

September 2015!

Hello Greenland Parents and Guardians!

I am one of the new art teachers here at Greenland and I wanted to introduce myself and welcome you to the 2015-16 school year. My name is Melissa Winker and I will be teaching part of Monday, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Ms. LaGrange will be teaching most of Mondays and has extensive experience as an art educator in the district.

I am excited to join a dedicated and very positive, student-centered staff here at Greenland Elementary. I join you as a new member to the Oconomowoc teaching community, but I bring with me 14+ years of teaching life. I have taught at Memorial High School and Emerson Elementary in Madison, WI, McFarland High School, UW-Madison, and Eben Hopson Middle School in Barrow, Alaska. Prior to teaching in the public schools, I worked at a Chicago advertising agency as a graphic designer.

On a personal note, I am a proud mom of 3 great kids (of course :) ... Luci (9), Zeke (3) and Wyatt (3).

We have a 5 yr old Yorkie-Poo named Tilli and are currently caring for a sweet (& sometimes smelly) 2 month old duck, named Charlie. We love to camp, take road trips, wander on nature hikes, watch movies, and eat ice cream. We took a road trip to Mammoth Cave, the Smoky Mountains, and the shark invested waters of North Carolina this summer. We saw a mama bear with triplets, elk, deer, jellyfish, a baby shark, crabs, crawfish, an owl, an alligator, a snake, kangaroos, and lots of bugs.

On a classroom note, I strive to create a creative space where students feel comfortable taking risks, trying new ideas, and practicing new skills to continue improving as visual communicators. We will be thinking like inventors, designers, and artists in class... and hopefully outside of class! I encourage student to develop skills to problem solve and challenge themselves while learning techniques to create and decode art and design. From our Kindergarten student-artists to our wise, artist mentors in 4th grade - every student will be exploring, expressing and learning about historic and contemporary artists and designers, how colors influence how you feel, how form influences function, how to improve our realistic/observational drawing, and, of course, experience the joy of creating.

We are surrounded with art and design.... from the phones we use, movies we watch, to the clothing we buy. I hope to present a wide range of artists and designers - so that students can see the enormous influence that art & design has on their everyday world.

On a classroom wish note *If you have any of the following items around ... the art room would love them.*

We love to recycle, reinvent and create with found objects. THANK YOU - IN ADVANCE - for thinking of us.

--- cardboard tubes (small and large)

--- fabric - cotton, felt, etc...

--- yarns and threads

--- art and craft supplies, in general (pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks (not used :), child friendly paint, ...)

--- watch parts, buttons, little things... for assemblage/collage work

--- origami paper

--- old maps

--- printed paper for collage work

--- a loom! ... would love a community weaving project

--- wood blocks for building and sculpture work (precut in kid sizes)

--- **and VOLUNTEERS to help hang artwork, photograph, etc or ARTISTS that would like to help in the art room or talk about life as an artist or designer?** (photographers, designers, painters, architects, ceramicists, filmmakers, illustrators, ...)

I will be sending home notes occasionally with artwork to update you on what we have been studying, discussing, and creating in class.

**Thank you for all you do in encouraging and nurturing your young students.
It is the most important work we do.**

Sincerely,

Melissa Winker

Greenland Art Teacher

Please feel free to call or email me at any time.

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