

PEARL S. BUCK Elementary School



Family-Student
Handbook
2015-2016

PEARL S. BUCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
143 Top Road, Levittown, PA 19056

September, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome back to a new school year at Pearl S. Buck Elementary School! I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new and returning families. The staff and I are looking forward to another great year working with you and your children. We will strive to continue to provide an exciting and rewarding educational program for each and every child at Pearl Buck Elementary School.

We would like to take this opportunity to acquaint you with some routine procedures and practices of Pearl Buck Elementary School, as well as policies adopted by the school board. The updated Pearl Buck Family/ Student Handbook will guide you throughout the year. Please keep it in a convenient place for easy reference.

The staff members at Pearl Buck take great pride in their work. They are dedicated and hard working, and they care deeply about the children with whom they work each and every day. We believe that we have an incredible opportunity to help students learn how to learn and learn how to live. We take that job seriously and put 100% into the challenge of influencing and motivating students with diverse personalities, strengths, and talents. It is a big job, but one that is part of what we do as caring and dedicated educators.

Please feel free to call or stop by with any questions or comments. I thank you for your continued support and look forward to seeing all of you at any of our school-wide events, activities, and programs.

Sincerely,

Brian Kern

Brian Kern, Principal

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AMBASSADORS

These 4th grade students help incoming Buck students get better acquainted with their school. Student Ambassadors are representatives for our school for various activities throughout the school year. They will also work under the direction a staff member to coordinate safety procedures throughout the building at dismissal. Through helping others, these students grow and learn values to become more productive citizens.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

Two days are set-aside in November for parents to visit the classroom and see their child in a learning situation. Please refer to our website calendar for this year's visitation dates. An invitation will be sent home with your child as the event approaches. We urge you to get a baby sitter if you have small children.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

Neshaminy School District is required by law to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information about accessible facilities and reasonable accommodations available to disabled individuals attending District activities or programs, please contact the office of Pupil Services, (215-809-6588). Please contact said office at least 72 hours prior to any District activity or program so that all necessary arrangements can be made to accommodate disabled individuals.

BICYCLES (Skateboards, Scooters, Rollerblades)

Students are discouraged from riding bicycles to school. Bicycles have been stolen during the school day. The school cannot be responsible for bicycles that are damaged, lost or stolen. Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades and wheelies may not be brought to school. Students who ride a bicycle to school must wear a helmet.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Children often appreciate very simple ideas which celebrate their birthdays in school. Parents may send in a small snack for the class to enjoy, or donate a book to the library in honor of a child's birthday. Please contact your child's teacher to determine if there are any specific food allergies with students and to coordinate the delivery and quantity. In addition, *invitations for home birthday parties must be delivered to classmates by US mail unless every child in the classroom is invited.*

BUS STUDENTS

Bus children are to ride their assigned bus **both to and from school**. They are to get off at the same stop as they got on when coming to school. Please speak with your child about the proper behavior at a bus stop and on the bus. Any request to change a bus student's routine of getting to school or home should be placed in writing to the principal.

Children are expected to show the same respect to bus drivers as that afforded to their parents and Pearl Buck Staff. Repeated infractions of the bus rules may necessitate temporary or

permanent denial of bus privileges. The bus driver will familiarize your child with the bus rules. Students should recognize that the bus and bus stop are still considered to be part of their school day and are therefore subject to the expectations and consequences listed in the Pearl Buck Elementary School Discipline Code.

CAFETERIA

Your child is scheduled for a thirty minute lunch period each day. They may take longer if necessary. Cafeteria aides supervise the cafeteria. We would like to make the cafeteria as pleasant an eating place as possible. We do need the children reasonably quiet for the last five minutes of the lunch period for the purpose of taking back their trays and to line up to be dismissed.

1. Stay seated unless permission has been received to get up to purchase lunch, throw out trash or go to the restroom.
2. Walk at all times. This is important in keeping students safe at all times.
3. Keep your area clean. This requires children to look on, under and around the location where they are seated. Notify an adult when a spill occurs.
4. Maintain an appropriate noise level. While it is understood that eating lunch is a social experience, students are asked to speak to those nearby and not yell across tables or across the cafeteria.
5. Be respectful. The staff will be teaching expected behaviors at the beginning of the school year and reinforcing expectations throughout the year.

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CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

It is insisted upon that students take proper care of school property. Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued to them during the school year. Textbooks must be covered. Lost or damaged books must be paid for at a price determined by school personnel based upon condition, age, current pricing and replacement cost. In the event that a child should lose or destroy any school property, restitution must be made.

CELL PHONE POLICY

In this day of technology and communications, it is not uncommon for students to have a cell phone. However, **CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED IN SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL HOURS.** If a student has a cell phone and it is seen by a staff member, it will be confiscated and contact with the parents will be made to retrieve it. The school will not be held responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones. Specific medical/emergency situations requiring a cell phone will be dealt with on a one-on-one basis by the principal.

DISCIPLINE

POLICY 505 – DISCIPLINE can be found on the District’s website under Board Policies

PEARL BUCK SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CODE

I. Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, elementary and middle schools in the Neshaminy School District began to implement the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

approach to managing student behavior. Children will be specifically taught expected behaviors in a variety of areas without our school. The overarching themes of our PBIS approach will be introduced to all Pearl Buck students at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

The focus of PBIS is on teaching behavior in much the same manner we teach academics – with a specific learning objective, practice, and reinforcement/re-teaching. It will take approximately 3 academic years for the approach to be imbedded in all we do. As a result, you may see gaps in our approach while our staff learns and adapts new approaches to addressing behaviors. However, PBIS does NOT eliminate consequences. Traditional responses up to and including suspension are still possible. However, if a child should demonstrate inappropriate behavior, the initial approach from staff will be to reteach expected behaviors. Please also refer to School Board Policy 505, Student Discipline, available on the Neshaminy School District Website.

DRESS CODE POLICY

The Neshaminy School District dress policy is as follows: School attire must meet reasonable standards of cleanliness, not endanger student or public health, not be disruptive to the educational process and meet reasonable standards of appropriateness.

Policy 508 - Student Dress Code:

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

School attire must meet reasonable standard of cleanliness, not endanger student or public health, not be disruptive to the education process and meet reasonable standards of appropriateness. Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extra-curricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.

II. EXAMPLES OF INAPPROPRIATE DRESS

- A. Hats without purpose worn in the building.
- B. Bare or stocking feet.
- C. Apparel with offensive words or pictures
- D. Heavy clothing normally worn only outdoors.
- E. Any apparel that overexposes the body.
- F. Shoes with heels on them (wheelies) or open backs.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

- A. The entire school staff shall be responsible for encouraging appropriate standards of personal appearance and for the carrying out of this policy. The achievement of this result shall be the responsibility of each building administrator.
- B. Guidelines shall be published in staff and student handbooks and be sent to parents by way of appropriate media.

WARM WEATHER DRESS GUIDELINES: The word "reasonable" can be widely interpreted. So, we are asking each and every parent to consider the clothing their children wear to school. Kindergarteners may dress differently than emerging adolescents. It is suggested that students would be able to touch their shorts when their hands are straight at their sides. Shirts should cover the trunk of the body and should not show any part of abdomens. Please consider the

happy medium between warm weather and appropriate school attire. As a parent, we are asking you to closely monitor what your child is wearing to school.

COLD WEATHER DRESS GUIDELINES: Sometimes parents leave the house before their children and they are not aware of what a particular child is wearing to school. Or, sometimes children decide to switch jackets at the last minute thinking that one would be better than another. Temperatures can drop dramatically during the day and that lightweight jacket will no longer keep a child warm. Consequently, we ask our Recess Aides to please check to see that every child has warm clothing before going outdoors for recess in the cold weather. Those children who seem to need something more are sent to the Health Office for a warmer coat or sweatshirt to wear, if available. Please be sure that all jackets are labeled as they will be easily returned if lost. We never give hats to children because of our concern about the possibility of spreading head lice.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

In the event school must close early for some unforeseen reason, the closing will be announced on radio stations WBCB (Levittown, PA), WCAU, WIP, WFIL (Philadelphia, PA). Our school number is **752**. School closing and emergencies are on the Neshaminy Cable TV Station (Channel 27, Verizon Channel 28) and also on the District Website. Neshaminy School District also employs the use of the *Parent Link* system to contact families at listed phone numbers in the event of an emergency. We can never anticipate when an emergency will arise, but it is essential that your child/ren understand(s) where he/she must go in case no one is at home and we are forced to close schools. We have attempted to indicate this in our Family Handbook and through the District memo sent out in early September, entitled “**INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSING.**” **Please make sure that your child knows where to go in case of an emergency and no one will be at home.**

FIRST AID, ILLNESS AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

First aid may be administered by the school nurse or the health aide when a child has an accident. They will attend to the child’s needs and notify the parent or guardian. If it is determined that a child is too ill or injured to stay in school, the parent, guardians or others listed on the emergency card will be contacted to pick up the child.

It is essential that the school staff have on file the names and phone numbers of several persons to call in case of an emergency and the parent(s) or guardian(s) cannot be reached. This information is kept on the emergency card that is distributed to each family at the beginning of the school year. Please call the main office at 215-809-6300 to update your emergency card if changes should occur.

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The guidance program is geared to help individual students fully use their abilities, interests and talents toward self development and success in school. The guidance counselor is available to any student or parent needing assistance.

The guidance counselor is ready and able to meet with parents and students to provide suggestions and to facilitate the use of school and other resources. The guidance counselor does not provide individual or group therapy, but may meet with individual children or groups regarding school issues or concerns.

HIV INFECTION

While providing a safe, healthy environment for its students and employees, our school district must recognize the confidentiality of individuals who may be diagnosed as having HIV. All employees in Neshaminy School District are required to follow Universal Health Care Prevention in all settings and at all times. Questions regarding specific school board policies on this subject should be directed to the principal.

HOMEWORK POLICY #619

I. **DEFINITION:** Homework is any activity planned or approved by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher.

II. **THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THE TEACHER ASSIGNS HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- A. Helping a student master a skill.
- B. Encouraging a student to learn new things.
- C. Assisting a student to understand what is being taught.
- D. Developing a sense of responsibility and independence.
- E. Promoting good study habits and motivation.
- F. Acquainting parents with what their child is learning in the classroom.

III. **GENERAL PRINCIPLES CONCERNING HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES**

- A. The purpose for which a homework activity is assigned must be shared with the student.
- B. The activities must be necessary, beneficial and clearly explained to the students.
- C. The homework must be relevant to the area of study, be reasonable in length and be appropriate to the maturity and ability level of the student.
- D. Teachers must acknowledge completion of homework assignments and/or provide feedback on all homework activities.
- E. Homework assignments must not be used as a disciplinary action for misbehavior of an individual student or a group of students.

IV. **STUDENT AND PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- A. It is understood that the student has responsibilities to meet in carrying out homework assignments made by the teacher. Failure to do so may subject the student to a lower grade for that assignment.
- B. Parents are encouraged to examine homework assignments and to offer advice toward successful completion of same by the students.

V. **IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY**

- A. It is the responsibility of the administration and staff to carry out the provisions of the homework policy.
- B. Individual building guidelines shall be developed and principals shall work with their respective school staffs to formulate these guidelines and to establish processes to assist in carrying out the intent of this policy.

1. Such guidelines must be shared by individual teachers with students and parents and/or be included as part of a student handbook which is distributed to students and parents.
2. An explanation of the use/value of homework must be described such as: correcting, grading, class use, etc.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

I. BACKGROUND

The foundation for study skills is an elementary school responsibility. As a consequence, there is a resurgence of interest in homework in the hope that more homework, will of itself, bring about better achievement. However, simply increasing the amount of homework will not necessarily produce better scholarship.

Once children learn a skill, they need to practice it. If too much time elapses between learning and practicing, the skill is not mastered and may even be forgotten. Having effective practice exercises for students is a valuable part of the daily instructional program. The responsibility for homework rests with the student so please provide support as needed, but allow the child to complete it on his/her own. If the homework assignment was too difficult, we ask that you please send a note to your child's teacher, rather than completing it for him/her.

I. PURPOSES

One of the first improvements that can be made in homework is to be sure that it serves valid purposes such as:

- Provides essential practice in needed skills.
- Trains pupils in good work habits and promotes responsibility
- Affords opportunities for increasing self-direction.
- Enriches and extends school experiences.
- Helps children learn to budget their time.
- Acquaints pupils with out-of-school learning ideas.
- Minimize the temptation to merely copy information.
- Are adapted to individual needs, interest and capacities.

Concerns or questions relating to homework assignments should be directed to your child's teacher.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The Pennsylvania Department of Health requires that all children at any grade, kindergarten through 12 (including all public, private, parochial and intermediate unit students) show proof of immunization before they can attend school in the Commonwealth.

4 doses of Diphtheria and Tetanus Vaccine (with one dose after 4th birthday).

3 doses of Polio Vaccine

2 doses of Measles Vaccine (with the first dose after the 1st birthday)

1 dose of German Measles & Mumps

3 doses of Hepatitis B Vaccine

1 dose of Varicella (or verification of chickenpox disease)

PROVISIONAL ENROLLMENT

Children entering school for the first time and children entering school from another state must have initial immunization shots in each vaccine. The parents' plan for completion of the required immunization shall be submitted to the school. All immunization requirements shall be completed within eight months of entrance to school. If the requirements are not met, the student will be excluded.

EXCEPTIONS

1. Medical Exception

Children need not be immunized if a physician provides a written statement that immunization may be detrimental to the health of the child. When the physician determines that immunization is no longer detrimental to the health of the child, the child shall be immunized according to procedure.

Only licensed medical doctors and doctors of osteopathy can sign for medical exemptions. If a medical exemption is for a specific antigen(s), this should be indicated in the statement of exemptions. All other immunizations will still be required.

2. Religious Exception

Children need not be immunized if the parent, guardian, or emancipated child objects in writing to the immunization on religious grounds or on the basis of a strong moral or ethical conviction similar to a religious belief.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN SCHOOL CHILDREN

The following guidelines for communicable diseases are regulated by the Department of Health. Children diagnosed with diseases may return to school after they have adhered to the appropriate time guidelines listed below:

- (a) Chickenpox – six days from the last crop of vesicles.
- (b) Acute Contagious Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – Twenty-four hours from institution of appropriate therapy.
- (c) Diphtheria – Two weeks from the onset or until appropriate negative culture tests.
- (d) Impetigo Contagiosa – Unit judged noninfective by child's physician.
- (e) Measles – Four days from the onset of rash.
- (f) Mumps – Nine days from the onset or until subsidence of swelling
- (g) Pediculosis Capitis (Head Lice) and Pediculosis Corporis (Body Lice) – After appropriate treatment has been given. Students must see school nurse prior to entering a classroom.
- (h) Pertusis (Whooping Cough) – Four weeks from the onset or seven days from institution of appropriate antimicrobial therapy.

- (i) Respiratory streptococcal infections including scarlet fever – 24 hours from institution of appropriate antimicrobial therapy.
- (j) Ringworm – all types – until judged non-infective by the child’s physician.
- (k) Rubella (German Measles) – Four days from the onset of rash.
- (l) Scabies – Until judged non-infective by child’s physician.

Any disease not covered by these regulations should be reported to the school nurse for proper advice and implementation of regulations.

Procedures for reporting, controlling and regulating communicable diseases in the Neshaminy School District are based upon the guidelines outlined in the Pennsylvania Department of Health Regulations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

In the event of inclement weather, one of three conditions will exist and any decision will apply to all Neshaminy Schools:

1. Schools will be in session and begin at regular time.
2. Schools will start two hours later than usual. Students should report to their bus stops two hours later than usual and wait for at least 30 minutes for the bus to arrive. School will be dismissed at the regular time unless notification is given of an early closing.
3. NO SCHOOL. Students should not report to school.

We ask that you be ready for school closing or early dismissal and that you cooperate with the school in the following ways:

- Please do not contact the school office as we need the lines to make outside calls.
- Please listen to the radio, visit the district website, or watch the local news.
- Please prepare your child with an early dismissal plan and where they should go.

Our staff is involved with emergency closing procedures and phone calls are extremely difficult to manage. Please use the regular means of transporting your child home from school and listen to radio stations KYW AM 1060, WMSB-AM 1490, and WPST-FM 94.5. Also, Neshaminy Network Television has 24 hour weather and Neshaminy school closing information. This can be viewed on Comcast Cablevision Channel 28 or Verizon Channel 43. The District’s school closing number is 752. In addition, information on school closings/ delays/ dismissals will be posted on the District’s Website and through the *Parent Link* calling system.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The program at the Pearl S. Buck School is based on the premise that children differ in their rate of growth and development. These differences can be observed in the physical, social and emotional growth patterns of children. Children’s academic rates of learning are as varied as their physical, social and emotional growth. Some children are ready to read when they enter school. For others, the pre-reading skills, known as reading readiness, must be acquired. Our goal is to meet these differences in individual rates of learning to the greatest extent possible, give each child an opportunity to develop at his/her own pace, and at the same time, provide greater challenges for the

more able pupils. This may mean that some children will leave their “homerooms” in order to be properly placed for instruction. A District approved inclusion model is followed for providing support to identified special education students.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA)

All elementary schools follow a “Balanced Literacy” approach to teaching language arts. A Balanced literacy program uses both whole language and phonics. There are five different components of a ‘balanced literacy’ program: The read aloud, guided reading, shared reading, independent reading, and Word study. The elementary program also includes a writing program.

MATH

All elementary schools follow the Singapore approach to math instruction. It was originally developed in Singapore to teach students to learn and master fewer mathematical concepts at greater detail as well as having them learn these concepts using a three-step learning process. The three steps are: concrete, pictorial, and abstract. In the concrete step, students engage in hands-on learning experiences using concrete objects such as chips, dice, or paper clips. This is followed by drawing pictorial representations of mathematical concepts. Students then solve mathematical problems in an abstract way by using numbers and symbols.

SCIENCE

Science is taught K-12. The elementary level is inquiry-based, with a focus on lab experiences.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies is taught in grades K-12 in the Neshaminy School District. The curriculum in each grade addresses the PA Standards for Civics and Government, Economics, Geography and History. Social Studies also supports the English/Language Arts in several PA Common Core strands.

READING

Each building has a reading specialist whose primary responsibility is to work directly with classroom teachers. Other priorities are established by building principals working with the Supervisor of Language Arts. The specialist is responsible for the implementation of the reading program at the building level. ALL materials that are used in the classroom reading instructional program are to be ordered through the specialist. To provide consistency and direction, all grade level teachers are asked to cooperate with the district program.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

A speech and language therapist is assigned to our school by the Intermediate Unit. Please call to her attention any students who may be in need of articulation therapy or language development. Parents need to be informed of this intent to involve the speech and language therapist.

ART

The Neshaminy Art Department offers students a variety of opportunities to explore and develop their artistic interests and abilities. The art program is designed to challenge the student’s skill level and apply critical thinking in their studies. Art history and appreciation are integrated into all art courses to inspire the student artist to maximize their artistic potential.

MUSIC

The Music Department in Neshaminy School District offers a variety of musical experiences for all students from grades K-12. All students in grades K-8 receive General Music Instruction, including singing, classroom instrument playing and musical listening. Beginning in grade 3, students may choose to learn an orchestral string instrument. In Grade 4, students may begin learning woodwind, brass or percussion instruments. The Instrumental Program involves a weekly group lesson at school, as well as, a weekly large ensemble rehearsal – Orchestra or Concert Band. Students in grades 4 participate in the school chorus. All vocal and instrumental ensembles present a public performance during the winter and spring.

LIBRARY

Librarians in the Neshaminy elementary schools are teaching students in grades K through 4 a new technology-infused library science curriculum. The focus has been on using iPads to learn applications such as *Educreations*, *Edmodo* and *Google Docs* to collaborate, to do research, to communicate with the librarian and classmates and to create digital presentations. Students are also permitted to borrow books from our library on a weekly basis.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Teachers have developed a program in which emphasis is placed on development of lifetime skills or recreation and conditioning. An adapted physical education program is available for some children with special needs that can be implemented with parental permission. Classes meet one time per week. The curriculum includes; bike safety, dance, playground activities, adventure and team building activities, tactical approaches to territorial games. State Department of Education regulations and Neshaminy School District policy require all students to participate in regular or adapted physical education classes.

If some physical reason prevents a child from participating in physical education, a note from the parent must be presented to the classroom teacher before school, and then given to the physical education teacher before class for each day requested. Excessive parent requests will be referred to the school nurse. A physician's certificate must be presented if the child is to be excused for more than two consecutive class periods - usually consisting of two consecutive weeks. The doctor's request must verify the extent of any illness or injury. A permanent medical excuse must be on file with the nurse if the child cannot participate in any physical education activities. This request must be renewed annually. If so prescribed by a physician, adapted physical education periods can be substituted for the normal activities of the grade level. When a physician recommends a limited program of physical education for the child, that request must be filed with the school nurse. The note must indicate the amount, type of activity allowed, and length of time participating in physical activity is permitted. A new note is required for each school year.

INSURANCE

Student Accident Insurance is available to purchase through the School District. Literature will be sent home regarding the cost and the agent. If you wish to purchase insurance, the forms are to be completed and a check or money order for payment is to be sent directly to the insurance company.

ITEMS IN SCHOOL

We believe that students should primarily focus on learning when they are in school. **No electronic games, i-pods, cell phones, trading cards, toys, or special possessions** of students should be brought to school. **This list is not all-inclusive.** Especially after holidays or birthdays, students who bring personal possessions to school are often tempted to spend more time thinking about those items than their schoolwork. Additionally, many of these items are costly, look the same, cannot have names written on them and are easily broken, lost, or stolen. That often results in anger, accusations, or disappointment. Unfortunately, even putting items in one's backpacks or desk does not ensure security. With their many duties, teachers should not be expected to guard students' belongings. Items such as these that are brought to school will be held by the teacher or office staff and sent home with the child at the end of the day or held until a parent comes to pick them up. Your cooperation and understanding is appreciated. The building principal has discretion over the safety and appropriateness of all items.

LIBRARY

Library books are checked out to each child for one week. The book may be renewed once. Ask to see your child's library book/s. Discuss the content of the book. Your interest will promote his/her interest and progress.

LOST AND FOUND

All items found on the playground or in the building are placed outside the office where they are stored. Eyeglasses, lost money or jewelry is given to the office staff. Please have your child check the lost and found containers if he/she has lost anything. It is a good idea to put your child's name on lunch boxes, jackets, etc. to avoid confusion. At the end of every year, we end up with a considerable amount of good clothing. Unclaimed clothing will be donated to a charitable organization if not claimed by the end of the school year.

LUNCH PROGRAM

The school district's Food Service Department is self-supporting and non-profit. It is not funded by taxpayer dollars. However, each school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the educational program. As such, a well-balanced lunch is offered each day. The cost of a full lunch for 2015-16, including milk, is \$3.20; dessert is not included but can be purchased separately. Other a'la carte items are also available, including pizza, hot dogs, hamburgers, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, a variety of salads. For students who bring their lunch, a selection of milk, including low fat, is available for \$.70. A variety of snacks and ice cream is also available. Weekly menus are announced on radio station WBCB. They are also shown on the Neshaminy Network Television (Cable Channel 27 or FIOS channel 43) and can be accessed on the Web www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us and then select Food Service.

As participants in the National School Lunch Program, free or reduced priced lunches are available to Neshaminy students. Application forms are sent home with each child the first week of school; they are also available from your school's nurse.

All Neshaminy School District schools use a Point of Sale system for the purchase of food, beverages, and snacks. It is a computerized system that allows for prepayment from paying students but also recognizes a student's free or reduced payment status. Each student is assigned an account and PIN number with which to access the account.

By prepaying, you can be assured that your child has money available daily to purchase their meal. Prepayments may be made by check or cash by sending it to school with your child in an envelope marked with his/her name and pin number. Checks are to be made payable to Neshaminy Food Service Department. Daily cash payments will still be accepted, but it is important for the efficiency of the system that all students use their PIN number regardless of the payment method. However, the more students that use the prepayment method the quicker the lines will move. It is important that students do not share their PIN number with anyone. Should a problem arise with your child's account, it can be closed and a new account with a new PIN number will be assigned.

If your child forgets or loses his/her lunch money or bagged lunch, the cafeteria staff will provide a lunch on a credit basis. The cost for the lunch must be repaid the next school day. This prompt repayment is important so that this privilege is not abused. We understand that children can lose or forget their money on a given day. It is essential; however, that the privilege of borrowing money is not abused. If a lunch loan is made to a child, the cafeteria manager will telephone the parents. All emergency meals must be repaid. We thank you for your support and cooperation in helping our students develop responsibility.

If your child is celebrating a birthday, our food service staff would be happy to arrange for a special in-class snack. Please discuss the arrangements with your cafeteria manager. Prices vary according to your request.

MONTHLY CALENDAR AND NEWSLETTER

A monthly newsletter and calendar is sent home via e-mail at the beginning of each month. Please remember to look for it. Please read the calendar carefully so that you will be aware of important activities. Each monthly calendar will have our five day rotation schedule noted. Please post it prominently in your house each month. You can also access this monthly calendar at www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us (Pearl S. Buck).

NON-DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

"Neshaminy School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion and/or handicapping conditions in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504." For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger, Director of Human Resources at 2001 Old Lincoln Highway, Langhorne, PA 19047 or call 215-809-6606.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Smoking and tobacco use by students, employees of the Neshaminy School District and all members of the general public is prohibited in/on the following areas:

- All District facilities and buildings
- Buses, vans or other vehicles owned by, leased by, or under the control of the Neshaminy School District.
- Property owned by, leased by or under the control of the Neshaminy School District.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Neshaminy School District provides special education and related service to resident children with disabilities who are ages three through twenty-one. Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or "IDEA," children qualify for special education and related services if

they have one or more of the following disabilities and, as a result, need specially designed instruction:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-Blindness
3. Deafness
4. Emotional Disturbance
5. Hearing Impairment
6. Mental Retardation
7. Multiple Disabilities
8. Orthopedic Impairment
9. Other Health Impairment
10. Specific Learning Disability
11. Speech and Language Impairment
12. Traumatic Brain Injury
13. Visual Impairment Including Blindness

The legal definitions of these disabilities, which the public schools are required to apply under the IDEA, may differ from those used in medical or clinical practice. The legal definitions, moreover, could apply to children with disabilities that have very different medical or clinical disorders. A child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, for example, could qualify for special education and related services as a child with “other health impairments,” “serious emotional disturbance,” or “specific learning disabilities” if the child meets the eligibility criteria under one or more of these disability categories and if the child needs special education and related services as a result. If you suspect that your child may be in need of services, please contact your school’s Guidance Counselor.

NURSE

Our nurse and our health aide are available for medical services. If your child is ill, please **DO NOT** send him/her to school. The nurse is available only for accidents or illnesses occurring in school. We cannot treat injuries that were received at home.

Medication Policy

In order for the school personnel to distribute prescribed or over-the-counter medication, the following conditions must be met:

1. A written note is required from the doctor.
2. A permission form, available in the nurse’s office, must be on file authorizing school personnel to dispense the medication according to the directions of the doctor.
3. The medication must be in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician for the student. Medication in plastic bags, aluminum foil, envelopes, old pill bottles, etc. will not be administered.

In cases when these conditions are not met and the administration of medication is necessary, the parent or guardian may come to school to administer the medication.

Under no circumstances should a child have any form of medication, prescription or over-the-counter, to self-administer during the school day.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to keep in close contact with the school. Teachers may be contacted by note or by telephone. Messages are placed in the teachers' mailboxes as they are received. Teachers do have access to district e-mail but for time-sensitive or confidentiality issues, it is discouraged since the e-mail may not be received until the end of the school day. Please use the classroom teacher as the first line of communication in addressing your child's needs. Teachers will generally share their preferred means of communication with those in attendance at Back to School Night. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November and as the needs arise.

If you wish to have a conference with your child's teacher or another member of the staff, please call ahead to make an appointment.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Pearl S. Buck Elementary School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) can only be effective with your support. We urge you to join and become an active member. The Buck PTO has contributed greatly to enriching the educational programs for the children of Pearl Buck Elementary School while also organizing events that bring our community together throughout the school year.

Officers of the Home & School Organization for 2015-16:

President	Mrs. Elaine Shubin
Vice President Communications	Mrs. Beth Oswald
Vice-President of Fundraising	Mrs. Renee Evans
Treasurer	Mrs. Susan Pirollo
Recording Secretary	Mrs. Maureen Krom
4th Grade Representative	Mrs. Cathy Sermarini & Jennifer McVey
3rd Grade Representative	Mrs. Vicki Raivitch
2nd Grade Representative	Mrs. Lynda Pritchard
1st Grade Representative	Michelle von Brockdorff
Kindergarten Grade Representative	To Be Elected

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Please send your child to school each day having had breakfast (or being prepared to buy it) and ready with supplies, homework, forms, signed paperwork a lunch plan and a dismissal plan.

Please make sure that you are familiar with the Family Handbook and especially the sections on Student Expectations and Discipline.

Please make sure that you are familiar with our procedures for picking up children from school and, especially at the end of the day for dismissal.

If you choose to send in a class treat for your child's birthday, please make it something that can be carried to the cafeteria and that does not require refrigeration.

Please do not send drinks or any other item that requires refrigeration.

Bring treats to the office and they will be delivered to the classroom.

Please make sure that you have your child's plan for dismissal set before school begins each day. Any request to change the regular dismissal plan must be placed in writing.

Except for emergencies, please do not call the office to change the dismissal plan during the school day.

When arranging for an early dismissal, please try to pick up students before 3:15 pm. **We will not interrupt the classroom between 3:15pm and 3:35pm due to important end of the day homework/ dismissal instructions being given by teachers at that time.**

RECESS

We make every effort to ensure that our students have fresh air and exercise each day. A 30-minute recess period occurs before lunch. Please see that your child is dressed appropriately for weather conditions. If the outside temperature is 20 degrees or higher (wind chill will be taken into account), we will usually go outdoors. Recess is designated for students-only, so please do not plan to visit your child at this time of the day.

RELINQUISHING CHILDREN

If you are picking your child up at a time other than our regularly scheduled dismissal, whether or not your child is expecting you, please report to the office. We will call your child's classroom and let him/her know you are here. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

The statements below apply to release of children and access to children in all situations including: custody cases, regular dismissal, early dismissal and emergency situations:

- Copies of the most recent legal communication that pertains to the school setting regarding: custody, release of students and access to students must be presented to the school at registration, prior to the beginning of each school year and at the time that an access situation arises. The *most recent* court order or legal documentation permitting or restricting release of a child will be followed. A Court Order supersedes any other legal documentation, regardless of date of issue.
- Any individual, to whom children may be dismissed, must be identified on the *Emergency Information Card*. Please write additional names and phone numbers on the reverse side of the card if necessary. Students will be released only to those individuals whose names are on the emergency card. If for any reason someone will pick up your child other than who is listed on the emergency card, YOU must send a dated note to the office of this change.
- In order for a child to be released to anyone who is not on the emergency card, a note concerning the specific release must be presented prior to or at the time of the release. In the event that a note is not provided, and the parent or guardian calls to request that a child be

released to someone who is not on the emergency card, verification of the caller's identity must be made by the principal or designee before releasing the child.

- When arranging for an early dismissal, please try to pick up students before 3:15 pm. **We will not interrupt the classroom between 3:15pm and 3:35pm due to important end of the day homework/ dismissal instructions being given by teachers at that time.**

SCHOOL BOARD

The Neshaminy Board of School Directors conducts a public meeting each month. All parents are encouraged to attend these meetings. Notices are posted on the board in the main office. School Board Work Sessions are also opened to the public. The exact dates and locations can be found at www.neshaminy.k12.pa.us

SECTION 504 NOTICE

Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined might nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptation and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptation, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. Please contact your school's Guidance Counselor for further information.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

The Neshaminy School District in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education has made Social and Emotional Learning a priority for the Neshaminy community. All employees, students, and community members are encouraged to become familiar with and to participate in the SEL initiative. The District is dedicated to providing training and education to promote and reinforce the skills necessary for increasing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. These skills have been identified as necessary for employment in the 21st century. Employers want people who know how to get along with others. Communities need people who can contribute toward a peaceful neighborhood. Children and adults will develop essential social and emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Too Good for Drugs and Too Good for Violence

The school year, 2011-12, started the District's prevention curriculum in all of the grades from kindergarten through grade 12. The *Too Good for Drugs and Too Good for Violence* curricula teach life skills to aid students in making good decisions for themselves and their community, especially with regard to drug use and violence. Tools, such as De-Escalation Skills, "I" messages, and Stop-Think-Plan, taught in this curriculum can empower students to stand up for themselves and to express their feelings. Learning and rehearsing problem-solving skills will equip students with ways to advocate for themselves and others and to take ownership for their actions. Strong social and emotional learning paves the way for strong academic learning to take place.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Children are identified as being exceptional through formal procedures, wide assessments and evaluations culminating in a Comprehensive Educational Report followed by the development of an Individual Educational Plan. Albert Schweitzer currently offers programs for children who are eligible for Learning Support, Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Hearing and Vision Support and those who are identified as eligible for the Academic Enrichment Program.

Federal Law provides that identified students must be educated in the “least restrictive environment.” This concept mandates that children receive instruction by special education staff members only to the extent necessary to overcome the learning difficulties being experienced. Supplemental services can be provided through the resource room for a range of students (i.e. those who only need about one-half hour of time, those who need two or three days a week and those students who need a great deal more of their instruction provided by learning support staff). The primary goal of special education is to help students develop skills so that they can be successful in a regular classroom. This goal is consistent with the concept of “least restrictive environment.”

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires students in grades 3 & 4 to be given the PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) annually. The testing window typically occurs in March and/or April. Please see our website for this year’s dates.

STUDENTS RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The majority of students at the Pearl S. Buck Elementary School respect public property and personal property, as well as the rights of other students. Those students who act in a manner and/or whose conduct disturbs the learning environment or threatens the health, safety and welfare of themselves and of others, subject themselves to disciplinary action as per School Board Policy #505.

TELEPHONE

Our office telephone number is (215) 809-6300. Should an emergency arise that makes it necessary to communicate with your child, please call the office. If a need arises where a child **MUST** call home, permission must be received from their teacher or staff member to use the office phone. Frequent calls from the same student will be screened to be sure that due to lack of responsibility the child is not constantly asking parent/s to bring in assignments, etc.

VISITORS IN SCHOOL

Parental interest in the educational process is the lifeline of school performance. Visitation of parents is encouraged and always welcomed. However, we do ask that prior arrangements be made before visiting the classrooms. In addition, we are sure you will agree that the security of the building and the safety of our students are paramount to all of us.

While we encourage parents and guardians to be actively involved in their child’s education, visitors do not have automatic or immediate access to any school area or to any school personnel. Upon entering the building, the visitor must first proceed directly to the front office to sign in and obtain a visitor’s pass. This pass must be worn in a prominent place at all times while in the building. At the end of the visit, please return to the office, sign out and return the pass. We value the health, safety, and welfare of our students, therefore at no time should parents or visitors enter

the school building and go directly to their child's classroom or any other area of the building. In an effort to protect our students, all staff members will be required to ask anyone they see in the building for the visitor's badge. Staff members will respectfully direct any person without a badge to the front office. In order to visit any place or person, visitors must always:

- Check in at the front office and sign in with the purpose of the visit.
- Follow the school building procedures regarding visitations.
- Obtain a school visitor pass before frequenting any part of the school. Please turn off or place on vibrate all cell phones and PDA's while inside the building.
- In order to protect the students and integrity of the school facilities, all visitors are required to enter through the main entrance and to advise the principal, or designee, of their presence and business.
- No person shall visit or audit a classroom or other activity, nor shall any person remain on school premises without the approval of the principal or his designee.
- It should be understood after 8:50 a.m. that no visitors may interrupt the instructional process by taking a teacher's attention away from the students while classes are in session.
- It is unlawful for visitors to remain on school grounds in violation of these rules.

WALKERS

Students termed as “walkers” are those children that, because of the distance to school, walk to school rather than ride a bus. Walkers may not take the bus unless they have a **note from a doctor** stating they cannot physically walk to school. This doctor's note should be sent to Mr. Paul Minotti, Department of Transportation, 2001 Old Lincoln Highway, Langhorne, PA 19047.

The school doors open for children to enter the building at **8:55 a.m.** Walkers are **NOT** to arrive at school before this time and should not be walking through private property without the owner's permission.

Students are expected to go directly home when dismissed at the end of the school day (not play on the playground) in order to cross the street while the crossing guards are on duty.