



School in the Woods Field Notes



September 2020

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 2020-20 school year at School in the Woods is off to a terrific start. We are thrilled so many of you chose to send your child to school so they can learn in person. Our naturalists have been very responsible by wearing their masks when necessary, social distancing, keeping up with their hygiene, and supporting our need to subdivide our SITW community into four cohorts. Your SITW Team truly enjoyed the first week meeting and getting to know the 2020-21 naturalists.

Our seventy-six 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, 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 will be able to make observations, write, create poetry, and sketch 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 will be learning about the jobs they will get to do each day. Our naturalists are responsible for many jobs: astronomers and meteorologists, collecting library materials, 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. Despite the necessity to maintain cohorts, SITW is truly a communal educational experience, where each of us help to create a shared sense of community.

Turkey Trot – In late October we will have our annual Turkey Trot. This is our major fund-raiser of the year. This year funds will be directed toward classroom sinks and a few other projects. 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 ensuring your child checks the Schoology Home Learning page each evening. We expect our students to be responsible for understanding what their home learning is, completing their home learning, then checking in with a parent to help ensure 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!