

Dear Parents of Soon-to-Be First Grade Dragons,

The NES First Grade Team looks forward to meeting your child in the fall! Moving from kindergarten to first grade is a pretty big step, and this can be pretty scary at first. We have “big kids” rooms and we do “big kids” kinds of things. We want your child to feel comfortable and self-confident, so we have included information concerning the skills that we expect for beginning 1st Graders. We sincerely hope that it will be helpful to you as you work with your child during the summer in preparation for the big transition.



No Backpacks Please: We don't want you to go to the expense of buying one this summer!

The first grade team uses cloth shopping bags or cinch sacs instead of big backpacks. Since they are smaller, there is enough room for everyone's bag and jacket on the tightly packed hooks in our rooms, and so please purchase any cloth shopping bag or cinch sac instead. Write your child's name on it and decorate it any way you'd like! Check out *Hearts and Home*, the arts and crafts store for more ideas! ***The Booster Club also plans to sell NES logo bags in 2 sizes now!***

Know the Letters: ABC books are great for this! Try the base library for a big selection.

Your child should be able to recognize and name each letter (in sequence and in random order), as well as know the sound that they make. As you read with your child, point out that letters make words and words make sentences. Run your finger under the words and sentences as you read aloud.

Have your child practice writing his or her name using the proper case (capitalize the first letter but not any others within your name). Your child should be able to print the letters of the alphabet using correct shaping and spacing. We have included a handwriting guide on the back of this paper to help you with this. The PX should have a tablet with headline, midline and baseline. We use the lines to guide our writing and to recognize the top and the bottom of the paper. As you write this summer, make sure that your child distinguishes between upper- and lower-case letters (we don't use the terms “big” and “little” letters in first grade). Also, all letters go from top to bottom and we make a space between words.

Know the Numbers: Counting books are good for this, and again, try the base library!

Your child should be able to recognize and write the numbers 1 – 20. Use the writing tablet from above. Also the numbers are included on the handwriting guide. Don't be too concerned if the letters and numbers are turned around backwards. Just gently correct them by saying something such as, “Oops! Let's turn that one around.”

Your child should be able to count objects up to twenty. Count out socks from the laundry. Count beans or pasta before it goes in the pot. Count how many red cars you see while driving. This will also help your child to sort objects by color, size and/or shape. Play easy board games and card games this summer!

Small-muscle Practice: These are personal, necessary things to make your child feel like a “big kid.”

By the time your child gets to first grade, s/he should be able to tie their own shoes. Don't just avoid this by buying Velcro. Your child should also be able to redress after using the toilet (pull up, zip and/or button) without help. S/He should hold pencils, crayons and scissors correctly as well as use an Elmer's glue bottle correctly (“A little dot'll do you.”). Practice with a few arts and crafts activities this summer. Use coloring books and clay frequently as it exercises the small muscles in the hands.

We sincerely hope that this list helps you to understand what we will be expecting from your first grader in the fall. We have tried to include some ideas that might be helpful as you choose activities to do with your child during the summer. As we prepare to teach your child to read in the coming year, we would like to remind you that the number one indicator of a successful reader are those who are read aloud to regularly. Please read your child a story every day this summer. Check out our really cool base librarian for summer reading incentives!

We can hardly wait to meet your child in the fall!
The Netwaberg Elementary School First Grade Teachers

A B C D E F G H I

J K L M N O P Q R

S T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k

l m n o p q r s t u v

w x y z ? ! " ,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10