



August 5, 2019

Dear First Grade Parents and Guardians,

Warm greetings and a heartfelt welcome to our class community. With a number of friends returning and many new families joining I see our class as a newly forming constellation in the vastness of the starry sky. The children are bright stars finding their interrelation with each other. I await the beginning of our school year with joy and anticipation. Your children may also be thinking and talking about school already - some with earnest eagerness, others with trepidation.

Indeed, transitioning into our first grade marks a significant milestone for the children. They will now each have their own desk oriented towards the teacher. They will each receive their school supplies, learn how to use them, and take care of them. The children learn to raise their hand, focus their attention for longer periods of time, and bring their work to completion. Equally important, the children learn to adjust to each other, help each other and wait for each other as our class community begins to grow and blossom.

I am eager to share that **Ms. Soheireh Meier** is joining our class community as the First Grade Assistant Teacher. Ms. Soheireh brings a number of years of experience with both kindergartners and elementary grades children. Ms. Soheireh and I have an established collegial relationship and look forward to partnering with you on the children's learning journey.

Our journey will begin with several key happenings:

Class Warming Party on Friday, August 30th, 11am - 1pm

Our families will work side by side to wake up the classroom with some tasks and chores. We will then come out to the school yard for a well-earned potluck lunch and play time. Please dress for a work party and bring a dish to share.

First Day of School on Wednesday, September 4th, 8am - 12pm

Please arrive timely at 8am and guide your first grader to the classroom. I will be at the classroom door to greet the students and invite them inside. A formal, but comfortable outfit will suit the occasion: button-down shirt and trousers for boys, dresses or dress slacks for girls. Your first grader needs to bring 1) a healthy snack, 2) comfortable indoor shoes for daily active movement, 3) a sturdy drinking cup, 4) a cloth placemat for lunch.

Rose Ceremony, 11am - 12pm at the school auditorium

The Rose Ceremony is a tradition in Waldorf schools around the world. Every first grader is honored at the beginning of their learning journey and receives a rose from an outgoing eighth grader. You are all warmly invited.



All-school Picnic, 12pm - 1pm behind the school

Pickup your child outside the classroom at noon. Bring a blanket and lunch for your family. The eighth grade will be hosting a fundraiser and offering grilled fare as an option.

To support the health of our class, I ask that each family take up the following guidelines, many of which carry over from kindergarten:

1. **Restful sleep** is essential for a first grader's success in school. I suggest easing into an earlier consistent bedtime in advance. Six & seven-year-olds still need 10-11 hours of sleep.
2. **Nourishing breakfast** at home to give energy for learning.
3. **Pack a healthy and substantial snack and lunch.** Concentrating makes you really hungry! Please leave out sugary snacks.
4. **Timely arrival** between 8:00-8:10am allows each student orient themselves before our main academic work for the day begins. Students who arrive at 8:15am or later should wait on the bench outside the classroom until I can call them inside the classroom.
5. **Outdoor gear** should reflect the weather. We will go outside every day fully in the elements. Students will need the usual rain boots, rain pants, snow pants, gloves, hats, warm jackets.
6. **Dress** according to the [school guidelines](#). Briefly, skirts and shorts should be to the knee; tops and shirts must have short or long sleeves; clothing should be free from graphics and writing (overall prints okay); no nail polish, temporary tattoos or hair dye; no jewelry except for small stud earrings. I recommend you lay out the clothing with your child every evening for the following day. Hair should be out of face and eyes so that it is not a distraction.
7. **Screen-free weekdays** allow students to digest the content of their school days. I am open to speak with you about this complex topic. [Our school media guidelines are here.](#)
8. **Missing school** should be reserved for illness. Generally, do not plan family vacations or trips while school is in session. Our lessons are experiential and build upon each other.

I support open and timely communication:

- You may write to me at ataiga@gbrss.org with any questions big or small.
- I will hold a consistent weekly office hour prior to school pickup for your convenience.
- The first parent meeting is scheduled for September 19th at 6:30pm. More details to come.
- **Emily Kasten and Julie Anidjar** (Henry's mom & Ellie's mom) are our class parent reps. They will send periodic school-related emails, may organize seasonal social gatherings, and will represent our class at the Parent Association meetings. I am grateful for their willingness to volunteer precious time in service of our community.

May the last weeks of summer be restful and full of ease.

Warmly, Ms. Taiga.