

August 10th, 2011



Welcome to a new school, a new school year, and a new grade!

I am excited to be joining you as your 4th or 5th grade teacher this year at Grass Valley Charter School, welcoming back lots of friendly and familiar faces and several new students as well. Although the summer seemed especially short this year, I still had lots of fun. I just got back from a great road trip to Boston, Massachusetts, where I learned a lot about American History and the Revolutionary War. I also got to go to a place that's more fun than Disneyland for me: the Jersey Shore! Then I finished up my summer kayaking and camping up in the Sierras, and hiking through mountain flowers and bits of snow, even in August! I sure love summer, and I hate to have it end, so we will just need to keep that summer feeling going for a while at school.

During the first few weeks of school in our classroom we will be working on building a community of learners. We'll get to know each other (again!), trust each other, and build a safe and caring learning environment – one where each one of us can be excited about learning, creative and curious, willing to take risks, and ready to work hard, laugh hard, and learn together every day. Of course, with so many returning students, we will also be able to get right to work on our expedition!

This year, our expedition title is "That's Not Fair!", and we will begin unraveling the mystery of what our expedition is actually about beginning on the first day of school. I think you are going to really enjoy it!

Our first big adventure this year will be a mountain adventure, just like last year, but with a whole new mountain to climb. You'd better start running up and down stairs to get yourself in shape, and make sure your hiking boots still fit! This awesome adventure is scheduled for the 2nd week in September, and I am going to leave you guessing about which very high mountain we will be tackling THIS time!

Something you don't have to guess about is that you will have lots of field trips, lots of fun, some big academic challenges, and a fabulous year ahead.

Since we are 4th and 5th graders, you don't need to stop by for a "meet your teacher" time on August 16th. You can just enjoy that last big day of summer vacation. I figure you all know your way around the school, and you can just come ready to start a new school year at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, August 17th.

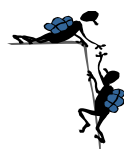
A few more highlights of the year to come: we will be working closely with Ann's Crew, and you will get to see all of your 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade friends at recess and lunch this year. Yippee!!

We have a bonus teacher this year! My daughter Maggie (also known as Ashleigh) just got her teaching credential, and she is going to be an "apprentice teacher" in our classroom. That means she will be in our class every day helping out, except for those days when she is substituting for other teachers. I am so excited about that! Look for Merry and Maggie's Crew Two Blogspot coming to your local internet soon!

The other exciting news is that all of the 5th and 6th grade classes in the Grass Valley School District have received a technology grant, and we are going to be receiving an iPod Touch for every student to use for learning in our classroom. Maggie, Ann, Cissy, Lisa, Brandon and I are going to two days of technology training this week to learn all about how to use them. In fact, on your supply list is "headphones". I put that on in case you wanted to have your very own personal headphones to use with your iPod Touch in class. I am pretty sure we will be supplied with headphones as part of the grant, but some kids prefer to have their very own.

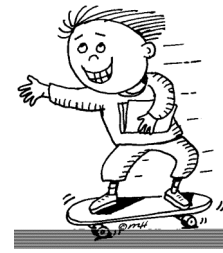
Attached there is a list of supplies that will be helpful for you to have during the school year. The most essential items are listed first. It would be great for you to have your supplies by Monday, August 22nd. But please note: only the ones marked with an arrow are essential. You don't need to spend a fortune, and you don't need to get everything at once.

Maggie and I are looking forward to seeing you in Room 2 and beginning our learning adventure together.



Merry Byles-Daly and Maggie Daly

Crew Two School Supplies



Required school supplies are in bold – please mark everything clearly with your name, especially pens and pencils

- **A sack lunch or lunch money and a healthy snack** (please bring a snack every day!) (strictly enforced: no candy, cookies, or chips – think healthy!)
- **A refillable water bottle**—the best kind is a sports bottle designed to be refilled, and not spill when tipped over. Everyone needs one of these for classroom drinking water—you can also use it for fieldwork
- **A cooperative and adventurous spirit, a curious mind, and a warm smile**
- **A couple of large (1.2 oz. or larger) glue sticks**
- **Two dark colored dry erase markers** (the thick kind – the very thin pencil or crayon size type won't work very well on our whiteboards. Due to allergies, please look for low odor markers)
- **A deck of playing cards for math time** (optional for classwork —but you'll definitely need a deck of cards for homework—and your own deck is preferable to my beat up cards)
- **Four pencils *optional***: you may also bring two mechanical pencils (I will confiscate mechanical pencils if they become too much of a distraction, but yes you may use those this year)
- **A few pencil tip erasers**
- **A personal pencil sharpener**—the kind that traps shavings—and has two sizes of holes)
- **A plastic coated pocket folder or pouch for carrying homework and other important papers back and forth from school –find a cool one that says you all over it.**
- **A book at your reading level** to read at independent reading time (if you have already read all the books you have at home, you may choose one from our bookshelf when your first get to school—I have hundreds for you to choose from)
- **A backpack to keep it all in—plan on carrying a backpack back and forth EVERY DAY (a cool satchel will also do). We have limited space, so please avoid a large backpack with wheels – you won't need to carry things heavy enough to wheel.**

Please do not bring a three ring binder – our desks are just too small for binders. They are great for organizing your homework at home, though, and you will need to have binder paper at home.

I will provide journals for everyone—we all use the same kind so that the lines are the right size.

Optional: just bring these things if you would like to have your own

- A set of headphones with a thin jack to fit an iPod Touch
- A small pencil box (not more than 6 inches tall --our desks don't have a lot of room for personal items) (the space saver kind work great). Clear zippered pouches also work especially well for storing personal items.
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, or gel pens: bring what **you** like to color with - I have big baskets of coloring tools, but not organized sets.
- An ultrafine tipped and a fine tipped Sharpie pen – if you want your own
- A basketball, football, or playground ball to share with your friends at recess