

# First Grade Student Handbook



Yeager Elementary  
2009-2010

Yeager Elementary School  
13615 Champion Forest  
Houston, TX 77069  
(281)440-4914  
Fax (281)587-7531

# Yeager Elementary School Personnel 2009-2010

Principal	Susan Brenz
Assistant Principals	Mary Dawn Murr Michelle Truitt
Instructional Specialist	Sarah Calhoun Jennifer Wolf
Counselor	Marrene Harris
Librarian	Amy Mitton
Nurse	Regina Wysocki
Secretary	Bev Secrest
Receptionist	Melissa Castelo
Registrar	Edith Zamora
P.E. Teachers	Jana Johnston Alane Williams
Music Teacher	Lisa Trewin
Art Teacher	Landry Kelly
First Grade	Meagan Barnhart Amie Bass Denise Burton Mary David Lauren Draper Carolina Mejias Anna Montemayor Katherine Owen Emily Sageman

*Welcome to Yeager Elementary School! We are so excited about the new experiences your child will have during the 2009-2010 school year. This handbook has been prepared so that we can provide you with important information about our school and grade level procedures. We look forward to working together with you so that we can make this a wonderful year for your child!*

## **GENERAL YEAGER INFORMATION**

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

School hours are 8:40 A.M. to 3:45 P.M. for students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. In the morning, students may enter the building beginning at 8:30 A.M. Students are expected to be in class no later than 8:40 A.M. for the morning announcements. Arriving on time will help ensure that your child starts the day in a positive way. ☺

Morning Pre-K and PPCD hours are 8:40-11:45 A.M. Afternoon Pre-K and PPCD hours are 12:45-3:45 P.M.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Tuesday is Parent Communication Day. Your child will have a folder/envelope that he or she brings home each Tuesday. The folder/envelope will include graded papers from the previous week, as well as information about your child's work habits and conduct. Please discuss the contents of the folder/envelope with your child. Sign and return the folder/envelope to the teacher on Wednesday. The YAP (Yeager Addresses Parents) newsletter will be sent to you via email every other week. If you do not have internet access, you may request a paper copy to be sent home with your eldest child.

Students in Second through Fifth Grade will maintain a student planner. Please review your child's planner on a daily basis for due dates, notes, and assignments.

### **BACKPACKS AND PERSONAL ITEMS**

We request that each student bring a backpack to school every day. This teaches responsibility for their belongings, and it provides for a convenient means of transporting items between school and home. Rolling backpacks should not be used at Yeager or on the bus due to safety and space considerations. Please remember to label any personal items (lunch kits, sweaters, coats, etc.) that your child brings to school. This will assist us in identifying lost or misplaced items.

Students should not bring items other than those on the school supply list. Cameras, radios, toys, tape recorders, and other personal items should not be brought to school. We do not want these to become distractions in the school environment.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES**

Daily attendance is marked by the homeroom teacher at 10:00 A.M. If your child is absent, please provide a written excuse upon his/her return to school. A written note is also needed to leave school during the day. State funding is allocated in accordance with student attendance, so accuracy in accounting is very important.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The modes of transportation at Yeager are bus, car, day care van, or YMCA program (in our Yeager cafeteria - P.M. only).

School bus transportation is available to every Yeager student; therefore, we encourage all students to ride the bus. At the beginning of the year, it takes a couple of weeks for bus drivers and students to become familiar with routes and establish routines. The bus may be later than normal during these first weeks, and we appreciate your patience as we go through this process.

If you decide to provide car transportation for your child, we ask that you drive through the car rider line in the north parking lot. A Yeager staff member will escort your child to the car and open the door for them.

Students who ride a day care van will be dismissed through the Music Room exit (which is located next to the parking lot). Students will be loaded onto their day care van with adult supervision at this location.

Students that participate in the YMCA program in the afternoon will be escorted to the cafeteria by their teacher on the way to the buses.

## **TRANSPORTATION CHANGES**

We encourage you to make as few changes as possible in your child's mode of transportation. Any changes in transportation should be made in writing and sent to the homeroom teacher. If an emergency occurs during the school day that would cause you to need to change your child's transportation, please call the main number (281-440-4914) to speak with someone about the change. No transportation changes will be made after 2:30 P.M.

## **GRADING PROCEDURES**

Student performance is reported to parents in several ways. Our goal is to keep parents well informed of their child's progress. If you should have a question about a grade your child has received, please contact your child's teacher.

## **Progress Reports and Report Cards for Pre-K through Fifth Grades**

At the end of the fifth week of each nine week grading period, a progress report will be sent to the parents of all students in Pre-K through Fifth Grade. Parents can access their child's grades throughout the nine weeks period using a protected password across a secure server.

All students in Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth Grades will receive a report card each nine weeks that will reflect the student's mastery of grade level TEKS. The following numerical scale is used to report achievement in language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies:

**A = 90% - 100%**

**B = 80% - 89%**

**C = 75% - 79%**

**D = 70% - 74%**

**F = below 70%**

## **Conduct and Work Habits**

All Yeager students are expected to follow the school, grade level, and classroom rules. Teachers will use the district Building Better Relationships model that teaches the social skills that are necessary to succeed in school and in life. If a child does not follow a rule, the teacher will reteach the appropriate social skill. Repeated infractions in any area over a six weeks period may result in an N on the report card. Should inappropriate behavior continue, parents will be contacted and an administrative intervention may occur.

It is also our goal to help your child develop good work habits (staying focused, following instructions, being prepared for class, and completing class work and completing homework). If a child is having difficulty with a particular work habit, the teacher will provide assistance so that the student can develop the appropriate skill. Repeated difficulty with a particular work habit over a six week period may result in an N on the report card.

## **YEAGER AWARD REQUIREMENTS**

### **Distinguished Honor Roll (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

- An average of at least 90 in each subject area: reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies for each nine weeks of the entire school year and
- An S in all areas of General Conduct in reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, P.E., Art, Music, and homeroom and in all areas of Work Habits for each nine weeks of the entire school year.

### **Honor Roll (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

- An average of at least 90 (A) in one academic area: reading, language arts, math, social studies, and science for each nine weeks of the entire year and
- An average of at least 80 (B) in all remaining academic areas: reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies for each nine weeks of the entire school year and
- An S in all areas of *General Conduct* in reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, P.E., Art, Music, and homeroom and in all areas of *Work Habits* for each six weeks of the entire school year.

### **Perfect Attendance (1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grades)**

- Perfect attendance for the entire year

### **President's Award for Educational Excellence (5<sup>th</sup> grade only)**

- An average of at least 90 in each subject area: reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies for every 9 week period in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades and
- An S in all areas of *General Conduct* in reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, P.E., Art, Music, and homeroom and in all areas of *Work Habits* for every 9 week period in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

**We acknowledge birthdays at Yeager. To recognize your child's special day, their name will be announced during the morning announcements and they will receive a birthday ribbon. Due to state mandate regarding Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value, food items for birthday celebrations may not be brought to school. In an effort to maintain a learning environment for all of our Yeager students, we request that you not have balloons or flowers delivered to the school. Although birthday invitations cannot be passed out at school, parents can receive a student directory by joining PTO to assist in sending party invitations from home. We appreciate your cooperation with this school policy.**

## **FORGOTTEN ITEMS**

Students are encouraged to make preparations the night before so items are not left at home the next day. Students who have forgotten their class work, homework, or projects will not be permitted to come to the front office during the day to call home. If you notice that your child's class work, homework, projects, or supplies are left at home, you may bring the item(s) to school. The item(s) will be placed in the teacher's mailbox at the end of the day.

If your child forgets a required item (such as eye glasses or a house key) they will be allowed to call home. If the parent brings the item to school, the item will be delivered to the classroom area.

## **LUNCH VISITS**

Parents are invited to occasionally have lunch with their child at Yeager. If you are planning to eat with your child, we ask that you follow a few guidelines:

- Check in at the front desk and get a visitor's nametag.
- Sit with your child at the designated "Visitor's Table" during your child's lunch. Since teachers must monitor all students during lunch time, friends will not be able to join your child at the "Visitor's Table."
- Due to food allergies and FMNV (Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value) guidelines, food and snacks can only be brought for your child. Sharing of food is not allowed.
- During the five minute "finish up" time, your child should return to his/her assigned table to ensure that they will be finished with their lunch and ready for recess.
- At the end of lunch, please exit the building through the doors in the cafeteria or through the front entrance of the building.

If your child should forget to bring their lunch to school, you may bring it during the school day. The receptionist at the front desk will have you sign in and then you may put your child's lunch in the labeled tote tray to the left of the stage area in the cafeteria where your child can retrieve it during their lunch time.

## **CLASSROOM VISITS**

Parents are welcome to visit school. For the safety of our Yeager students, school personnel will request identification from any person on school property. Staff will ask all visitors in the building to sign in at the front desk and to wear a nametag. We appreciate your assistance with this safety procedure.

If you would like to visit in your child's classroom, we request that you make an appointment in advance by contacting the classroom teacher. You may suggest a date and time. The teacher will consider classroom activities when confirming the scheduled visit.

## **TAKS TEST**

Third Grade students will take the TAKS Test (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the areas of Reading and Math.

Fourth Grade students will take the TAKS Test (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the areas of Reading, Math, and Writing.

Fifth grade students will take the TAKS Test (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) in the areas of Reading, Math, and Science. The Student Success Initiative of Texas states that students must pass the **READING** and **MATH TAKS Tests** as well as have passing grades on their report cards to be promoted to sixth grade.

## **THANKS**

Thank you for sharing your child with us. It is our desire that we team together to better serve our students. We look forward to a wonderful school year!!

## FIRST GRADE INFORMATION

Dear Parents,

Your child is beginning an exciting new phase in his/her life—first grade. There are many things you can do to make this important step successful and enjoyable. In order to help, we have prepared this handbook of information to make the transition to first grade as smooth as possible for both you and your child.

### Daily Schedule

8:35-8:45 A.M.	Arrival/Announcements
8:45-11:00 A.M.	AM Instructional Class
11:00-11:30 A.M.	Lunch
11:30 A.M. -12:00 P.M.	Recess
12:00-12:15 P.M.	AM Instructional Class (cont.)
12:15-1:55 P.M.	PM Instructional Class
1:55-2:45 P.M.	P.E./Art/Music
2:45-3:45 P.M.	PM Instructional Class (cont.)
3:45 P.M.	Dismissal

### Conference Time

Yeager's phone number is (281) 440-4914. You may leave a message for the teacher at any time during the school day. Calls will be returned as soon as possible. The first grade conference period is 1:55-2:45 P.M. Please arrange a time with the teacher prior to the conference.

### Daily Folder

After curriculum night your first grader will be given a daily folder and be responsible for bringing it to school **every day** in their backpack. The folder will include a page with information on homework, important events, and conduct. This page should always be kept in the daily folder.

## **Homework**

Homework will be sent home on Monday in the daily folder and should be initialed by parent/guardian and returned on Friday. Your child will be asked to read, study math facts, and practice spelling words daily. Homework should not take more than 20 -30 minutes. We will begin sending homework the second six weeks of school.

## **Library**

First graders will check out and return books each week on your child's designated day. Please note, no "new" books may be checked out until previously borrowed books are returned. We really need your help in overseeing this procedure. Remembering to return the library books each week will foster responsible student habits. Library visits most often include a story time, too!

# **Curriculum Overview**

## **Language Arts**

First graders will focus on balanced literacy components throughout the year. Words Their Way will be our spelling program. It is a program that is designed to meet each child's developmental progress. It incorporates vocabulary, phonetics and word families. Spelling lists will be tailored to your child's specific needs.

During reading, students will be utilizing titles from our extensive literacy library. Reading strategies are emphasized, along with fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

First graders will be writing messages, summaries, letters, poems, personal narratives, and even "how to" paragraphs. Zaner-Bloser, continuous stroke manuscript, will be taught and practiced during handwriting. Grammar skills will include capitalization, punctuation, editing, word choice, and parts of speech.

Many opportunities for listening and oral expression are also included within the language arts curriculum.

## **Math**

The focus in math is on problem-solving using addition, subtraction, graphs, charts, and pictures. First graders will be learning specific steps and strategies to use when solving problems. The learning process will begin with the use of manipulatives and then transition to pencil and paper. It is also a first grade goal for every student to memorize the addition facts to eighteen.

## **Science**

In first grade we use a hands-on approach to explore science. We begin with studying safety and the scientific process. The first grade curriculum also includes the study of plants, animals, weather, energy, the water cycle, and health.

## **Social Studies**

First graders will acquire knowledge about people and their world during social studies. They will study history, economics, geography, citizenship, and world cultures.

## **A Good Beginning**

During the start of school, your first grader will be very tired. Be supportive and encouraging. Since the school year begins in August, it will remain light until late in the evening. It is extremely important to begin a school routine right away. Going to bed early and getting a good night's sleep will help your child adjust and perform well in school. A good breakfast is also helpful.

## **Notes to the Teacher**

When sending a note to the school, please inform and remind your child to hand the note to the teacher as soon as they walk into class. Sometimes children forget to take notes out of their backpacks, so teachers will request notes as part of the early morning routine. A written note should be sent if your child needs to leave school during the day or change his/her means of transportation.

## **Volunteers**

There are many opportunities to volunteer at Yeager. For example, parents can be library aides, clerical volunteers, or reading relatives. If you are unable to volunteer during the school day, there are also jobs that can be done at home. Look for information in the YAP about volunteer activities.

Thanks in advance for all of your help and support as we work together to make first grade a positive learning experience!

## Physical Education/ Art/ Music Classes

### **Schedules**

Kindergarten: Your students have P.E. daily. They will attend Art and Music every other week. We make a switch half way through the 50-minute large group class time.

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades: Your students will have P.E. every other day for 50 minutes. On Fridays, all students will go to P.E. for half of the large group time alternating with Art and Music for the other half.

### **Clothing**

Please have your students wear rubber-soled shoes with a strap or closed back. This will make it safer for your students to participate in P.E. Shorts should be worn under dresses. Play clothes are preferred since they may get dirty, especially in Art. If you would like your child to bring an apron or smock, he/she will be responsible for bringing it to each art class.

### **Supplies**

Students should come prepared to class. Art class may request certain simple supplies during the year that can usually be found at home. All students will perform in a musical production that will require costuming. Special information will be given near performance time.

### **Excuses**

If a student needs to be excused from physical activity, please send us an excuse note. If the excuse will last for more than 3 days, you must send a doctor's note. A doctor or parent note is required for readmission to P.E. after a more serious type of injury (i.e. cast, stitches)

### **Rules**

1. Follow the teacher's directions and be ready to learn.
2. Show respect to yourself, others, and property.
3. Hands, feet, and objects are to be kept to your self. Safety comes first.
4. Be silent when the doors are open and while changing classes.

### **Consequences**

1. Reminder
2. Personal chat and time out
3. Conduct card signed
4. Parent contact
5. Office referral; this may also result in a report card grade change

\*\* In certain cases, depending on the severity of the problem, the order of steps may be altered.

**Thank you for your cooperation in making your student's Large Group experience a success!**