

# Welcome to 1st Grade! Meet the 1st Grade Team



**Mrs. Dabkowski**

I am a graduate of Aquinas College with a Social Studies Major and Early Childhood Endorsement. This year will be my 17th year of teaching at Knapp following 20 years as a preschool teacher.

I love teaching first grade here at Knapp Charter Academy! I am married and have four fabulous children: Sara and her husband Teddy; Kevin and his wife Stephanie; Michael, and Jake. I also have four grandchildren Kylee, Dylan, Archie, and Sadie.

My favorite thing about teaching first grade is to witness how much each child grows and becomes a confident reader by the end of the school year! I hope to see a lot of parental support as we work together to help your child achieve and have academic success.



**Mrs. Kavaluskis**

I am a graduate of Aquinas College and hold a Bachelor's Degree of Science and Education. I have been working on getting a Master's Degree in the Art of Teaching Reading from Grand Valley State University. I have been teaching for 21 years in lower elementary. I have taught 1st grade, here at Knapp Academy, for the last 18 years. I am married and have 2 boys, ages 11 and 15. We love exploring the great outdoors and participating in sports related activities.

I love teaching at Knapp Academy! We have amazing staff, families and students. My favorite thing about teaching first grade is helping children learn to read and write. It warms my heart to see the children's pride in their reading and writing accomplishments. I also love to challenge them and help them learn independence! I look forward to working together with you to make it a successful year for your child!



**Mrs. Vankley**

Welcome to first grade! We are going to have a GREAT year together! This will be my ninth year at Knapp Charter Academy, and my sixth year teaching first grade. I am a graduate of Calvin College and I am working toward my Master's Degree in Literacy Studies (Reading Specialist) from Calvin College.

When I am not in the classroom, I enjoy reading, playing golf, making crafts, and exploring nature at our cabin up north. My husband Ryan and I will be celebrating our sixth anniversary this summer and our son will be 2 years old in August.

I hope you are enjoying your summer and spending lots of time outside in the sunshine! Don't forget to read and work on your math facts throughout the summer! I am so excited to start a new adventure with you in first grade. I know we are going to learn so much together. I can't wait to meet you! See you soon!



# 1st Grade "Highlights"

In first grade we go on field trips to the apple orchard in the fall and to the Zoo and to Frederick Meijer Garden in the spring. First grade Dads enjoy carving pumpkins with their child at Dad's Night in the Fall. In the spring we have Mom's Night. First grade Moms join us in the evening to decorate flower pots and enjoy a special snack together. Fun projects we look forward to in 1st Grade are a Book Box in March and an animal research project in May. Students can look forward to many more fun activities throughout the year as well!

## Exciting Opportunities

With school of choice, parents have an opportunity to choose a school for their child. With that in mind, parents have to look at many different aspects of a school and decide which would be the best fit for their child and allow their child to develop academically.

Knapp Academy has the best of both of these: a perfect fit for any child, and exceptional academics. Knapp teachers greet students at their doors with a warm welcome and handshake making students feel appreciated and cared for as soon as they enter the classroom. With that mindset, students feel more comfortable to express themselves, and try their best in class. Students also participate in activities where they get to know each other, respect differences, and learn from each other's strengths.

## A Standard of Excellence

The First Grade team is very focused on making sure your child meets all of their educational objectives. We take pride in giving every student the best educational experience and we do this by teaching the students at their own individual level. We work closely with one another to plan strategies and resources that will best meet the state objectives as well as the needs of our students.

## Supply List:

1 Pencil box	Headphones or earbuds for computer time
10 glue sticks	2 boxes of Kleenex
Backpack	1 roll of paper towel
15 Sharpened Pencils	1 pair of Scissors (Fiskars brand work well)
Clorox Wipes	1 box of 24 count crayons (please tape the bottom)
Spanish Supplies: Grades 1-8 need a two-pocket folder	1 ream of 8 ½ x 11 copy paper
	Tennis shoes for Gym – you may keep a pair at school

\*Please label scissors with a **name**.

\*\*The teacher will provide a **Homework** folder and a **Friday** folder.

\*\*\*Please do not send in markers, rulers, staplers, or tape.

\*\*\*\*Please discourage your child from choosing items that may be distracting to them and others in the classroom...such as toy erasers, giant pencils, etc.

***Knapp Academy** A Tuition-Free, Public School*

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