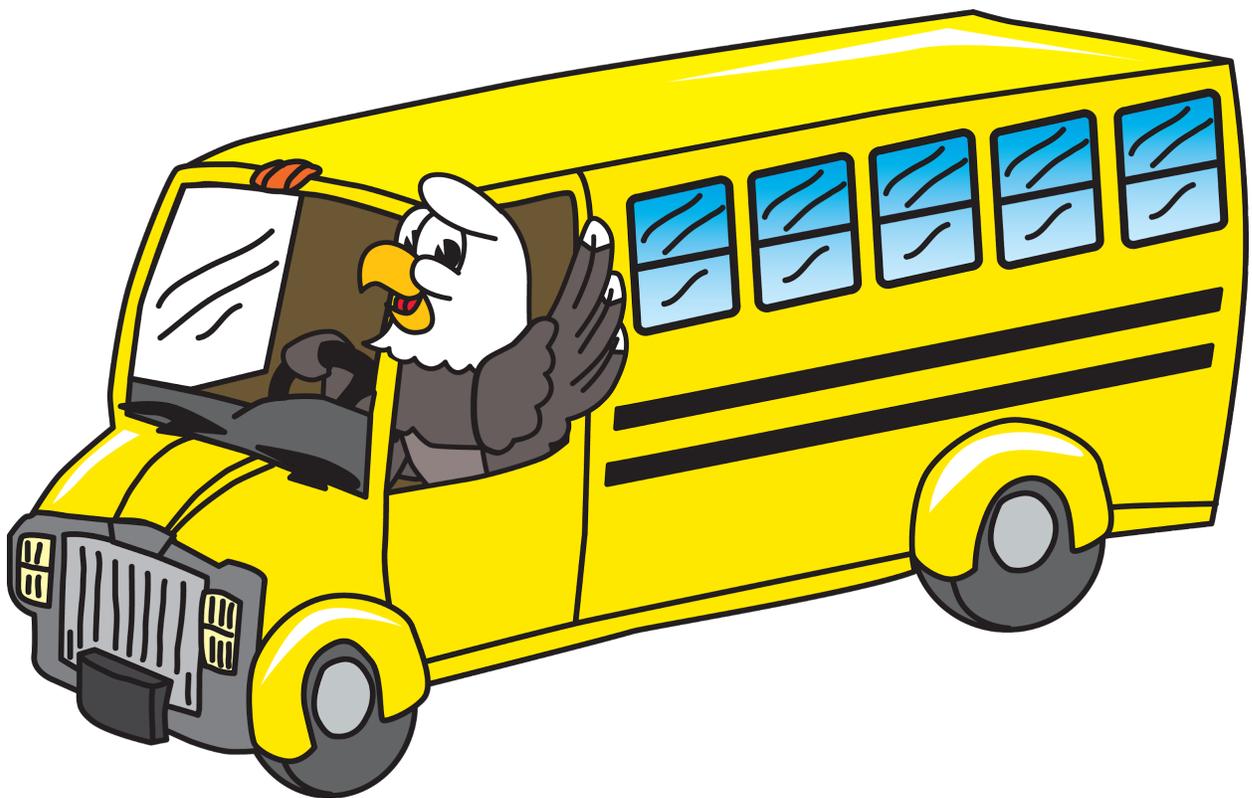


Oakview Elementary School



Student & Family Handbook
2023-2024

Where Childhood is a Journey...Not a Race!



LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Oakview Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! Oakview Elementary School consists of preschool through second-grade classes and is home to over 400 students. The Oakview staff is dedicated to working collaboratively to provide engaging instruction that promotes curiosity and instills life-long learners. We continue to focus on developing the whole child by providing all students with the opportunity to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. While working in partnership with our families, we strive to connect as a community to enrich the lives of our youth. Together we hold the key to a successful school year! We encourage families to use this handbook and the school website as a resource to familiarize themselves with our academics, expectations, and procedures.

Sincerely,
Laura Sandy

Principal
Oakview Elementary School
350 DuBois Avenue
West Deptford, NJ 08096
Main Office Telephone Number: (856) 845-1856
Fax Number: (856) 845-3241

District Website: <https://www.wdeptford.k12.nj.us/>
School Website: <https://oes.wdeptford.k12.nj.us/>
Follow us on Twitter: @OVELEM <https://twitter.com/ovelem>
Follow us on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/Oakview-1551556508493655/>



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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 New Jersey Student Learning 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.

ABSENCE

When your child is going to be absent, please call the Oakview absentee line, *before 8:45 AM*, at 856-845-1856 (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. Please review the district’s attendance regulation regarding excused and unexcused absences. ([link](#))

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

The hours for kindergarten through second-grade students at Oakview Elementary School are 9:10 AM to 3:45 PM. The hours for Mrs. Lex and Mrs. Costino’s preschool classes are 9:10 AM to 3:45 PM. Mrs. Grasty’s preschool class attends from 9:35 AM until 3:45 PM.

Doors will open at 8:55 AM daily for preschoolers in Mrs. Lex and Mrs. Costino’s class and all kindergartners through second-grade students; therefore, no supervision is provided prior to this arrival time. Any student arriving prior to that time is encouraged to enroll in the Young Eagles morning childcare program.

Doors will open at 9:25 AM daily for preschool students in Mrs. Grasty’s class; therefore, no supervision is provided prior to this arrival time.



	PRESCHOOL - 2nd GRADE	PRESCHOOL (Mrs. Grasty Only)
FULL DAY	9:10 AM - 3:45 PM	9:35 AM - 3:45 PM
HALF DAY	9:10 AM - 1:30 PM	9:35 AM - 1:30 PM

Please refer to the [2023-2024 West Deptford School District Calendar](#) for a detailed schedule of student days.

AM: STUDENT DROP-OFF

In the interests of safety, parents/guardians dropping their child off to school during the supervised window of time (8:55 AM - 9:10 AM for preschool through second-grade classes; 9:25-9:35 AM for Mrs. Grasty’s preschool) should drop their child off at the main (front) entrance. A staff member will always be present to receive your child to ensure that traffic keeps moving and buses are not being unnecessarily delayed.

Please do not park next to or in front of the buses. This measure is done for the safety of our children and will be enforced.

Any preschool through second-grade student arriving after 9:10 AM is considered late and must be escorted, through the main (front) entrance, by a parent/guardian to be signed in. Students in Mrs. Grasty’s preschool class that arrive after 9:35 AM are considered late and must be escorted, through the main (front) entrance, by a parent/guardian to be signed in.

PM: STUDENT PICKUP

There are 4 ways students are dismissed at the end of the day at Oakview Elementary School:

1. bus riders
2. walkers (determined by school district)
3. parent/guardian pickups
4. Young Eagles Program (YEP)

If you plan to pick your child up from dismissal, it is imperative that a note be sent to the teacher to ensure the student does not ride the bus. Parents/guardians are welcome to arrive as early as 3:30 PM at the blacktop near the side playground. In order to sign out a student, you will be required to present identification. Please note that students participating in the *Young Eagles Program* (YEP) must sign out with the YEP staff.

STUDENT EARLY PICKUP

A student who needs to leave school early for a legitimate reason must submit a note from his/her parent/guardian to the classroom teacher, indicating the child’s name, classroom, and the day and time that s/he must leave school. The classroom teacher will forward the



parent/guardian note to the Main Office in the morning. A contact telephone number should be included in the note as the Main Office may need to verify the note via a telephone call. Parents/guardians should have photo identification ready to present and report to the office to pick up their child to officially sign them out of school. The student will then meet his/her parent/guardian in the Main Office at the designated time. If for some reason the parent/guardian picking up his/her child is running late, kindly call the office.

ATTENDANCE

Oakview Elementary School maintains high expectations for attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance and punctuality enable 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.***

BICYCLES

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

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Board of Education has a food nutrition policy ([LINK](#)) based upon recommendations from the District Wellness Committee and in accordance with state regulations (N.J.A.C. 2:36-1.7). One of these recommendations called for the reduction of food consumption outside of the designated lunch periods. To this end, parents/guardians **will not be allowed to bring in any food products for student birthday celebrations.** We will still continue to celebrate student birthdays and we are hopeful that this change will ensure that students eat a nutritious lunch. Your cooperation regarding this change is greatly appreciated.

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

Please Note: All classrooms will be peanut and tree nut-free, no items containing nuts or nut oil can be brought into the classroom. Therefore, students' snacks that are eaten in the classroom must be peanut and tree nut-free. Accordingly, our staff (school nurse or teachers) will inspect any food items (with an ingredient label attached) before consumption in the



classroom.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH INFORMATION

The kitchen serves a cold and hot breakfast and lunch program; however, students may bring 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 the payment into the web-based program at PaySchoolsCentral.com.

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

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, along with a few others. Oakview also recognizes the importance of recognizing students demonstrating good character and has a student of the month award in each classroom, as well as a “bucket filler” system where students and staff can recognize one another weekly for random acts of kindness.

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.

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/guardians, 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.

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 competence, positive values, and a positive identity.

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

CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

The West Deptford School District cannot honor requests from parents/guardians for placement with a particular teacher or class. All parents/guardians will be notified in mid-August as to who their child's teacher will be when they receive our summer email from the principal.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Oakview Elementary School Code of Student Conduct is in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff. You can view the entire code on the school's website ([LINK](#)).

COMMUNICATION

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 and coming events are provided via the weekly newsletter.

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.

It is essential that the school has the 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/guardians are reminded that if they change their home, work, or emergency contact numbers, the school nurse and main office should be notified immediately.

Weekly Family Newsletters will be sent out 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 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/guardians are urged to utilize conferences to establish active communication that will assist in the progress of their child.

Social Media is also a wonderful way to stay connected with our school. Oakview is on both Facebook (Oakview Elementary) and Twitter (@OVELEM). Please follow us on both accounts for up-to-date photos, news, and events.

DRILLS: FIRE DRILLS & SECURITY DRILLS

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.). Oakview families will be provided with an email notifying them after a security drill has taken place.

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.

Lockdown 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. In the event of an emergency where the entire school needs to evacuate the premises, we will follow our district reunification plan where all students will be transported to River Winds Community Center to be reunified with their parents/guardians.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

DELAYED OPENING

If adverse weather conditions cause a delayed opening or 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), local radio and television stations.

EARLY CLOSING

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*.



FIELD TRIPS & FIELD DAY

Field trips will be considered as instruction and planned as such, with definite objectives determined in advance. Appropriate instruction will precede and follow each trip. Students are expected to dress appropriately and to conduct themselves courteously at all times during field trips. All school rules are in effect during field trips. **All students attending field trips must ride district-appointed transportation to the trip location and back to school. Parents/guardians can only sign out their child once transportation has returned to school.**

Field day will provide students with the opportunity to interact through various activities that reinforce sportsmanship, teamwork, and physical activity. Families will have the opportunity to sign up to volunteer to support the activities during field day. No more than three volunteers will be randomly selected from each class's sign up. No additional spectators are permitted to attend field day.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION & BULLYING

All persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Bullying is conduct that subjects a pupil to insults, taunts, or challenges, whether verbal or physical in nature, which is likely to intimidate or provoke a violent or disorderly response from the student being treated in this way. Conduct constituting bullying will be promptly addressed in the most appropriate manner. It is the policy of the Board of Education and school district that harassment, intimidation, and bullying activities are inconsistent with the educational process and will be prohibited at all times (Reference Board Policy [#5512](#)).

HEALTH SERVICES

Our school nurse is available if your child becomes sick or injured during the school day. Parents/guardians will be notified if the situation cannot be remedied by simple first aid. **It is very important that all the student's information in PowerSchool is correct so that parents/guardians can be contacted in an emergency.** If any information changes, particularly parents'/guardians' 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/guardian and a physician. All medication must be delivered directly to the nurse by a parent/guardian. 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.



HOMEWORK

Homework is the opportunity for students to practice specific skills, extend learning, remediate learning, 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/guardians are important partners in helping students learn this responsibility. Taking into consideration the benefits of regular homework and how it can enhance children's education, Oakview is committed to setting clear expectations for homework and communicating those expectations to students and their families.

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 may not be honored.

LATE/TARDY

Kindergarten through second-grade students are marked late if they are not in the classroom by 9:10 AM. Preschool students in Mrs. Grasty's class that are not in the classroom by 9:35 AM are considered late. When your child is going to be tardy, please call the Oakview absentee line at 856-845-1856 (select prompt 2). Students who are tardy for school will be required to sign in by an adult in the main office upon arrival.

LOST & FOUND

Found items will be sent to the Lost and Found container placed in the Main Office. Valuable items (watches, rings, electronics, money, etc.) are secured in a separate location in the Main Office. Students are encouraged to check the Lost and Found as soon as they realize an item is missing. Parents/guardians and students should label important personal items such as coats, jackets, book bags, etc. Items not claimed before winter break and again before spring break and again at the end of the school year will be donated to a local organization.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The mission of the West Deptford Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is to enhance and enrich our children's academic experience by inspiring parents/guardians 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/guardians 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 of pride in his/her parents'/guardians' 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.



RELATED ARTS/ENCORE

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.

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.

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/HEALTH

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 improves health, fitness, motor skill development, safety practices, positive social skills, team building, and sportsmanship—just to name a few areas of emphasis!

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.



RELATED SERVICES

COACHING SERVICES

The Math and Reading coaches provide services for identified students needing additional academic assistance in the area of math and/or reading.

COUNSELING SERVICES

School Counseling helps students to strengthen their self-concepts, enhance their ability to solve life problems, and explore positive attitudes. Oakview Elementary School has a full-time counselor who provides a broad spectrum of services that focuses on educating the whole child—living in a family, school, and community system—to produce positive educational outcomes.

ELL (ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS)

The primary goal of our English as a Second Language (ESL) program is the development of essential skills that will enable the student to function successfully in the mainstream of American schools and society. ESL instruction is an integrated process of developing useful and necessary communication skills.

GIFTED & TALENTED PROGRAM

Gifted academic programming is based on student needs, beginning in kindergarten. 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 kindergarten, our gifted teacher provides enrichment experiences.

SPEECH & LANGUAGE/OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Our Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy department's mission is to ensure that all students have access to quality services to help them effectively communicate. A student's IEP determines how often a student receives services.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

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

Oakview Elementary School is committed to effective communications between students, teachers, and parents/guardians. Conferences will be held twice a year. Additional conferences may be initiated, as needed, by parents/guardians 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.

STUDENTS FIRST COMMITTEE (INTERVENTION & REFERRAL SERVICES)

Oakview Elementary School operates a multidisciplinary Students First Committee which comprises a cross-section of professional staff members. The Students First Committee offers teachers and parents/guardians 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/guardian 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.

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.

TRANSPORTATION/ BUS SAFETY

Bus transportation is provided for all students where walking conditions have been determined to be hazardous. Transportation provided by the 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 RULES

BE SAFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Obey the bus driver’s instructions.● Treat others with kindness, and always use appropriate language.
BE RESPONSIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Report problems and always use an indoor voice.



TRUANCY & CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

The West Deptford Board of Education ([Policy 5200](#)) and New Jersey state compulsory education law (N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28) requires 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.*

Student absenteeism can lead to low academic achievement, dropping out of school, delinquency, and gang involvement. School districts that have established multi-systemic approaches and policies pertaining to student absenteeism typically experience fewer numbers of dropouts and a greater number of graduates.

VISITORS

Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit Oakview Elementary School, but as a matter of courtesy, the classroom teacher and main office should be notified in advance. All Oakview visitors must register in the main office by showing their ID in order receive a visitor's lanyard. The lanyard must be worn at all times while in the building.

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/guardians 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. Denise Redstreak, at 856-848-4300 ext. 3212.

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