

Dear First/Second Grade Families,

My name is Rita Wright and it is my pleasure to welcome your children into my first/second grade combo classroom! This will be my first time teaching a multi-grade class and I am ready for the challenge! I can't wait to greet my "old" kids again and meet my new kiddos as well! Teaching is my passion and I truly can't wait to start the new year!

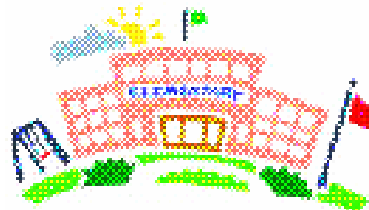
My goal this school year is to meet the individual needs of each child. I would like to make a promise to you that I will dedicate myself to your children this year and work towards instilling in each child a true love for learning. Our classroom environment is one of action, participation, and hands-on involvement. The emphasis will be on trying your best and taking risks. I plan to provide a nurturing environment for my students so they will feel free to become all they can be. Working together, we can assure that every child feels welcomed and receives the best education possible. I truly feel that communication and teamwork between parents and teachers is vital. I will do my best to keep you informed and involved in your child's classroom life. If you feel the need to contact me, you can reach me before or after school via phone or anytime via email.

Let me tell you some information about myself! I grew up in the Seattle area with my parents and brother. I attended a private Christian school. In 1998, I married my husband Brian and began my studies at Western Washington University. I received my Bachelor of Art's degree with a double major in Elementary and Special Education. During the 02-03 school year, I taught first grade in Everett, Washington. My husband and I moved to Coeur d'Alene in 2003 and I continued to teach first grade here at Ponderosa! In April of 2007, I received my Masters Degree at Gonzaga University with an emphasis in literacy (reading/writing instruction). My interests include teaching, the ocean, writing, computers, spending time with my husband, and playing with my two cats.

Please read the attached packet, sign the bottom portion, and send it back to school with your child. My desire is that the information contained here will answer many of your questions and put your mind at ease as our year of learning begins!

Sincerely,

Rita Wright  
rwright@sd273.com, 208-773-1508



**Take-Home Folders:** Because our classroom has an ocean theme, a blue "FISH" folder will go back and forth to home and school each day. FISH stands for "Family Involvement Starts Here". This folder will contain homework, newsletters, graded work, and more. Please empty the folder each night and send any homework or notes back to school. This routine will teach your child responsibility and will enable us to communicate efficiently about your child's progress in school.

**Homework:**

Reading- Your child will soon participate in an at-home reading program. A book bag containing books at your child's reading level will be sent home each Monday. The bags will be due back on Friday with a log detailing at least 60 minutes of reading over the course of the week. Students can earn a pizza from Pizza Hut just by doing their reading! More info to come!

Math- Math homework will be sent home daily (excluding Fridays) and is due the next school day. This is a review that should take only 10 minutes to complete. Please let me know right away if your child struggles with this.

Spelling- Formal spelling lists and tests will be individualized to meet your child's specific needs. More information to come!

**Monthly Newsletters:** Our "Weekly Wave" newsletter will be sent home each Monday. This will be full of important information! Look for it in your child's "FISH" folder!

**Community Supplies:** Because our classroom has tables instead of desks and storage is an issue, I will supply a bin of crayons for each table. Because of this, your child's crayon box and crayons will be sent home for use with homework. Please store this "homework box" in a special place where your child can complete nightly homework. If your child already has crayons at home, you may choose to donate the crayons to our class supply. Glue and pencils will be stored in totes alongside the crayons so all of the children may easily access them at all times. Community supplies encourage sharing and responsibility and also ensure that materials are readily available. No more "digging in desks" for needed supplies! Thank-you for your understanding with this issue.

**Drop-Off/Pick-Up:** On the first day of school, you may bring your child to the classroom between 8:30 and 8:40. After the first day, a duty will be on the playground by 8:20. Please do not drop off your child before that time, as no supervision will be available. The bell will ring at 8:40 and students will line up outside of the classroom and wait for instructions to enter. If you choose to pick up your child after school, please do not come to the classroom. Your child will be waiting outside by the portable buildings.

**Island Boy/Girl of the Week:** One student each week will have the honor of becoming "Island Boy" or "Island Girl" of the week! This special person will share about him/herself each day and decorate a bulletin board. When your child earns this special title, a letter will be sent home with details. Mrs. Wright is the first "Island Girl of the Week", so the students will see a picture of Mrs. Wright when she was in first grade!

**Absences/Tardies:** If you know ahead of time that your child will be tardy or absent, please let me know. When your child is not at school, work will be collected in a large envelope and sent home when he/she returns. Your child will have two days to make up work for every day that he/she was absent (example: 2 days absent= 4 days to complete and return missed work). Please remember that many lessons are hands-on and cannot be made up at home. Please also make sure that your child is at school on time. Tardy students miss crucial morning directions and disrupt the class.

**Hot Lunch:** Lunches may be purchased in bulk. Simply send a check to school with your child and remind him/her to deliver the money to the lunch room BEFORE school begins. Please include your child's name on each check.

**"Switch" Reading Groups:** We will have "switch" time Tuesday-Friday mornings from 9:00-10:15 starting on September 24. The students will be grouped based on their individual reading levels. Your child may work with my reading group during this time, or he/she may visit another 1st or 2nd grade teacher and work with her group. Every first and second grader at Ponderosa will be involved in this switch time. Each child will be assessed frequently to make sure he/she is in the reading group that will best meet his/her needs. More information will soon be sent home about switch.

**Wish List:** The following items are always needed for our classroom. If you are willing and able to donate, it would be much appreciated, but not required. This list will be updated on our classroom website and in Weekly Wave newsletters as needs arise. Thanks in advance for any donations!

- Glue sticks
- Crayola crayons
- Hand Sanitizer
- Skittles (for our classroom Skittle machine)
- Blue copy paper (for our Weekly Wave newsletter)
- Small toys (for our treasure box)

**Water Bottles:** In order for students to learn to the best of their ability, they need to be fully hydrated at all times. I encourage you to send a water bottle to school with your child. Please make sure the bottle is clearly labeled with your child's name and does not contain juice or soda. In order to prevent spills, please make sure the bottle has a pop-top or flip-up lid. No screw-on lids, please. Water bottles will be sent home daily for cleaning and refilling.

**Birthdays:** I welcome you to send treats for your child's birthday. Please just let me know at least one day in advance so I can plan the treat break into our day. Summer birthdays will be celebrated with a "Birthday Bash" in June. If birthday party invitations are to be distributed at school, ALL children (or all girls/boys) in the class must receive one. If this is not do-able, please send invitations in the mail to avoid hurt feelings. I appreciate your cooperation with this!

**Book Orders:** Optional book orders will be sent home periodically. Please make checks out to "Scholastic Books" for the exact amount. No cash will be accepted. If ordering from multiple forms, please write a separate check for each order and put your checks and order forms in an envelope with your child's name clearly labeled. Each order helps our class earn points that turn into free books or supplies for our classroom!

**Specialists:** From 12:05-3:00 every Monday afternoon, our class will attend their specialist classes, consisting of chess, library, computer lab, music, and PE. Please make sure your child always wears tennis shoes and other appropriate attire on Mondays.

**Home Transportation:** If your child will be going home in a different way than normal, you must send a note specifying the change of plans. In order to keep your child safe, I always need your permission before I can allow someone else to pick up your child. Also, if you will be picking your child up early and know about it in advance, please write me a note as well so I can help to prepare your child for an early departure. Thank-you for your cooperation with these important issues.

**Website:** Please visit our classroom website! <http://www.mrswright.com>  
The website includes our newsletters, other important forms or notices, a list of current word wall words, a school lunch menu, a photo gallery highlighting classroom happenings, and much more! The class website is updated regularly, so be sure to check in often! If you have not yet filled out the website permission form in regards to posting pictures, please do so right away and send it to school. I am hoping for 100% participation so our site can be the best that it can be!

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions or concerns, please call or email me and I would be happy to schedule a meeting. I am available before school from 7:30am-8:30am and after school until 3:30pm. My email is [rwright@sd273.com](mailto:rwright@sd273.com) and the school phone number is 773-1508.



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Please sign here stating that you have read and understand the contents of this handbook. Detach this section and have your child turn it in as soon as possible for a very special treat! Thank-you!

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Mrs. Wright's Weekly Schedule: 2007-2008

### Tuesday-Friday

8:40-9:00	Morning Jobs and Announcements
9:00-10:15	Reading "Switch" Time- guided reading groups, phonics, fluency, comprehension
10:15-10:30	Morning Recess
10:30-11:15	Calendar Math/Start Saxon Math
11:20-12:00	Lunch/Recess
12:00-1:00	Saxon Math- problem solving, number sense, math facts, measurement, geometry
1:00-1:30	Afternoon Recess
1:30-2:30	Author's Workshop/Spelling- brainstorming, drafting, editing, revising, publishing, sharing
2:30-3:05	Reading Workshop- learn reading strategies SQUIRT Time ( <u>S</u> uper <u>Q</u> uiet <u>U</u> ninterrupted <u>R</u> eading <u>T</u> ime)

### Monday (Specialist Day)

8:40-9:00	Morning Jobs and Announcements
9:00-10:15	Calendar Meeting and Math Assessment
10:15-10:30	Morning Recess
10:30-11:15	Author's Workshop/Spelling
11:20-12:00	Lunch/Recess
12:05-3:00	Specialist Block- Music, Chess, Computer Lab, Library, PE
3:05	Dismissal

- Science/Social Studies topics are integrated into reading/writing instruction.
- This schedule is subject to change. You must be flexible with first/second graders!