



Welcome to Kindergarten at Country Oaks! I am very excited about getting to know you and your child, and I'm looking forward to having a great year! I believe that learning is a cooperative effort between home and school. This year your child will have many new learning experiences at school. With your patience and encouragement at home we can give him or her a great start and establish a strong foundation for learning.

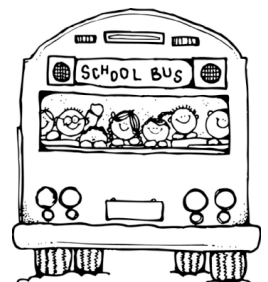
I rely a lot on parents' active participation in our classroom. An extra pair of hands is a great help in providing enthusiastic children with a variety of learning experiences. If you are unable to help in the classroom, there will be times I could use your help with projects at home. The following is some important information you will need:

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

The school day begins at 9:05 and ends at 3:45. When your child rides the bus, he or she will usually arrive at school right on time. If you drive your child, please arrange to be here on time, or plan to wait outside our centrum with your child until time for school.

BUS INFORMATION

Your child will always ride his/her regular route home from school unless I receive a written note with different instructions. If you plan to pick your child up, please write a note. The transportation department does not allow kindergartners to have bus passes to visit each others' homes. If your child is going to attend the School Age Care Program, or if you have other day care arrangements, please be sure that I know right away.



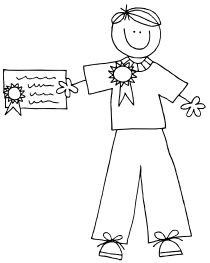
BUS NAME TAGS

Tomorrow I will give each child a durable bus shaped name tag. Please help your child remember to wear it back and forth to school for a few days. This will help me learn each child's name, and insure that your child gets on the right bus for home each day. It is very

important that the children memorize which bus they ride home as soon as possible. The take-home route will be printed on the name tag, please help your child learn it. After a few days I will collect the name tags and we will use them on field trips for the rest of the year.

SPECIAL HELPERS

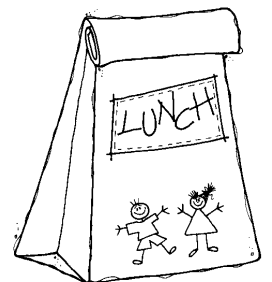
I will send home a monthly calendar designating a special helper for each day. The first time it is your child's turn to be the special person (s)he can bring a favorite show and tell item from home in a closed bag so the other children can take turns guessing what it is. You might encourage your child to think about photographs, souvenirs, books, etc. as well as their favorite toys. Otherwise, please keep toys at home so we don't have tears over broken or missing pieces.



LUNCH TIME AND RECESS

Our class will be eating lunch in the Country Oaks multipurpose room every day. Before their lunch period they will go outdoors for recess with a paraeducator for 20 minutes. We are asking for donations of wet wipes to clean the children's hands before lunch to eliminate long, time consuming lines at the sink.

The children will have the option of purchasing a hot lunch or bringing their own lunch from home. We are requesting that all children bring their lunch for the first month of school, this will give us a chance to establish a lunch routine and the children will get acclimated to the lunch room before they begin buying lunches. Please try to send nutritious foods that your child enjoys in packaging that is easy for him or her to open independently.



Each month, beginning in late September, the children will bring home a lunch calendar listing the menu choices for each day. The price of a hot lunch is \$2.10. Some families are eligible for free or

reduced lunch prices, you will receive a form to fill out to apply. When you send lunch money to school, please put it in a sealed envelope labeled with your child's name.

In order to make buying hot lunches less complicated, you have the option to purchase hot lunches by the month. Once a month you can look over the calendar with your child and decide which days your child would like to buy his or her lunch. You don't have to tell us ahead of time which days you plan to buy, just send in the correct amount of money for that many days. Our lunchroom supervisor will do the accounting and keep track of how many days your child purchases a hot lunch. If your child is absent or decides not to buy lunch as many days as you have paid for during the month, that money will be carried over to the following month. This system would minimize handling money and carrying home change every day.



It is really important to remind your child every morning about whether he or she is bringing or buying lunch, and what their menu choice will be. Every day we ask the children whether or not they brought their lunch, and which menu choice they want to buy when they first arrive at school. We must have an accurate lunch count each morning so the correct number of meals can be ordered.

SNACKS

Small tummies often get hungry before lunch time so I plan to have a snack break every day. I would appreciate donations of simple, non-messy, non-perishable crackers for the entire class to share. Some suggestions are Teddy Grahams, Goldfish crackers, graham crackers, etc. The children will be able to get a drink of water from the drinking fountain in our classroom. You will not need to send a snack with your child each day.

Every Friday will be our cooking or "snack math" day. I feel that cooking is an extremely worthwhile activity which incorporates lessons in math, science, nutrition, and cooperation; and the children love it!

I am asking for a donation of \$15 per child for each semester, or \$30 for the year. This money will be used to help cover the cost of cooking ingredients and paper products, our cooking



project will be our snack on Fridays. Part of this money may also be used for supplemental materials and supplies. If you write a check for these provisions, or for any other reason, please make the check out to me.

I cannot cash a check that is made out to Country Oaks
or Huron Valley Schools.

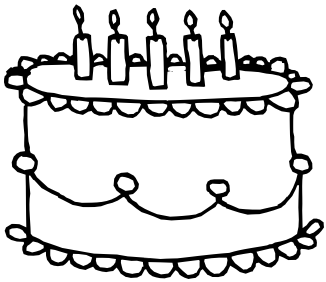
TOTE BAGS

Each child needs to bring a tote bag or backpack to school every day. Please select one that is easy for your child to fasten, and large enough to accommodate our projects. Please label tote bags, coats, hats, boots, etc. with your child's name.



BIRTHDAYS

I try to coordinate the Special Helper calendar so each child is the helper on his/her birthday. On that day (s)he will have the option of bringing a treat for the class. This could be a snack or a non-edible treat such as stickers. We will celebrate each child's birthday, but sending in a treat is not required. The children with summer birthdays will celebrate an "Un-Birthday" some time during the school year. Please let me know before the birthday arrives if you plan to send something in for our celebration.



If you are planning a birthday party for your child, please do not send the invitations for other children to school. This always causes hurt feelings for the children who are not invited. I will be sending home an address and phone book, so you will be able to call or mail your invitations.

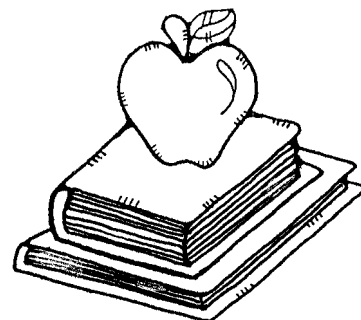
TELEPHONE BOOKS

I would like to distribute class telephone books so that your child can call friends from school. This book will contain a Xeroxed photograph, child's name, address, telephone number, e-mail if available, and parents' names. When I pass out the phone books we will talk about needing to ask permission from parents before making telephone calls. If you do NOT want this information to be distributed, please let me know by the end of this week.

BOOK ORDERS

Each month I will send home flyers from two different book clubs. These clubs offer wonderful books at very reasonable prices. There is no obligation to buy any books at all, but if you do purchase books through the book clubs, our class earns free books and materials.

If you write a check for a book order you can make it out to the book company, or to me. Please remember that I cannot cash a check made out to Country Oaks.



RAIN PROTECTION

For safety and practical reasons, a raincoat with a hood is the best choice on rainy days. Children struggle to open and close umbrellas, they are easily left behind, and they are difficult to carry without bumping other children.

HEALTH CARDS

Please complete both emergency health cards as soon as possible and return them to school with your child.

FIELD TRIPS

I try to plan field trips that are fun as well as educational. If you have any suggestions for a trip that would benefit the kindergartners, please let me know.

If you volunteer to drive or help chaperone a field trip, please understand that I will be counting on you to come. I usually do not write or call to confirm that I need you, but I will be expecting you to be there. Unless the place that we are going restricts the amount of people who attend, I will always encourage as many parents as possible to go with us on field trips. When we travel by school bus, preschoolers are not allowed to ride on the bus. When we drive by car you are welcome to bring younger siblings, but we usually do need to pay for each child and adult who participates.

If the cost of a field trip or any school function presents a hardship for your family, please let me know. This information will always be treated with extreme confidentiality. Our PTA has a fund so that every

child can participate. Just give me a call or write a note, and I will arrange it for you.

DONATIONS

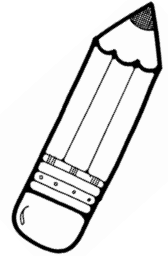
Kindergarten is a busy, fun place. We create many projects and books that the children love to make and bring home. Every day we use many consumable items. We are asking for donations of some materials that will be used by all the children in our class. Please do not label these items with your child's name, we do not have space to store separate materials for each child.

16 count Crayola crayons

4 oz. Elmer's glue

Crayola markers - fine or medium point

Glue sticks



I will also be asking for donations of many different items throughout the school year. There are a few other items that we can use now:

Wet wipes for hand washing before lunch

Non-perishable snacks

Napkins

Kleenex

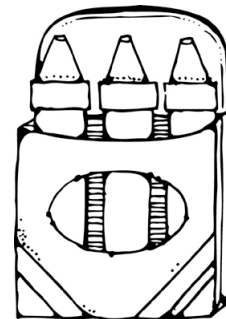
Crayola watercolor paints

Safety pins

Margarine tubs

Empty frosting containers

Extra paper for the writing center



I believe that it is in the children's best interest for parents and teachers to communicate often. I will be sending home a calendar every other week which will keep you updated about what we do each day at school. Please feel free to stop in, parents are always welcome in our room. Don't hesitate to write me a note or call about any questions or concerns you may have.

Thanks a lot!

Diane Senk