

Dear Parents,

I hope last week went well. It is hard to believe we are already in October!

Before I get to the practical stuff, I wanted to let you know that the whole class has been working so hard as they try to earn class points. And they finally did it! We are all so excited! We voted on what prize we wanted. The big winner was a class scavenger hunt, which we are going to do on Friday.

So how were they earning points? By being awesome, of course! Some specific examples are that an assignment was turned in by everyone the day it was due. And also, quickly stopping the “chit chat” when class officially starts. And we zoomed ahead one week when we were super successful at naming assignments correctly. Wow!

And now on to stuff to know.

### **STUDENT LINCOLN AGENDA**

As you fully understand, turning in work during online school might actually be the hardest part! It is so easy to forget what to do. It’s easy to forget when something is due. And, it is super easy to forget what to name the assignment.

So, using the Lincoln Agenda is something I always require during regular school. And now I am requiring it to be used during online school.

Please help your child with this process until it becomes a habit. The way it should be set up is:

- A) For each day, write the work that has been assigned.**
- B) For each assignment, write the due date.**
- C) For each assignment, write what to name it. (I recommend highlighting this.)**
- D) For each assignment, put a check next to it when it is completed.**
- E) For each assignment, put a circle around it when it has actually been sent/shared.**

Please make sure the agenda is always out beside your child during school. It is a great place to write down notes and reminders. Also, it is a great place to stick those post it notes the students are learning to jot down.

As parents we know this will not automatically get done. So please take the time in the next few weeks to supervise. Also, please check daily to see it is being checked and circled as appropriate. Eventually this will become a habit. When we finally get back to on-site school, we will continue to use the agenda to keep ourselves organized.

### **ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS**

As you know, in 4<sup>th</sup> grade we move past discussing the plot of a story. Instead, we go deeper and think about what a character is like, what motivates them to do what they do, and learn to recognize theme. I call this thinking “under the ocean.” There is a page on the website called Thinking About Reading that gives more details.

This is always a big leap forward for 4<sup>th</sup> graders and it is not easy to take that leap. The Ellerbees are trying hard and are still in that stage of finding it challenging. This is not unusual, but it is perhaps a little harder with online school.

This is how you can help. PLEASE read the book along with your child. It can be done with them week by week or you can quickly read ahead. This is so important for 2 reasons.

- One, you will be able to have conversations about the book with your child. This helps the understanding and deeper thinking as just talking about it sparks ideas and grows our thinking.
- Second, when I provide feedback, you will be able to connect with what I am saying. It is basically impossible to understand my comments and explanations if you are not reading the book.

For example, in chapter 10 the students typically wrote something like, “The trip on the boat was scary and she had to fix the leak.” But the actual deep thinking was her **motivation** for taking such a scary trip, and why was she willing to risk death to do it? Without reading the story, it isn’t possible to make sense of my comments about that. Thanks in advance.

### **MID-TRIMESTER PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

We will be scheduling conferences on October 26, 27, 29 and November 2, 3, 5, and 6. I will be communicating with you shortly about how to sign up for a time. All conferences will be in the afternoons.

We will get a chance to discuss how your child is doing academically, and I’m looking forward to your feedback and questions. Stay tuned...

### **PICK UP DAY SCHEDULED**

It is getting to be that time. I will be sending home some more school materials for you to pick up. We will continue the same process. Please drive up to school and have ELLER and your child’s name on a sign easy to see. I will be out there and will hand you your bag.

**Our designated time is NEXT Wednesday (October 14) from 11:00 to 11:30.** If this time is not possible for you, please email me. I can have you stop by school after 3:00 on certain days and you can walk to room 10. We can wear masks and you can safely get the materials. More details to follow via email if you need this alternate solution.

### **LINCOLN LIBRARY**

Now that we are in full swing, hopefully your child is starting to learn the process of checking out books.

FYI, library pick-up is on designated Wednesdays. (The schedule was emailed to you by the school.) The pick-up time is 11:30 to 12:30. We alternate primary and upper grades on Wednesdays.

Also, the deadline for requesting books is the Tuesday before pick-up at noon.

As always, thanks for your patience reading my long emails.

It will be a good week. We have our scavenger hunt on Friday and a special virtual visitor on Wednesday! (Ask your child who it is!).

Stay safe,  
Ruth