Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am excited to welcome your child to fifth grade! This letter contains important information that will be useful throughout the school year. *Please review the information with your child.* Complete and return only the last page of this letter to school by **Friday, September 7, 2018.**

Fifth grade will be a very challenging, yet rewarding year. As you are probably aware, fifth grade is an SOL year. Your child will take SOL assessments in math, reading, and science. I will always inform your child of the SOL objective I am teaching before each lesson. I believe that students must know what they are responsible for learning when expected to successfully achieve a goal or objective.

Please be aware that the students in our gifted cluster classroom are expected to work at a very quick pace, use higher level thinking, complete several self-guided projects, and exercise problem solving skills. In addition to working together as a class, they are expected to become independent workers, thinkers, and researchers. They will achieve this through completing group and self-guided projects within the classroom. As your child’s teacher, I will ensure that they have a strong foundation based on required standards and then work to enrich that knowledge each day. I will accomplish this through effective classroom management, knowledge of the curriculum, and creative and effective instruction.

To ensure our classroom runs smoothly, I will thoroughly discuss class rules with your child. I believe rules and consequences should be clearly conveyed to a student so that he or she knows what is expected of them and can then own their actions. Once established, I will enforce the rules consistently through positive reinforcement and negative consequences for maximum effectiveness.

***Rules***

1. Follow the Golden Rule (Treat others as you want to be treated….most rules fall under this rule!)
2. Keep your hands, feet, & objects to yourself
3. Do not interrupt others…teachers or friends
4. Listen carefully & follow directions the first time
5. Be organized, neat, & work with pride

***Consequences***

All students are part of a behavior chart in the classroom. Every Monday, students will start with their clip on green, and then may or may not move down throughout the week depending on their behavior. Students cannot earn their way back up the chart. Below is the color coding along with the consequences.

Green= Great Day

Blue= Verbal Warning

Yellow= Lose 5 minutes of recess time (student will walk laps for exercise)

Orange = Silent lunch

Pink= Note or call home

Red= Office Referral

***Rewards***

Specific Praise

Occasional visits to the Treasure Bin

Special Privileges

Self-respect and happiness!

\****Please note that extreme behaviors will result in an automatic referral.***

Student behavior is conveyed in papers sent home to parents for a signature. Specific notes may be included for parents to read. Please read the notes and look over the completed assignments. This is done to track and assist in preventing negative behavior patterns and to reinforce positive behavior.

***Procedures***

* Please bring your child to school on time so that they do not miss important instruction. Drop off is NO EARLIER than 8:35am and NO LATER than 9:00am.
* Upon arrival, students should go directly to breakfast, unless instructed to do otherwise.
* Unpacking: Students should enter the classroom respectfully, unpack their backpack and hang it on a hook, make their lunch selection, place their Communication Folder, notes, etc. in the appropriate containers, sharpen two pencils, copy homework in their agenda, place the previous night’s homework on their desk, and complete morning work. They are to read silently or work on an independent project once morning work is completed.
* Notes: Students should place any notes, especially transportation notes, in the assigned note tray **before** beginning morning work. I **do not** check their binders or folders for them.
* Packing up to go home: Students are responsible for packing their homework folders and writing down their assignments in the morning. They are NOT allowed back in the classroom after release if I am not in the room.
* Snack: Please remember that snack is a privilege. We do not have an assigned snack time. Students may eat their snack during the lesson at the end of the day. Please do not send a snack requiring utensils unless you provide the utensils. Candy, sodas, and energy drinks are not permitted. Plastic or metal water bottles with tops are permitted in the classroom. We do not have a water fountain in our room. Bottles must be brought home for cleaning on Fridays.

***Exercise Balls for Seats***

* Students may bring an exercise ball to sit on at their desk. This is optional.
* They help with focus, core strength, reduces obesity, improves posture, and students write more legibly (research from American Journal of Occupational Therapy & Mayo Clinic)
* Are a privilege and can be taken away if not used correctly
* **Must be 55cm.**  Anything larger *will be sent home* because of space restrictions, smaller and they may not be able to reach their desk.
* I have a few that will rotate in the classroom.
* The teacher is not responsible for the condition of the ball at school.
* Children may not borrow another child’s exercise ball.
* Prices begin at $7.00 on Walmart.com and $9.00 on Amazon. Walmart has them in-store as well.

***Accelerated Reader***

Students are expected to read AR books that are within their reading level range. The range will be given to them after taking the STAR reading assessment. After taking a test, students should record the book’s information on their reading log. There is time to test daily. Students must log their grade, which is reported at the end of the AR test. Please encourage your child to read their book carefully and to use their “thinking voice.” Students are able to check the number of points they have and percentage of their goal. Each nine weeks you will be notified of the AR point goal your child is responsible for achieving and their progress. This is not done weekly, but your child will always be aware of their progress. Students should be reading *at least* 30 minutes a night to build fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension skills.

***Communication Folder & Mrs. Gates’ Updates***

Every student will be given a plastic communication folder that will hold a report with reminders and notes (Mrs. Gates’ Updates), graded tests, quizzes, and classwork. The folder is separated by what should be **left at home** and what should be **returned to school**. Graded papers that need to be returned will be stapled to the report. Parents should remove the bottom of the report, sign the report, and return the entire stapled packet to school. Please note that the staple is not to be removed! Please read the reminders, look through all papers, and keep only the papers on the **keep at home** side. If no papers are stapled to the report, just sign and return the top portion. There may be weeks when a folder is not sent home, I aim for every two weeks. Please pay attention to your child’s grades in the communication folder and on TylerSis Parent Portal. The communication folder and TylerSis Parent Portal are effective ways of communicating how your child is progressing.

***Unit Tests***

Most tests and some quizzes will be given on a computer using Power School. This is a method that is paperless and gives great feedback for teacher and student reflection. I go over the test in class after all students have completed it for feedback. The tests are very similar to SOL tests, including technology enhanced items, which assist in student success. Parents will not see the actual test but grades can be seen in TylerSis.

***Grades***

•I expect your child to be the best that THEY can be!

•Please remember that an A is Excellent, a B is above average and a C is average.

•B’s are NOT bad grades!  
  
***Prince George County Grading Scale:***

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| **Number Grade** | | **Letter** | | **Quality points** | |
| 97-100 | A+ | | 4.5 | |  |
| 90-96 | A | | 4 | |  |
| 86-89 | B+ | | 3.5 | |  |
| 80-85 | B | | 3 | |  |
| 76-79 | C+ | | 2.5 | |  |
| 70-75 | C | | 2 | |  |
| 66-69 | D+ | | 1.5 | |  |
| 60-65 | D | | 1 | |  |
| <60 | F | | 0 | |  |

***Breakdown of Grades***  
  
Language Arts  
Classwork/Homework – 15%  
Quizzes – 25%  
Tests – 35%  
Accelerated Reader – 25%  
  
Math, Science, and Virginia Studies  
Classwork/Homework – 25%  
Quizzes – 35%  
Tests – 40%

***Incomplete class work***

If graded work is not completed during the permitted time, and the majority of the class is finished, the student will be required to complete the work during recess or resource. Graded work will not be sent home to complete. If a student does not turn in work, they will receive a 0/F on the assignment. Completing an assignment is NOT an OPTION...it is a requirement. I do not give extra credit to bring up grades.

***Homework***

Homework is reviewed daily and is beneficial to the child if it is completed. Because I believe in family time, I do not overload on homework, however, because of the practice needed away from the classroom, I generally assign math homework. Of course, I also advise students to study material a little each night instead of waiting until the day before a test. I do not usually assign homework over the weekend except during SOL review time. There will be homework every night then. In addition, if a home projects is assigned, they are given far enough in advance so that students have plenty of time to work on them. Each student will have an agenda to record their homework in the morning. Parents are encouraged to assist their child with homework *when needed.* Missing homework will be noted in communication folders and students will complete missing homework in recess detention. If a child does not complete homework regularly, it will be noted on their report card.

***Tardiness/Absences***

Please make every effort to have your child to school on time. We begin class at **9:00 a.m.** I do not have the opportunity to re-teach a lesson for students who are tardy. Furthermore, because our curriculum is often compacted in the gifted cluster class, it can be difficult for students to learn what they missed when absent. *Please* try and keep absences to times when it is really necessary. Mental health days will cause them stress in the long run when they have to catch up.

***Supplies***

Extra school supplies will be labeled with your student’s name and stored in a bin in the classroom for easy access throughout the year. They may take them home if they wish. If students run out of supplies throughout the year, they will need to restock them. We use A LOT of glue sticks for interactive notebooks! I do not share your students supplies with others...it is for their use only.

***Social Media***

In an effort to maintain my privacy...and yours...I will not accept friend requests or “follows” on social media from parents or students. In addition, I do not give my private number out or text after hours.

***Remind App***

I use the Remind app to communicate information, send reminders, send messages to parents, etc. You may send messages after hours, however, I do not normally message/text back and forth after 4:00 p.m.

***Contact Information***

Mrs. M. Gates [mgates@pgs.k12.va.us](mailto:mgates@hopewell.k12.va.us) 13400 Prince George Dr., Disputanta, VA 23842 (804) 733-2755

***Schedule***

9:00-10:00 Science PACE meets on Tuesday and Thursday from 9am-10am

10:00-10:40 Resource Mon.-PE Tue.-Art Wed.-Music Thur.-Library Fri.-PE

10:40-11:50 Math

11:50-12:20 Lunch

12:20- 12:40 Recess

12:50-1:30 Reading

1:30-2:10 Writing/Grammar

2:10- 2:55 VA Studies

2:55-3:25 Enrichment/Silent Reading/A.R.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Michelle Gates

*“Working as a team to elevate our children!”*

**Confirmation**

I have reviewed the information in the Parent Introduction Letter and understand the expectations set forth for my child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I will work with Mrs. Gates and other South Elementary School staff to support my child as he/she strives for success in their lessons, social interactions, and character development this year.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I have read the information with my parent and understand what is expected of me. I will strive for success at all times. *I will take care of me and be the best me that I can be!*

Student Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please sign and return this page only by Friday, September 8, 2017.

If there are any concerns or questions after reading the information in this packet, please list them below.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Contact information for Remind App, E-mails, and phone calls (You may use multiple contacts for Remind)***

***\*\*\*\*\*Please print clearly\*\*\*\****

Father’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 

Mother’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 

Other’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Use for Remind App 