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Dear Family,

Homework is an important link between learning in school and learning outside school. It can extend the work we are doing in class, provide an opportunity to practice previously learned skills, or prepare students for the next day's lesson. Here are some suggestions for making the homework experience successful for your child.

- In first grade, math homework activities might include working on a problem, playing a game we learned in class, collecting information (from family members) for a data project, or solving a story problem.
- Children will bring home the materials and directions needed to do homework activities. First graders may need your help and attention in completing these tasks—reading a problem, playing a game, being reminded of directions, and so on.
- Establish a quiet place to work (whether at home, in an afterschool program, or some other place) and a system for bringing homework back and forth to school.
- Certain materials, such as Primary Number Cards and game directions, will be used again and again throughout the year. Because they will be sent home only once, please help your child find a safe place to store their math materials—maybe in a math folder, an envelope, or a shoe box—so that he or she can easily locate and use them when needed. If your child regularly does homework in more than one place, we can talk about how to obtain the necessary materials for each place.

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- Children often use real objects to solve math problems. Please provide a collection (20–30) of small objects such as beans, buttons, or pennies for students to use at home. These can be stored in plastic bags or small containers and kept with other math materials.
- Ask questions to extend your child’s thinking. Here are some questions you might try. Notice that they require more of a response than just “yes” or “no.”
 - ◆ What do you need to find out?
 - ◆ What are you going to do first?
 - ◆ How you are solving this problem?
 - ◆ How did you get this answer?
 - ◆ Why does your answer make sense?
 - ◆ Can you explain that in a different way?

If you would like to share any thoughts with me about how your child is approaching a homework task, please feel free to send me a note. If a task seems too difficult or is confusing, please let me know so that I can address the issue in school.

I look forward to working with you throughout the year.