



## A NOTE FROM YOUR 3-5 PRINCIPAL

8/15/2016

Dear OHVA Families,

August 15, 2016

Welcome to the 16-17 school year! Let me start by welcoming all new families to OHVA and say, welcome back to all returning families! The new school year always brings so much excitement, especially when the boxes of materials arrive at your front door. As you all know, there continues to be changes in education as the state of Ohio works to secure their state assessment plan which covers the New Learning Standards. I am pleased to announce that Ohio will continue with the Ohio State Tests (OST) for the 16-17 school year. The spring state testing cycle is scheduled to begin in mid-March. Each student, grades 3-8 will take one, two part assessment in math and ELA. Grade 4 and 6 will take an assessment in social studies and grade 5 and 8 will take an assessment in science. Teachers are looking forward to having a longer duration of instruction time with their students. We are all on this educational journey together and look forward to partnering with you throughout the months ahead! I wish you a successful transition to this new school year.

I want to highlight a few things about our program as we begin.

### **K12 Curriculum:**

The K<sup>12</sup> curriculum engages young minds with a rich combination of online interactive and offline hands-on learning. We know that it is important to embrace and ‘dig into’ the curriculum to reap the full benefits. Your teachers will also be encouraging this throughout the school year. We ask that you complete 100% of the core lessons for each subject before the next course is ordered, if your child is advancing during the school year. We are encouraging whenever possible to finish all courses during the duration of this school year. It is important to be on track to begin new courses at the start of Middle School. If your child struggles with a lesson or needs to take an assessment for a second time, it is fine to review the lessons and ask your teacher for support. Our goal at the 3-5 level is to make sure your child is prepared for Middle School. We expect our students to be not only mastering the concepts, but also analyze and apply what was learned. You will also notice that assessments can be attempted up to 3 times before they are “locked” and you will be prompted to contact your teacher. Your teacher will be able to open the assessment once the skill has been reviewed and your child is ready to show mastery. Your teacher will work with you to determine the instructional plan for each individual child. Please take the time each day to ensure that attendance and assessments are entered in your OLS. Your teacher will also be giving you a monthly overview of which Math and Language Arts/ Literature lessons will be covered in Class Connect.

**Grading Scale for 3-5 :** We are continuing with our mastery based program which is an important part of each student’s total grade for each course. There are other components of our program that will be factored into the final grade as well; Writing assignments, portfolios, and class connect

attendance when applicable. Each of these will be weighted appropriately. (Teachers will be able to make adjustments when needed.) These marks will appear on the final progress report.

- **Grading Scale for grades 3-5:**

95%-100% E (Exceeding)

85%-94% M (Mastering Concepts Consistently)

70%-84% P (Progressing towards mastery)

50%-69% L (limited Progress)

0%-49% I (Insufficient Progress).

**Study Island:**

Study Island is a part of our academic program and needs to be part of your child's weekly routine. It is most beneficial to work this into your schedule now, rather than later in the school year. Your teacher will be looking at this data on a regular basis to hold small group sessions focusing on student needs. Students will be completing Study Island Assignments, earning blue ribbons and showing proficiency levels in math and reading. You will see the first assignments on your child's Study Island page in September. Please also look at your child's Daily Plan for the SIG Skills Academy class connect link. Monday through Thursdays (most weeks), grade-levels will offer support classes to help your students with grade level standards. We encourage you to have your child log on for this additional support!

\*Study Island assignments will look different this year. Each student will be responsible to complete just those lessons assigned to them for Math and Reading. These lessons will correlate with what is being taught in Class Connect from the curriculum each week. This will not include all Study Island lessons however, if your child wishes to complete all lessons available they will be able to access the lessons to do so.

**MAP Diagnostic Assessment:**

Students in grades 3-5 will be given the MAP assessment two to three times during the school year in math and reading. This assessment will be proctored by the teacher during an assigned class connect appointment specific to your child. The teacher will be able to log your student in live and support them through the assessment process. Teachers will use these assessments to determine the correct academic plan for each student. It will allow the teachers to identify any areas of strength and weakness for each student and provide instruction accordingly. The student results will be sent in a report to families through k-mail after the assessment cycle is complete. There are a few minor technical adjustments that will need to be made before logging in for your child's scheduled assessment time. These will be outlined in the step sheet that your teacher will be sending. Teachers will be proctoring the assessments and able to see that a student is working in the system. It is critical that students complete these assessments independently for accurate results. We are excited to see the academic growth in our students throughout the school year.

**Formative Assessments/ Class Connect Weekly Instruction:**

Teachers will be providing live instruction in math and reading each week directly from the curriculum. This means that your student will be able to complete lessons by attending class Monday through Thursday. Your teacher will be communicating her schedule to you soon. Students will be taking four Formative Assessments throughout the school year. These will take place during Class Connect after a cycle of state standards have been taught and will be approximately every 5 weeks. These assessments will cover only the concepts/ lessons taught during the previous weeks and very similar to a unit test.

Writing skills are an integral part of all areas of the curriculum. It is critical that students be able to express themselves through writing to demonstrate mastery and understanding of key concepts. We are dedicated to the continued development of our student's writing skills throughout the grade levels and will be devoting class time each week specific to writing. All students are highly encouraged to attend. There will also be writing assignments required of all students, based on specific grade level requirements. These must be turned into the homeroom teacher. The teacher will give helpful feedback on these assignments intended to foster the development of strong writing skills for each student.

**Third Grade Reading Guarantee:**

In June 2012 Governor Kasich signed into law Senate Bill 316, which calls for a Third Grade Reading Guarantee. Students entering third grade cannot be promoted if they score below the state determined score (cut score) on the state reading assessment (Formerly, OAA- Ohio Achievement Assessment), with some exceptions for ELL students and students with disabilities. The new state assessment will be produced by AIR and the cut score has not yet been determined for this school year. Once ODE releases that information we will make sure you are aware. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers use MAP as a reading diagnostic tool to identify each individual reading level of their students. If a third grade student is determined to be at risk with reading deficiencies, then the parent will be notified and a Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan (RIMP) will be put in place. You can find more information about the Third Grade Reading Guarantee on the ODE web site:

[www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us).

**Synchronous/ Asynchronous Learners:**

Please take some time to read about Synchronous and Asynchronous Learners outlined in the parent handbook. Most students will start the year as Synchronous Learners who must attend specific class connect sessions in reading and math. If your student meets the criteria for Asynchronous Learners your teacher will let you know. All of our teachers are highly qualified and excited to offer instruction to all students during their class connect sessions. They are your partners in the direct academic instruction of your children.

Our teachers and administration want to be seen as a partner in your child's academic career. We know that as the primary learning coach you are the key component to your child's education and we commend you for choosing to take this active role in your child's education! We look forward to seeing you at our Back to School Picnics around Ohio on September 9<sup>th</sup> – check out the calendar for details!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Amy Helm-Borchers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A".

Amy Helm-Borchers  
Elementary Principal, Grades 3-5  
877-648-2515 ext. 3046