



# August/September

**Welcome Back:** Welcome Back to School to all of our wonderful students, parents, and families. The 2022-2023 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.

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

- \*Casey Orellano-Assistant Principal
- \*Amy Hollis-Fourth Grade Teacher
- \*Ellen McMaster-Third Grade Aide
- \*Tracy Lawrence-Library

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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
- 9-6: WE-PTO @ 4:00 p.m.
- 9-14: Early Dismissal @ 11:20 a.m.
- 9-15: Young Rembrandts after School art begins
- 9-18 to 9-24: Homecoming Week

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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. **Please do not visit or volunteer until we are back to normal procedures.**

*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.**

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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 6<sup>th</sup> @ 4:00 P.M. via Google Meets. Please see the WE-PTO Facebook page for the meeting link. We have a great PTO that funds many student activities: field trips, assemblies, rewards, etc.

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**Early Dismissal:** Students will be dismissed at 11:20 AM on Wednesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. During the afternoon, teachers will be participating in a variety of important staff development activities. Regular bus service will be provided on SIP days.

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**Parent Teacher Conferences:** Please sign up for Parent/Teacher Conferences with your child’s teacher. Conferences will be held on November 9<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-7:00 p.m. and Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

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# 2nd Grade

## Areas of focus for Trimester 1

In Math, we will start out focusing on place value: hundreds, tens, and ones. Then we will move on to basic addition and subtraction math 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 throughout the first trimester: main idea and details, find answers in a text, make and confirm predictions, compare and contrast, sequence events, summarizing, and plot (beginning, middle, ending). We will practice these skills in whole class activities with our Superkids book, as well as, in small groups using either Super Magazines or Book Club groups. Students are encouraged to read for at least 15 minutes, each night, to help with fluency and building 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 Wetlands, Living Things in a Grasslands

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

## News from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:

### 1st Trimester:

Wow! The third grade students have done an AWESOME job starting out the year on the right foot! We've been busy meeting new friends, learning procedures and expectations, and, of course, learning! During our first trimester in math, students will learn multiplication and division strategies for numbers within 100. Our NEW reading series, Into Reading, begins with exploring what makes a character interesting. Module 2 will teach us how people use words to express themselves. For Module 3, we will learn how historic places, documents, and symbols represent our nation. Within these units, students will be taught about and utilize point of view, predictions, literary elements, theme, inference, text and graphic features, and monitor and clarify. They will be immersed in vocabulary terms and spelling skills. In writing, students will learn about the parts of a sentence, sentence types, nouns, pronouns, and write a narrative. We will be studying forces and interactions in science. In social studies, students will be taught map skills. In technology, students will become experts in Google Classroom, IXL, IReady, 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! Please continue to work with your child on math facts and encourage them to read at home. We are so happy to be back at school with your child!

## 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 as well as using context clues.

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 use Mystery Science for fun hands-on activities! Fourth grade is going to be a great year!!

## ***News from 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:***

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.

We have a brand-new reading program which we are really excited about this year! The new consumable reading textbook provides great stories from many different genres to learn and practice skills. Students will be taught to annotate, take notes, and highlight right in the story, which is a nice study skill to learn. This trimester, our students will cover the reading skills and strategies of central idea, theme, point of view, author's purpose, text structure, literary elements, visualization, inferring, predicting, and lots of vocabulary words along with weekly practice of Greek and Latin root words. 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 using the RACE strategy to answer questions (Restate, Answer, Cite Evidence, Explain Evidence), Explode the Moment activities to be more descriptive, 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. 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. A field trip is being planned for October to enrich this Social Studies curriculum. Look for more information to come about this trip.

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.

### Benchmark Testing

We use many forms of assessment to monitor students' academic progress throughout the school year. These assessments give teachers the information they need to make the best instructional decisions for their students. The following are three assessments we will use at SIS this school year.

If you have any question, reach out to Mrs. Orellano or Mrs. Dennis

#### aimswebPlus (grades 2-5)

The aimswebPlus reading and math benchmark assessments are standardized measures that all students will complete at the beginning (September), middle (January), and end of the year (May). The aimswebPlus reading assessment will measure students in the areas of reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, and vocabulary. The aimswebPlus math assessment will measure students in the areas of concepts and applications, number comparison fluency-triads, and mental computation fluency.

#### i-ready Math (grades 2-5)

The i-ready math diagnostic benchmark assessment will measure students in the areas of numbers and operations, algebra and algebraic thinking, measurement and data, and geometry. This assessment will allow student strengths and weaknesses to be identified in the specific domain areas listed above. This assessment is completed at the beginning (September), middle (January), and end of the year (May) to determine student growth in the area of math.

#### Fountas and Pinnell (grades 2-5)

Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessments are utilized in the area of reading. This reading benchmark allows teachers to identify student's independent and instructional reading level. This assessment measures student fluency and reading comprehension within fiction and nonfiction texts. This benchmark is completed at the beginning of the

year (September) and at the end of the year (May) to determine student growth in the area of reading.

Please visits Stevens Intermediate at:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Stevens-Intermediate-School-722707204469250>

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

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Education is like a chair; it needs for legs:

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