

Mrs. Drees' 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class  
J.E. Cosgriff Memorial Catholic School 2017-2018  
Disclosure Statement

Dear Parents:

Welcome to third grade! I am absolutely thrilled to be your child's teacher this year. I want to work with you to ensure that your child has a positive and successful experience in our classroom! I have included some important information that will help us support your student together!

**Goals:**

My goal is that each student:

- Feels valued, secure, respected, and capable.
- Grows academically, socially, and spiritually.
- Enjoys coming to school and is excited about learning.

**Communication:**

I encourage students and parents to come to me with any questions, concerns, or "success stories!" The best way to reach me during school hours is by email ([mdrees@cosgriff.org](mailto:mdrees@cosgriff.org)), because I am able to respond to these more promptly! I am also available to talk on the phone (216-402-7728) or meet after school when we need to if it makes you feel more comfortable/is more convenient.

**Classroom Rules:**

In order for school to be a safe and enjoyable place where students can learn and grow, the students and I have developed a list of rules that will help each child thrive at Cosgriff this year! These rules include:

1. Be kind and considerate towards everyone
2. Keep hands, feet, mouth, objects, and unkind words to yourself
3. Use materials and equipment properly
4. Listen to and follow directions the first time
5. Be safe and walk from place to place in the classroom and in the building
6. Try your very best on every assignment, project, and activity

In order to encourage your child to follow these rules, we use a behavior chart to track their choices throughout the day. Each student has their own clothespin with their student number on it, and each child starts the day on "green" (which is labeled "Ready to Learn.") Throughout the day, as I see students making particularly good choices I will ask them to "clip up" on the behavior chart. If they clip all the way up to "Super Student", they will get a sticker to put on their clip. After a student has earned 5 stickers, they will get to pick a

coupon out of my coupon box that allows them to have the reward of their choice! I use this system primarily as a way to reward good behavior, however, when a student is struggling to make good choices, I will ask them to clip down. If a student has to clip down they will first clip to yellow (“Think About It”), then to orange (“Teacher’s Choice”). At teacher’s choice, I will decide what I think the student needs to do to make better choices (ex. moving their seat, writing an apology note, losing a few minutes of recess). If the student continues to make poor choices, they will clip down to red (“Parent Contact”), where I will contact you so that we can work through the issue together or I will give the student a referral slip to see Mrs. Hunt (which you would also be notified about). Of course, every student has the opportunity to change their choices and clip up throughout the school day!

### **Daily Schedule:**

All 3<sup>rd</sup> grade language arts related subjects will be taught in the morning. Math will be taught primarily after lunch, with some variation throughout the week! Science, social studies, health, and religion will be taught in the afternoons as well.. However, integration of all subjects into the morning language arts block will take place whenever possible.

### **Homework:**

I encourage students to read at least 20-30 minutes at home each night. The student may read anything that they choose, however they will bring home a “book bag” each Friday with books that they chose from the book room at school. They are expected to read these books throughout the week. The child can be choose to read independently, out loud to family members, back and forth with someone else, and may also listen to someone else read out loud to them! I will also send home a newsletter each week detailing all of the homework assignments that may be completed at their pace throughout the week. Students will receive it on Friday and should complete the assignments by the next Friday. There will be a few “mini projects” that your student will be working on this year at school, which may require them to spend additional time working on them at home.

### **Curriculum:**

We will follow the Common Core Standards in all of our Language Arts and Math content.

**Reading:** My goal is to help each student develop a love for reading this year! I want each child to feel confident and capable, and it is my mission to help students find “just right” books for them that they can connect with! I will primarily be using the Houghton Mifflin program to teach grammar, phonics, vocabulary and other reading skills. There will be a variety of center activities and digital resources for them to use as well. I will also incorporate a reading workshop model periodically. This typically includes a whole group

read aloud with planned stopping points for students to make connections and other guided observations within the text and discuss it with each other. Following the read aloud, I will ask students to respond to a prompt that pertains to the read aloud, and write a “third grade” paragraph explaining their thinking. Reading comprehension is a large part of the third grade standards, which are the skills that will be taught and reinforced during this time. In addition, we have a reading “Power Hour” where students will be instructed in small guided reading groups.

**Power Hour:** Students have a block of time Mon.-Thurs. devoted to language, literacy, and writing. This block of time lasts for 40 minutes and is called Power Hour. The students will work in small groups with a teacher on Words Their Way and Guided Reading. I use data from Power Hour to help guide my classroom instruction!

**Language Arts:** Writing is a major component of the language arts program. Students will learn to write personal narrative stories, persuasive essays, and information pieces using our Step Up to Writing curriculum in addition to other resources that I have used throughout the years. Students will also use writing in science, social studies, religion and even math! There is a major emphasis on the writing process in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, where students will learn how to brainstorm, write, edit, and publish a piece of writing. They will continue to learn how to organize their writing so that it makes sense and use details to make their writing more interesting! We will study authors and other mentor texts to support this as well.

**Math:** We will be using the Math in Focus curriculum, which is a Singapore Math Approach. It includes:

- Using place value to communicate
- Adding and subtracting to solve problems
- Developing multiplication facts and concepts
- Developing division facts and concepts
- Using patterns and algebraic thinking
- Measuring length, area, temperature, capacity, weight, volume and time
- Identifying geometric figures and spatial reasoning
- Organizing, displaying, and interpreting data
- Developing fractions, understanding fractions as decimals, and multiplying by one-digit numbers

\*\* Students will be expected to have their times tables memorized (1 through 10) by the time that they leave 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**Science:** We have recently adopted the NGSS science standards and have purchased the new Houghton Mifflin science curriculum to address them. We also use an online program

called “Mystery Science” which leads the students through a variety of topics and hands on activities! I also use other resources and technology to support students in their learning. I listed an overview of core concepts that we will be covering under the different discipline areas:

Life Science: Life Cycles, Animal Groups/Adaptations, Fossils, Inheritance/Variation of Traits, Natural Selection & Ecosystems

Physical Science: Force and Motion, Balanced and Unbalanced Forces, Electric and Magnetic Properties

Earth Science: Climate vs. Weather, Weather Patterns, Weather Related Hazards,

**Social Studies:** In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students will study geography, how communities have changed over time, and the purposes and roles within the government. In keeping with the State Core, we will study various environments and their influence on people, map skills and natural landforms, and the development of various cultures with a strong emphasis on our Native Americans.

**Religion:** In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, your child will be discussion and reviewing core Catholic beliefs. They will study the Sacraments, the Liturgical year, and the responses during Mass. We will participate in community service and connect it with the lives of the Saints. We want students to demonstrate that they know how to apply the principles of Catholic teaching to their own personal and social situations. They will also be expected to memorize prayers. In addition, the students will have the opportunity to become Altar Servers. There will be another teacher, Martina Gehrig, who will step in to teach Religion, and she does a fantastic job!

**Additional Support:**

The class size is large, but we are fortunate to have the help of Alma Camp as our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade aide. She will be working in the classroom each morning as we do our spelling, reading, writing, and math activities.

**Additional Information:**

**Class Pet:**

Third grade is an exciting year for students because we have a pet tortoise named Squirt! Squirt is a Russian Tortoise and students have the ability to take her home over the weekends. There will be a journal for students to record what their weekend was like with Squirt and they can include pictures in it as well! There will be time each week for students to share about their weekend with Squirt with the class!

**Birthday Treats:** We love celebrating birthdays in 3rd grade! If you want to send in a treat with your child, please send them individually wrapped/package or send bags to package them in! For example, if you bring in donuts, either pack the donuts in 31 separate brown paper sacks or send in the sacks and we will do that during the day! Please make sure that there is enough for every student to have one and be aware of allergies!

**Conferences:** We will have conferences in the Fall and the Spring. If you would like to schedule a conference outside of those two times, please let me know via e-mail. I am always willing to address any comments, concerns, or suggestions you may have!

**Field Trips:** We will plan to take two field trips this year. We will be traveling to the Ogden Nature Center in the fall and hope to take another in the spring! I will send home more information related to the field trips when we have dates scheduled.

I am really looking forward to getting to know and work with you and your child this year! Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns!

Morgan Drees