Third Grade Information

Teacher: Komlan Kakou E-mail: komlan.kakou@spps.org
School: Highwood Hills
Room: 2606
Address: 2188 Londin Lane, St. Paul, MN 55119
Phone: (651) 293-8875 Fax: 651 293 5296
School Hours: 7:30 - 2:00 (Students should arrive at 7:15)

1. Attendance/Absences/Tardiness: Attendance and being on time are vital to the success of your child. Third grade is a continuous experience with each day's learning built on the day before. Much of what we do involves listening and participating so it is nearly impossible for a child to do make-up work. Children will come in the room at 7:15 and will have a morning assignment to complete. Students arriving after 7:35 will be marked late. Family vacations other than non-school days are discouraged but if it is necessary to take some days off during school time you must fill out a form to be approved by the principal. I can send it by e-mail or in your child's communication folder.

When your child is ill, please call the office in the morning to report the absence. After 2 days, students need a note from a doctor. **Be aware, the district regards more than 11 absences for the whole year (whether excused or unexcused) as excessive.** If you have forgotten to call, please send a note when your child returns to school that specifically explains the reason for absence or else the absence will be recorded as unexcused. Repeated unexcused absences and tardies will be turned over to Truancy Intervention.

2. Change in Transportation/Early Release: All transportation changes must be indicated in a note to me, including after-school activities. If I do not have a note, I must put your child on the bus. I cannot just accept your child's word. If the change is last minute or you forgot the note, you may call the office before noon but this should be the back-up plan and not the routine. **DO NOT E-MAIL THE CHANGE AFTER 8:00 AM! I MAY NOT GET THE MESSAGE UNTIL AFTER THE CHILDREN HAVE GONE HOME.** Please note that children may not take the bus home with a friend even with a note. Bus drivers only accept children on their bus list!

3. Name Tags, Bus/Patrol: All Third grade students must keep their information card with transportation info in their backpacks for the first 2 weeks of school. We will be discussing the bus rules in the class during the first week of school. **Please reinforce the importance of following school bus rules.** Parents are notified of incident reports given to the school from the bus drivers. Following repeated offenses, your child may be suspended from the bus.

4. Breakfast-to-Go: Breakfast is available at school from 7:10-7:30 free-of-charge to all students. Students will pick up their breakfast and bring it to the class to eat. Many healthy options are available. Lunch: An account is made for each student and they will use assigned personal identification numbers (PIN) to debit their account each time they eat. You may pay online or send in money or checks in the communication folder. Checks should be made out to St. Paul School's Nutrition Service and your child’s PIN number should be written on the memo line. Cash must be put in an envelope and labeled “Lunch Money” with your child’s first and last name and PIN. Free and Reduced Lunch forms should be filled out by everyone even if you think you don’t qualify.
5. **Birthdays:** We will observe birthdays in our class with a crown, singing “Happy Birthday” and signing a card. **We will not** do birthday treats. We will celebrate **summer birthdays** as ½ year birthdays so July dates will be celebrated in January, and August in February. If you oppose us celebrating your child’s birthday please let me know in advance.

6. **Communication:** Communication will be by 2 means – e-mail and communication folder. Your child will get a communication folder where all school and teacher notices as well as homework and finished work will be sent. The folder is also for parents to send in anything that needs to be sent to the school or to me like notes, money for lunches or other school needs, forms that need completing, etc. Please be sure to remind your child to hand me any notes from you so that I am sure to get your message promptly and get back to you. **MONEY needs to be in an envelope with the purpose and your child's name written on it.** The folder needs to be brought to school **every day** in your child’s backpack.

   **E-mail IS NOT a good way to communicate with me during the school day but is the BEST way to contact me after school.** I check my e-mail after school, in the evening, and before I come to school but don’t always have a chance to look at it after 8:00 or during the school day. **If you need to give me a message that I must have before the end of the school day, it is best to send a note in the communication folder or call the school and leave a message with the secretary.** To talk with me, call the school during my prep (8:15-9:05), or after school (2:15-2:30). Other times, while I am teaching, your call will be sent to voicemail, which I will not get until after school is over. My e-mail address is komlan.kakou@spps.org.

7. **Newsletter:** Each month, I will write a newsletter to keep you informed about the upcoming month. It will include themes of study, homework, things your child might need to bring, special events, and other announcements. The newsletter will be sent in your child’s communication folder.

8. **Clothing:** Simple clothing is best. Buttons, belts, and buckles can be hard to handle in the bathroom. Although I do not request a spare set of clothes for at school, if your child is prone to bathroom accidents, it is a good idea to keep a clean pair of underpants and pants in a plastic bag in his/her backpack (they can put the wet clothes in the plastic bag after changing). Please **label all clothing including jackets, snowpants, hats, mittens, and boots. Hats and Hoodies are not allowed** to be worn in school.

9. **Shoes:** Tennis shoes are preferred for everyday wear. Flipflops and shoes without backs are not safe play shoes for recess. If your child prefers to wear dress shoes, please send tennis shoes in the backpack or keep a pair at school. **When winter begins, you may want your child to leave his/her shoes at school and just wear boots home – I do not allow students to wear snowboots in class.**

10. **Toys at School:** I would like to strongly discourage children from bringing toys to school. I understand that sometimes children do not go home after school and want to have their toys with them but they should stay in the backpack while at school. **Children are not allowed to give away, sell, buy, or trade any toys at school or on the bus.**

11. **Items not allowed at school:** Weapons (this includes toy weapons), gum, trading cards (Pokemon, Yu Gi O, etc.), money, perfume, or make-up. Weapons of any kind can mean expulsion from St. Paul Public Schools. Forbidden items that repeatedly come to school will be confiscated and a parent needs to recover these items.
About the teacher: My name is Komlan Kakou. I am originally from Togo, a small country in West Africa right by Ghana. I am a Native French Speaker. This is my second year at Highwood Hills, and my 9th year at Saint Paul Public Schools. Before, Highwood Hills, I taught at Ramsey Middle School for a year. I also taught at L'Etoile du Nord French Immersion for 6 years. I graduated from Hamline University with my Masters in Art of Teaching program. It is my pleasure to be your child's teacher this year.