



# The Scoop About Mrs. Shaw's Shining Stars



I am very happy to be working with you and your child and I am dedicated to making this an exciting and successful year for all of my students. The information that follows will help you understand more about our third grade program here at Ortona.

## Attendance

Research indicates that students are most successful when they attend school regularly. It is difficult for students to learn if they are not in class. The learning process builds upon itself. Each lesson presented to students is based upon or related to those that preceded it. Students who miss school miss out on carefully planned sequences of instruction. They miss out on active learning experiences and class participation. They might miss the opportunity to ask questions. They are more likely to fall behind. Just as we can never regain a moment of time wasted, the child who misses a day of school also misses a day of education which cannot be retrieved. Of course, I understand that students become ill from time to time. If your child is absent, please notify the front office.

## Academics Are Number One!

The Sunshine State Standards are taught as outlined in our grade level curriculum maps, and children are given many opportunities to learn and practice important skills each day in both whole group and small group activities. Additionally, I try to integrate technology into my lessons as much as possible. All students are expected to be active participants in class. Educational support at home is essential to the success of all children in school.

Students will be required to take the FCAT test in the spring. The FCAT measures student performance on benchmarks in reading and mathematics as defined by the Sunshine State Standards. The FCAT Reading test contains passages (articles, stories, and poems) from books, magazines, and other publications. Students are expected to read and analyze the passages and answer questions based on the passages. The FCAT Mathematics test requires students to solve numerical problems taken from real-life situations. Please be aware that the state of Florida requires all third grade students to pass the Reading FCAT as a requirement for promotion to fourth grade.

## Homework is Important Too!

A homework packet is sent home each Monday. Please have your child complete one assignment nightly in order. Since homework reflects what has been taught in the classroom, this should be a review for your child. Please help to make sure your child understands the directions. If they understand the directions, but still are unable to complete the assignment, write me a note on top of the worksheet, and I will work with your child on that concept. Students are expected to read nightly for 20 minutes to build fluency and comprehension. If your child likes the computer, they can access FCAT Explorer ([www.fcatexplorer.com](http://www.fcatexplorer.com)). This website is a valuable resource that helps children prepare for the FCAT test. Students know their user name and password and may access the program from any computer with an internet connection.

## Grading And Assessment

Your child will earn grades based on their performance on various skills, tests, and other assessments. They will take spelling, reading, and math quizzes on a regular basis. Additionally, county tests are given approximately every six weeks. When graded papers are sent home, please look them over with you child to see how they have done.

You will be kept informed about your child's progress through interim reports and report cards. If your child begins to experience difficulties, we will need to work together to correct it. Educational support at home is essential to the success of all children in school.

Grades are taken for class work, quizzes, and tests. Grades are determined by using Volusia County's grading scale.

- A - Outstanding Progress (90% - 100%)
- B - Above Average Progress (80% - 89%)
- C - Average Progress (70% - 79%)
- D - Lowest Acceptable Progress (60% - 69%)
- U - Non-completion of tasks (0% - 59%)

S (satisfactory) and I (improvement needed) are given in other areas on the report card. When report cards are sent home, please sign and return the envelope. Also check to see if a conference has been requested by myself. If one has been scheduled, please make every effort to attend.

## Discipline Policies

Behavior counts in the classroom so that maximum teaching and learning can take place. Misbehavior and/or disrespect will not be tolerated. To help insure a successful school year we have classroom rules. If you would like to know more about the behavior policies in my classroom, please speak with me.

## Special Area Classes

Children will participate in a special area class daily. It will be either music, art, or physical education. Students must wear tennis shoes and comfortable clothing for P.E. Grades will be given in these classes as well. Additionally, all students will also visit have lessons with the guidance counselor weekly.

I know this will be a great year for all of us! I look forward to watching each and every child succeed in learning. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me and I will help you and your child in any way that I can.

Sincerely yours,

Melissa Shaw