

Dear Second Grade Families,

I hope that you all had wonderful summers filled with joy, adventure, and relaxation! I have spent sweet time exploring the outdoors, reading, playing, gardening, and soaking up as much time as I can with my family—my sweet husband, our 5-year-old, Ryder, and 2.5-year-old, Jett. After a wonky year, we were thrilled to have some normalcy and joy.

First—let me just say how EXCITED I am for this year! I'm looking forward to moving up to second grade with this awesome bunch of kids, and to continue the learning journey together. I'm excited to work with Ms. B and learn from her as I move through a new grade-level and curriculum. We'll work collaboratively to provide second grade with a wonderful year! I am delighted at the opportunity for kids working together and engaging in the practices that I strongly believe in, such as partner and group work, collaborative design, and interacting. We don't know what the school year and protocols will look like exactly, but I have big hope that we will be moving back towards an education model that feels appropriate for these young kiddos, while following safety protocols and keeping our community safe.

As for second grade in the classroom, we will be exploring an exciting and engaging curriculum. The first month or so of school will focus on learning how to be second-grade students. We will spend time learning about each other, creating classroom expectations, and learning routines that will help everyone to be successful students and friends. I will be teaching literacy using the Orton-Gillingham methodology, which utilized multisensory education and explicit direct instruction in order for students to develop a concrete understanding of language. We'll learn various strategies to help us grow as readers and develop a love for reading, stories, and literature and will be implementing a workshop model this year that allows students to be more independent and engage in an individualized education. Our class will explore and research environmental, physical, and Earth sciences. We will join together with Ms. B's class in many activities and (hopefully!) field trips. Ms. Asia will guide our class in creating unbelievable artwork this year. Your children will be enchanted and engaged through rhyme and music with Mr. Gabriel. Slowly but surely, your students will become readers, writers, scientists, artists, musicians, and mathematicians.

While there is, of course, a strong academic focus, we also know that developing equity and a strong social-emotional well-being is incredibly important. Here at NCSA, we place a huge emphasis on our social-emotional curriculum, as we use Passageworks, Positive Discipline, and the Mindful Schools curriculum to support NCSA students to become their best selves. I have a strong belief that using mindfulness to be present, engaged, and aware of emotions and expectations will help our class to be a strong, sweet, and positive group. We will gather in circles, class meetings, take class hikes/walks, spend time in nature, and express ourselves creatively in order to create a safe, nurturing, and loving learning environment for all. We will learn to be compassionate, caring humans that respect and love one another.

I am so excited for this group of students. I know how kind, capable, and smart they are. I know that we will have fun, learn, discover, work hard, and have a great year together.

Last, I'd love to have a welcome board with photos of each child from our class. **Please email or text a photo of your child with their (preferred) name** so that everyone is represented on the first day of school. The sooner, the better!

Please enjoy your summer! Don't hesitate to call, email, or text me with any questions, concerns, or happy thoughts!

Love,  
Brittani Brackett (Ms. Britt)

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