

## Upper Intermediate Information and Guidelines 2009-2010

"What we learn in pleasure, we never forget."  
Alfred Merier

### Schedule of Specials

- \*PE / Music - Monday - 1:00 to 1:30  
- 1:30 to 2:00  
Wednesday - 10:15 to 10:45  
- 10:45 to 11:15
- \*Art / Library - Tuesday - 9:15 to 10:15  
- 10:30 to 11:30
- \*Instrumental Music - Monday - 2:00 to 2:30  
- Wednesday - 2:00 to 2:30  
- Alternate Friday mornings - 8:15 to 8:45
- \*Spanish whole group - Tuesday - 12:15 to 1:00
- \*Spanish 4<sup>th</sup> grade - Thursday - 10:30 to 11:00
- \*Spanish 5<sup>th</sup> grade - Thursday - 11:00 to 11:30

### Main Thematic Units

- \* South Africa - School Wide
- \* U.S. History/Construction
- \* Special Interest Topic - Experiential Learning
- \* Earth Science & Electricity

### Math Program

The Investigations© program is our adopted math curriculum at Woods Learning Center. We have separated our students into 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade math groups to assure the scope and sequence for each level is addressed. Supplemental problem solving, math focus groups, computer math, and whole group activities will also be taught throughout. If your child has no math homework, they can always work on multiplication facts.

### Spelling Program

Through baseline assessments from Words Their Way, each student has been placed in a developmental spelling group. On Friday, students will be given their spelling sorts. At this time groups meet and talk about the spelling patterns, group their words into sorts, and take a pretest. The pretest is then scored and sent home in the homework folder or Friday

Folder. This will depend on how much help we get on Friday scoring the pretests. If you don't see it in the Friday Folder, check with your child on Monday. Students will retest the misspelled words on Thursday morning. Words that are not spelled correctly on this test (roll-over words) will be carried over to the next week for mastery.

### Reading

The teaching of reading will be facilitated in a variety of ways this year, but mainly through small, guided novel groups. Students will meet with a teacher to demonstrate word attack skills, sequencing, summarizing, author's intent, and comprehension. Also, one day a week students will have independent reading. During this time students read from self-selected literature. It is important that your child have available a good piece of literary work that is not too easy or difficult for them to read.

### Homework Folders

Each night it will be your child's responsibility to have his or her homework folder in order to finish assignments on time. Every folder has a weekly calendar inside, which should be filled out with each new assignment. They will be due on the date the assignment is written. As an Upper Intermediate student your child will be receiving more homework than they have in the past. We believe that each child should be taking more responsibility for their learning at this age, and with that comes more privileges. We feel it is a wise investment on the behalf of all stakeholders (teachers, parents, child) to make education our #1 priority. Please see that your child has a place to work and enough time to be able to turn in their best possible work.

### Friday Folders

Friday Folders will go home weekly and are considered to be as important as homework. They will contain corrected homework for you to look over, as well as a number of other items for you to review. For example, this can include newsletters, book orders, sports notes, or announcements etc. After reading through the material please sign and date the inside cover of the folder. If you have any comments or questions please feel free to note them in the "comment" column. We will also include a missing homework report at that time, giving students ample time to get caught up over the weekend. Also, please initial the column designated for "Missing Homework Report"

inside your child's Friday Folder. This serves as an efficient way for us to communicate with you regarding your child's work habits.

### Grading, practice vs assignments. What is Proficiency?

It has come to the attention of the staff at WLC that there have been some inconsistencies regarding grading procedures across the pods. Over the years what we consider "proficiency" marks have morphed into a mixture of differing procedures. This year the discussion was addressed at retreat and we will all be working toward the same goal. In the past "grades" or "proficiencies" were entered into a grade book and averaged. This is not an accurate picture of an ever-changing and growing student. We teach to the standards with the purpose of pushing each child to become proficient at the skills necessary for each benchmark. Therefore, much of the homework your child will have will be considered "practice." It will have a stamp on it to identify it as a practice page or activity. These will not be scored. The students will also have "assignments" or "assessments," these will be scored in order to determine each child's level of proficiency. At the end of a trimester the last assignments and assessments will be weighted while the beginning ones will not. This will show an accurate snapshot of your child's abilities at that time. The Upper Intermediate Pod will also be using a number of checklists that are similar to those used in the Primary Pod. The main difference of course will be the amount and depth they will cover. These will be used in order to give parents more feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of their children as well as to guide instruction and show their progress toward proficiency.

### Work Habits Checklist

We will be reporting their work habits using a rating scale that will now be the same in every pod. If your child is meeting our expectations they will be given a "consistently" rating. For example: "Gets his or her homework in on time... consistently." We realize that some students fluctuate and they would be given a rating of "inconsistently." The last identifier will be "Needs Improvement," which will signify areas that need to be worked on.

### Conferences

Our first parent-student-teacher conference will be October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will be discussing your child's work and study habits as well as their proficiencies in each standard at that time. We begin by having your child

lead us by reading a letter to you about their adventures and accomplishments in the standards covered over that trimester. We may have them demonstrate some skills to you or share their assessments or assignments. After we go over some paper work with you we ask the student to leave to give you an opportunity to voice any concerns or questions you may have. If there are time conflicts or preferences please let us know early and we will try to accommodate you as best we can. Remember this is not a time to plan an extended vacation. Make up conferences will be scheduled in the event of emergencies only.

### Student Dismissal

UI students will leave the building through the south end exit and wait in the fenced / grassy area on the south side of the building for pickup. The only students who will be allowed to wait at the North end of the building will be those with Middle School siblings who have a note on file at the office with a parent signature. Remember your child's school day does not end until 3:15 Monday through Thursday and at 12:15 on Friday. Every minute is important to the school day.

### School Dress

Appropriate dress is expected in all school settings. Any clothing deemed unacceptable will result in the student calling home for a change of clothes. If that is not possible, clothing will be provided from the laundry. Examples of inappropriate clothing are t-shirts with offensive language or t-shirts that advertise violence, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes etc.; clothes that are too short, too low, or too tight, spaghetti strap shirts, or muscleman shirts.

### Snacks

Brain research tells us that nutritious foods are essential for good brain functioning and development. We hope all students will bring a nutritious snack to school each day. Sugar laden snacks do not provide adequate nutrition. The best snacks are fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, it is not our intention to have snacks substitute for lunch, so please send a modest quantity.

### Traits to Live by

Academic content is not our only focus at Woods Learning Center. We believe it is also imperative to foster global, caring citizens who will be

equipped to flourish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore one of our goals is to nurture the following attributes in our classroom.

- Respectful
- Caring
- Cooperative
- Honest
- Open-minded
- Risk-takers
- Curious
- Independent
- Reflective
- Responsible

We will encourage students to recognize others who are displaying these traits by adding "Drops in the Bucket."