

Oakview Elementary School
Student/Parent Handbook

2017-18 School Year



Oakview Elementary School

Student/Parent Handbook

TRANSFERS

Please contact the office as soon as possible when planning to move; our administrative assistant will provide you with information on how to proceed to make the move as smooth as possible.

ATTENDANCE

Oakview School maintains high expectations for attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance and punctuality enables students to benefit from well-planned and well-delivered instructional activities, including classroom discussions, presentations and cooperative activities. These shared academic experiences are integral to the learning process and cannot be re-created or replicated. In order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each child, the process of education requires continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences and study.

Attendance and punctuality play a significant role in a student's success at school and are essential life skills. However, the overwhelming majority of children become ill at some point during the school year. Given that we do not want to add an additional stressor to those that are sick, ***we do not recognize students for perfect or near perfect attendance.*** We have found that in many cases, promoting perfect and near perfect attendance results in sick students, who are often contagious, attending school.

TARDY: A child not in the classroom by 8:55AM is considered late. When your child is going to be tardy, please call the Oakview absentee line at 845-1856 (select prompt 2). Students, who are tardy for school, will be required to be signed in the Main Office by an adult upon arrival.

ABSENCE: When your child is going to be absent, please call the Oakview absentee line, *before 8:45 AM*, at 845-1856 (select prompt 2). It will be necessary for school staff to call home if a note or a phone call from a parent/guardian does not verify a child's absence. A note with a parent's signature explaining the nature of the absence is required upon the first day of return; *however, only a doctor's note will excuse the absence.*

TRUANCY: Per Board policy 5200 and New Jersey state compulsory education statutes §18A:38 and § 6A:16-7.8(a)4, all children between the ages of 6-16 are legally required to attend school. *The state attendance regulation §16:6-7.8 mandates court referral for truant students who have ten or more cumulative unexcused absences.*

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The hours at Oakview School are 8:55 AM to 3:10 PM. The AM Preschool/Pre-K session is from 8:55 to 11:25, and the PM session is 12:40 to 3:10. On half-days, AM Preschool/Pre-K begins at 8:55 and dismisses at 10:55; PM session is 10:55-12:55 on these days. There is no supervision before the students begin to arrive at 8:45 AM. Any student arriving prior to that time is encouraged to enroll in the Young Eagles morning childcare program.

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STUDENT DROP-OFF (AM)

In the interests of safety, parents dropping their child off to school during the supervised window of time (8:45-8:55AM) should drop their child off at the main (front) entrance. **Please stay behind the buses and wait to drop off your child at the front doors. Please do not park next to or in front of the buses.** A staff member will always be present to receive your child to ensure that traffic keeps moving and buses aren't being unnecessarily delayed. All Preschool/Pre-K students will be dropped off and picked up around the side entrance with the green canopy.

Any child arriving after 9:00 AM is considered late and must be escorted, through the main (front) entrance, by a parent to be signed in.

STUDENT PICKUP (PM)

If you plan to pick your child up during dismissal, it is imperative that a note be sent in to the teacher to ensure the student does not ride the bus. The venue for parent pickup is the main foyer. Parents are welcome to arrive as early as 3:00 PM. Children being picked up will be dismissed to the main foyer at 3:10 PM. You will be required to sign your child out; please be prepared to present identification. Please note that students participating in the *Young Eagles Program (YEP)* must sign out with the YEP staff.

YOUNG EAGLES PROGRAM

The Young Eagles Program (YEP) operates concurrently with the school calendar and is supervised by qualified staff. The YEP accommodates working parents by providing childcare before and after school within a flexible schedule. Homework help, athletic activities and arts and crafts are offered in an informal setting. For information on registration, cost and availability, contact Mrs. Sue Iraldi, YEP Coordinator, at 848-4300 ext. 3218.

EARLY DISMISSAL

As a general guideline, children should not leave school during school hours, except for an emergency. We do recognize that scheduling a doctor's or dentist's appointment during the school day is sometimes unavoidable. In such cases a note should be sent to the child's teacher and the parent must come to the office to sign the child out of school. For security purposes, we ask that parents be prepared to present identification to the office staff.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING/ DELAY/ OPENING

- ▶ If adverse weather conditions cause a cancellation of school, *School Messenger*, the district emergency automated phone/email/text system, will be activated to provide the information, as well as posted on Twitter (@OVELEM) and Facebook (Oakview Elementary). Word of the closing will also be sent to local, Philadelphia radio (KYW 1060) and television stations for announcement. West Deptford's code number is **804**.
- ▶ For one-hour delays, AM Preschool/Pre-K will be dismissed one hour later; for two-hour delays, AM Preschool/Pre-K will be canceled and a makeup day will be provided.
- ▶ Closing school early due to inclement weather is avoided as much as possible. However, please discuss your family's emergency plan with your children just in case safety dictates an early dismissal. We will attempt to make contact with *School Messenger*.

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ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Differentiated instruction is integral to the way the West Deptford School District structures learning for all students. Differentiation is an instructional approach for each elementary grade level without “walls or ceilings” for students, ensuring that each student is challenged by a variety of instructional strategies suited to his/her achievement and ability levels, learning styles and interests. All students are nurtured and encouraged to learn and grow to their full potential.

The elementary curriculum emphasizes total child development—cognitive, affective, social and physical. The curriculum is directed by a 5-year plan, which ensures that all programs are reviewed. This plan considers the Common Core Curriculum Standards approved by the New Jersey Department of Education. It is developed and implemented through input from teachers and administrators, ensuring that all programs represent current theory and practice and reflect high expectations of students.

CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

The West Deptford School District cannot honor requests from parents for placement with a particular teacher or class. However, each spring, the overwhelming majority of our first grade parents opt-in to our looping program for second grade. That said, our Kindergarten parents, and parents of those that opted out of the looping program for second grade, are encouraged to provide the principal with written feedback outlining their child’s strengths, areas of need as well as the optimal classroom environment (e.g., structured, nurturing).

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

Report cards, interim progress reports and parent-teacher conferences are the primary means by which to inform parents of a child’s progress in school. Report cards are issued by trimester.

Oakview School is committed to effective communications between students, teachers and parents. Conferences will be held twice a year. Additional conferences may be initiated, as needed, by parents or teachers throughout the year. If you think your child is experiencing academic, social or emotional issues, please do not wait for the regularly scheduled conferences—call your child’s teacher as soon as possible.

HOMEWORK

Homework is the opportunity for students to practice specific skills, extend learning, remediate learning, to provide enrichment and to complete assignments not completed in class.

Furthermore, it is important for students to develop a sense of responsibility for their learning. Teachers and parents are important partners in helping students learn this responsibility. Taking into consideration the benefits of regular homework and how it can enhance the children’s education, Oakview is committed to setting clear expectations for homework and communicating those expectations to students and their families.

MAKE-UP HOMEWORK FOR ABSENCES: When your child is out sick, we encourage you to request make-up work; however, please make the request as early as possible. Given the time required to organize make-up work, requests received after 10:30 AM cannot be honored.

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CHARACTER EDUCATION

Character Education is a lifelong developmental process by which children learn and apply core ethical or shared values to their lives. The New Jersey Department of Education has identified the following 6 Pillars of Character Education—*Responsibility, Fairness, Citizenship, Caring, Trustworthiness and Respect*—which are interwoven throughout the core content curriculum. Many of our activities/events will have the 6 Pillars of Character Education themes embedded.

ART

Creative expression is a universal component of human culture. Art education addresses the needs of the whole child. Exposing children to rich and artistic works will enable them to celebrate and appreciate cultural differences and similarities. The art program at Oakview will encourage problem solving, concentration, self-discipline, cooperation and individuality while affording children both verbal and nonverbal avenues for communication and allowing them choices for self-expression.

MUSIC

Music classes at Oakview expose every child to a musical learning environment that is positive. Students receive age appropriate lessons that consist of kinesthetic, visual and aural experiences. Through the playing of instruments, reading of music and other multi-tasking abilities, students learn to work together as a team to achieve a common goal. These experiences provide our children with an enriching appreciation for the arts as well as a positive outlet for growth.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education is an integral part of Oakview's instructional program. All students are afforded the opportunity to participate in physical and health-related activities on a weekly basis that improve health, fitness, motor skill development, safety practices, positive social skills, team building and sportsmanship—just to name a few areas of emphasis!

LIBRARY AND MEDIA CENTER

The Oakview Media Center is an exciting haven where books come alive! Children are encouraged to explore the library. Information literate individuals are responsible, lifelong users of information, capable of accessing, organizing, evaluating and communicating in all forms.

TECHNOLOGY

The West Deptford School District is committed to the infusion of technology into all aspects of the educational program, making the use of technology natural to the educational experience and inherent to the way students work and think, in and beyond the classroom.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Building a life-long love of learning, through a climate of support and encouragement, is an ongoing goal at Oakview. Activities are planned to support our core curriculum, character education and citizenship skills. Many clubs target developmental needs specific to our student population, and they are scheduled throughout the year.

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STUDENTS FIRST COMMITTEE (Intervention & Referral Services)

Oakview School operates a multidisciplinary Students First Committee comprised of a cross-section of professional staff members. The Students First Committee offers teachers and parents with a means of drawing on the resources of both the individual school and the larger district in an effort to assist students experiencing academic, behavioral, social, or emotional difficulty. Any staff member or parent may request that a child's needs be considered by the Students First Committee. This process is the mechanism by which district educational support services can be accessed to assist in providing success for all students.

GIFTED PROGRAM

Gifted academic programming is based on student needs, beginning in third grade. In general, many of our students have an elevated achievement level, so most of their needs are met within the regular classroom. A variety of adaptations and modifications are made by the classroom teacher, including tiered assignments and enrichment opportunities. Once the children enter second grade, our gifted teacher provides enrichment experiences.

CHILD STUDY TEAM SERVICES

The Child Study Team (CST) is a group of specialists employed by the West Deptford School District to provide consultative, evaluative and prescriptive services to teachers, parents and students. The CST, along with the school principal and the Students First Committee, make recommendations for programs and placements that best address the needs of students who experience school-related difficulties.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Not too long ago, school guidance services were provided only to children experiencing serious problems. Oakview and Red Bank share a full time counselor who provides a broad spectrum of services that focuses on educating the whole child—living in family, school and community systems—to produce positive educational outcomes.

HEALTH SERVICES

Our school nurse, is available if your child becomes sick or injured during the school day. Parents will be notified if the situation cannot be remedied by simple first aid. **It is very important that all the information on the student data sheet is correct so that parents can be contacted in an emergency.** If any information changes, particularly parents' cell phone numbers, please notify the school nurse so that we may reach you when you are needed.

Any medication, including over-the-counter medication, that needs to be taken during the school day, must be in the original container and requires **written authorization from the parent and a physician. All medication must be delivered directly to the nurse by a parent. Children cannot transport medication.**

Physical exams are required of all new enrollees as well as students in kindergarten. Physicals must be completed by the student's family physician.

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CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Any knowledge or suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect must be reported immediately to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. Failure of a staff member to make a report is a violation of the law. All information is kept confidential. The building principal, school nurse and school counselor have further information relating to this process.

SCHOOL CITIZENSHIP

The goal with regard to school discipline is to help children learn to regulate their own behavior. We try to take into account the developmental level of students and teach certain behaviors given our young population. Mistakes are an opportunity for children to learn more about themselves and their place in the world; positive behavior is an opportunity for recognition.

We seek to develop in students a sense of responsibility that causes them to interact appropriately with one another in a way that provides a safe environment for all. A safe environment, in turn, creates a climate that is conducive to learning. Our concern for safety is not limited to the physical environment, but includes caring for others and fostering social competency, positive values and a positive identity.

While we don't have a formal dress code at the elementary level, we do require students to wear clothes that are appropriate, modest and safe. Examples of inappropriate and/or unsafe dress include hats, open sandals, shoes without heel straps, bare midriffs and t-shirts with provocative images or slogans.

As a general rule, personal property that exceeds \$20 in value should remain at home. These items include—Nintendo DS's, iPads, tablets, etc. Too often, personal property is damaged or lost, which can create a significant distraction from the learning process.

TRANSPORTATION/ BUS SAFETY

Bus transportation is provided for all students where walking conditions have been determined to be hazardous. Transportation provided by West Deptford Board of Education is a privilege, and as such, proper bus behavior is expected and required. Two bus evacuation drills are scheduled during the school year.

Students must ride the bus to which they have been assigned. Students are required to be picked up and dropped off at the same location all five days. Please note that 48 hours-notice is required for a permanent bus change.

BUS SAFETY	
BE SAFE	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself while buckled at all times.
	Keep the aisle clear and remain in your assigned seat.
	Absolutely no food is to be eaten on the bus.
BE RESPECTFUL	Obey the bus driver's instructions.
	Treat others with kindness, and always use appropriate language.
BE RESPONSIBLE	Report problems and always use an indoor voice.

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BICYCLES

Given the age of our students and the safety hazards involved, bicycles may not be ridden as a means of transportation to school by our students.

PUPIL RECORDS

Your child's records contain only information that is relevant to their education and is objectively based on personal observation of the originator of the record. Parents and children have a right to privacy and the right to know concerning information gathered by the school. If you wish to see your child's records, please make an appointment with the principal.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

The kitchen serves a cold breakfast and a complete hot lunch program; however, students may bring a lunch from home. Milk may be purchased separately. If your child has forgotten a lunch, the cafeteria staff will provide one, please send in the money the next day or enter payment into the web based program at PayForIt.net.

Children who are in need will be provided a lunch. Students in need of such assistance will be determined by the criteria issued by the state of New Jersey. Eligibility requirements and application for free and reduced price meals are distributed to all students annually.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Special treats for your child's birthday may be brought into school. We would just ask that you notify the teacher at least one day in advance and select treats that can be easily distributed (e.g., treats that don't require cutting such as cookies or cupcakes). Parents are always welcome at Oakview; however, we prefer to keep birthday celebrations "low-key," so we ask that you refrain from sending in special visitors, balloons and presents. Treats must be dropped off in the main office.

Invitations to birthday parties may only be distributed in school if **all the children in class are being invited** to avoid hurt feelings and the resulting distractions to the education process.

Please Note: If your child is assigned to a peanut or tree nut free classroom, no items containing nuts or nut oil can be brought into the school. Accordingly, our school nurse, will inspect any food items (with an ingredient label attached) before being taken to the classroom.

VISITORS

As mentioned above, parents are always welcome to visit Oakview School, but as a matter of courtesy, the classroom teacher should be notified in advance. All Oakview visitors must register in the main office and receive a self-adhesive visitor's pass. The pass must be worn at all times while in the building.

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EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

It is essential for your child's health and safety that the school has a telephone number of someone who is to be contacted, and who is available to pick up your child in the event of illness, injury, or early dismissal. Parents are reminded that if they change their home, work, or emergency contact numbers, the school nurse and main office should be notified immediately.

DRILLS: FIRE DRILLS, EVACUATION AND LOCKDOWN

There will be two emergency drills conducted per month as required by the state statute; one fire drill and one school security drill (evacuations, lockdowns, etc.).

An auditory and visual alarm will signal the need to evacuate the building. Students will follow the directions given to them by staff members. A map indicating the nearest exit is posted in every room.

Lock down drills will also be scheduled throughout the year. The purpose is to account for all the students and staff and move them to a safe place in case of emergency. They will be tactfully and sensitively discussed with the children prior to the drills.

PARENT INFORMATION

▶ Monthly Letters

Mr. Dougherty will send out a newsletter each month via School Messenger. The newsletter will review activities that occurred in the previous month and highlight important dates/events that will occur in the upcoming month. Please make sure your email addresses are updated so you can receive these important letters.

▶ Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year, once in the fall and again in the spring. If you think your child is having a problem or you have a concern, please contact the teacher at any time. Parents are urged to utilize conferences to establish an active communication that will assist in the progress of their child.

▶ Social Media Accounts

Oakview is now on both Facebook (Oakview Elementary) and Twitter (@OVELEM). Please follow us on both accounts for up-to-date photos, news, and events.

▶ Parent Teacher Organization

The mission of the West Deptford Elementary PTO—is to enhance and enrich our children's academic experience by inspiring parents and teachers to work together to build a strong school community. Parental involvement is critical to a child's success in school, and we encourage all parents to show their support for their children by getting involved in the PTO. While many PTO programs require parental participation during school hours, there are many activities that are flexible and can be managed after hours. We want every child to have the opportunity to benefit from a sense a pride in his/her parents' involvement in the school. Please join us as we work together for the benefit of our children. For additional information, please refer to the PTO website, which is linked to the Oakview homepage.

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WEBSITE

Oakview has an extensive website that can be accessed at:

<http://wdeptfordoes.ss9.sharpschool.com/>

We encourage you to visit often to review information about our school, students and staff, including an individual web page for each teacher that includes daily homework assignments, special announcements, reminders, etc.

CALENDAR

We keep our school community well-informed regarding important dates, events and activities through a multitude of channels. In addition to maintaining a dynamic calendar on the school website, coming events are provided via the monthly newsletter and reminder flyers sent through our student take home folder system.

When an emergent or time-sensitive change is made to the school schedule or event, we will initiate our *School Messenger* automated phone/email/text system to ensure that the information is sent out quickly and efficiently.

Given that many school events (e.g., music concert and field days) and all PTO meetings and activities are being scheduled after the publication of this Student/Parent Handbook, please be sure to check the school website regularly, and be on the lookout for the monthly newsletters and reminder flyers.

BEST WISHES FOR A FUN-FILLED, SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL YEAR!