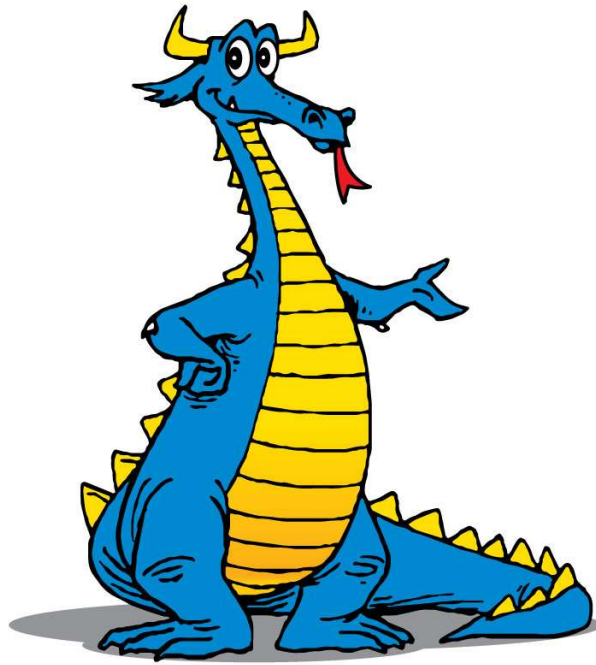


# PEARL S. BUCK Elementary School



## Family-Student Handbook 2021-2022

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

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 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 and is always available on our website under “Our School → Handbooks, Codes & Manuals”. In addition, please refer to District Policies for additional information and guidance.

The staff members at Pearl Buck take great pride in their work. They are dedicated, hard-working, and care deeply about the children with whom they work each day. We believe we have an incredible opportunity to help students learn “how to learn” and learn “how to live”. In pursuit of the District Mission Statement “The Neshaminy community builds futures by empowering each child to become a productive citizen and lifelong learner”, we take our responsibilities seriously and put our hearts into influencing and motivating students with diverse personalities, strengths, and talents. It is challenging work we accomplish with care and dedication.

As of the updating of this year’s handbook (early August, 2021), much remains to be clarified regarding the effects of the pandemic on our daily operations. Therefore, information regarding health and safety protocols is omitted from this document, as they may change during the course of the year. Information specific to pandemic-related health and safety protocols will be communicated by the District.

Our weekly e-newsletter will provide updates, reminders, and general information about Pearl Buck elementary throughout the course of the year and will be emailed to the account we have on file within our e-school database. Parents/Guardians may update email and other contact information through the Home Access Center.

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

Sincerely,

*Brian Kern*

Brian Kern, Principal  
[bkern@neshaminy.org](mailto:bkern@neshaminy.org)  
215-809-6300

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## **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, oh my!)**

Students shall not ride bicycles to school. In the past, a bike rack was provided. However, this was removed several years ago. In addition, bicycles have been stolen during the school day. The school cannot be responsible for bicycles that are damaged, lost or stolen. Further, skateboards, scooters, rollerblades and wheelies may not be brought and/or worn to school. This list is representative and NOT all-inclusive.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

Presently, pandemic health and safety protocols prohibit the distribution of items from home, including invitations for at-home birthday parties.

Children often appreciate very simple ideas which celebrate their birthdays in school. **Prior to sending in food, please review our food practices information (found within this handbook) and contact your child's teacher to coordinate.** *Unexpected food items will not be distributed.* Also, you must discuss with your child's homeroom teacher any ideas regarding in-school celebrations for your child before making any firm plans. Consider using email to contact families. Our PTO will coordinate an contact list that can be used by Pearl Buck parents. Parents may also consider donating a book to the library in honor of a child's birthday. Please contact our librarian for more information.

## **BUS STUDENTS**

Bus children are to ride their assigned bus **to and from school**. Students shall disembark at the same stop to which they are assigned 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 child's teacher and the principal. PLEASE DO NOT ASSUME your child may change a bus. Some routes are filled to capacity and cannot accommodate additional students. Further, conditions related to the pandemic may prohibit students from riding a different bus. Please call the school at 215-809-6300 for last-minute changes to your child's dismissal routine.

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 of the Pearl Buck Elementary School discipline practices and School Board Policies.

### **CAFETERIA**

Your child is scheduled for a thirty-minute lunch period each day. Additional time for eating is permitted, if necessary. Cafeteria aides supervise the cafeteria. We would like to make the cafeteria as pleasant an eating space as possible. We do need the children reasonably quiet for the last five minutes of the lunch period for the purpose of returning their trays and preparing for dismissal from lunch.

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 voice 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.

As part of our School-Wide Positive Behavior Plan, staff will teach expected behaviors at the beginning of the school year and reinforce expectations throughout the year.

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

It is expected students take proper care of school property. Students are responsible for all textbooks, technology 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 PHONES**

In this day of technology and communications, it is not uncommon for students to have a cell phone. However, **during the school day, cell phones shall remain in the child's book bag and be powered off.** A cell phone may be confiscated if a student disregards our expectations related to cell phone use. If your child rides a bus, please reinforce the importance of safe and responsible use of the phone, especially regarding the taking of photos and posting to social media. When necessary, contact with parents will be made to discuss any concerns that may arise. 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 addressed on a one-on-one basis. Please contact the principal to discuss.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Students are welcomed into the building by our staff beginning at 8:50 AM. Parents/Guardians shall remain with their children until our staff is ready to receive students into the building.

The school day officially begins at 9:10 AM. Dismissal begins at 3:35 PM.

A typical day of instruction includes language arts, math, science, social studies, a special (art, library, music or physical education), lunch and recess. Additional time is scheduled for academic interventions/enrichment. Each child is assigned 1:1 technology. Computer skills are integrated into daily learning experiences.

## **DISCIPLINE CODE**

POLICY 218 – STUDENT DISCIPLINE can be found on the District’s website under [Board Policies](#). Once at the page, click on the ‘Policies’ link at the top, right.

### **DISCIPLINE CODE – Pearl Buck Elementary**

Elementary and middle schools in the Neshaminy School District implement the School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (SWPBIS) approach to managing student behavior. Children will be specifically taught expected behaviors in a variety of areas throughout our school. The overarching themes of the PBIS approach was introduced to all Pearl S. 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. 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 re-teach expected behaviors. Please also refer to School Board Policy 218, Student Discipline, available on the Neshaminy School District website.

## **DRESS CODE POLICY**

The Neshaminy School District dress policy is as follows: “The Board has the authority to impose limitations on students' dress in school. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents/guardians to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices disrupt the educational program of the schools or constitute a health or safety hazard.”

**Please see Policy 221 – Dress and Grooming (Dress Code) for more information.**

*WARM WEATHER DRESS GUIDELINES:* 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 the hem of their shorts with the tip of their fingers when arms are fully extended at their sides. Shirts shall cover the trunk of the body and shall not show any part

of the abdomen. Also, sleeveless shirts must not allow one to see a child's chest/abdomen. As an example, basketball jerseys with traditional, large arm holes are NOT appropriate when worn alone. Please consider the happy medium between warm weather and appropriate school attire. We are asking parents to closely monitor what their child is wearing to school. For the majority of their day, students are within the climate controlled areas of our building.

*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 a lightweight jacket will no longer keep a child warm. Consequently, we ask our Recess Aides to 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 may be sent to the Health Office; parent may also be contacted. Jackets clearly labeled with the owner's name are easily returned if lost.

## **EMERGENCY DISMISSAL**

School closures due to anticipated conditions (weather or other circumstances) will be announced with as much notice as practical. In the event school must close early for some unexpected/unforeseen reason, the closing will be announced on the District Website and school pages, text message, phone calls and email. Neshaminy School District employs the use of the *Blackboard* 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 children understand(s) where he/she must go in case no one is at home and we are forced to close schools. **Please make sure that your child knows where to go in case of an emergency and what to do if they find no one 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 in our student database and on the emergency card that is distributed to each family at the beginning of the school year. **Parents should take advantage of our Home Access Center to update contact information 24/7.** You may also call the main office at 215-809-6300 to update your emergency contact information if changes should occur.

## **FOOD PRACTICES**

In order to accommodate the increasingly varied health needs of our students, the Pearl S. Buck staff has been instructed to limit food-related events during the school year. However, events involving food will be permitted under the parameters noted below. These parameters apply to school-day events.



- If you would like to provide a treat to your child's class, please contact your child's teacher directly to discuss appropriate options. *Non-food treats are preferred.*
- Teachers will provide to parents advance notice of classroom activities involving food. Parents will have an opportunity to discuss concerns and options with the teacher.
- All food and non-food items are to be discussed with and approved by the classroom teacher prior to having the items delivered to school. *Unexpected items will not be distributed.*
- Food shall not be shared between students. This applies to lunch and snack-time as well, and is discussed in-class with students.
- Only store-purchased food, in original containers with food labels, may be distributed in classes. In order to reduce/avoid unintentional cross-contamination, homemade items may not be distributed.
- In certain cases, it may be necessary for food items to be limited to a specific brand due to ingredients.
- Candy shall not be distributed to students.
- A classroom teacher may need to specifically avoid or limit a type of food consumed within his or her classroom in order to manage specific health needs.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Move-Up Events:

- A general menu will be provided to all 4<sup>th</sup> grade families.
- Ingredient-specific information will be provided to families of food allergy students.

### **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 #130**

The purpose of homework assignments should be to:

1. Help the student master a skill.
2. Encourage the student to learn new things.
3. Assist the student to understand what is being taught.
4. Develop in the student a sense of responsibility and independence.
5. Acquaint parents/guardians with what their child is learning in the classroom.

### **Guidelines**

Each student shall be responsible for completing homework assignments as directed. [\[1\]](#)

Homework shall complement classroom instruction and be planned and evaluated with respect to its purpose, appropriateness, and completion time.

The demand of homework upon the students' time shall be consistent with the best interests of the students in regards to other valuable experiences to be gained outside of school.

Homework shall not be used as a disciplinary action for misconduct.

Individual building guidelines regarding homework assignments shall be developed, and building principals shall work with school staff to formulate these guidelines and establish processes to assist in carrying out the purpose of this policy. Guidelines for assigning homework shall be shared by individual teachers with students and parents/guardians and/or be included as part of a student handbook distributed to students and parents/guardians.

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. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has recently changed their requirements for childhood immunizations. Please read the information below for more information, and contact your child's School Nurse if you have any questions.

- [Parent Information \(PDF\)](#)
- [Immunization Clinic Schedule](#)

**Diphtheria and Tetanus** – 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)

**Polio** – 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given), a fourth dose is not necessary if the third dose was administered at age 4 years.

**Measles, Mumps, Rubella** – 2 doses of Measles, 2 doses of Mumps and one dose of Rubella, given on or after the 1<sup>st</sup> birthday as an MMR. The second doses of Measles and Mumps are usually given as an MMR but may be Measles & Mumps only given at least one month after the first dose.

**Hepatitis B** – 3 doses with the first and second doses at least one month apart and the third dose 16 weeks after the first dose but not prior to six months of age.

**Varicella** – 2 doses on or after the first birthday or evidence of chicken pox 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.

**Even if your child is exempt from immunizations, he or she may be excluded from school during an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease.**

## **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 non-infective 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 several 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, including COVID, 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.

See also: Emergency Dismissal

## **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 are currently implementing the iReady math program and provide instruction that focuses on the 'why' of math. Students are guided through concrete to abstract thinking processes.

### **SCIENCE**

Science is taught K-12. The elementary level is inquiry-based, with a focus on lab experiences. Currently, a combination of FOSS and ETC materials are used.

### **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 contact your child's teacher with any concerns related to articulation or language development. If an initial screening is warranted, parents will be informed if additional assessment is recommended.

## 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 music 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 may 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 and Chromebooks to learn applications such as Educreations, Edmodo and Google Docs to collaborate, research, and 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 a physical reason prevents a child from participating in physical education, a note from the parent must be presented to the classroom teacher at the start of the school day. The note will be provided to the physical education teacher and/or school nurse before class for each day requested. Excessive parent requests will be referred to the school nurse and principal. 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, adaptive 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 provided to families regarding the cost and the agent. If you wish to purchase insurance, the forms are to be completed and 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. **Electronic games, i-pods, cell phones, trading cards, toys, or special possessions of students** should NOT be brought to school. **This list is not all-inclusive.** Special occasions (e.g. reward day) scheduled by your child's teacher are permitted. However, please consider the cost of the item and possibility for damage or loss before sending an item to school. Storing items in one's backpack or desk does not ensure security. With their many duties, teachers are not expected to guard students' belongings. The building principal has discretion over the safety and appropriateness of all items. Items of concern may be held by the teacher or office staff. Parents/Guardians will be contacted as necessary. The school will not be held liable for lost, stolen, or damaged 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 rack 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. For the 2021-2022 school year, breakfast and lunches are currently free to all students. Weekly menus are shown on the Neshaminy Network Television (Comcast and Verizon) and can be accessed on the Web at [www.neshaminy.org](http://www.neshaminy.org), and then select "Food Services" under the "Parents" link in the red header.

**If/when lunches require payment:** 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 a 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.

### **MONTHLY CALENDAR AND NEWSLETTER**

A weekly newsletter is sent home via e-mail. Please remember to look for it and review for important information and updates on daily/weekly/monthly activities at school. [The District calendar is available at this link.](#)

### **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 I I . 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**

Health and Safety protocols related to the pandemic are continuously in flux. Please refer to District communications regarding our current protocols.

Our nurse and our health aide are available for medical services. If your child is ill, please **DO NOT** send him/her to school. Children must be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning 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:

- A written note is required from the doctor.
- 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.
- 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 email, note or telephone. Messages are placed in the teachers' mailboxes as they are received. Teachers do have access to district e-mail but for time-sensitive 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 for addressing your child's needs. Teachers will generally share their preferred means of communication at the start of the year. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November and/or as the need arises. 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. The pandemic has curtailed many of the annual events scheduled by the PTO. Be on the lookout for electronic and paper communication regarding events that are able to continue.

## **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 you are familiar with our procedures for picking up children from school and, especially at the end of the day for dismissal. This information is outlined in our weekly e-newsletter at the start of the year.

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

Please make sure you discuss with your child the plan for dismissal before school begins each day. Any requests to change the regular dismissal plan must be placed in writing to the teacher/office.

Except for emergencies, please refrain from calling 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 p.m. so that we may avoid interrupting the classroom between 3:15 p.m. and 3:35 p.m. 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 or after 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; please do not plan to visit your child at this time of the day.

## **RELINQUISHING CHILDREN TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

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. You will not be permitted to 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.

## **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.org](http://www.neshaminy.org).

## **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 our school's Guidance Counselor at 215-809-6305 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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. Our weekly newsletter will also provide this information as the year progresses.

## **TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION**

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. Communication via cell is not permitted. If a need arises where a child MUST call home, our staff will assist with making arrangements.

## **VISITORS IN SCHOOL**

Parental interest in the educational process is the lifeline of school performance. Visitation of parents is encouraged and always welcomed. However, prior arrangements must be made before visiting the classrooms. 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.* Pearl Buck Elementary has a secure entry system which will REQUIRE visitors to provide official ID (e.g. driver's license, credit card) prior to accessing the building. ID's will be scanned by the entry system. 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 are required to ask anyone they see in the building for their visitor's badge. Staff members will respectfully direct/escort 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 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 the purpose of their visit. Visitors may be denied access at any time.
- 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. The school doors open for children to enter the building at 8:50 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.