

Home Connection

Friday, August 19, 2016

Maestras Brewer y Trail

Dear Families,

Welcome back! This is going to be a great year, with lots of positive changes happening. We're so excited to have you and your students in our CIS community this year! For third graders, it's like they never left. For second – it's a big adjustment! Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about *anything* this year. We use a 50/50 Spanish/English, Brewer/Trail classwork schedule, which looks like this:

Monday	Brewer – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Trail – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Tuesday	Brewer – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Trail – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Wednesday	Alternate weeks 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Alternate weeks 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Thursday	Trail – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brewer – 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Friday	Trail – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brewer – 3 <sup>rd</sup>

### **Student Academic Expectations For 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>:**

We would like all students reading and writing in cursive in both 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We will be providing practice pages. There are many reasons for promoting cursive writing in the primary classroom – if you're reading this Home Connection online you may be interested [in this article](#) from Psychology Today about the brain benefits of cursive handwriting. Cursive is a part of [Montessori](#) instruction at this school, and the British Dyslexia Association also [recommends teaching children cursive](#) to increase muscle memory, reduce letter reversals, reduce confusion between capital and lowercase letters, and to ultimately improve speed and spelling. Many CIS students are already fluent in cursive writing; however, we will provide practice for students new to CIS or still working on mastering cursive letter formation.

Continuous Spanish practice is also very important for children to become truly multilingual. They should be practicing Spanish in some form every single day. Maestra Brewer will be sending home weekly readers for your student next week, but they can also be exposed to more of the language through library books, television programs, [games](#), music, or a trip to a place with Spanish speakers.

Finally, Mrs. Trail always expects students to read a little every day – even if there is no assigned reading log for the week. We aim for students to be comfortable reading from 20 – 30 minutes a night, either out loud with family (this helps with reading fluency) or self-sustained reading. This is a terrific opportunity for students to become familiar with genres or mediums that may not always be available in the classroom (for example, graphic novels or magazines).

### **Homework:**

We typically give students 7 days to work on homework. Homework will be assigned in both Spanish and English, and will be due 7 days after it was assigned. Generally, Maestra Brewer and I will

give homework to students on the last day we see a grade level that week. For example, Maestra Brewer's last day with 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is Tuesday, so 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will have Spanish homework assigned on Tuesdays and due on Tuesdays. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade will thus have English work assigned on Fridays, and due the following Friday, and spelling tests on Friday.

Once or twice during the year, we will assign a major project. The majority of the project will be completed at school, but there may still be aspects of it that need to be completed at home by the student. If this occurs, we will give at least 3 weeks notice via the weekly Home Connection, as well as provide explanatory notes and rubrics for the project on our class website.

Please let us know if you have any questions about this schedule.

**A Note From the Health Office:**

Please read the attached letter from the Health Office. It's important stuff!

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Website:**

I'm experimenting again with websites – I have made a class website that we will keep updated with resources such as major project handouts, rubrics, and dates, and websites for optional home practice. Please let me know if you run into any problems trying to view anything on the site.

<https://sites.google.com/a/corralesis.org/cis2-3/home>

**Bulky Supplies Sign-Up:**

Thanks to the Judd Family for coving our bulky supplies for August. If you would like to donate a lot or a little bit, you can sign up through the website above. It will take you to a google doc.

Welcome back, and have a great weekend!

Christ Trail ([trailc@corralesis.org](mailto:trailc@corralesis.org)) and Paola Brewer ([brewerp@corralesis.org](mailto:brewerp@corralesis.org))