

# Paris Elementary School

## PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK 2009-2010



### **CARDINAL POWER!**

4 Hathaway Road  
South Paris, Maine 04281

207-743-7802  
207-744-0318  
207-739-2433 (Voice System)

[www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris](http://www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris)

## **Cardinal Power Pledge**

**I am a citizen of Paris Elementary School**

**I HAVE CARDINAL POWER!**

**I am respectful, safe, and kind**

**I HAVE CARDINAL POWER!**

**I take care of myself, my environment,  
and all people**

**I HAVE CARDINAL POWER!**

**I am responsible for my learning each  
and every day**

**I HAVE CARDINAL POWER!**

**I can make a difference in the world  
with my own two hands**

**I HAVE CARDINAL POWER!**

## PARIS ELEMENTARY STAFF

Principal: Ms. Jane Fahey (302)

Assistant Principal: Mrs. Mary Lou Peterson (302)

Secretaries: Mrs. Juli Dubuc (301), Mrs. Jodi Truman (302)

Kindergarten: Mrs. Carol Allen (220), Mrs. Rebecca Schaff (212), Ms. Marcia Wright (223)

First Grade: Mrs. Theresa Copp (230), Mrs. Kim Desjardins (227), Ms. Holly Lidstone (235)

Second Grade: Mrs. Carol Brown (240), Mrs. Heather Hatch (242), Ms. Stephanie Rioux (238)

Third Grade: Mrs. Christina Jackson (327), Mrs. Evelyn Krahn (324), Mr. Nathan Merrill (325)

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Sharon Castonguay (321), Mrs. Anna Gregoire (320), Mrs. Laurie Huff (318)

Fifth Grade: Mrs. Joan Deans (413), Ms. Luba Greene (417), Mr. Doug Hoy (418)

Sixth Grade: Mrs. Alice Deegan (424), Ms. Laurie Rodrigue (421), Mr. Frederick Schwaner (420)

Special Education: Mrs. Pam Farnum (217), Mrs. Linda Livak (313), Mrs. Jill Moyer (117)

Speech and Language: Mrs. Jeanne Sylvester (216), Mrs. Sue Hopkins (311)

Occupational Therapy: Mrs. Sue Proctor (311)

Ed Techs: Mrs. Kim Haney, Mrs. Suzette Keniston, Mrs. Doreen Kilfoyle, Mrs. Debi Loveless, Mrs. Tamara Cohen, Mrs. Amy Morton, Mrs. Sarah Dexter, Mr. Chad Truman, Mr. Gary Churchill, Mrs. Jill Gay, Mr. Bob Mahn

Title I Reading: Mrs. Lori Pacholski (210) and Ms. Jaime Gilman (211)

Literacy Specialist and Coach: Mrs. Marilyn Brown (211)

Math Interventionist: Mrs. Tracey Hartnett (412)

Library: Mrs. Kathryn Davis (112) Library Tech: Mrs. Carol Walker (112)

Music: Mr. Dan Barker (148), Mr. Bob Tiffit (148)

Physical Education: Ms. Kim Kangas (120)

Art: Mrs. Sue Moccia (123)

Gifted and Talented: Mrs. Georgina Grenier (312)

Spanish: Senor Matthew Carter (412)

Guidance: Ms. Mary Newcomb (308)

Nurse: Mrs. Victoria VanLoan (306)

Health Secretary: Mrs. Wendy Bernier (305)

Lunchroom: Mrs. Bonnie Jones (142), Mrs. Michelle Raymond, Mrs. Carolyn Knights

Custodians: Ms. Carol Fanjoy (132), Mrs. Rachel Coburn, Ms. Laurie Leonard, Mr. Jim Philobotte

**To contact any school district employee by e-mail, use this formula:**

**first name\_last name@sad17.k12.me.us**  
**Example: jane\_fahey@sad17.k12.me.us**

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

8:25 a.m.	Supervision is provided for arriving students - Breakfast is served.
8:40 a.m.	Classrooms are open for students to enter.
8:45 a.m.	Instructional Day Begins
11:00 - 1:00	Recess and Lunch Period for students
3:05 p.m.	Dismissal begins

There is no supervision prior to 8:25 a.m. for children arriving early. We ask that your child not arrive before 8:25 unless an adult (parent) is present to provide outside supervision.

If your child arrives after 8:45 he/she must stop at the office for a tardy slip before proceeding to class. Parents should bring their child into the school upon late arrival to sign in.

Throughout the school year there will be scheduled early release days. Lunch is served on these days prior to dismissal and bus transportation is provided. Early Release Day dismissal will be at 12:30 p.m. for all students. Breakfast is not served on days when there is a delayed start.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

When arriving by car, parents are asked to enter school property via Meadow Lane. Parents may park in the large parking lot on the North Side of the building and walk their child to the front entrance of the school or they may pull into the Car Loop and drop their child off. Parents are asked to not arrive until after 8:25 as there are no staff on supervision duty until that time daily. If you are using the car loop, please do not pass other cars and please do not leave your car unattended. If you wish to leave your car, please park in the North Parking lot.

In the afternoon, students who leave by car are dismissed at 3:05 and walked to the car loop by a staff member. We do not dismiss children to go alone to the parking lot to meet parents.

Students are allowed to walk or ride bikes to and from school with parent permission. Children who ride bikes must wear bike helmets in accordance with the law. Students who walk or ride bikes must sign out in their classrooms so we know that they have left the grounds.

Please do not enter school property via Hathaway Road. This driveway to the school from Hathaway is reserved for Buses and Staff use only.

## **ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

In the event of an accident or illness at school, the parents are called or, if necessary, the emergency number that you indicate on the Emergency Form is called. Please make sure your Emergency Contact Person is someone local who can be reached (Grandmother in Florida isn't a good choice!) Please make sure that person is forewarned that you are using them as a contact person.

Any accident or injury at school should be reported to a teacher. Ice, soap and water, band aids, and rest are our routine first aid. If there is any doubt about the seriousness of the injury, the parent or guardian or emergency back-up will be contacted.

If at any point during the school year your emergency information changes, please notify the school immediately so we can keep our records up to date.

## **APPOINTMENTS/CONFERENCES**

Our staff will gladly meet with parents before or after school. Please call the school office to arrange an appointment. Parents are kindly asked not to call teachers at their homes.

An appointment can be made to meet with the principal or assistant principal by calling or stopping in. It is best to call ahead to avoid having to wait. Evening hours are available for parents who work.

The Oxford Hills School District has made a transition to a Parent Conference style called Three-Way Conferencing. Students are prepared in the fall and winter to join the conference with the parent and teacher to talk about his/her successes and to set goals. We encourage parents to attend both sets of conferences with their child. Conference dates for this year are October 29 and April 12.

To protect a child's confidentiality, we ask that parents refrain from trying to conference with a staff member in public places, i.e.: the parking lot, a spaghetti supper, a hallway, supermarket, etc. Your cooperation is requested in understanding that it is against the law for any staff member to discuss confidential school and student matters with others who do not have the right to know.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

On Monday afternoons students gather together as a school family to hear announcements, to sing songs, to receive awards and recognition, and to gain a feeling of school unity. Parents are welcome to join us for any assembly. Assemblies begin at 2:15 and last for about half an hour.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Excessive absences or tardiness for other than verifiably excusable reasons may result in disciplinary action. Parents will be notified after their child has accumulated excessive absences and parents will be asked to participate in a conference to develop a plan to improve school attendance. Ten percent (eighteen school days) over the course of the year is considered excessive. Please see information on page 6 about mandatory attendance laws.

## **ILLNESSES AND APPOINTMENTS**

We believe that students should strive to be in school each of the 175 days required by Maine State Law. If a child must be absent due to illness, the parents or guardian are asked to notify the school between 7:30 and 9:00 of the morning missed. This communication keeps us from worrying about where a child might be and sets a lifelong example for children that they must notify their "employer" when they are unable to be on the job. In extreme cases, parents may be required to provide notice from the child's physician. We make every attempt to call parents if a child is absent to ensure the student is safe. It helps us if you call us, so we do not have to bother you at work!

We encourage parents to try to make doctor appointments after school hours though we understand it is not always possible to do so. Please let us know if your child will be late to school or will leave school early due to an appointment.

If a child is too ill to be in school, we consider the child too ill to be asked to do schoolwork at home. At a parent's request, teachers will prepare lessons for an ill child that will be sent home with a sibling or that may be picked up after school hours by the parent. Please allow 24 hours after the request for a teacher to prepare lessons for the child. Students who have been absent are responsible for contacting teachers to get explanation about missed lessons, assignments, and to make up missed quizzes or tests.

A child who has been absent from school may not participate in any school sponsored evening activities that day unless approval is given by the school principal.

## **ATTENDANCE CONTINUED...**

### **FAMILY VACATIONS**

Parents are discouraged from planning family vacations during school time. Parents must contact the principal and teacher at least one week in advance for permission to remove their child for family vacation. Once permission has been given, all long-term projects that have been assigned prior to and that are due during the time missed must be completed and turned in prior to the child leaving on vacation. Parents must understand that new instruction, class discussions, etc. can not be repeated. Parents are responsible for making sure that their child understands missed assignments and instruction. Parents must also understand that not all assignments can be predicted or prepared prior to a child being absent on vacation. Therefore teachers are not required to prepare lessons ahead of time for students who will be gone on vacation. Children who have been absent are responsible for contacting teachers to get missed assignments and to make up missed quizzes or tests upon their return to school. Vacations that are taken during mandatory school testing periods will be unexcused.

### **TARDIES**

School hours are from 8:45 - 3:05 each day unless otherwise noted. Students must be in their classrooms before 8:45 AM to avoid being marked tardy. Punctuality is an important life lesson that we reinforce with students. The tardy child misses out on important things that happen at the beginning of each day including announcements, lunch count, beginning of lessons, etc. A student who is tardy is, in effect, being unfair to his/her classmates, teacher and, most importantly, self. Please help us teach responsibility to your child by assuring that he/she is prompt each day.

If a child is late to school, the child, along with the parent, should report to the office prior to going to his/her classroom so we can make corrections to the district attendance reports and get an accurate lunch count. An admittance slip will be issued. Disciplinary action may be taken by the school if the child has accumulated numerous tardies and corrective action does not appear to have been effective in solving the problem.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

Parents who need to dismiss their child from school early are asked to come to the office to sign their child out. Under no circumstances will a child be sent to the parking lot to meet a caregiver. This includes parents who wish to remove their child from the bus at the end of the day. Before the child is released to you, parents must come to the office to sign the child out. This rule is for the safety of your child. Thank you for your cooperation.

## **Perfect Attendance Awards**

Students are honored each trimester if they have been present at school all day every day.

# STATE ATTENDANCE LAWS

During the 2007-08 school year, several updated and revised district policies were approved to match new State Laws regarding student attendance. These policies could have a direct affect on your child, yourself, and our school. The newly revised policies are **JHB: Truancy** and **JLF: Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**.

Policy JHB now specifies “Habitually Truant” at the elementary level. During the school year, when a child has the equivalent of seven (7) unexcused absences or five (5) consecutive unexcused absences, the child is considered, by law, to be habitually truant. At that point, the principal shall inform the Superintendent and attempt to correct the problem. If it is not resolved, the Superintendent/designee shall try other initiatives listed in the policy to get the student in school. If these attempts fail, the school may notify local law enforcement authorities and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) a violation of the habitual truancy state statutes.

Policy JLF explains the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect. For the first time, habitual truancy is included in this policy. If a child is in violation of Policy JHB (truancy), then the parent/guardian falls under policy JLF - Child Abuse and Neglect.

What this means for parents and guardians is that you should have your child continue to attend school on a daily basis. If your child will be absent, please remember to call or send a note to the school office. If we do not hear from you, we assume your child’s absence is unexcused. School Board Regulation regarding excused/unexcused absences specifically states:

*A student’s absence is excused when the absence is for the following reasons:*

- A. Personal illness. May be verified by the building principal*
- B. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day. Appropriate documentation may be requested by the building principal.*
- C. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day. Appropriate documentation may be requested by the building principal.*
- D. A family emergency if deemed appropriate by the building principal.*
- E. A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose which has been approved by the principal.*

As a courtesy to parents and to ensure that children are safe, if we do not hear from you when your child is absent, we attempt to call you to find out where your child is and why he/she is absent. It is so much easier if you give us a call to notify us when your child will be absent. When we call, if we do not reach anyone, we assume your child is unexcused absent.

Also, as a reminder, school begins daily at 8:45 and ends at 3:05. Children who arrive after 8:45 are considered tardy. The guidelines above are used to determine whether the tardiness is excused or unexcused. The same guidelines are used when students are dismissed early. If a child arrives before 10:00 AM, the absence is considered a tardy. If a child leaves after 2:00 PM, it is considered an early dismissal. Otherwise, the child who arrives late to school (after 10:00) or who leaves early (before 2:00) is considered half day absent.

## **BANNED ITEMS**

Gum is not allowed on school property either inside or on the playground without special permission. Candy is permitted only in special circumstances or as part of a bag lunch to be eaten in the cafeteria or at lunch. We encourage parents to send healthy snacks for their child. *Please do not send soft drinks (soda) to school with your child or caffeinated power drinks.*

Personal toys may not be brought to school without specific permission from the classroom teacher. Trading cards including Packman, Yu-gi-oh and similar cards are not allowed at our school and will be taken from students. Children who wish to bring playground toys such as balls or jump ropes to school accept full responsibility for them. Toys will be taken from students if they are out during instructional time. They will be returned only to parents. Children may not bring toy guns, including squirt guns, toy knives, or toy weapons of any kind to school.

CDs, Tapes, Radios, walkie-talkies, hand held games, CD Players, iPods, MP3 Players, Beepers and Walkman type devices are not allowed at school at any time unless there is a specific instructional need and approval is given by the teacher. Some bus drivers do allow CD players or hand-held games during the bus ride to or from school. However, once the child arrives at school these items should be securely placed inside their backpack and the student accepts full responsibility for the item's safety. Items that are confiscated because they are out during the school day will be returned only to a parent.

Noise causing devices, including watches that "beep" need to be shut off.

## **CELLULAR PHONES**

We recognize the need for parents to provide a cellular phone for all members of the family. Cell phones should be shut off during the school day and kept in the child's backpack. Students may not use them at school except under conditions provided for in school district policy. The school accepts no responsibility for lost or damaged cellular phones. If a cellular phone becomes a distraction, it will be kept in the office until the end of the day. Cell phones may not be used on District buses.

## **BICYCLES**

With the construction of the new sidewalks along High Street, students may now ride their bikes to school with parent permission. The following bike rules will be enforced:

All cyclists must wear safety helmets in accordance with the law.

Bicycles should not be ridden in the parking lots or driveways.

Cyclists should enter the school grounds from High Street near the bike rack by the school sign.

Bikes must be left at the bike rack during the school day.

The school accepts no responsibility for the safety and security of bicycles.

It is suggested that bikes be locked during the day.

Motorists should practice extreme caution around the school, knowing there are now children riding bikes and walking to/from school

## **BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES**

If your child would like to share a special treat with the class on his/her birthday, please call the classroom (homeroom) teacher to make arrangements. To protect the health of all children, we discourage treats with high sugar and/or fat content. Because some children may be allergic to peanuts, it is best to avoid food items that contain nuts or any peanut oil.

If your child is planning a private party, we ask that invitations not be distributed at school unless all children in the class get one.

On special occasions students sometimes like to plan “surprise” parties for their teachers. We discourage this because of the disruption to the educational climate of the classroom. Only on very special occasions and with the prior permission of the principal will parties be allowed.

Occasionally a child will receive a special delivery of balloons or flowers at school for a special occasion. Deliveries of this nature are extremely disruptive to the educational process and we discourage parents from honoring students at school in this way. It is our policy to hold such items in the office until the end of the school day. Please note in the bus rules that balloons and glass containers are not allowed on district buses.

If for religious reasons your child cannot participate in special events or parties, please notify the principal of the school so that we can make proper alternative arrangements for your child.

## **BULLYING**

Every child has the right to attend school in an environment that promotes learning through a peaceful and loving atmosphere. It is not unusual for some students to believe that they have the right to make fun of someone else or to call names. Bullying is not tolerated at Paris Elementary School. We define bullying as any words or actions which put someone else down, make fun of another person or which fail to show compassion. We ask parents’ cooperation in helping children learn how to handle a bullying situation in an appropriate manner. These are the steps that we teach children:

If someone is making fun of you by excluding you, calling names, or being mean in other ways, do these things:

- 1) Do not fight back with words or actions. (Then you are also guilty of impolite and improper behavior!)
- 2) Instead, look the other person in the eye and politely ask them to stop doing what they are doing. Tell them how you feel. “When you call me that name, it really hurts my feelings. Please stop.” This empowers you and actually puts you in control of the situation.
- 3) If the behavior doesn’t stop or even continues on another day, tell an adult who can do something about it. Your mom or dad, your teacher, the counselor, the principal, a grandparent, etc. all are willing to help make our school a safe place for you to be.

Parents, please help us create a peaceful and kind learning environment. If your child complains about other children teasing or putting him down, let us know immediately. If you receive a call from the teacher, principal, or counselor saying that your child has been bullying another child, please help us teach better behavior.

## **BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

As with all other aspects of the school experience, our focus is on the safety of each child. Therefore, we take the school district bus rules and consequences very seriously. We expect our children at Paris Elementary School to set a good example for all students who ride the bus. We will enforce the district policy as written. Please familiarize your child with the bus rules and consequences which can be found on the next two pages.

Buses in SAD #17 have been fitted for the use of video cameras and equipment. Bus students are videotaped by the school department and these tapes may be reviewed to monitor student behavior and safety.

## **CHILD CUSTODY**

In most cases, when parents are divorced or separated, both parents continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned. In these instances we will send copies of report cards, progress reports, newsletters, etc. to the noncustodial parent as requested. If you are a noncustodial parent or share custody of your child, please notify us if you would like to receive vital information pertaining to your child.

**If, as custodial parent, you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring a copy of the order to the school office. Unless your court order is on file with us we will provide equal rights and access to both parents.**

## **CLUB ROWE**

The District is fortunate to offer inexpensive child care before and after school at many school sites. The Club Rowe program, located at the Guy E. Rowe School in Norway is available to students who attend Paris Elementary five days a week from 7:00 - 8:30 and from 3:05 to 6:00. A shuttle bus is provided from Rowe to Paris Elementary each morning and from Paris Elementary to Rowe in the afternoons for students attending this program. Special classes and activities, homework support and play time are provided in a safe educational setting for a nominal cost. For more information about how to register your child and about costs, contact the Guy E. Rowe School at 743-5183.

# **BUS SAFETY**

The Oxford Hills School Transportation Department needs your help in making children aware of the Safety measures necessary both on and off buses. All students should understand the importance of the rules, both for regular transportation and field trips.

Please review with you child the following rules:

## **MEETING THE BUS**

1. Be at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled time. Stand back about 10 feet from the bus stop and wait until the door is open before loading.
2. If students miss the bus, they should not attempt to ride another bus, walk to or from school, or hitch hike.
3. Respect the property rights of others while waiting for the bus. Do not litter or make unnecessary noise.
4. Line up at the stop; don't push and shove; wait for the bus to come to a full stop before approaching it.
5. Never throw snowballs or other objects at or around a bus.
6. Don't fight with or tease other students at the bus stop.
7. During winter months, students should never wait for the bus on snow piles near the road, they may slip under the bus or another vehicle.

## **ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUS**

1. While loading and/or unloading, enter or leave the bus orderly and quickly as directed by the driver.
2. If the student should arrive at the stop just as the bus approaches the stop, wait until the bus has come to a complete stop; cross 10 feet in front of the bus in clear view of the bus driver.
3. Students who must cross the road after leaving the bus in the afternoon must go to a point of the shoulder of the road 10 feet in front of the bus. Cross the road only after the driver has signaled the student to cross in front of the bus.
4. Before crossing in front of the bus, be sure you can see the driver and the driver can see you.
5. If a student drops any object while leaving the bus, do not attempt to retrieve the object until the bus has left the scene and the road is clear of vehicles.
6. Do not enter or leave the school bus by the back door except in case of an emergency or unless directed to do so by the driver.

## **RIDING THE BUS**

1. While riding the bus, students are under the supervision of the driver at all times. The driver has the authority to assign a seat to a student.
2. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that they will not distract the driver or disturb other riders on the bus.
3. Students may not carry the following objects on school buses:
  - Glass
  - Knives or sharp objects
  - Pets or caged animals
  - Skis, ski poles, and snowboards
  - Sleds
  - Chemicals of any nature
  - Large musical instruments
  - Skate boards
  - Firearms
  - Hand Tools or power tools
  - Engine parts
  - Balloons
  - Pokeman, Yugioh, or other trading cards
  - Any item that could cause injury or disruptive behavior (This is at the drivers' discretion)
4. Students must keep pens, pencils, and other school materials inside their backpacks.

5. Students are not to deface the bus or any school property. They should not litter the floor of the bus, eat, or drink on the bus.
6. Students must not tamper with any of the safety devices, including door latches and fire extinguishers. They must stay seated until the driver directs them to get off the bus. Students are not to put their hands, arms, head or bodies out of the window, nor are they to yell at anyone outside the bus.
7. Students are to sit facing the front with their back up against the back of the seat and their feet directly in front of them. They must not get up from their seats and move while the bus is moving.
8. Do not ask the bus driver to be let off at any place except your (the students') regular stop unless there is a note signed by the students' parents' directing otherwise.
9. Students must ride only the bus to which they are assigned. Visitors are not allowed to ride buses unless permission is first obtained from school officials.
10. Students are not to play radios, tape players, or band instruments while on the bus. Special arrangements may be made with the use of a CD player with headphones depending on the students' needs
11. The school bus is like a classroom and all school rules apply.
12. Keep the bus clean.
13. There is no smoking or any use of tobacco on the bus.
14. Keep the aisle clear of books, lunch boxes, musical instruments, etc.
15. No objects will be allowed which obstruct the driver's view of which interfere with a student(s) space, safety or comfort. All items should be held on the student's lap.
16. No harassment physical or verbal. No hitting or roughhousing. No teasing, name calling, or profanity.

If necessary, the bus driver can assign seats. Students are instructed in the proper use of seat belts during the course of the year, if the bus is equipped with them. Bus safety drills are also performed. To ensure everyone's safety, it is essential that distraction to the driver is kept to a minimum. Cooperation with the driver at all times will help make the ride better and safer for everyone. It is important to understand that riding the bus is a privilege and not a right. Students may be denied the privilege of riding the bus as a result of unacceptable behavior.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Transportation Department at (207) 743-5621.

## **Consequences**

Students may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus for infractions of the rules.

**First Written Warning:** Parents are notified and consequences consistent with the discipline procedures of the school are given. This may include suspension from the bus. Contact may be by telephone and/or parents conference, depending on the circumstances. The number of days for a suspension will depend on the offense, pattern and severity of the behavior.

**Second Written Warning:** Parents are notified and consequences consistent with the discipline procedures of the school are given. This may include suspension from the bus and school. The number of days for a suspension will depend on the pattern and severity of the behavior. Parents will always be notified in cases of suspension. (A parent conference may be requested in cases that do not result in suspension).

**Third Written Warning:** Parents are notified and the privilege to ride the bus is suspended. (A parent conference will be required with appropriate school personnel to resolve the problem). On this, the third incident of misconduct the student will lose all bus privileges for minimal 3-5 days.

**Extreme Violations:** In any instance in which a student's misbehavior has endangered the bus or other passengers, or in which a student has to be removed from the bus by a school employee or police officer, that student's privilege to ride may be immediately suspended until such times as a parent or guardian and student meet with appropriate school personnel to resolve the problem.

**Additional incidents:** Will result in removal from the bus for the remainder of the year. End of the year violations/disciplinary actions may carry over to the beginning of the following school year.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

One of our ongoing goals is to provide clear and concise information to parents in a variety of ways. All of our efforts to provide parents with accurate information are useless if parents fail to take the time to become informed. Likewise, if parents fail to communicate concerns or give us feedback in a direct way, we will not be a very effective school. We strongly suggest parents utilize one or more of the following channels which are easily available:

1. Read the Parent Newsletter published once monthly throughout the school year. You may opt to read the letter at our website to help us save paper and money by visiting the school district web site: [www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris](http://www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris) Contact our office if you choose this option and we will send a note to you each month to remind you that the latest edition is posted.
2. Review and sign the School Planner or assignment book weekly.
3. Attend PTO meetings each month and get involved in this fine organization.
4. Read special interest articles published routinely in local newspapers.
5. Attend Parent Conferences, Open Houses, and special family events.
6. Get involved as a school volunteer.
7. Pick up the phone and call us if you need clarification or further information.
8. Read communications sent home by teachers. All do a weekly or regular letters
9. Share your e-mail address with us! All staff have school issued e-mail accounts. This is an excellent way to communicate with any staff member.
10. Use the school voicemail system to communicate with any staff member 24/7. (739-2433)
11. Check us out on-line! Our web site includes a calendar, information about our staff and school newsletters. [www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris](http://www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris)

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Occasionally a parent may have a need to express a concern about something that has gone on in a classroom or within the school setting. We ask that you follow a logical sequence of steps to assure that your concerns are heard. It is important to us that we try to solve issues quickly.

First, meet with the teacher to discuss your thoughts. If you do not feel that appropriate resolution has come from that meeting, please contact the school principal for a meeting. At that time the teacher, if necessary, may be asked to sit in. If you still are dissatisfied with the school's response to your concern, you should contact the Superintendent of Schools for SAD 17.

It is important to our professional teaching staff that we are given the opportunity to solve problems at the lowest possible level by listening to your concerns. It is also important that concerns be directly addressed. It is difficult to address issues that have either been presented to us as 'hearsay' or that have been allowed to fester over a period of time.

## COMPUTERS

All 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students are issued a bulletin board service account (BBS) during the school year provided the Acceptable Use Agreement has been signed by student and parent or guardian. Students who have previously had an account do not need to complete a new permission form each year. Students who violate the Acceptable Use Agreement risk having their account privileges revoked.

All students have access to school computers and a curriculum that teaches students about technology, keyboarding and other important skills. All school computers are guarded by a system that prevents children/adults from accessing inappropriate web sites.

Students who use the school computers in violation of the Acceptable Use Agreement may have their computer privileges at school suspended until additional instruction has occurred.

The School District allows community members to have personal accounts which will allow them to access the Bulletin Board System. If parents or other community members are interested in being set up with an account, please contact SAD #17 District offices at 743-8972.

Citizens are able to access districtwide information about curriculum, budget and school board policies via the SAD17 web site at [www.sad17.k12.me.us](http://www.sad17.k12.me.us)

**As a school we have become very concerned about the dangers posed to children who use the internet and world wide web when unsupervised. Please supervise your children's use of the "Net" and teach them to never give out personal information such as name, address, phone or birthdays.**

## DISCIPLINE

Effective discipline is necessary for quality education. In order to guarantee your child and all students in the school the excellent learning environment they deserve, it is essential for the home and school to work closely together in promoting self-discipline, responsibility and an appreciation for the rights of others.

Minor classroom offenses are the responsibility and obligation of the classroom teacher. When serious or persistent problems arise, discipline will become the joint responsibility of the principal and teacher.

It is the teacher's role to guide and direct the classroom. This includes teaching children about appropriate behavior. Parents will be notified when their child is having a difficult time adjusting to school rules and behavior expectations. Likewise, if a child is sent to the office for disciplinary reasons, parents will be notified.

In order to establish a consistent discipline program at school it is expected that parents and teachers will communicate regularly and openly with each other. Parent cooperation and support is vital to the process. We encourage you to team with us to teach your child appropriate behaviors and to reinforce positive behaviors.

As mandated by District Policy, each school has two adults designated as agents to whom concerns regarding sexual harrasment are directed. At PES Ms. Fahey, our principal and Mr. Merrill, a third grade teacher are the designated harrasment officers. Please contact any staff member or them if you have a concern that needs to be addressed.

A school rule that governs behavior throughout the building and grounds has been adopted. Specific guidelines for behavior in each area of the building focus on this primary rule:

**We take care of ourselves, others and the environment  
by being respectful, responsible and safe.**

You may hear your child talk about “Cardinal Power.” We encourage children to use their “Cardinal Power” to make good choices. The Cardinal Power Pledge, located at the front of this handbook is recited by students at assemblies and serves as a guide for positive behavior in our school.

### DISCIPLINE CONTINUED...

The following behaviors will not be tolerated:

1. Bullying/Harassment/Ridicule - words or actions which put someone else down, make fun of another person, that threaten another person, or which fail to show compassion.
2. Cheating - copying, taking or accepting answers from another person, giving answers to another student, using a crib sheet.
3. Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco - use of or being under the influence of or possession of any unauthorized or illegal drug, alcohol or tobacco product on school property, or on a school sponsored trip. Giving or selling any drug/alcohol or tobacco product to another.
4. Disruption of Learning Environment - any action which makes it difficult for a teacher to teach or another student to learn.
5. Disrespect - not showing proper respect to any school employee, substitute teacher, volunteer, or student; talking back, improper language or actions.
6. Forgery - Signing someone else’s signature without their knowledge or approval.
7. Hazing - forcing individuals to do silly and dangerous things for the purpose of inclusion.
8. Hurting of Others - pushing, shoving, kicking, tripping, hitting, punching, or any action which results in the hurting of another.
9. Insubordination - not doing what a school employee has asked.
10. Lying - failure to tell the complete truth at all times.
11. Sexual Harassment - words or actions with sexual implications that demean or make someone of another sex uncomfortable including sexually oriented jokes.
12. Stealing - taking something that belongs to someone else without permission including going inside someone else’s desk, locker or book bag.
13. Vandalism/Destruction of Property - purposeful damaging of property that does not belong to you.
14. Violence/Fighting - physically causing harm to another person as a result of anger.
15. Weapons - having in possession any weapon including knives, guns, homemade devices, projectiles, fireworks, martial arts items, or any item that could harm another including snowballs.

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken as a result of violation of any of these behaviors. Some violations will result in immediate suspension or expulsion from school in accordance with School District Policy. Parents will be notified if a violation is severe or persistent.

### DONATIONS

Occasionally parents have the resources to make donations to a school. We welcome items that you are willing to donate to make our school a better place for children to learn and to grow. If you would like to contribute an item to our school, please come into the school office and we will help direct your efforts.

Remember that some companies provide matching funds for donations to a school by their employees. Check with your work place to see if they can help our school out! Also remember,

donations to nonprofit agencies are tax deductible in April! Helping us helps you!

### **DRESS CODE**

**“Dress Sharp, Look Sharp, Act Sharp”** is a theme that helps to set a positive tone in our society. Research indicates that when we look good, we have positive attitudes about ourselves and our work.

Recreational clothing such as spandex pants, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps and extremely short skirts and shorts are never appropriate school attire. Hats and clothing with rude or inappropriate language, symbols, or connotation are not allowed. Slogans and logos that advertise or promote alcohol, tobacco, or other adult material are also not permitted at school. We ask students and parents or other guests to the school to reserve hats for outdoor wear and to take them off while inside the building. Clothing that presents a safety concern is not permitted. We consider oversized clothing, shoes with wheels built in, and high heeled shoes as not safe attire for school. We ask that you send your child to school with sneakers or other shoes that protect the toes. Please do not send children to school with clothing that ‘talks’ or plays music!

To protect our gym floor, street shoes are not allowed during play or gym time. Students are encouraged to bring a spare pair of sneakers to be kept in their lockers. Our P.E. department has extra sneakers in various sizes that children may borrow for class.

In the winter, children should dress for the weather. Hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants help make outside play more fun.

### **DRUG POLICY**

In the Oxford Hills School District we have a strict drug policy. The policy will be followed as written. We appreciate your support as we help children understand the dangers of drug use. Please familiarize yourself with the policy which is located in the appendix of this handbook.

### **EARLY RELEASE DAYS**

Dismissal on scheduled early release days is at 12:30. If you are picking up your child please be prompt. There are four scheduled early release days to allow our staff to attend training meetings and to score assessments. The established early release days for the 2009-2010 school year are September 18, November 25, April 9, and June 7.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Our schools have a detailed emergency procedure plan in place in the unlikely instance of an emergency that requires action or evacuation. By State law we are required to have fire drills throughout the year. All students, staff and guests need to exit the building in an orderly, safe manner and immediately follow the instructions of the staff in charge. In the event of a real emergency, when the building can not be reentered, students and staff will be picked up by bus and taken to the High School.

Our primary concern is the safety and protection of all children. We ask your cooperation in following procedures that help ensure that all children are safe. With that in mind, children will not be dismissed to someone other than a parent or guardian without parent permission.

Because we provide a safe school environment, all guests, including parents and volunteers are required to get a pass at the office before proceeding to classrooms. This also helps us account for everyone in the case of an emergency evacuation. If you are in the building during an evacuation drill or lock down drill, please follow the directions of the staff member in charge.

## ENROLLMENT PROCESS

When enrolling a child in our school, parents need to provide:

- Name and address of the previous school
  - Proof of residency in SAD 17
  - Birth Certificate
  - Immunization Records
  - Information on previous Special Education or Gifted Services
- After a child is registered, we contact the previous school to get information that allows us to place the child in the most appropriate classroom.
  - Each spring we set aside a day for kindergarten registration. If you have a child who will be entering kindergarten in the fall of 2010, please notify our office in February or March. To be eligible for kindergarten, children must turn five years old on or before October 15 of the year of entry.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned as an educational experience for students. At the beginning of the year you are given the opportunity to sign permission for your child to attend all in district field trips. If you sign that form, you will receive notification about in district field trips but no further signature will be necessary. Any field trips that take children out of district requires signed parent permission. If we do not receive your permission, your child will stay at school. You will always receive advance notification of upcoming field trips. Occasionally teachers will ask for parent volunteers to chaperone trips. **For liability reasons, we cannot allow preschool siblings to participate in field trips. Parents are kindly asked to refrain from smoking or using tobacco products around children while chaperoning.**

Each child may be charged his/her share of some field trip costs. We often receive outside support via grants and PTO fund-raising to support field trips. Parents will be notified about the cost, what children should wear, times and lunch arrangements. Payment should be received as requested. If for financial reasons you can not afford the field trip fee, please notify the school so we can provide assistance.

Children represent their school while on school sponsored field trips. School rules remain in effect even while away from the building. Therefore, students should dress in appropriate attire and should behave in a way that demonstrates pride in themselves and their school.

## GRADES

Our grading system provides parents with specific performance feedback in each subject area based on standards that have been set by the district and that are measured through assessments and classroom performance.

Report cards for all children are sent home three times yearly shortly after the end of each trimester. If at any time you have a question about your child's performance, you are encouraged to talk with your child's teacher(s).

A District Honor Roll for Academic Achievement is named at the end of each tri-mester in grades 4-6. In addition, we give a Cardinal Power Award to those students, Grades 3-6, who demonstrate good citizenship and appropriate learning habits. See the guidelines for both awards listed under Honor Roll.

## **HEALTHY CHOICES**

Your child's health is a concern to us. If you pack your child's lunch, please send healthy snacks or lunches. Children are not allowed to bring soft drinks or caffeinated 'power drinks' for lunch. Childhood obesity is a topic that we must all work to solve. In addition, in accordance with District Policy, we will provide healthy options for children when there are class parties or rewards. If you have questions about your child's health, please contact the health office.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important part of life at our schools. To be meaningful, homework should be practice for each child to become competent in new concepts that have been introduced in class. Just like any new learning, meaningful practice is critical to success. Children who do not do homework will have a more difficult time meeting the learning standards that have been established.

Homework will be assigned regularly each week in all grade levels. In the lower grades this includes having your child practice reading at home. By third and fourth grades, you can expect at least half an hour each weekday evening of practice at home. In fifth and sixth grade, students generally average about one hour of practice at home after school. We encourage parents to play an active role in homework by

- Guiding and encouraging your child to complete work
- Monitoring work to ensure it is being completed
- Checking the assignment sheet which is located in the School Planner regularly and signing it each week. (grades 4 - 6)
- Communicating with your child's teacher if homework difficulties persist over a period of time.

## **HONOR ROLLS**

Guidelines for District Honor Rolls are as follows:

### **Academic Achievement Award:**

Presented to students in grades 4, 5 and 6 at the end of each trimester. District standards for this award include all students who have trimester marks in each subject indicating they meet or exceed district standards in that subject

### **Cardinal Power Award:**

Presented to students in Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 at the end of each trimester. District standards for this award include all students who have trimester marks of 3 or 4 in behaviors that support learning and in all effort marks in each subject area.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER/CANCELLATION**

All children are expected to go outside during recess times unless it is raining or extremely cold. During the winter months students should be dressed warmly, including hats, mittens and snow boots. We make decisions about whether there is indoor or outside recess based on current temperature and wind chill. Because all staff is either at lunch or already on recess duty, children who must stay inside during recess will either wait in the cafeteria or be assigned to another classroom.

Listen to the radio or television to hear if school is canceled for the day. Announcements are regularly made on most area radio and television stations, usually by 5:30 AM.

Occasionally school may be dismissed early because of weather conditions. Please listen to the radio if the weather is unstable. It is technically impossible for us to call each parent to notify you if this happens. It is also not practical for each child to call a parent to find out what to do. Therefore, each family should have an emergency plan which includes either who is responsible for picking up the child or where the child should go. To facilitate the release process, parents may pick up their child as soon as the announcement is made. A form will be sent home with all children during the first week of school so parents can inform us of their emergency release plan. We will consult these forms in the case of an early school dismissal.

You can have free text alerts about school closings and delays sent to your cell phone by signing up on-line at [www.wcsh.com](http://www.wcsh.com).

## **LATEX FREE ENVIRONMENT**

We are a latex free environment. We do not use balloons, protective gloves, or other items that contain latex.

## **LOCKERS**

Each child is assigned a personal locker for use during the year. We do not allow locks and children may not switch lockers with another student. Items of value should be left at home. Students should not keep money in their lockers. Student backpacks should be kept inside this locker throughout the day. Students may use magnets to tack things up inside their lockers but may not use tape or stickers inside or outside the locker. Lockers should be kept closed for safety reasons. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers and to conduct locker searches. Parents, feel free to inspect your child's locker to look for missing homework and important notices that might not find their way home!

## **LOST AND FOUND**

We strongly encourage parents to write their child's name inside each article of clothing and belongings. If your child fails to bring home a sweater, winter coat, lunch box, boots or other items, a good place to begin the search is in the lost and found lockers that are located near the main lobby. Please come to the office and we will help you. Occasionally we display all lost and found items on a table in the front lobby. Items left at the end of the year will either be sent to a clothing center or discarded.

## **LUNCH, BREAKFAST AND MILK**

Our schools participate in the Federal Hot Lunch/Breakfast Program. Our meals are prepared at OHCHS and are brought to our school daily. Menus are sent home monthly. Lunch and Breakfast prices remain the same this year. Please send breakfast, lunch, or milk money in the white envelope provided by the district. If your child brings a bag lunch or a snack to school, please be aware we have a school rule prohibiting soft drinks and power drinks. We discourage candy and other unhealthy snacks during breakfast/snack/lunch.

Some families may qualify for free or reduced lunch prices. Applications will be sent home at the beginning of the school year or on request. Children who have received free or reduced lunches during the 2008-2009 school year will continue to receive the same level of service until September 30 or until a new application has been processed. We encourage you to return your applications as soon as possible.

Breakfast is served between 8:25 and 8:45. When your child arrives at school, he/she should come into the school to get breakfast or to eat a snack, if desired. By 8:45, all students are expected to be back in class and ready for the start of the school day. If your child's bus arrives late, breakfast will be held for him/her. If your child wishes to bring a snack to eat during this time, he/she may do so. **If there is a school delayed start, no breakfasts will be served.**

Students will eat lunch in four shifts in the cafeteria. The cafeteria is monitored by 2 staff members. The following rules apply in the lunchroom:

1. Enter the cafeteria in a quiet, orderly fashion.
2. Be polite and courteous to employees and fellow students and quickly take a seat.
3. Use good manners and appropriate behavior while eating.
4. Clean up your table and area before leaving the cafeteria.
5. Depart the cafeteria in a quiet, orderly fashion.

Students who cannot follow the rules will be assigned to a quiet table in the cafeteria or removed to another location.

### **Lunch Payment Process**

In order to make the lunch payment process easier for parents, we use an electronic payment/debit system.

You can send lunch/breakfast money in any time during the week but Mondays are the best day for our cafeteria staff to process payments. It is very helpful to have the envelopes filled out completely (complete name, grade, teacher and amount enclosed). Please note that we do not make change but any extra money sent in will carry over on your child's account. Feel free to pay several days, weeks, or months in advance. Your child's account will be debited each time he/she eats! Please make checks out to **SAD 17 Food Service**.

Envelopes are available from the teachers and will come home with account balances. You can stop by the school to get additional envelopes, if needed. Every two weeks or so you should receive a slip from the lunch program indicating your account balance or indicating how much you owe. Please help us by keeping your food service account paid up.

### **Peanut Free Table:**

We provide a peanut free table in the cafeteria for those children who may suffer from peanut allergies. On days when peanut butter is served as the primary meal, students with allergies may eat with a friend in another location.

## **NURSING SERVICES**

Our school is fortunate to have a school nurse who is on site several days a week. We also have a full time health office secretary. If your child is ill or injured he/she may visit the Health Office. Our school nurse is always available by phone if not on site. She is also available to consult with parents and teachers about student health matters. The nurse also conducts periodic screenings for visual acuity, hearing and scoliosis, height and weight.

If your child will be staying home for the day, please give us a courtesy call between 7:30 and 9:00 in the morning to let us know or use our voice mail system to leave a message at any time.

Health records for each child are kept in the Health Office. If there are changes about your child's health or major health concerns, please contact our nurse so she can update the records and inform staff as necessary.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

No medication is given to a student at school unless properly authorized by a health care provider, as well as the parent. This includes over-the-counter medicines, as well as prescriptions. Medications should be delivered to school by the parents and the medication must be in its original container.

Children using inhalers and epi-pens should have a special health care plan that allows them to carry the medication on their person.

Medicines are kept under lock in the nurse's office and administered by the nurse or health secretary.

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND IMMUNIZATION POLICY**

To keep communicable disease at a minimum, we ask parents to keep your child at home if he/she has a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea the previous night or in the morning before school.

If you have any questions about whether to send your child to school or not, please call the school nurse.

The State of Maine has an Immunization Policy for all children in schools. Children must be in compliance with this law in order to attend public school. The school nurse will review this policy with you, if necessary.

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

Please notify the school nurse if your child has any health concerns that may need special consideration at school.

Remember to update your child's emergency form if telephone numbers change during the school year. It is extremely important that a parent can be reached in the event of an emergency or illness at school.

## **DENTAL HEALTH**

We offer a free fluoride rinse for your child's dental health (K-6). A permission slip is sent home at the beginning of the year for you to fill out and send back granting permission for this program

Due to the enthusiasm of several local dental hygienists, students may receive free teeth cleaning and checkups at school during the year. The Tooth Fairy program is designed for children who do not have the financial resources to visit a dentist regularly. Watch for more information that is sent home early in the school year.

## **PARENT NEWSLETTER**

A parent newsletter is published in the middle of each month to keep interested parents informed. In each newsletter you will find a calendar for the following month. We strongly encourage parents to set aside time each month to stay informed by reading the school newsletter. In addition, classroom teachers will also be sending home regular communications about what is going on in class. Our newsletters can be read on-line at [www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris](http://www.sad17.k12.me.us/schools/paris). Please consider helping us save time and money by letting us know that you will read the newsletters on line.

## **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

Our dynamic PTO is a very active group of parents who are interested in supporting the educational goals of the school. We encourage parents to become active members of the PTO. In our school the purpose of PTO is threefold:

1. Provide financial support to school programs, events, activities, and items that would otherwise not be able to be funded.
2. Provide quality and informative programs to parents.
3. Provide a vehicle for better communication between school and parents.

Meetings are held at 4:00 on the second Tuesday of each month. Watch for information in upcoming newsletters about meetings, fund-raisers, and special projects.

The PTO has set lofty goals for fund-raising this year to help provide instructional support, student services, special programs and to supplement needs for our school. We strongly encourage you to get involved in PTO activities and fund-raisers so that you can have a voice in creating a quality school.

The officers for this year's PTO are:

President - Lisa Keisman  
Vice President - Melissa Jewett  
Secretary - Bobbi Jo Hodgdon  
Treasurer - Janet Everett

## **PATRIOTIC EXERCISES**

Each classroom begins the day with the Pledge of Allegiance. We also teach children patriotic songs throughout the school year.

Students who object to participating in the flag salute or other patriotic exercises shall be excused from doing so upon submission of a request in writing. Such excusal shall not intimidate or embarrass the student. An excused student may stand, remain seated or arrangements may be made so that he/she may leave the room during that time. When in the presence of staff and students conducting a patriotic exercise, an excused student shall have appropriate respect for others' participation.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students have physical education classes once a week. If your child is unable to participate in physical education class for medical reasons, a note from the doctor must be presented. Dresses or skirts are not appropriate attire on physical education day. All children will attend physical education class. Those who can not participate will observe, help, or be given an appropriate, alternative assignment. For more information about the School District PE curriculum, please consult the District web site.

When PE classes are held inside, children must wear clean soled sneakers to protect the wooden gym floor. We suggest that children keep an extra pair of sneakers in their lockers so they will always be prepared for an indoor gym activity. We also have spare shoes that children may borrow.

## **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTICE**

### **Pest Control**

Because pesticides pose risks, the school uses an alternative approach to merely applying pesticides. Control of insects, rodents, and weeds at our school focuses on making the school buildings and grounds an unfavorable place for pests to live and breed. Through maintenance and cleaning, we will reduce or eliminate available food and water sources and hiding places for the pests. We will also routinely monitor the school area to detect pest problems and prevent the pests from becoming established. Some techniques we will use include pest monitoring, sanitation, pest exclusion, proper food storage, pest removal and--as a last resort--pesticides. This holistic approach is often called Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

### **Pesticide Use**

Sometimes pesticide use may be necessary to control a pest problem. When that happens, the school will use the lowest risk products available. If higher risk pesticides must be used, notices will be posted at application sites and parents, guardians and staff have a right to know.

#### **Your Right to Know**

Parents, legal guardians, and school staff will be notified of specific pesticide applications made at the school. To receive notification, you must be placed on the notification registry. To be placed on the registry, please call Mary Briggs at 743-8972 and ask for a registry sign-up form. Notification will be given at least five days before planned pesticide applications. Pesticide application notices will also be posted in school and on school grounds. Notification need not be given for pesticide applications recognized by law to pose little or no risk of exposure to children or staff.

The school also keeps records of prior pesticide applications and information about the pesticides used. You may review these records, a copy of the School's Integrated Pest Management Policy and the Pesticides in Schools regulation (CMR 01-026 Chapter 27) by contacting our IPM coordinator, Nelson Baillargeon, at 743-8972.

For further information about pests, pesticides and your right to know, call the Board of Pesticides Control at 207-287-2731 or visit the Maine School IPM web site at [www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm](http://www.thinkfirstspraylast.org/schoolipm).

## **PLANNERS**

All fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students will be required to carry either a school-issued three-ring binder called the School Planner or a school-issued assignment book. These will be used for home/school communication. Students who lose or need a replacement will be charged a small replacement fee.

Parents are kindly asked to check the planner weekly and to sign it so that we know you are informed about your child's progress. Many parents use the planner/assignment book to have an ongoing dialogue with the teacher. Each teacher will be in touch with you about his/her classroom procedures and policies pertaining to homework completion and overdue assignments.

## **PRE-SCHOOL**

We are excited to be able to continue our partnership with Community Concepts and Head Start by providing a quality pre-school program for 3 and 4 year olds. The Early Learning Center is located on the North side of the building with a special entrance from the North Parking Lot. The four year olds attend school on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Three year olds attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There is no cost for this program and four year olds may ride District buses to and from school.

The Pre-School has their own staff of teachers and support personnel and operates under strict Federal guidelines. By being located in our school, they are an exciting part of our school community and share school resources and services with our K-6 students.

For more information about this program and to learn about the registration process, please call the school and ask to speak to someone in the Pre-School.

## **READING FIRST**

Paris Elementary School is a Reading First school. We have been awarded a fifth year of a grant that has provided over \$800,000 so far to our school. The Reading First initiative focuses on improving students' reading performances. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development that applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures relative to reading instruction. The Grant has provided funding for the purchase of school supplies and materials that support literacy, teacher training, and the addition of extra personnel. As a result of this grant, students are given frequent assessments throughout the school year. Ask your child's teacher to share results with you!

## **SAFETY**

As a school we are very conscious of student safety. Many of our staff members have been trained in CPR and First Aid. Our staff Safety Committee meets regularly to ensure that we provide a safe learning and teaching environment. It is our policy to not leave students unattended or without appropriate supervision. We welcome parent input about school safety issues and concerns. Please speak with your child's teacher or an administrator if you have questions about school safety.

Paris Elementary School also has a sophisticated security system that allows the office to know who is in the building at all times. The front door, by the flagpole, is the only door that is open throughout the school day. All visitors, guests, volunteers, and parents must enter via the front door and sign in/out at the office. This also allows us to account for all people who might be in the building during an emergency or fire drill. Outside doors are also monitored in the office with security cameras.

## **SMOKING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

By district policy and state law no smoking is allowed anywhere on school property. Parents' cooperation in setting a good example for our children is greatly appreciated. Parents are kindly asked not to smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children when chaperoning field trips.

## **SOLICITATION**

Because we are trying to protect the learning environment of our school, we do not allow students to solicit staff members or each other with fund raisers, pledges, etc. Your cooperation is appreciated.

## **SPECIAL SERVICES AND PROJECTS**

**Special Education:** We have a multi-categorical special education program for children who need extra support to become successful students. Program guidelines allow for both in class and out of class services. Teachers work with the special education staff to modify instruction for students who need it. Children with severe learning needs may be serviced in another district school.

Paris Elementary School is also home to a District program that serves the needs of children who have behavioral and social skill deficits which are serious enough to make them eligible for special education services. All these children are members of our school community and participate in regular education classes. With the support of the program and our school community, students experience increased success in their regular education classes.

In addition, we have specialists in Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy who regularly work with identified students in our school. For more information about how to refer your child for special education services, please contact the school office or your child's teacher.

**Gifted and Talented:** The Oxford Hills School District provides a Gifted and Talented Program for those children who qualify at all grade levels. Students are formally identified in grades 2, 5 and 8 however parents and teachers are encouraged to refer a child at any time if they believe the child would benefit from accelerated or differentiated instruction. Participating children are challenged to work on skills that will go beyond the regular classroom curriculum. For more information about the district's gifted program please contact the Gifted Education Coordinator whose office is at the Fox School or call our school to leave a message for a GT staff member.

**Guidance Services:** Our school has a part time guidance counselor who works with children to help them overcome personal problems they may be having. If you feel your child has a need for school counseling services, please speak with your child's teacher or call Ms. Newcomb directly. Individual, small group, and classroom sessions provide a balanced approach to helping children solve problems.

**Foreign Language:** **Hola!** Children in grades 4-6 are taught Spanish. A specialist comes into each Grade 2 -5 classroom to teach lessons that will lead to children learning a second language.

**Title I:** Extra support services in literacy are provided for qualifying students in the primary grades. It is a federally funded program focusing on the school's most at risk population. Title services are provided by highly trained literacy specialists. Paris Elementary uses the Reading Recovery model to provide very focused instruction to individual children who qualify.

Children qualify for Title I assistance through literacy assessments and teacher recommendation. Please talk with your child's teacher if you have questions about whether your child needs this extra literacy support.

**Instrumental Music, Strings, and Chorus:** We are fortunate to have an excellent music program in the Oxford Hills School District. Children in grade four can elect to learn to play a stringed instrument. Beginning in fifth grade, students may take instrumental band lessons at school. Small group lessons are provided during the school day and students are responsible for the work they miss in their classrooms when at music lessons. If a child elects to learn more than one instrument, the additional lesson will be held outside instructional time. A District elementary band and an elementary orchestra meet one day weekly after school for those participating in instrumental music. We also have a school chorus for children in grades 4, 5, and 6 which meets weekly and a District chorus that meets after school one night each week.

**Big Brother/Big Sister:** Members of our community and high school students volunteer to mentor individual students through this program. Generally the mentor comes to school for about one hour per week to work with the child on schoolwork and to interact. Parents are always informed when a child is recommended for this program. Guidelines prevent contact between mentor and child outside school hours. If you are interested in becoming a mentor in the Big Brother/Big Sister Program, please contact school guidance counselor, Mary Newcomb.

**Aspire Higher:** SAD17 has challenged all students to “**Aspire Higher**” by setting high goals. This initiative is supported at our schools through participation in the Aspire Higher parade, through career exploration, and in goal setting at three-way student-led conferences.

**Knights of the Math Table:** Students in grades 4 - 6 are challenged to learn their addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts. Students who meet the standards in each grade level are knighted at a Monday assembly as “Knight of the Math Table.”

**Two Hands Project:** Children at Paris Elementary School learn that they can change the world by using ‘their own two hands’ to make a difference. Each classroom is challenged to come up with a service project that improves our school or community in some way. The staff also participates in at least one project each year as a way of giving back to our community. Watch the school newsletter for information about how each class/grade is using their own two hands to make a difference.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Each child has on file a cumulative record and a health record. If you wish to review your child's school records, please contact the school principal and we will make arrangements to have someone assist you. If your child is transferring to another school we will mail your child's records to that school as soon as we have received a signed request asking for the records. We do not give parents the records to transport.

By federal law we follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which protects a child's right to privacy and requires information about the child to be confidential to only those who have the educational right to know. A copy of FERPA guidelines can be found in District Policy.

## **TEACHER/SCHOOL REQUESTS**

In the Spring, parents are given the option of requesting a teacher for their child for the following year. A reminder is put into the March newsletter. We will do our best to honor parent requests but reserve the right to deny requests based on class size, class needs, and other factors. Requests received after the end of April will not be honored. Only half of the available space in a classroom will be filled by requests to enable us to maintain a balance between classrooms. All requests must be in writing and given to the principal.

The District has a liberal policy allowing students to attend their school of choice as long as space is available and with the understanding that parents must provide the transportation to and from school. Families who live outside South Paris may request, through the Superintendent, permission to attend Paris Elementary School. Each Spring, parents must re-request for a child from outside South Paris to continue at Paris Elementary for the following year.

## **TELEPHONES**

Permission must be obtained from the teacher or the office staff before a student may use the telephone at school. Students may use the phone only for necessary calls. Because we are trying to build personal responsibility, students are not generally allowed to call home for a parent to bring things to school that have been forgotten. Children are not called from class to take phone calls unless there is an extreme emergency.

If parents have reason to contact a student during the school day, they should call the office. You may also call the classroom using the voice mail system. Because teachers may not check their voice mail until after school, to ensure that a message gets delivered to your child, it is best that you call the office line.

Cellular phones must be shut off and may not be used at school except as allowed by school district policy. Students who abuse this policy will be asked to keep their cell phones in the office. This policy includes the use of cellular phones on school grounds, on buses and on field trips. Please do not call your child on his/her cell phone during the school day.

## **TESTING PROGRAM**

We follow school district guidelines for testing students. Third, fourth, fifth and sixth graders participate in statewide testing by taking the New England Common Assessments (NECAP) during the month of October. Further information will be provided to parents in the school newsletter as test time approaches and as soon as dates are set.

**Because there is so much at stake with the mandated NECAP testing, we encourage parents to avoid vacations during testing weeks.** NECAP results are shared with parents when results arrive at school.

Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth graders participate in the NWEA Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) Reading and Math assessments in the fall and spring. Also, as part of the Reading First requirements, all kindergarten, first, second, and third graders take the Terra Nova reading tests in May.

Other assessments are given in all subject areas at all grade levels. Results of these common assessments help us inform instruction and to understand the learning needs of each individual child. Talk with your child's teacher about the testing schedule and about your child's performance.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Students are expected to take good care of their textbooks and planners. We encourage students in the upper grades to protect their hardcover textbooks by covering them. Please do not use sticky or adhesive book covers. At no time should non-consumable books be written in. Students will be charged the replacement costs of lost or seriously damaged textbooks or library books.

## **THERAPY DOG**

SAD17 permits the use of highly trained therapy dogs to assist in schools. Several schools in our District, including Paris Elementary, have therapy dogs who routinely come to school to help children. Madeleine (Maddie) is a Standard Poodle who spends time at school with children who need comforting or who need motivation to improve behavior. She has undergone hours of training to be certified as a Therapy Dog. The benefit of using a poodle for such work is that she does not shed and thus can be around children who might normally be allergic to canine dander. No District funds are used to support the Therapy Dog program.

## **VOICE MAIL and E-Mail**

Paris Elementary School has a sophisticated voice mail system that allows you to directly contact any staff member at any time. While instruction is going on or when a staff member is busy, you will be able to leave a message. The direct line number to Voice Mail is 839-2433. On the first page of this handbook you will find a list of staff and their Voice Mail Extensions.

To contact any staff member by e-mail, use the following formula:

**first name\_last name@sad17.k12.me.us**

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

We would not be a very effective school were it not for the tremendous support we receive from parents who are willing to lend a hand in all aspects of our school. Parent volunteers help in the library, classrooms, office, and serve on numerous committees. Research shows that children whose parents are actively involved as school volunteers perform better academically.

We provide ample opportunity for all parents to be involved. At the beginning of the year you will receive a form to complete indicating ways you would like to be involved. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity at our school please complete that form, contact the school office, or talk with your child's teacher. All new volunteers must participate in an orientation program prior to beginning work in the school, must sign a confidentiality form and must undergo a background check. Volunteers who have previously been approved need only sign the confidentiality form.

Parents who volunteer within the school need to be conscious of school confidentiality issues. We kindly ask that you be discreet if working within the school setting and refrain from talking with others about children, staff or other items that might become gossip in the community. Volunteers who do not honor this request will be dismissed.

## **WALKERS**

Now that the sidewalks have been finished along High Street, children will be permitted to walk to and from school with parent permission. Children who walk must follow these guidelines:

1. When leaving the school, children must sign a sheet that says they have walked home.
2. Children are not to walk in parking lots or driveways.
3. Children should leave the school through the front door by the office and walk down the sidewalk to the sign. Then they should follow the sidewalk either north on High Street or South on High Street.
4. Children should cross the road where there is a crossing guard (provided by the Town of South Paris) and should follow directions given by him/her.
5. Children walk at their own risk. The school does not provide supervision of students who walk to or from school.
6. It is suggested that if students walk where there is no sidewalk, that they walk off the roadway in a direction FACING oncoming traffic.
7. Children who walk to or from school should respect the property of our neighbors.

## **WITHDRAWING A STUDENT**

We are always sorry when a student must withdraw to attend another school. If you are moving or your child will be going to another school, please follow this procedure:

1. Contact our office in advance so we can help make your child's transition smoother. We'll be glad to call the new school, with your permission, to provide information.
2. Sign a release form at the new school or at our school allowing us to send cumulative and health records to the new school. Our procedure is that we will mail the records to the new school. Records are not released directly to parents.
3. If you are moving, make sure we have your new address and phone number.