



Welcome to grade four and five!!!

September 6th , 2018

Dear Parents:

Welcome to a new school year and the grade four/five class! ☺ As your child’s teacher, I am excited and looking forward to a great year working with you and your child. There is a total **of 27** students in our class. It will be great!

***Let me introduce myself!***

*My name is Coralee Cuming (or Ms. Cuming-Klassen). This is my first year at Willowgrove. I have been teaching for eighteen years and employed by the Saskatoon Public School Board for 21 (educational assistant for 3). My husband Randy and I just celebrated our eleventh wedding anniversary. We have two boys ages 24 years old and 9 years old. It is fun to have one joining the adult world on his own while the other is still in elementary school!*

 At the start the school year it is important for all of us to make immediate connections as people who are advocates for our children’s learning. One crucial communication tool is the use of a daily communication book or student planner. Students will be responsible for filling out details of daily homework, document significant dates, and organize reminders. The school will only supply students with one planner, so it is important that they take responsibility not to lose it. It is also important for parents to check planners daily, sign initials each day, and even write questions or provide information from home (a heads up about an upcoming appointment). The student planners have been a very successful communication tool between student, home and school when everyone utilizes it daily. I found it informative to read Willowgrove’s student planners for school procedures, policies, mission statements, staff assignments, calendar events and timetables. Please browse the student planner for information on holidays/absences during the school year and conflict resolution (bullying) strategies outlined by Willowgrove. Please take time each day to check the planner and feel free to inquire about its contents.

Another communication tool new to our class is the grade 4/5 blog. We will have day planner items added each day, links, and newsletters/files. Some assignment outlines will also be an added link on the side bar. I will write the same student planner agenda items on the class blog each day as well. Please add this to your favourites cursor and check daily. <http://www.cuming-klassenclassroom.com/> .

If you are looking for ways to become involved in the classroom and school, please consider volunteering as a room parent. The role of the room parent is to help assist in organizing class events, participating in home and school meetings, assisting in organizing any fundraisers, field trips etc. If you would like to volunteer to assist in class activities or have talents, skills that you would like to share, please let me know, our parents and community members are a valuable resource we would love to see in the classroom.

The best way to keep current on class and school events is reading class and school newsletters. The school newsletter will be distributed once a monthvia email. I will distribute our classroom newsletter at the beginning of the month via email and as a link on the class blog. It is vital that parents read the newsletters to stay informed about significant events, trips, calendar dates, and current issues in the classroom. Many of these items are also available on the Willowgrove parent portal as well.

We have a new set up with school supplies this year. Parents pay a school fee for supplies on September 5th instead of shopping for items on their own. Any leftover supplies will be sent home at the end of the year. The first couple of days of school, when students are settled in their homerooms, students will be sent home with permission slips and forms. It is important to fill out permission forms on excursions. We already have a threshing demonstration field trip scheduled for September 18th. If you are interested in volunteering on school field trips or volunteering at the school, please stop by the office to pick up a criminal record check form. These must be filled out every school year.

We are hoping that you are available to come meet us and the rest of the Willowgrove team at our meet the staff night on September 19th from 5-7 p.m. We have many new faces on our school team as well many familiar ones. At present, Arts Education will be taught by myself (dance), Mrs. Rigby (music) and Mr.Popescul (visual arts and drama). Ms. Ferguson will be teaching two physical education classes each week. We’ll keep you posted as, or if any, changes occur. We will be spending the next couple of days getting to know each other, practicing classroom routines and co-generating class expectations, and getting some good work and study habits in place.

Students take ownership and develop autonomy of their classroom. They do this by collaboratively setting up classroom expectations for student learning situations and behavioral conduct. They contribute in creating what they want they want their classroom to look and feel like. One program in our class is the **“marble jar incentives”.** Each day the class earns marbles for having a successful day. As we all know and can expect, some days are better than others. When the marble jar is full, the students can then select an activity whether it is a class movie afternoon, an outside play day for half a day, special field trip, etc.

Another system in place is the **“how am I doing today”** visual cue card system that communicates to each student how they are individually functioning in the classroom (like the marble jar incentive, we use the student co-generated classroom expectations for behaviour). The green is good job, yellow is a reminder, red is a loss of a privilege at school, and a black would be administrative involvement (in my experience, this rarely happens). I will be tracking daily for communication purposes. We believe with the support of parents and the cooperation of students, that every child can feel safe to learn, assume positive risks and succeed to their fullest potential. We believe these qualities help to build a strong classroom and school community. I will enclose a photo of the class expectations (once created by the student’s) on the blog.

 **Some of the Classroom Expectations for Behaviour that was co-generated from the students:**

1. Respect the speaker. Listen quietly when the teacher or another student is speaking.

 Raise your hand when you have something to say or comment on.

2. Respect the school rules and procedures. Be on time.

 Let the office or us know where you are or are going to be.

3. Respect your assignments. Do your best!

 Write in your planner, read during DEAR, take responsibility when absent from school by having a homework buddy to update you on missed assignments

4. Respect others. Be considerate of other’s feelings, keep your hands, feet and objects to yourself. Fix it when making mistakes and be a problem solver.

 Respect the school’s property, other’s property and your own materials.

5. Be a good class and school citizen, participate with a positive attitude in all activities and be inclusive to peers.

Feel free to phone or email me at cumingc@spsd.sk.ca . If you are needing time to connect or meet, please set up an appropriate time so your privacy and needs may be accommodated. I am looking forward to meeting all you whether it is casually in the hall, formally in the classroom, or at meet the staff night.

**Dates/activities for September:**

Tuesday, Sept. 4 -registration day/students attend a.m. only

Wednesday, Sept 5 -first full day of school

Tuesday, Sept. 18 -students attend the Harvest Demonstration at the WDM

 in the p.m.(outside activity, please be prepared for the

 weather)

Wednesday, Sept. 19th -Meet the Staff evening 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 4th -grades 4-8 picture day

Friday, October 5th -PD day, no school for students

Parents, you form part of an awesome community and I feel very fortunate to be working with you and your child.

Respectfully yours,

Ms. Cuming