
4	Demonstrates initial understanding of grade level standard. Interventions are necessary for understanding. (0% - 59%)

Work Habits

- 1** Consistently
- 2** Usually
- 3** Sometimes
- 4** Rarely

Contacting Mrs. Michalski

Email: tmichalski@tkschools.org

The easiest and often quickest way to reach me is through email. I check my email a couple of times each day!

Voicemail: 269-795-5400 x 4531

If you are calling during school hours you may need to leave a message, but I will return your call as soon as possible.

Office: 269-795-7944

Any absences need to be reported to this number.

(Important: Call the office if your child's go home plan changes – do not call me or e-mail me because the message may not be received. Some afternoons I am so busy that I do not have time to check my voicemail or e-mail until after school.)

Handwritten Notes: Please remind your child to give them to me first thing in the morning.

My goal is to help your child be successful and learn responsibility by giving them opportunities to be successful and responsible. Doing it, not hearing about it, leads to success and responsibility. I can't wait to get to know your son or daughter. It's the relationships and laughter shared with the kids that I love most about teaching!

~Mrs. Teresa Michalski

I realize this is a lot of information and while I have gone over it in class with the students, I appreciate you taking the time to go through it yourself and discuss it with your child. The Page Elementary Handbook is linked on my site, or you can also find it on our school website. This contains school-wide policies and procedures and is also important for you and your child to read. If you need a hard copy of this survival guide, please email me or send a note and I will print one for you.



We have read and understand Mrs. Michalski's Classroom Policies/Procedures.

Child's Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____ Date: _____