



# August/September

**Welcome Back:** Welcome Back to School to all of our wonderful students, parents, and families. The 2021-2022 school year is going to be educational, fun, and exciting!

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For those of you that do not know me, my name is Venita Dennis. I am the principal of LJS Intermediate School. I have been the principal at SIS for eight years. I am easy to reach at [vdennis@209u.net](mailto:vdennis@209u.net) . Email is the quickest way to get in touch with me. I can also be reached at 815-926-1689. I look forward to seeing everyone again and to meeting the new families of SIS.

Please take time to read through the **student handbook** located in the student planner. You were asked during the registration process to sign a form stating you and your student(s) have read the handbook.

Positive behavior is stressed and rewarded at SIS. Students will be given chances to register for drawings held monthly.

COVID-19 has changed the way we function in life and at Stevens Intermediate. Please refer to my August letter for routines. As always, call or e-mail if you have questions!

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**Attendance:** Student attendance is very, very important to Stevens Intermediate School. Please make sure your child is at school on time. At **18 days** absent, the State of Illinois considers a child a chronic absentee. With 10 unexcused absences, your child is considered a chronic truant. **Stevens is graded by the state on attendance.** Please have your student at school unless they are vomiting or running a fever.

Studies show that students who are absent frequently are more likely to fail math and/or reading and more likely to drop out of school in middle school or high school. Students who are at school and on time score higher on assessments. Be at school!

Each month, I am required to report attendance to the State of Illinois. I am also required to report any remediation, phone calls, letters, etc. to the State of Illinois. I will call and speak to parents if absences are excessive in a month and over time.

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**Important Dates:**

- 9-6: No School-Labor day
- 9-7: WE-PTO @ 4:00 p.m.
- 9-15: Early Dismissal @ 11:20 a.m.

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**Safety:** The safety and security of our students is of the utmost importance to the SIS Staff.

***Entering the building:*** During normal operating procedures, when visitors come to SIS, the first (outer) door is unlocked. Proceed to the interior, and please ring the doorbell. You will be asked your name and business. Please clearly state both. Upon entering the building, proceed directly to the office to check in. You will surrender your government issued photo ID and will be issued a visitor's badge that must be worn at all times while you are in the building.

*Visitors without a badge will not be allowed. Visitors that do not stop in the office will be asked to leave the building immediately.*

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***Car Riders:*** Please do not drop off car riders before 7:45 a.m. Car riders may be picked up in two ways.

1. Get in the car rider line and remain in one single line. Please do not pull out of line unless your student is loaded. The first four cars will load at the Northeast corner and leave as normal.
2. Parents who wish to park in the parking lot are asked to meet their student(s) at the crosswalk at the Northeast corner of Stevens. **Please practice social distancing.** Teachers and teacher aides will be on hand to help students and parents.

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**Parent Teacher Conferences:** Please sign up for Parent/Teacher Conferences with your child's teacher. Conferences will be held on Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-7:00 p.m. and Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. No School on Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.

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**WE-PTO:** Please join us at our first WE-P.T.O. meeting this school year. It will be Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> @ 4:00 P.M. utilizing Google Meets. We have a great PTO that funds many student activities: field trips, assemblies, rewards, etc. We are in danger of losing PTO due to lack of volunteers and support.

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**Early Dismissal:** Students will be dismissed at 11:20 AM on Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. During the afternoon, teachers will be participating in a variety of important staff development activities. We have four additional staff development days scheduled for this school year. These dates include October 29, November 17, February 9, and April 13. Regular bus service will be provided on these days.

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**Welcome:** Welcome to our new staff at Stevens-

5<sup>th</sup> grade Teacher: Mrs. Christi Benson

5<sup>th</sup> grade Special Education Aide: Mrs. Ginna Van Duyne

3<sup>rd</sup> grade Special Education Aide: Mrs. Michelle Towery

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**News from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade:**

In Math, we will start out focusing on place value: hundreds, tens, and ones. Then, we will move on to basic addition and subtraction facts. Students are encouraged to practice math facts at home to help with mastery.

In Reading, we will be focusing on the following skills and strategies for the first trimester:

- \*Sequence of events      \*Author's word choice      \*Inferring/predicting
- \*Compare/Contrast      \*Author's Purpose      \*Cause/Effect
- \*Main Idea & Detail      \*Summarizing      \*Fact/Opinion

These skills and strategies will be practiced, in a variety of genres, within our reading series and through engaging instruction and activities within the classroom. Students are encouraged to read at least 15 minutes each night to help with fluency and build reading stamina.

In Science, our topics of study will include the following:

- \*Ecosystems: What plants need, Animals Pollinate Flowers, Animals Spread Seeds
- \*Biology: Living things everywhere, Living things on the coast, Living things in a wetland, Living things in a grassland

In Social Studies, we are focusing on community. We discuss the holidays that we celebrate which include: Labor Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day.

2<sup>nd</sup> grade behavior expectations include:

- \*Respect Others                      \*Respect Property
  - \*Respect Yourself                      \*Be there, be ready
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**News from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:**

The third grade students have done a marvelous job adjusting back to our new norm! Please keep reminding them to social distance, wear masks, and wash their hands frequently! As a reminder, students may bring in a water bottle and prepackaged snack. During our first trimester in math, students will review addition and subtraction facts, and then learn multiplication and division strategies for numbers within 100. Students should be practicing these math facts at home daily with flashcards, IXL, I-Ready, Reflex Math, etc. In writing, they will review and learn parts of speech, sentence structure, and write a narrative. Our reading unit kicks off with the topic of being a good citizen. Within this unit, students will review and learn summarizing, drawing conclusions, inferring, predicting, analyzing, evaluating, visualizing, and cause and effect, along with learning vocabulary terms and spelling skills. Please encourage free reading while away from school. We will be studying forces and interactions in science. In social studies, students will learn map skills. Students will utilize Google Classroom, IXL, I-Ready, Think Central, Typing.com,

and use other various websites. Please be sure to login to those websites at home, and reach out with any questions or concerns. As you can see, this will be a year filled with learning and growing! We are so happy to be back at school with your child!

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#### 4th grade Happenings in the First Trimester!

In the first trimester, students are reviewing concepts from third grade as well as introducing completely new skills as a 4th grader! In Reading, students will review what story elements are, discussing the setting, characters, and plot of a story. In fictional stories, we will also discuss the genre and point of view. In nonfiction text, students will determine the main idea and details within a paragraph as well as summarize the most important parts within the entire story. Students will also have vocabulary strategies such as prefixes and suffixes that can help determine the meanings of words.

In the first trimester of Math, students will review place value, and will read, write, round, add, and subtract six-digit numbers. Fourth graders then move onto multiplication. They will begin multiplying single digit numbers and then double digit numbers. Multiple strategies will be presented, and then students choose what method is best for them when solving multiplication problems. Students are expected to know all of their multiplication facts through twelve. Please practice these at home!

Finally, students will also be learning new concepts in Social Studies and Science. In the first trimester of Social Studies, students will begin reviewing map skills and then begin studying the Northeast region of the United States. Besides learning about the importance of this region, students will be expected to know the capital and location of each Northeast state. In the first trimester of Science, students will begin to explore what it means to be a scientist and then 'dig in' to their first topic of fossils. Fourth grade is going to be a great year!!

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#### 5<sup>th</sup> grade News:

Fifth grade is a very busy year for our students. We hold our students to high expectations in order to have each one of them prepared for middle school. Responsibility, respectfulness for our school, teachers, and classmates, as well as organizational skills are necessary to be successful this year.

Our reading textbook provides great stories from many different genres to learn and practice many skills. This trimester, our students will cover the reading skills and strategies of story structure, point of view, irony, theme, characterization, sequencing events, visualization, idioms, inferring, predicting, and formal & informal language. Our Reading Block is structured in a way that has students learning during whole group instruction, small groups, independent conferring, and independent reading. In addition, fifth graders will learn strategies to improve our writing skills including narrative writing and summarizing. We add in practice with grammar and conventions too.

Math for the first trimester will include place value and patterns, properties, powers of ten, dividing whole numbers, and adding and subtracting decimals. Mastery of multiplication facts is necessary at this point. Much of the midyear will cover fractions. Fact mastery makes learning fractions, equivalent fractions, simplifying fractions, etc. much easier. Please ask your student to practice at home using flash cards or apps available at home.

The Social Studies curriculum begins with Map Skills, Early Americans, theories about how people first arrived in North America, and Native Americans and the regions in which they lived.

The first trimester of the year in science includes a large unit covering Earth Science with our biggest topics being the water cycle and water distribution on Earth, the four systems of the Earth including Geosphere, Hydrosphere, Biosphere, and Atmosphere, and the impact of humans on the Earth.

Please visits Stevens Intermediate at:

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Website: <https://www.wilmington.will.k12.il.us/>

Twitter: ppalvdennis

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Education is like a chair; it needs four legs:

1. Students 2. Parents 3. Teachers 4. Schools