

October 7, 2016

Dear Families,

There is certainly much energy in each of the schools after the first month of the new school year. It is the mission of the Germantown School District to continue this excitement throughout the school year and beyond as we “empower and inspire every student to success.”

The start of the school year marks a time of change. The elementary grading periods will be changing from trimesters to quarters beginning with the 2016-17 school year. For quarters 1 and 3, your child’s progress will be reported at parent-teacher conferences. No report card will be created. There will be time for all parents to schedule both the fall and spring conference. Our expectation is that all parents will schedule a time with the classroom teacher during these conference times (October 20/26 and March 23/29). For quarters 2 and 4 (end of January and end of the school year), there will be a report card available for each student. These two report cards will be the cumulative records of your child’s progress over the course of the school year. Additional information about the scheduling of conferences and accessing report cards will be available closer to the windows.

Students in kindergarten through second grade will be using new FOSS science materials. The following is a list of topics studied in each of the grades.

- Kindergarten will study Materials and Motion as well as Animals Two by Two
- 1st grade will study Air and Weather as well as Plants and Animals
- 2nd grade will study Solids and Liquids as well as Insects and Plants

The FOSS program has a wonderful website full of resources for teachers and families. Please visit the site for additional information: <http://www.fossweb.com/foss-modules>. Click on the individual modules for each unit. Under the picture of the cover of each unit, there is a link to “Go To Module Detail.” When you click on that link, there is a Home/School Connection link that has a PDF of ways you can support your child’s interest in science.

Teachers in third through fifth grade are developing new social studies units. The list of topics for each grade level is listed below. The units will continue to be developed during the course of the school year and will evolve as we plan lessons that are intentional about teaching students how to learn, including how to ask powerful questions, how to research information, and how to present learning to others.

- 3rd Grade – Wisconsin Today; United States Today, and America in the World
- 4th Grade – Early Immigrants, Pioneers, and Settlers; Wisconsin Territory through Statehood; US Government – 1848 compared to today
- 5th Grade – Age of Exploration; Colonization; Becoming an Independent Nation

As we evolve into creating powerful learning experiences for students, we will continue to align the report card to give you an ever clearer picture of how your child is learning. Additional information regarding the updated report cards will be communicated closer to the end of the first semester.

Thank you for your continued partnership in the education of your child.

Sincerely,

Brenda O’Brien

Brenda O’Brien
Director of Teaching and Learning