



OWATONNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK



2020-2021

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year

Elementary Handbook

The elementary handbook has been written in collaboration with all four elementary schools (Lincoln, McKinley, Washington and Wilson) to provide important information concerning specific rules, policies and procedures related to the safety and operation of our elementary schools. In order for schools to operate safely and efficiently, you and your student(s) must become familiar with and abide by the expectations and rules outlined in this handbook.

Specific Elementary Announcements and Updates

For specific announcements, updates and procedures from your neighborhood elementary school, please review your elementary home website and review additional communication from the school by way of email, school newsletters and social media pages.

Additional ways you can stay informed throughout the school year include:

- Read district newsletters sent via email
- Follow your school, teacher and district on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Attend or watch school board meetings
- Visit the district website: www.isd761.org

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year



The Owatonna Public School district employees are energized and eager to inspire excellence to every learner, every day. Thank you for your partnership and continued support of the Owatonna Public Schools. It is our privilege to educate your child.

Best wishes to a successful school year!
Jeff Elstad, Superintendent



@Owatonna761

MISSION

**Inspiring Excellence.
Every Learner, Every Day.**

VISION

Owatonna Public Schools inspires a community of learners with equitable access to high quality, innovative learning opportunities ensuring all students are college, career and life ready.

CORE VALUES

Build and Nurture Relationships
Develop and Maintain a Growth Mindset
Challenge the Status Quo

OWATONNA PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMMITMENTS



21st CENTURY LEARNERS

who are:

- Collaborative
- Creative
- Critical Thinkers
- Effective Communicators
- Community Focused



SAFE AND CARING COMMUNITY



EQUITY



HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Table of Contents

District Calendar	2
Elementary Directory	3
GENERAL INFORMATION	
Attendance and Tardiness	5
Behavior	5
Bullying	5
Chemical and Tobacco Use	6
Conferences and Family Communication	6-7
Dress and Appearance	7
Electronics	7
Equal Educational Opportunities	8
Field Trips	8
Food and Nutrition	8
Harassment and Violence	8
Health Services	9
Lockers, Desks and Personal Possessions	10
Lost and Found	10
Media Opt Out	10
Outside Deliveries	10
Parental Custody	11
Pledge of Allegiance	11
Pets	11
PTO	11
Records and Your Rights	12
Risk Management	12-14
Student Leadership Opportunities	14
Transportation	15
Release of Children During School Hours	16
Volunteer	16
MN Department of Education:	17-19
<i>Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for</i>	
<i>Student Participation</i>	
<i>In Statewide Testing</i>	
CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS	
Curriculum	21
Community Education	21
English Learner Program	21-22
Talent Development	22
Montessori Program	23
Title One Program	23
Special Education Programs and Services	23-24
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
ISD No. 761 Foundation	26
District 761 School Board	26

<div><div>July</div><table><tr><td>Su</td><td>M</td><td>Tu</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>Sa</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr><tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr></table></div>	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		<div><div>August</div><table><tr><td>Su</td><td>M</td><td>Tu</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>Sa</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr><tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table></div>	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<div><div>September</div><table><tr><td>Su</td><td>M</td><td>Tu</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>Sa</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table></div>	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				<div><div>October</div><table><tr><td>Su</td><td>M</td><td>Tu</td><td>W</td><td>Th</td><td>F</td><td>Sa</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>3</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr></table></div>	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa						1	2						3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
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<div><div>August</div><div>17-20 New Teacher Workshop</div><div>24-26 Teacher Work Days</div><div>25 Parent/Student Information Day at OMS</div><div>27 Gr. K-5 Before School Interview Day</div><div>31 First Day of School, Gr. 9-12</div></div> <div><div>September</div><div>1 First Day of School, Gr. 6-8 Before School Interviews, Grades 1-5</div><div>2 First Day of School, Gr. K-5</div><div>4 No School</div><div>7 Labor Day/School District Closed</div></div> <div><div>October</div><div>2 Homecoming/2-Hour Early Release</div><div>5 OHS Conferences</div><div>8 ALC Conferences</div><div>15 MEA/No School</div><div>16 MEA/No School</div></div>	<div><div>October</div><div>22 OMS Conferences</div><div>26 OMS Conferences</div></div> <div><div>November</div><div>5 "End of First Quarter"</div><div>6 No School, Teacher Work Day/Staff Development</div><div>17 Grades K-5 Conferences</div><div>19 Grades K-5 Conferences</div><div>20 No School, Grades K-5, Conferences</div><div>25 No School, K-12</div><div>26 Thanksgiving Day</div><div>27 District Closed</div></div> <div><div>December</div><div>24-31 Winter Break/No School</div></div> <div><div>January</div><div>1 No School/District Close</div><div>15 End of 2nd Quarter</div><div>18 No School/MLK Day/Staff Development</div><div>19 No School Teacher Work Day</div></div>	<div><div>February</div><div>15 OHS Conferences</div><div>16 Grades K-5 Conferences</div><div>18 Grades K-5 Conferences</div><div>18 ALC Conferences</div><div>19 No School, Grades K-5, Conferences</div></div> <div><div>March</div><div>11 OMS Conferences</div><div>18 End of 3rd Quarter</div><div>19 No School Teacher Work Day</div><div>22-26 Spring Break/No School</div></div> <div><div>April</div><div>2 No School, School District Closed</div></div> <div><div>May</div><div>31 Memorial Day/School District Closed</div></div>	<div><div>June</div><div>4 Last Student Day</div><div>6 Graduation</div><div>7 Teacher Work Day</div><div>8 PLC Staff Dev. Day</div><div>9 PLC Staff Dev. Day</div></div> <div><div>School Not in Session</div></div> <div><div>No School, Gr. K-8</div></div> <div><div>No School, Gr. K-5</div></div> <div><div>No School, Gr. 6-12</div></div> <div><div>School District Closed, Designated Holiday</div></div>																																																																																																																																																																																						

Yearly Calendar by Verlex42.com

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11/22/19

Yearly Calendar by Verlex42.com

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Elementary Directory

www.isd761.org
Superintendent Jeff Elstad
District Office: 507-444-8600

Elementary Office Hours:
7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Bus Company: 507-451-5262
SAC/Community Education: 507-444-7900

Lincoln Elementary School

747 Havana Road, Owatonna, MN 55060

[Website](#)

Principal: Mary Hawkins
mhawkins@isd761.org

School Hours

7:55 a.m.- 2:25 p.m.

Students may enter school at 7:50 a.m.

Main Office	507-444-8100
Attendance Line	507-444-8105
Fax	507-444-8199
School Nurse	507-444-8106
SAC- Lincoln	507-444-8122
Lunch Balance	507-444-8616

McKinley Elementary School

1050 22nd Street NE, Owatonna, MN 55060

[Website](#)

Principal: Justin Kiel
jkiel@isd761.org

School Hours

7:55 a.m.- 2:25 p.m.

Students may enter school at 7:50 a.m.

Main Office	507-444-8200
Attendance Line	507-444-8205
Attendance Secretary	507-444-8211
Fax	507-444-8299
School Nurse	507-444-8206
SAC- McKinley	507-444-8222
Lunch Balance	507-444-8616

Washington Elementary School

423 14th St NE, Owatonna, MN 55060

[Website](#)

Principal: Beth Svenby
bsvenby@isd761.org

School Hours

7:55 a.m.- 2:25 p.m.

Students may enter school at 7:50 a.m.

Main Office	507-444-8300
Attendance Line	507-444-8305
Fax	507-444-8399
School Nurse	507-444-8306
SAC- Washington	507-444-8322
Lunch Balance	507-444-8616

Wilson Elementary School

325 Meadow Lane, Owatonna, MN 55060

[Website](#)

Principal: Melodee Hoffner
mhoffner@isd761.org

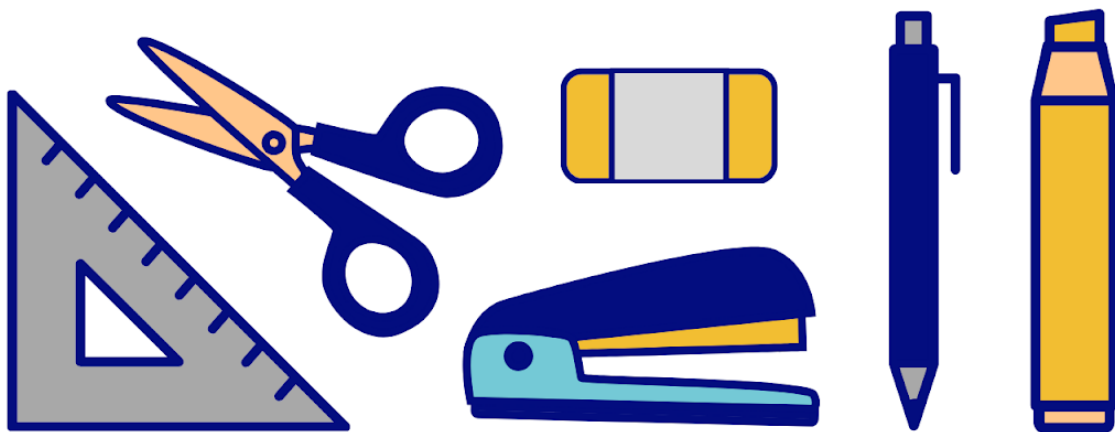
School Hours

7:55 a.m.- 2:25 p.m.

Students may enter school at 7:50 a.m.

Main Office	507-444-8400
Attendance Line	507-444-8405
Fax	507-444-8499
School Nurse	507-444-8406
SAC- Lincoln	507-444-8422
Lunch Balance	507-444-8616

GENERAL INFORMATION



Attendance and Tardiness

When a child is absent from school, please call the attendance line to inform the office prior to the start of school. The call allows us to inform the teacher so plans can be modified in the classroom. It also keeps us current on the childhood illnesses which are affecting our students. If we are not called prior to school regarding your child's absence, the school will contact you. This is an important safety measure to protect our students. In order to learn, and comply with Minnesota's compulsory instruction laws, students need to have consistent, regular attendance. ([Policy 503](#))

When a child is late for school, they must check in at the office to receive a pass before going to class. Please note any student who arrives after 7:55 am will be marked tardy.

Behavior

Our schools utilize a Positive Behavior Intervention System where students are explicitly taught the expected behaviors. The expected behaviors are positively reinforced for our students. We will establish a safe learning environment where students have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. The schools may respond to student misbehavior or concerns in a variety of ways which include restitution, court or law enforcement personnel, fines, and chemical evaluation. The following possible consequences are used and vary based on severity of the incident as well as repetition of the offense:

- Restorative Practices
- Loss of privilege
- Parent/guardian conference
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Referral made to outside agency
- Recommended expulsion—referral to the school board recommending the student be expelled from school up to one year. ([Policy 506](#))

See Also Hazing Prohibition ([Policy 526](#)) and Staff Notification of Violent Behavior by Students ([Policy 529](#))

Bullying

Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and/or a teacher's ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond to, and to remediate and discipline for those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. ([Policy 514](#))

Chemical and Tobacco Use

In order to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment, the school district prohibits the use of tobacco, alcohol, toxic substances and controlled substances without a physician's prescription on school grounds. (Policies [417](#), [418](#), and [419](#))

Conferences and Family Communication

BEFORE SCHOOL INTERVIEWS (GRADES K-5)

Owatonna Public Schools is committed to creating strong student and family relationships and fostering a positive first experience. Students in grades K-5 will start next school year on Wednesday, September 2nd to allow time for before school interviews to take place.

Before school interviews allow teachers to meet individually for 30-40 minutes with students and parents before the start of the school year. All kindergarten students will sign up for an individual 30-minute interview conference time on either Thursday, August 27th or Monday, August 31st. All students, grades 1-5, will sign up for an individual 40-minute interview conference time either on Thursday, August 27th, Monday, August 31st or September 1st.

Students will meet one on one with their teacher for approximately 40 minutes to learn more about them and assess their reading level. Parents will complete paperwork during this time. Following the teacher meeting, students will stop at stations to complete FASTBridge reading assessment and school pictures. Students in grades 1-4 will also complete their vision and hearing screening. The teachers are looking forward to getting to know your child better at the beginning of the year.

Look for a letter to be sent to your home after August 8 with your child's teacher's name and a link to sign up online for an interview time. If you have questions about signing up for a time, please contact your elementary building office.

PLANNERS

Each student is given a planner at the beginning of the school year. This is a great communication tool between school and home. Families are expected to check the planner daily.

Conferences and Family Communication (continued)

FAMILY/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are a great opportunity for families to meet with the teacher; students are encouraged to attend. We strive for 100% attendance at our conferences. [MN Statute 181.9412 Subd. 2](#) allows employed parents to request a leave for school conferences and activities. An employer must grant an employee a leave of up to a total of 16 hours during any 12-month period to attend school conferences or school related activities related to the employee's child, provided the conferences or school-related activities cannot be scheduled during non-work hours. You must let your employer know in advance and make every effort to schedule the leave so that it disrupts your workplace operations as little as possible. The law does not guarantee that the time off will be paid, but paid vacation or other paid leave time may be used.

EMAIL

All staff have email addresses, and can be found under the [District Staff Directory](#).

REPORT CARDS

Report cards come out three times per year (following second, third and fourth quarters) and provide information about students' progress throughout the year.

Dress and Appearance

Students are expected to be dressed appropriately which includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Clothing appropriate for the weather.
- Clothing that does not create a health or safety hazard.
- Clothing appropriate for the activity (i.e. physical education or the classroom).
- Hats are only allowed in the building with approval from the principal.
([Policy 504](#))

Electronics

Cell phones, I-Pods and other electronic devices are becoming more common with students. We know some families rely on these devices for a variety of reasons. In order to respect the learning environment at school we will require that all electronic devices are shut off during the school day, unless being used at a teacher's request. Devices should be left in the student's bag from the time of arrival at school until departure at the end of the day. The school will not be responsible for loss or theft. If a student is using a cell phone or other electronic device during the school day or it creates a disruption, the device will be taken from the student and a parent will be required to pick it up from the school office at their convenience. ([Policy 524](#)) See also [Social Media Guidelines](#)

Equal Educational Opportunities

The school district provides equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation or age. The school district also makes reasonable accommodations for disabled students.

The school district prohibits the harassment of any individual for any of the categories listed above. ([Policy 102](#))

Field Trips

Field trips provide authentic learning experiences for students. Permission forms will be required for all field trips. Chaperones will need to have a background check prior to the scheduled trip. ([Policy 610](#))

Nutrition Services

NUTRITION SERVICES

All school sites participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch programs. Each student has his or her own meal account and a four-digit PIN. Students can purchase a carton of milk for \$.45 if they bring a cold lunch from home. Money must be prepaid into the account prior to the student purchasing food. Payments can be made online at mypaymentsplus.com, dropped off at the district office, handed to the teachers in K-5, placed in the payment box at the Middle School, or handed to the cashier at the high school and ALC. Go to isd761.org - District Services - Nutrition Services for more information on meal and a la carte prices, application for meal benefits, menus, special dietary needs, lunch schedules, payment methods, etc. Call 507-444-8616 with questions. We look forward to serving your children!

WELLNESS

The school district promotes wellness through food and nutrition services as well as with physical activity. ([Policy 533](#))

Harassment and Violence

The school district prohibits all forms of harassment and/or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation or disability. ([Policy 413](#))

Health Services

To enable the school to give your child proper health care, the school nurse's office welcomes any health communications or questions related to the health of your child. A licensed practical nurse is in the office from 7:45-2:45 each school day.

SHOULD MY CHILD STAY HOME?

Here are some guidelines to help you make that decision:

- If a child has a fever of 100 or more, the child should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without fever reducing medicine).
- If a child has vomited or had diarrhea, the child should stay home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- If a child has any rash and you do not know the cause, check with your family physician before sending the child to school.

MEDICATION

Medications are given with doctor's orders AND parent signature ONLY. This includes over the counter medications such as Tylenol. Permission slips are available in the nurse's office or at the Owatonna Clinic. All medications are to be brought to school and picked up by an adult to avoid problems and insure safety. Medications must come in their original container. We will not administer medications that come in alternate containers. ([Policy 516](#))

VISION AND HEARING SCREENING

We routinely do both hearing and vision screening on all 1st & 4th grade students. Parents and staff can request screening for students with possible concerns at any time during the year.

IMMUNIZATIONS

In order for a student to enroll or remain enrolled in any elementary or secondary school in Minnesota, the parent or guardian must provide a statement to the school showing that the student is either:

- Completely immunized by receiving all immunizations required by law, or
- Received the primary schedule of immunizations required by law and is up to date in completing a schedule of the remaining required immunizations, or
- Legally exempt from one or more of the required immunizations, as evidenced by either a statement of medical exemption signed by a physician, a documented history of the varicella disease, or a notarized statement of conscientious exemption.

Students enrolling the first day of school must provide the required immunization documentation prior to the first day of school. Students have until October 1 of each school year to be in compliance. Students transferring into the Owatonna Public School District after the first day of school have a maximum of 30 days to provide immunization documentation and be in compliance. ([Policy 530](#))

Lockers, Desks and Personal Possessions

School lockers/cubbies and desks are provided for the convenience of students and are the property of the school district. Inspection of the locker and/or desk interiors may be conducted by school authorities for any reason, at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions within a school locker may be searched only when school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. School authorities must provide notice of the search to the student whose locker was searched as soon as possible after the search of a student's personal possessions unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials. ([Policy 502](#))

Lost and Found

Each year, clothing and other items are left at school and never claimed. We urge you to mark ALL clothing items with your child's name. Permanent ink and/or tape securely sewn in place are the best methods. Lost articles may be picked up at the school office. Lost and found items will be donated to charity periodically throughout the year as storage is limited.

ISD 761 is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

Media Opt-Out

Owatonna Public Schools are proud to promote the success of our students, staff, and programs. These accomplishments may draw the attention of newspapers, television stations and other media who visit our schools to photograph, film, and identify students and staff during various activities. The District also uses names, images and video clips of students in materials such as newsletters, website content and posting to social media platforms.

To restrict the District and those acting under its permission the ability to feature your student, please use this Media Opt-Out Form. If the District does not receive this form, your student will be included in materials for public promotion. A separate signature form is required for each child in school. Please sign and return this form to your child's school. Should you choose to opt-out, a new form will have to be completed each school year. [Media Opt-Out Form](#)

Outside Deliveries

Food for school events must be commercially prepared. Personal outside deliveries, such as flowers and non-latex balloons are discouraged. If delivered, they will be kept in the office until the end of the school day. Parents will be responsible for transporting these items home that day. Latex balloons are not allowed due to allergies. The school district will encourage all students, staff, and parents to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages.

Parental Custody

The custodial parent is responsible for providing the following to the school:

- A copy of the signed and certified court order, awarding custody.
- Court order revisions/updates that affect custody, visitation, or record-access rights.

Upon request, a non-custodial parent has the right to access and receive copies of school records and information; to attend conferences; and to be informed about the child's welfare, educational progress, and status, as authorized under [MN Statute 120A.22, Subd. 1\(a\)](#). ISD 761 is not required to hold a separate conference for each parent. In cases where parents are separated, divorced, or never married it is recommended that the school have documentation of custody and visitation rights.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform and provide the school with current documentation if anyone is legally restricted from contact with his or her child/ren.

If there is no legal restriction, and upon request, the school will do the following:

- Send duplicate correspondence to non-custodial parents.
- Arrange for review of school records by non-custodial parents.
- Keep non-custodial parents apprised of major school events.

Pledge of Allegiance

Under [MN Statute 121A.11](#), the Pledge of Allegiance is recited in every school building at least once a week either by each individual classroom or over the school intercom system by a school administrator. Recitation is voluntary: Everyone must respect the rights of others who opt to forego reciting the pledge. ([Policy 531](#))

Pets

In practicing cultural sensitivity, along with many being allergic or fearful of animals as well as the potential for injury, students, families, and staff may not bring animals into our schools or around the outside of schools during the school day or at the start or dismissal of school. It is recognized that service animals are not pets or comfort animals but perform valuable functions and are trained to do important tasks for individuals with disabilities. For more information on Service Animals, please see [Policy 535](#).

PTO

ISD 761 is fortunate to have an active Parent Teacher Organization, which offers support for student programs and classroom activities. The PTO is a wonderful opportunity for families and staff to collaborate in providing learning opportunities for our students. Please give your active support to this essential school group. PTO meetings are held once a month.

Records and Your Rights

PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF EDUCATION RECORDS

The collection, security, storage and release of student information is as required by state and federal laws. The school district must obtain and use information about each student to plan the best education program and ensure the rights of each student and parent/guardian to privacy. Therefore, access to information by third parties is controlled.

The superintendent of schools has overall responsibility for student records and delegates the day-to-day responsibility to administrators in charge of each elementary and secondary school and to certain district personnel.

See Also [Public Notice Regarding Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records and the Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment \(PPRA\)](#)

STUDENT DATA

Public Data Directory information may be disclosed in the form of class lists or other lists.

The following student information is public: a) name; b) address; c) school of attendance; d) dates of attendance; e) grades completed; f) degrees and awards received; g) participation in officially recognized activities/sports; h) height and weight of members of athletic teams; and i) photograph (including most videos).

Names of students in each class and classroom photographs are designated as limited directory data and allow parents and guardians to have access to that information without designating it as public information.

If you, as a parent, do not want directory information used for school functions, please submit this request in writing to the principal of the elementary building. ([Policy 515](#))

Risk Management

BUILDING ACCESS AND SECURITY

For the safety of students and staff, all exterior doors are locked during the school day, except for the main entrance. Upon entering the main doors, all visitors will be asked to present an ID such as a driver's license, which can either be scanned or manually entered into the system. If a parent or guardian for any reason does not have a US government-issued ID, the school staff member can use any form of identification and manually enter the person's name into the Raptor system. The Raptor system will check to ensure that registered sexual offenders are not entering our schools without our knowledge. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency. Once entry is approved, the greeter will print a name sticker that identifies the visitor, date and the purpose of his/her visit.

A child will be released only to his/her parents or individuals authorized on the student's emergency card; identification may be requested. It is a misdemeanor for any person to enter or be found in an elementary, middle, or secondary school building unless he or she:

Risk Management (continued)

- is enrolled or a parent/guardian of an enrolled student in the school;
- is a school district employee;
- received permission/invitation from a school official to be in the building;
- is attending a school event, class, or meeting to which he or she has been invited;
- reported his or her presence in the school in the manner required for school visitors.

WEAPONS

To ensure a safe school environment for students, staff and the public, no student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, or member of the public who violates this policy. ([Policy 501](#))

SEVERE WEATHER & EMERGENCIES

Generally, you can expect that school will be held, even in severe weather. If you disagree with the district's decision to hold school on a day you believe the weather is hazardous, you may keep your child home. Please call your school's absence line to report the absence. The absence will be excused.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

District administrators consider the combined effects of snow, ice and wind chill when determining if school will be held. If the National Weather Service predicts the wind chill to remain at or drop below -35°F (below zero), school may be cancelled. We attempt to make the decision by 5:30 a.m. after surveying conditions, monitoring weather reports and consulting with transportation vendors.

EARLY RELEASE

If a storm worsens during the school day, a decision to close school early will be made as soon as possible. Lunch may be served, and schools will be released in normal order, so older siblings are home first to await younger brothers/sisters.

Tornado warning or other severe weather: Buses will not be loaded, and students will remain at school.

COMMUNICATION ON SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS AND EARLY RELEASE

If school is cancelled or dismissed early, the following communication will go out:

- Telephone/Email: Through the district automated messaging system; a call and/or email provided to your child's school for contact information will be used.
- District Website: Emergency information will be posted on the district's website.
- District Social Media Pages: Emergency information will be posted on the district's Facebook page: @Owatonna761
- Radio/TV: Information will be submitted to major radio and TV stations as "Owatonna Public Schools."

SCHOOL EMERGENCY PLAN

- Please review your family plan for when school is cancelled and/or dismissed early with your children.
- If your family plan is for your children to go home, do they know how to get into your home safely?

Risk Management (continued)

PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

When school closes, all after-school and evening activities and programs are generally cancelled as well, including extra-curricular activities and community education programs (youth/adult classes; preschool programs; adult basic education; early childhood). Privately sponsored activities scheduled through the school district's facilities reservation department are also cancelled.

STUDENT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION AT SCHOOL

Students will be released only to parents, guardians and authorized individuals listed on the student emergency information kept at school. Please keep this information current.

REMINDER

Please do not call your child's school with questions during an emergency. The phone lines must remain open for emergency communications. If you need assistance, call the main district phone number: (507) 444-8600.

COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY PLAN

Owatonna Public Schools has a [Crisis Management Policy](#) and individual School Crisis Plans which have been created in consultation with local law enforcement, emergency management and public health officials. Drills are routinely held in all district buildings to prepare students and employees for emergencies. ([Policy 806](#))

Student Leadership Opportunities

BAND/CHOIR/ORCHESTRA

Each elementary school offers several extra-curricular activities for intermediate students. Orchestra lessons begin the summer after students have completed 3rd grade. Band lessons begin the summer after completion of 4th grade. Choir is open to 4th and 5th grade students.

SAFETY PATROL

Patrol students are selected from the fifth grade classes. They provide safety to students going to and from school. Student captains and the school Patrol Advisor supervise patrols. The patrol captains receive special training at Legionville during the summer. The PTO sponsors this activity. Patrols are at designated crossings from 7:40 to 8:00 a.m. and from 2:25-2:45 p.m. each day. They DO NOT patrol during electrical storms. When the Minnesota winter becomes extremely cold, revisions are made in their schedules.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Student Leadership Team works together to create unity and school spirit among students and staff. Meetings are held once per month after the school day.

Transportation

BUS EXPECTATIONS

The school district recognizes that transportation is an essential part of the school district services to students and parents but further recognizes that transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right for an eligible student. ([Policy 707](#))

BUS ELIGIBILITY

Upon the request of a parent or guardian, the school district shall provide transportation to and from school, at the expense of the school district for all resident students who reside one mile or more from the school, except for those students whose transportation privileges have been revoked or have been voluntarily surrendered by the student's parent or guardian. Owatonna Public Schools partners with the [Owatonna Bus Company](#) to provide transportation.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Each student is responsible for practicing safe and courteous bus ridership. The safety of all children is of primary importance and must be protected. The same behavior expected of children at school is expected at the bus stop and on the bus. Children are expected to:

At the bus stop...

- Arrive 5 minutes before the scheduled time.
- Stay back from the street so they do not become a traffic hazard.
- Wait for the bus to stop completely and the driver to signal to board before approaching.

On the bus...

- Stay seated and facing forward until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Talk quietly and use respectful language.
- Respect the bus, bus driver, other riders and their property.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Help the driver remain focused on the road by not causing a distraction.

Riding the bus is a privilege. Consequences for inappropriate behavior demonstrated on the bus may include a warning, loss of privileges, bus suspension or termination of service. Please remember the bus is a continuation of the school day.

BICYCLES/SCOOTERS/ROLLERBLADES/SKATEBOARDS

Children are allowed to ride bicycles to school. Racks are provided for parking them, but the school does not accept any responsibility for the bicycles. As a measure of safety, please follow these guidelines:

- All bicycles must be parked and locked in the racks provided.
- Bicycles must be walked on school grounds.
- Children may ride only their own bicycles.
- Riders should follow all traffic rules including the use of our school patrols.
- Students may bring scooters or roller blades to school only with special permission from the classroom teacher and/or principal.

Tennis shoes with wheels in the sole are not allowed during school hours.

Release of Children During School Hours

If it is necessary to take your child out of school during school hours, you must come to the office to sign out your child. The child will then be called to the office and dismissed from there. When possible, please notify the teacher by sending a note in the morning. No student may be dismissed directly to the authorized adult from the classroom. This applies to the entire school day, including the lunch period. Any missed time away from school will add up for absences.

Volunteer

Parents and community members are always encouraged to apply as an employee or volunteer at their child's school and/or with the Owatonna Public Schools. Volunteers provide a valuable service to students and staff.

Employee and Volunteer Background Checks

Minnesota requires a school hiring authority to request a criminal history background check from the superintendent of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension on all individuals who are offered employment in a school and on all individuals, except enrolled student volunteers, who are offered the opportunity to provide athletic coaching services or other extracurricular services to a school, regardless of whether any compensation is paid. The Owatonna Public Schools will seek a criminal background check on all applicants who receive an offer of employment with the school district. The school district may also elect to do background checks of volunteers, independent contractors, and student employees in the District. ([Policy 404](#))

Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing

This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

Why statewide testing?

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

Why does participation matter?

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student's achievement, but your student's participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student's school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota's implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered "proficient."
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

Academic Standards and Assessments

What are academic standards?

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](#) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)	ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science. • Majority of students take the MCA. • MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards. • Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. • Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs. • Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities.

Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student's district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student's school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student's results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child's progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is less than 1 percent of instructional time in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our [Statewide Testing page](https://education.mn.gov) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).



Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.31, subdivision 4a, requires the commissioner to create and publish a form for parents and guardians to complete if they refuse to have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Your student's district may require additional information. School districts must post this three-page form on the district website and include it in district student handbooks.

Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student's school.

To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student's school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required each year parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.

Date _____ (This form is only applicable for the 20____ to 20____ school year.)
Student's Legal First Name _____ Student's Legal Middle Initial _____
Student's Legal Last Name _____ Student's Date of Birth _____
Student's District/School _____ Grade _____

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

☐ I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the *Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing* on the [MDE website](https://www.mde.state.mn.us/mde/parents/parent-guardian-guide-and-refusal-for-student-participation-in-statewide-testing) (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

☐ MCA/MTAS Reading ☐ MCA/MTAS Science
☐ MCA/MTAS Mathematics ☐ ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state's efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered "proficient."

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

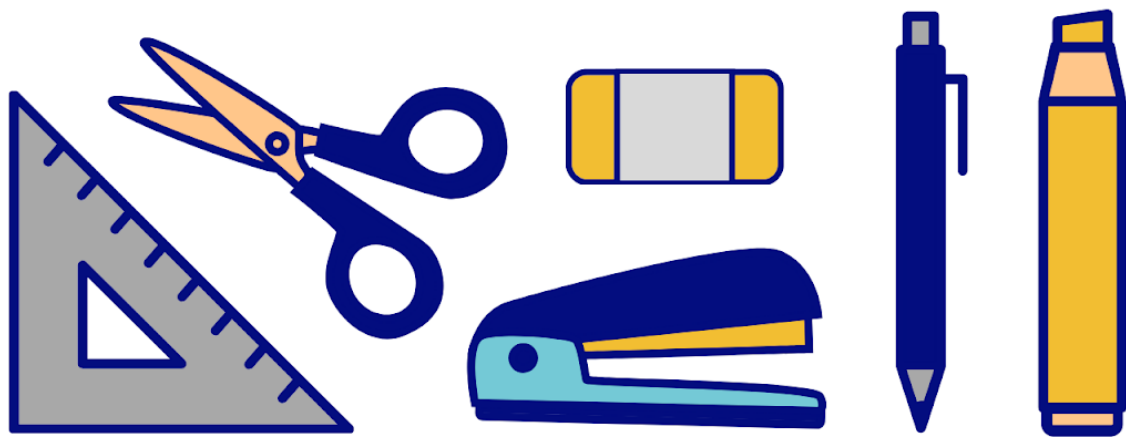
Parent/Guardian Name (print) _____
Parent/Guardian Signature _____

To be completed by school or district staff only.

Student ID or MARSS Number _____

Posted May 2019

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS



Curriculum

A curriculum guide for each grade level will be provided to families upon request. These guides contain all of the curriculum information specific to your child's grade level. Curriculum information can also be found on the school district's [website](#).

Community Education

In partnership with our diverse community, [Owatonna Community Education](#) aims to meet the needs of individuals and families through lifelong learning, service and leadership development. Owatonna Community Ed welcomes you and encourages you to explore their website to see the variety of programs they have to offer the community. They strive to provide an opportunity for continuing education that is suitable for all ages. Community Ed offers many enrichment opportunities for students in a wide variety of areas. Watch for their flyers in the mail. For more information go to their [website](#) or call 444-7900.

School Aged Care (SAC)

The [SAC Program](#) provides before- and after-school care, early dismissal, non-school day, snow day and summer care enrichment and support for our K-5th grade students.

SAC is designed to provide a wide range of fun and exploratory activities to students, such as arts and crafts, sports, games, quiet time, creative and dramatic play, outdoor play, science, special events, community service, exploration and field trips.

For more information regarding SAC go to www.owatonna.communityed.org or call 507-444-7900.

English Learner Program

The purpose of the [English Learner program](#) is to ensure English Learners are competent in the listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing of the English language in all content areas. English Learner (EL) staff members provide a balanced program of instruction for students using specific strategies and best practices. Instruction is focused on language learning and acquisition, which will allow students to be successful in all content areas. The students may be in a pull-out model, push-in model, a combination of both, or co-teaching model. In any model, the English Learner teacher may work one-on-one or with small groups of students who have similar needs. The English Learner teacher works closely with the classroom teachers and other building professionals to provide the most effective service for the student. The student's progress is reviewed on a regular basis and adjustments are made as needed. The district has services for students and families to help all multilingual learners succeed.

We aim to provide the following supports:

Culture

- Culturally relevant pedagogy
- Family engagement
- Bilingual support staff

English Learner Program (continued)

Language

- Integrated classroom support for language and content
- Dedicated EL staff
- Attention to English reading, writing, listening and speaking acquisition

Content

- Multimodal language support (visuals, kinesthetic, tactile, and auditory)
- Home language support and resources for beginners
- Emphasis on academic language

Talent Development

Owatonna Public Schools provides differentiated learning experiences to challenge and engage students across our system. Students deserve and need challenging learning opportunities that help them discover their unique interests and strengths. Our programming is designed to meet the needs of all students including those who have demonstrated high performance or show the potential for high performance relative to others of their age, experience or environment. Outstanding talents and potential are present in children and youth from all cultural and socioeconomic groups. Starting in grade 3, academically talented students are identified and placed in math and reading cluster classrooms where they receive differentiated, advanced programming in domain-specific strengths. These clusters work together on a regular basis, engaging with rich, research-based curriculum resources.

Cluster Classrooms

In a cluster classroom students are clustered according to their high performance in one or more subject domains: math and reading or math, or reading. Cluster classrooms are based on the system of flexible grouping, which is an instructional strategy that covers a range of grouping students for delivering instruction, such as whole group, small group, and partner work. Flexible grouping permits students to move in and out of various grouping patterns, depending on the student's academic needs.

Rising Scholars

Rising Scholar students are clustered according to their high potential to perform at high levels in one or more subject domains. In order to be identified as a Rising Scholar, teacher ratings are solicited for children who are culturally diverse, linguistically diverse, economically diverse or are twice exceptional (bright with a disability). The goal of the Rising Scholars Program is to provide support to raise students' achievement levels, so students may qualify for cluster classrooms and other advanced academic programming in the future.

Montessori Program

The [Montessori program](#) is a choice program open to all students in grades 1-5 through an application process. The Montessori program is housed at Washington Elementary School and is a free public school program that adheres to the Minnesota Academic Standards and is taught by licensed elementary teachers.

The Montessori approach to education embraces individualized instruction for children, mixed-age groupings of students, a structured curriculum and a prepared environment using specialized Montessori teaching materials. Montessori classrooms provide an environment that supports independent, self-directed learning and self assessment.

For more information about the Montessori Program, please call (507) 444-8300 or connect with any of the elementary school principals.

Title One Program

[Title I](#), Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), provides financial assistance to schools with high numbers or percentages of children from low-income families, to assist schools in ensuring that all children meet challenging academic standards. Schools accepting Title I funds are required to provide all children with fair, equitable and significant educational opportunities to obtain a high-quality education and to reach--at a minimum--proficiency on challenging state academic standards and assessments.

The goal of this program is to provide targeted interventions so that all students learn essential core standards. This program is delivered through a push-in model into tier 2 intervention blocks. This supports the classroom teacher in responding to meet the diverse academic and behavioral needs of each student. This program serves as additional support and prevents students from growing further behind and better prepare students to be successful in the general education environment.

Special Education Programs and Services

Owatonna Public Schools offers a wide-range of [Special Education Programs and Services](#). Each student with a disability receives educational programs and support based on their individual needs. Programs and services are provided to students and their families beginning at birth through the age of 21 or completion of a secondary education program.

Special Education teachers across the district provide direct and indirect services to students in the areas of academic, emotional/behavioral, fine and gross motor, social skills, functional skills, adaptive skills, vision, deaf/hard of hearing, speech / language therapy, and vocational work skills.

Special Education Programs and Services (continued)

Services include:

- Speech (Language or Articulation)
- Learning Disabilities
- Emotional-Behavior Disorders
- Developmentally Cognitive Delayed
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Developmental Adaptive Physical Education

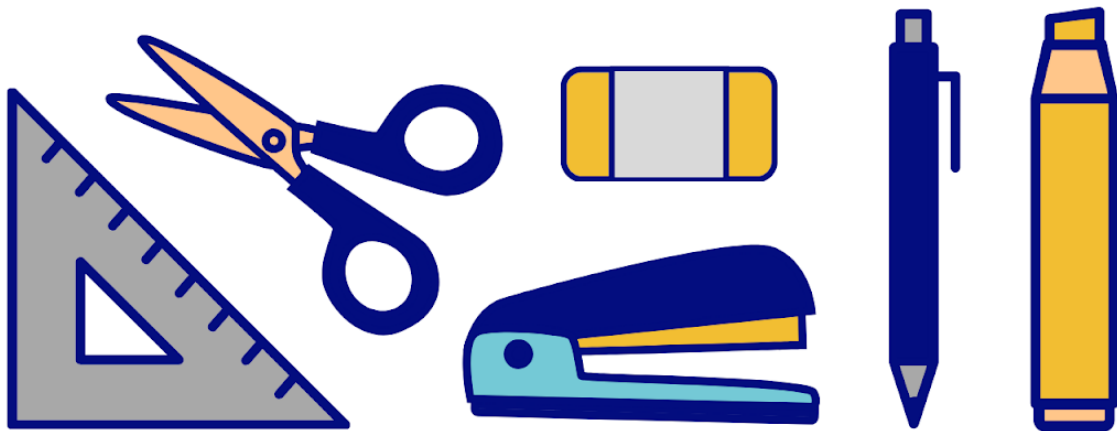
Each elementary school has a team of special educators who provide additional assistance to children in need of specialized instruction. The team meets to discuss the needs of children who have been identified by classroom teachers, parents and/or other appropriate agencies. The team is comprised of the principal, special education teachers, the speech and language teacher, the school psychologist, the school social worker and appropriate classroom teachers. If a child qualifies for service, the team works with the classroom teacher, specialists, and the child's parents to develop a suitable individual educational plan.

[Section 504](#), a provision of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, ensures access to a free and appropriate public education for individuals with a qualifying disability by prohibiting discrimination based on a disability.

A student may qualify for a 504 plan if he or she has a mental or physical condition for which reasonable accommodations are necessary in order to make progress in school.

Questions about Section 504 services may be directed to the building principal or Director of Special Services at 507-444-8604.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



ISD No. 761 Foundation

The Owatonna Independent School District No. 761 Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization providing for individuals, community groups and businesses to make contributions to give students and staff additional opportunities and programs not usually funded with tax dollars. Designated gifts are reviewed by the foundation board to ensure that they meet their stated objectives.

Foundation funds will enhance existing district programs and encourage the development of innovative programs as determined by district educators and the school board. Some of the areas currently benefiting from ISD No. 761 Foundation contributions include: agriculture, industrial technology, math programs/scholarships, geography, athletics, music, professional teacher training, and student scholarships.

The ISD No. 761 Foundation is a separate legal entity from the Owatonna School District. For more information visit www.761foundation.com.

District 761 School Board

The District 761 Board of Education generally meets the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month in the Board Room at the District Office (515 West Bridge Street). For upcoming agendas and meeting minutes please visit the [School Board website](#) page.

School board members are elected during the November General Election on even years. Members are elected for a four-year term with either three or four members elected. All board members are elected at-large.

2020 School Board Members

Mark Sebring- Chair

Lori Weisenburger- Vice Chair

Jolayne Mohs- Treasurer

Eric Schuster- Clerk

Nikki Gieseke- Director

Christina Invaldson- Director

Timothy Jensen- Director

Daniela Ortiz- Student Rep

