March 5, 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are moving into the world of multiplication this week! You might be thinking: "What?! Multiplication in First Grade!" Rest assured that your child is ready to enter this unit after all the addition and subtraction experiences he/she has had this year.

Addition and subtraction can be interpreted in terms of part and whole. When a whole is made up of two parts, we add to find the whole given the two parts. We subtract to find one part given the whole and the other part.

The part-whole concepts of addition and subtraction can be extended to multiplication. We multiply to find the whole given the number of parts and the number in each part. Multiplication means putting together equal groups. In this unit, students will learn to recognize equal groups. They will count the number of groups and the number in each group. Then they will find the total number in the groups by repeated addition. Students should use mental math to do the repeated addition, not simply count on. For example, they should be able to add 4+4+4+4 by thinking "4 and 4 is 8, 8 and 4 is 12, 12 and 4 is 16" or simply "4, 8, 12, 16" adding 4 mentally each time.

It is important to note that students will not be memorizing facts until Second Grade. Our focus is to identify equal groups and use repeated addition to solve these problems. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us!

First Grade Teachers