

# Frontiers Academy Trilingual Immersion Newsletter

March 2017

## Preschool Updates and Developments

**DRDP Assessment:** The DRDP is a developmental assessment tool created by the California Department of Education, Early Childhood Division. Frontiers Academy uses this with all of our preschool students, each year, to ensure they are meeting the developmental and academic benchmarks. Beginning in March, your child's Mandarin teacher will be doing the full assessment, and their Spanish and English teachers are doing the language portions only. Results will be discussed during parent teacher conferences. More info. at <https://www.desiredresults.us/families>

**Scope and Sequence:** Did you know we have a full scope and sequence of everything that is introduced, at each level, and for each language, in the office? Please feel free to check it out anytime to see the exciting things your student is learning, both this year, and in the future!

**P2B Teacher:** Zoe Lee, our current Mandarin P2B teacher, decided last Fall to return to school to further her education. She has begun classes, and unfortunately she has found that she is unable to work and focus on school the remainder of this year. Her last day at Frontiers Academy will be March 10th. We are excited that **Christina Chen**, who has been the Teacher Assistant in P2 and has previous teaching experience at a trilingual school, will be taking over the teaching beginning March 13th. The students are already used to daily interactions and teaching from Chen Laoshi, so are very confident that the transition should be a smooth one. Chen Laoshi (Christina Chen) is excited to see her career grow here at Frontiers Academy! Coming from another trilingual immersion school has given her experience in teaching a diverse group of students. She embraces the western style of teaching including hands-on learning, motivating students, and having a creative mindset.

### After-School Care:

During training last month, we focused on making some positive changes in the after-school program. **If your child stays past 3:00pm, here is their average daily schedule:**

**From 3:30-4:15pm** - Playground time: With a focus on gross motor development and social skills, the teachers have been setting up games and activities including obstacle courses, block building, yoga, hoola hooping, and more! The children are allowed to choose which activity they would like to participate in!

**From 4:15-4:45pm** - Potty/Snack: To avoid accidents, all students are required to "try" and go potty. Snack is then served, usually a combination of what is left from their lunchbox and extra morning snacks.

**From 4:45-5:30pm** - Learning Centers: With a focus on both structured and unstructured play (both which are critical in a child's development), the teachers have been setting up and overseeing centers for the children to play in. Centers may include fun things like: crayon melting, arts and crafts, cutting and gluing practice, free choice of toys, and teacher lead and guided activities.

**From 5:30-6:00pm** - Clean-up/quiet activities

### **Potty/Wash Hands Reminder:**

In order to ensure no outside germs are being brought into the classroom, and that the teachers are spending their time teaching, please take your child potty and wash their hands at school prior to dropping them off to their teacher. Thank you for your support!

### **Gross Motor Development**

Gross motor skills refer to the large muscle motor skills children need to develop. The window for these skills to develop properly is birth to age 5. Research shows that students who have not developed strong gross motor skills by the age of 5 are more likely to be isolated socially, have learning problems, speech problems, and low self-esteem. In addition to a strong academic foundation, fine motor development, social integration, and fine motor skills, Frontiers Academy is committed to the helping our students achieve strong gross motor skills as well. How does this look in school? Running, jumping, climbing, learning to catch and throw balls, balancing, and more! Of course there will be falls and bumps and bruises along the way, which is a part of childhood and the learning process, but like I always say... scrapes and cuts heal, but the skills of learning to get back up and keep moving are skills that will last a lifetime!

## **Elementary Updates and Developments**

### **Homework Expectations/Timelines**

Homework is an important part of your child's education. Our school recommends that homework be given to all students at each grade level. Teachers do their best job of educating your child when they have you, the parents/guardians as partners. Homework provides a significant opportunity for you to show your interest and to give your support.

Part of the purpose of homework is to teach responsibility to the student. Your child should assume the major responsibility for completing homework assignments. Homework expectations will be enhanced when your child accepts responsibility for:

- **Understanding the assignments before leaving school.**
- **Completing all assignments accurately.**
- **Turning in all assignments by the due date.**
- **Asking the teacher for assistance if unable to accurately complete homework assignments.**

Reading practice in English is encouraged EVERY night, especially in E1-E2 grades. Parental review of the homework is strongly encouraged. Our school guidelines suggest minimum and maximum amounts of homework, but time completion can depend on each student's attention during the lesson delivery and class work ethic to complete work on independent practice problems/assignments.

### **The following are Frontiers Academy guidelines for homework minutes:**

<b>E1</b> - English/Soc. Stu. <u>N/A</u>	<u>Mandarin 5 min</u>	<u>Spanish 5 min</u>	<u>Math/Sci. 10 min.</u>	<b>Total 20 min.</b>
<b>E2</b> - English/Soc. Stu. <u>10 min.</u>	<u>Mandarin 10 min.</u>	<u>Spanish 5 min.</u>	<u>Math/Sci. 15 min.</u>	<b>Total 40 min.</b>
<b>E3</b> - English/Soc. Stu. <u>10 min.</u>	<u>Mandarin 10 min.</u>	<u>Spanish 5 min.</u>	<u>Math/Sci. 15-20 min.</u>	<b>Total 45 min.</b>
<b>E4</b> - English/Soc. Stu. <u>10 min.</u>	<u>Mandarin 15-20 min.</u>	<u>Spanish 5 min.</u>	<u>Math/Sci. 15-20 min.</u>	<b>Total 55 min.</b>

Homework is recommended to be given by the majority of subject areas four nights a week and is not assigned over weekends (Exceptions: make-up work or possibly in

Mandarin Language) and/or before holidays. If a parent is finding their child homework completion time is regularly exceeding these time guidelines, please contact that content area teacher to let them know, and find out what might be causing that situation.

**\*Studying for exams and projects might also create greater homework study times**

**Assessment Week**

Elementary Assessments are also scheduled from **March 6<sup>th</sup> – March 8<sup>th</sup>**. It is critically important for your children to be in attendance for these summative assessments. Thank you, in advance, for your support in having your child have a proper night’s rest and a good breakfast. We want them to have the best opportunity to “show what they know” on these assessments!

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>Tuesday, March 7<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup></u>
<b>E1-E4</b>	<b>Chinese Math English Language Arts</b>	<b>Chinese Language Arts</b>	<b>Spanish Language Arts Chinese Science</b>

**Core Knowledge Language Arts/Social Studies**

There have been some recent positive decisions recommended and approved by the Board to acquire the remaining portions and materials for all levels of the English Language Arts and Social Studies Core Knowledge Program! We will be purchasing student anthologies and the grammar, vocabulary and spelling components of the program for the 17-18 school year.

Through the early years of the school instructional development, there has been a mixture of Spalding Reading and Words Their Way resources/methodologies used to instruct the children. The decision was made to increase continuity and fidelity of the integration of content areas (Social Studies, Reading, Grammar, Vocabulary development, and Spelling) as well as greater vertical (E1-E5) instructional delivery practices. Parents should see similarity of the student work format to assignments and consistent rigor building on itself from year-to-year.

**E1-E4 Weekly Testing Schedule Changes (Beginning 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester)**

Several parents expressed concern regarding multiple class tests being given to students on the same day. We certainly want to give the students the best chance of “showing what they know” on these weekly and bi-weekly quizzes. Therefore, we have determined what content areas will be assessed throughout the week. Our hope is that even though there will be one assessment given Tuesday-Friday, this will eliminate the stress of having to study for multiple subject quizzes and/or tests on the same day.

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
No Assessments	English/SS	Mandarin	Math/Sci.	Spanish

These quizzes are only one tool that our teachers will be using to assess student academic growth. Projects, class activities, and lesson participation are/will be utilized. Different assessment tools can assist the teachers with lesson pacing and reinforcement of areas of need.

**Annual Standardized Testing Update**

After further exploration, we will not be able to administer the SAT10 nationally normed referenced test this spring. We will be investigating other national assessment options for the future.

### **Character Development for Students**

We are evaluating a couple new character development programs that are used nationally, and will focus on character traits such as, not limited to: Respect, Responsibility, Compassion, and Integrity. It is our hope to have something in place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester and really build off that this upcoming year. These would create a core common value system on how we expect kids to treat each other, as well as how adults treat each other. As we progress, we will update parents on the values and put those on our website, in the classrooms and focus on those within the **whole** school day.

### **Start Time and Staff Supervision of Students**

At the elementary staff meeting this past week, we discussed the need and expectation of what student supervision should look like on a daily basis. Any staff member that starts their academic day at 8:15 am needs to be in their class, supervising students at 8:00 am working with students on social/emotional learning or conversations. There was also discussion about how children should be supervised at all times, and if there is a need for a teacher to briefly leave the room, they need to open the adjoining teacher's door and let them know she is stepping out for a moment.

### **Student Dismissal**

Please speak to your child(ren) about checking in with you right after they have been dismissed to you at the end of the day. The teachers have been asked to emphasize the same expectation, and we would request you emphasize that message, as well. There have been concerns of both staff and parents where a child has been in an area of the campus (usually visiting with friends or maybe even another teacher) before they have checked in with their parent. Please help us by reviewing the need to be safe by letting you where they will be if you are speaking to another parent or staff member.

### **Frontiers Academy Vision Statement**

*The vision of Frontiers Academy is to prepare our students to be well-educated and well-rounded global citizens, ready to engage and take an active part in their future. We achieve this through a rigorous academic program taught in a native Mandarin immersion environment, coupled with Spanish and English language arts, a STEAM focus, and all in a supportive school environment cultivating respect and responsibility. The use of a variety of assessment tools will help determine both student and school growth.*