

Dear Parents,

This year my students are going to be spending time daily practicing and learning math facts, beginning in the operation of addition, subtraction, and multiplication. Our class will keep working on these facts until everyone knows all the facts in this operation instantly, without any pause before answering. We will be using a program called **rocket math**. It will take only a few minutes each day of class time, but students will keep working until they have mastered all the facts. A fact is mastered when it can be answered instantly, without any pause. **rocket math** is unique because it teaches only 2 facts and their reverses on each page. For example 6x3, 3x6, 4x5 and 5x4. The program allows each child to go at his or her own pace, taking as many days to master those two facts as needed. Students are given an opportunity daily to show they have learned a set of facts by passing a test. Once students "pass" a set of facts, they color in the letter for that set on their "Rocket Chart."

You can help your child progress and learn faster by practicing at home. Any day your child does not pass a set of facts, he/she will have that day's practice sheet to bring home as homework. It will help a great deal if you will practice with your child for five minutes with that sheet. Here's how we recommend you practice:

- ★ Your child sits with the practice sheet in front of him/her. The problems for practice go in a circle around the outside of the page and *should not* have the answers written in. You will work only these outside facts. You may wish to tape paper over the inside part. This is the test that your child took that day.
- ★ Your child reads each fact (*not just the answer*) aloud and says the answer.
- ★ If you hear either the slightest hesitation or an error on one of the facts, give your child some extra practice on that fact by immediately giving your child the answer and asking him/her to repeat the problem and the answer again.
- ★ Your child then backs up three problems and begins again.
- ★ If there is no hesitation or mistake when the problem is reached this time, be sure to praise your child and let him/her continue. Go once around the outside of the page. This should only take about five minutes. If you would like to do a second session of practice, wait at least an hour, or try it again in the morning. When working on memorizing facts, two short sessions with time in between, is much more helpful than one very long session.
- ★ Your child will be able to explain this procedure to you because it is the same that we practice in class.

Learning all the facts in an operation is a lot of work, but future success in math is dependent upon knowing facts so well that the answers come automatically without much thinking. Especially in a world of calculators, being able to compute math facts mentally is needed just to know if the calculator answer is correct. You can also help by sharing with your child the importance of learning math facts. Thank you so much for your support of this critical learning goal. I will keep you notified of your child's success in this important task.

Mrs. Eaton