

July 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to fifth grade! My name is Beth Lewandowsky and I am privileged to be your child's teacher this year. This is my thirteenth year of teaching at Valley Academy, and teaching here has been one of the most rewarding things, I have ever done.

I have been involved in Valley since 2003 when my oldest daughter entered the third grade. She was then followed by her three sisters who have all promoted from Valley and have all moved on to other learning institutes. When my eldest started at Valley, I became acquainted with Valley Academy's high standards of education and gained first-hand knowledge of how much parental involvement is required here. I was impressed with the quality of students and the dedication of the teachers. Little did I know that I would soon be a part of this amazing school?

I began my career at Valley as an Academic Arcade aide, an aide to the third grade team, and then a substitute teacher. Substitute teaching made me realize that I had a passion for teaching so I went back to school to complete my degree in Education. In August 2008, I enrolled in the teacher college at ASU West and filled my intern hours in several classrooms around Phoenix. Mr. Smith accepted me into his classroom in January 2010 to complete my student teaching requirement and the last leg of my journey to becoming a teacher. Through this experience, I became familiar with the fifth-grade curriculum and bonded with the fifth grade team. I graduated from ASU West with my Bachelors of Arts in Education in May, 2010, and gladly, gratefully, eagerly accepted a contract to teach at Valley shortly after.

Through my education, observation, and participation in Valley, I have come to believe in "setting the bar high," therefore, I will have high expectations for every student in my classroom. I intend to maintain a positive environment where each student will be recognized and valued for their unique talents and abilities. I will challenge each student to grow in new ways while providing the academic skills necessary to enable your child or children to excel at Valley Academy.

In order to accomplish this goal, I will need your help. There has to be order in our classroom for learning to take place. We cannot possibly cover all the information if students that choose not to follow the classroom rules and procedures are constantly interrupting the class. Therefore, it would be helpful if you would emphasize the importance of the rules. Be assured that this is also being discussed in detail in the classroom.

Please be aware that we will be discussing the grade level and school handbooks, placing emphasis on certain sections. We will be discussing attendance, including absence and tardy procedures. School-wide and classroom rules will also be discussed thoroughly. Consequences for choosing to disobey these rules were also highlighted. Another very important discussion centered on the school dress code. Students should now be aware of proper dress to insure compliance with the Elementary Dress Standards, as set forth in the school handbook. Our homework and late work policies were discussed at length to insure that no misunderstandings should arise.

This year fifth grade is transitioning to the use of behavior cards, similar to what our sixth through eighth grades use. These are designed to track both behavior and homework completion. Please watch for more information on this to come home during the first week of school.

Parent/teacher communication is very important. If you need to get a message to me during the school day, please dial the school's main phone number, 623-516-7747, extension 522. I will not be available to speak to you directly, but I will check my messages throughout the day. Emergency messages should be directed through the front office. Email is my preferred form of communication as I can more readily access my computer during the day. My email address is blewandowsky@valleyacademy.com. The planner also works as a way of communication. You are welcome to write a note to me whenever necessary or just to send me words of encouragement! You will also be receiving a weekly letter from me, *Lewandowsky Letter*, each weekend via email, and a hard copy sent home in the weekly folder on Monday. This letter will highlight assignments and test for the week.

Thank you for affording me this opportunity to share this school year with your family. We will work hard this year, but we will have fun, too!

In closing, please think about this: ***What you think is important becomes important to your child! When a child knows his/her education is important to you, he/she will usually develop a sense of responsibility to achieve his/her best!***

Sincerely,
Mrs. Lewandowsky

