



School in the Woods Field Notes

September 2019



Dear Parents,

Welcome to our first Field Notes! Our monthly newsletter will inform you about some of the educational experiences we have had, experiences coming up, and other important information. We strive to keep our newsletter to one page and feel there is value in sending home paper copies each month and making an extra one for each naturalist's portfolio. You will find a monthly calendar of events on the back. We encourage you to read through the Field Notes and discuss some of the events and news with your naturalist. It is often through these talks that you become aware of how much your child is learning.

The 2019-20 school year at School in the Woods is off to a terrific start. Our seventy-eight young naturalists have already made many discoveries in the ponderosa pine forest. We have hiked on our beautiful property several times already, selected our solo spots, observed wildlife, and are becoming familiar with the montane forest ecosystem encompassing our school. Our naturalists are becoming connected with the land and the natural organisms and non-living components around us. Be sure to ask them about their solo spot and how it feels to be in such a special place. They have been able to write observations and create poetry in their special spot.

We are all contributing to the development of a powerful learning community. Our naturalists are demonstrating increased responsibility and will have frequent opportunities to share with one another. They appear eager to demonstrate their maturity and commitment to our school. We all strive to promote behavior that supports a respectful environment and a quest for experiential learning. Please discuss with your child how demonstrating maturity and making appropriate choices is important for our community.

Our naturalists have done so well getting to know one another and are demonstrating heart-warming ways of being respectful to one another and looking for ways to help. Please have discussions with your child about what it means to be empathetic and how they like others to treat them, both in and out of school. We all model the behaviors we want each other to demonstrate and find this truly helps us create a community that values respect, cooperation, and relationship building. We are so proud of how they are connecting with one another and our staff.

At the same time, naturalists are learning about our daily schedule and many of the jobs we have to do

each day. Our naturalists are responsible for many jobs: chefs preparing food, astronomers and meteorologists reporting daily events, composters and Green Team taking care of resources, and a variety of other tasks. They are learning and contributing as they help our school function in a sustainable manner. It truly is a communal educational experience, helping to create a shared sense of community.

Turkey Trot – October 25th is our annual Turkey Trot. This is our major fund-raiser of the year. This year funds will be directed first for the remaining balance on our student cubbies and benches, approximately \$4,000. After we fulfill our obligation, we hope to be able to install projectors in each of the classrooms. As a reminder, all donations to SITW are tax deductible and we can provide receipts upon request.

Box Tops - We love Box Tops for Education! We have such a long list of needs/wants. Every penny is pinched for the benefit of our students and program. We tried the new app-based system and it is really easy. For more information, please go to: www.boxtops4education.com



Home Learning - We deeply appreciate your cooperation in checking and signing the Home Learning Folder. Each school night, your child will bring home their Home Learning Folder that includes an assignment sheet. We expect our students to be responsible for writing down assignments, completing their home learning, then asking a parent to sign the assignment sheet when the work is completed. Please check to see that the home learning is complete, accurate, and NEATLY done. If home learning does not meet these standards, ask your child to revise or do it over. When high standards are reinforced both at home and at school, students do their best work.

On Fridays, your child will bring home a Friday Folder with completed work from the week and announcements. Please take time during the weekend to look over this work and any announcements with your child. This helps you to be aware of what your child is learning at school, and to see your child's progress.

We look forward to an amazing year together!