**Tip Sheet for Chicks**

\* The Development from embryo to baby chick takes approximately 21 days. This is not an exact science some chickens may not start hatching until day 22 or 23.

\* Incubator should be stabilized at 100 and 102 degrees for a few hours (even overnight) before placing the eggs in it. Keeping the temperature in the incubator stable is the most important thing. Try to keep the temperature at 101-102 degrees if you are manually turning the eggs and the classroom is cooler at nights and weekends.

\* Some of the incubators leak so we suggest cutting about 4 Styrofoam or Dixie cups to fit and keeping water in them. Set them in the corners away from the heat element of the incubator. This will provide the humidity needed. Add warm water as soon as you plug in the incubator to make sure you get the most accurate temperature inside the incubator. Check every couple days to add more water, make sure the water being added is room temperature.

\* Mark the eggs with an X (**With Pencil**) on one side and an O on the other side. This will help determine if the eggs are turned according to the schedule. Gently put eggs in incubator.

\* ***Please make sure all students wash their hands after handling the eggs and chicks.***

**REMEMBER, THE TEMPERATURE AND MOISTURE ARE CRITICAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTHY CHICKS.** If the temp gets too high or too low the chicks may not develop properly or at all. If there is a lack of moisture the chicks may have trouble hatching.

\* Turn the eggs three times a day (except the first 24 hours and not after day 18).

\* It is important when turning the eggs that you look and make sure none of the eggs are cracked. If you see a cracked egg, or while you are candling see a crack, throw the egg away immediately. If the crack was to get larger or the egg got to hot it will bust inside your incubator. Your school will then smell like a rotten egg ☹

\* Candling is useful for determining fertility and is most accurate after 7 days.

\* Once hatched, leave the chicks in the incubator until the feathers are dry and fluffy (about 10-12 hours). **A Good Hatch Rate is 50%**

\* Transfer the chicks into a box that has paper shreds, straw, or wood chips in the bottom. **Do NOT use newspaper**. Newspaper causes the chickens to slip and that can sometimes hurt their legs. Attach a clamp lamp with a 40 or 60 watt bulb to the side of the box. Keep them at 95 degrees. If the chicks huddle together under the lamp, they are too cold and you should increase wattage or move the lamp closer. If the chicks are hovering in a corner away from the lamp, they are too hot and you should reduce wattage or elevate the lamp. After 3 or 4 days, drop the temperature to 90 degrees.

\* Provide a small jar lid of chicken feed and a shallow jar lid full of water. Placing a marble or something shiny in the water will draw the chick’s attention to it.

\* Once chicks have been in the classroom for a few days, our office will pick them up unless you find a home for them. Let us know if you need a home for your chicks.

\* Clean the bottom part of the incubator with warm sudsy water. Cleaning it out as soon as possible helps prevent stain and odor. Any eggs left in the incubator can be disposed of in the trash. Placing strong paper towels or cheese cloth under the screen on day 18 when you stop turning them can help make clean up much easier.

\* Please remember to have the incubators and all other Materials to the school office by 9:00am on the date requested. Pick-ups begin early because we sometimes visit as many as 20 schools in one day. Your cooperation in having the materials ready for pick up and in the school office saves us a great deal of time and is much appreciated.

\* If you have questions, please refer to the teacher notebook. It contains very helpful information. If you can’t find the answer, feel free to give us a call at 232-0062 ext. 112.

**Video Resources**

I have found a Magic School Bus Video on YouTube called “Magic School Bus Cracks a Yolk.” This is a really great video to have your students watch.