



Handbook for Families  
2021-2022

***Empowering all students to achieve and  
inspiring excitement for life-long learning through  
high expectations, collaboration, and respect.***

*Learn, Live, Lead*

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**School Address and Information**

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 Email address: [www.district196.org/or](http://www.district196.org/or)  
 Absence Call-in: 651-683-6969, ext. 82764  
 Absence Email address: [orabsence@district196.org](mailto:orabsence@district196.org)

**Oak Ridge Student Handbook, 2021-2022**  
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## I. SAFETY

### ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE

School success and good attendance go hand in hand. Ensure your child succeeds in Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools by helping them build a habit of good attendance early. Attendance Matters is an initiative in District 196 that takes a proactive approach to making sure students are in school every day.

Launching in the 2018-19 school year, this initiative provides administrators and educators a renewed opportunity to dig deeper into the reasons for unexcused absences in an effort to keep kids in the classroom. The Attendance Matters initiative uses research and resources from the national Attendance Works program to highlight the seriousness of chronic absenteeism and the effects it has on learning, as well as strategies to improve attendance.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college and beyond.

Did you know: Research shows when students attend school regularly, they feel more connected to their community, develop important friendships, strengthen social-emotional skills and are significantly more likely to graduate from high school.

#### **Dedicated to student success**

At District 196, our highly competent educators and administrators are committed to educating students to reach their full potential. As a school district of choice, we have high academic standards and expectations for our students, and this starts with being prepared and in the classroom every day.

In accordance with district policy 503.2AR, students are expected to attend class every day, with the exception of school-authorized and verified absences. Excessive absences may have adverse consequences.

For safety reasons, parents must to report student absences via one of the following options: by calling the **school's attendance line at (651) 683-6969, mailbox 82764** or by emailing the school office at [orabsence@district196.org](mailto:orabsence@district196.org) as soon as possible each day their child is absent. Parents must report a reason for the absence. If the school has not received a call before school begins, the office will call parents at home or work to verify a student's absence. When we do not hear from the parent about the absence, it is recorded as an "unexcused" absence.

Excessive absences may result in a letter of concern from the school. In some cases, the school may require a doctor's note or a visit to the school nurse for the absence to be considered excused.

Please refer to the list below to determine if your child's absence will be recorded as excused or unexcused by the school.

### **Excused Absences**

- Illness (may require a doctor's note for verification)
- Appointments for doctor, dentist or mental health
- Religious holiday
- Extreme family emergency preapproved by principal
- Planned family vacation preapproved by principal
- Funeral
- Unique circumstances which are preauthorized by a school administrator

### **Unexcused Absences**

- Child overslept/parent overslept
- Child missed the bus
- Parents forgot to wake child
- Parents did not know school schedule
- Child did not feel like going to school
- Child was sleepy
- Child is having difficulty separating from parents
- Inclement weather
- Child does not meet state immunization law requirements
- Child is babysitting a younger sibling
- Child does not have transportation to school

We understand that family vacations can be valuable learning experiences for children. We ask that you plan these vacations around days that there is no school, like winter break or spring break, for example, that way your child will miss less school. Please notify the office in advance of planned family vacations. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

If you have any questions regarding District 196's attendance guidelines, please contact Cathy Kindem, Principal, or Alisha Kaul, School Social Worker. We want to work together so all of our students have the best possible attendance.

If you'd like for your child to do academic work while at home, they can log into Dreambox for math practice or Epic for books to read.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

School safety patrol members with stop flags are stationed at Johnny Cake Ridge Road/school driveway and at Clemson Drive/Johnny Cake Ridge Road before and after school to assist students in crossing the street safely. Patrols are available from 9:10 a.m. to 9:20 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. to 3:55 p.m. each day. Please instruct your children to follow the directions of the safety patrol.

**When dropping off students or picking them up, parents should enter and exit on Clemson Drive.** This procedure will keep traffic flowing in one direction and prevent students from crossing in front of cars.

Let's work together to keep our morning drop off efficient for all. Families are asked to respect the following guidelines for A.M. arrival:

- Students may enter the building at 9:15 a.m. Please do not drop off prior to 9:15 a.m.
- Be prepared for drop off before you reach the parking lot (i.e., backpacks zipped, shoes tied, jackets on, hugs given).
- When your vehicle reaches the sidewalk, your child should exit and begin walking to the front doors.
- Stay in your vehicle. We will provide supervision for your child as he/she walks to the front doors of the school. You may exit the parking lot after your child leaves your vehicle.

Families are asked to respect the following guidelines for P.M. dismissal:

- Families may enter the parent pick up line by the north entrance off Clemson Drive. The parent pick up line is the only place car riders should meet families.
- Families who plan to meet their child in the office may park in the parking lot and come through the front doors to the office.
- Students may not be released through the Community Events Entrance or directly to the parking lot.

### **BIKES, SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS**

Walkers who wish to ride their bikes to school may do so with parental permission. Bikes are to be ridden single file on the right side of the street. For safety purposes, bicyclists are expected to follow the same safety regulations as automobile drivers. **Bicycles must be walked across intersections and on the school property.** Bicycles are to remain in bicycle racks during the school day. Bicycle locks are recommended. Scooters and roller blades are acceptable but **skateboards and roller shoes are not allowed.** Scooters may be stored in lockers in the school. Roller blades need to be removed before entering the building. They may be stored in lockers in the school. All students who ride bicycles and scooters, to school are expected to wear helmets.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

Emergency procedure drills occur throughout the school year, as follows: lockdown drill five times per year, fire drill five times per year, severe weather/tornado drill one time per year, and bus evacuation two times per year. Staff is calm and reassuring during emergency drills. Students are silent and follow all directions so that all safety messages are heard by all.

### **SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS**

In the event of a school closing or late start due to inclement weather, a phone message will be made to primary telephone contact numbers with our school district mass communication system. You may also listen for the announcement on WCCO-AM (830) radio or KSTP TV, channel five. Our school district will be listed as **Rosemount, Apple Valley, Eagan.** For general information about events and activities in the district, call the District Information Line at (651) 423-7777 or check the district website at [www.district196.org](http://www.district196.org). In the event of severe weather, students will take cover in assigned areas within the school building and will remain in these areas until an all-clear signal has been issued. Busses will not leave and

dismissal is delayed if there a tornado warning is in effect. The school will make every effort to notify families in the event dismissal is delayed due to weather. **Parents/guardians are urged not to call the school during severe weather to help keep the phone lines free.** If the district determines it cannot safely transport students to school on an in-person learning day, the district will announce the cancellation of school or announce that it as a day of “distance learning for all students.” The decision will be made the night before, if possible, and will be communicated on the district website, social media, by phone call, text and on local television stations. Students will use Seesaw and Schoology to get assignments and communicate with teachers during established office hours, similar to distance learning Wednesdays. Child care for critical workers will not be offered on distance learning days for all students due to the weather. [Learn more about our updated Winter Weather Protocols.](#)

## II. COMMUNICATION

### **COMMUNICATION SOURCES**

At Oak Ridge Elementary School, we are very interested in promoting communication between teaching staff and parents. We encourage you to call or contact us when you have concerns or need questions answered. District 196 believes in a multi-dimensional, comprehensive communication system, which includes but is not limited to:

- Friday Folders-Each student has a Friday Folder, which will be sent home weekly and should be returned to school on Monday. These folders will include your child’s work, school papers, and district flyers.
- Oak Ridge Web Site - Our web site includes all school information, including lunch menus, calendars, and newsletters. The site address is: [www.district196.org/or](http://www.district196.org/or).
- Grade Level and Classroom Updates – Teachers will send a message to families at least once per month with calendar updates, curriculum information, and announcements. Teachers also post information on SeeSaw for grades K-2 and Schoology for grades 3-5.
- Seesaw (K-5) – Teachers and staff will send messages about assignments and school announcements on Seesaw. This is where students access online assignments in grades K-3.
- Schoology (4-5) - Teachers and staff will send message about assignments and school announcements on Schoology. This is where students access online assignments in grades 4-5.

- Email – Staff email addresses are [firstname.lastname@district196.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@district196.org). Teachers usually check email twice a day. **Please do not leave messages requiring a timely response, (i.e., Sarah should not go home on the bus after school) as teachers may not have an opportunity to check their email before the end of the school day or may be absent and not available to check email.**
- School Messenger - Electronic updates are sent from Oak Ridge via email weekly with information on upcoming events, announcements and calendar information.
- Oak Ridge Newsletter – A monthly Oak Ridge Newsletter will be prepared at the beginning of the month informing you about overall school activities/events. The newsletter is emailed to every family and posted on Schoology and SeeSaw.
- Facebook – Updates are posted on Facebook @[Oak Ridge Elementary](https://www.facebook.com/OakRidgeElementary) about upcoming events.
- Twitter - Follow us on Twitter @[OakRidgeMagnet](https://twitter.com/OakRidgeMagnet) to see what is happening at school.
- School Visits – Due to COVID 19, this offering is on hold. When our building is open again, parents are always welcome to visit at Oak Ridge Elementary. Remember this is your school! If you would like to observe in the classroom, schedule your visit with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance. **Check in at the office before entering the instructional areas. All visitors must sign in on the electronic system in the office to receive a badge and enter the building.**
- SchoolMessenger - You may receive telephone calls via the district’s SchoolMessenger mass notification service. This mass communication system is available to inform families quickly of any changes in schedules, snow days, early dismissals or other pertinent information. The most common use of this service at the district level will be to inform families of changes to the school day schedule. When there is a weather-related change to the school schedule, the district will call just the primary (home) phone number listed for each student – one call per student. Oak Ridge can also send out specific messages to all of our families or a specific grade level or class of students.
- Campus Parent Portal Account - Parents/guardians should review and update their contact information in their Infinite Campus Parent Portal each year. Oak Ridge parents/guardians should set up this account to view student information, allow permission for internet use and other information. If you do not have a Campus Parent account, you may contact the Oak Ridge office for assistance.
- Report Cards – District 196 elementary schools operate on a trimester system. Report cards are available through the Infinite Campus parent Portal at the end of each trimester (December, March and June). The purpose of the report card is to communicate a student’s achievement in academics, social skills, and effort based on our district grade level expectations and standards. A grading scale of 1-4 is used, based on rubrics with easy-to-understand descriptors of what the student is able to do in each of the four achievement levels: 1) Limited, 2) Developing, 3) Proficient and 4) Exemplary. For more information go to: <http://www.district196.org/elementaryreporting/>.



- The SPOTLIGHT is published quarterly at the District Office. The SPOTLIGHT communicates information to all citizens in the district. Items such as a district calendar, upcoming events, summaries of School Board meeting, etc. are printed for your information. If you do not receive the SPOTLIGHT, call (651) 423-7700.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/teacher conferences are an important time for families. You will learn about your child's progress, have an opportunity to ask questions, and discuss plans for continued growth and improvement. Formal conferences are held twice, during the fall and winter. Evening and day appointments are available. You will be asked to sign up for a conference appointment with your child's homeroom teacher using an online scheduling program. You may also make appointments to meet with specialists (music, physical education, art, STEM), and/or special education teachers and/or other interventionists.

### **PTO**

The Oak Ridge PTO's mission is to facilitate the betterment of Oak Ridge families, staff and students by:

- Creating an open, welcoming and supportive learning environment.
- Fostering pride in the school.
- Developing and strengthening the community of advocates.
- Offering talent and financial assistance.

All are encouraged to participate. Every Oak Ridge parent is a member of PTO. There are no dues or applications to be a member.

## **III. CURRICULUM AND SERVICES**

### **BAND**

The instrumental music program at Oak Ridge provides instruction for band instruments in small and large groups. Instruction begins during the summer preceding the child's fifth grade year or at the beginning of the child's fifth grade school year. Participation in the instrumental music program is optional for fifth grade students.

### **CURRICULUM**

Information about elementary curriculum may be found on the District 196 website: [www.district196.org](http://www.district196.org). Families have a right to review any curriculum materials used in the instruction of students, and/or request that students be excused from instruction on specific topics and/or lessons. If you wish to have more information contact Cathy Kindem, Principal.

**Art**

The art curriculum is based on the MN Art Standards, the National Core Art Standards of Creating, Presenting, Responding, Connecting, and also the Elements and Principles of Art and Design. Students practice artistic activities that expand creative strategies, skills, and habits of mind. The program explores art from various cultures, with an extra emphasis on environmental art and nature photography. The curriculum is designed to build on art skills and experiences as students advance through the grades.

**Music**

Students sing, play instruments, move, and create music. They learn to read music, and analyze and evaluate the music of others. The primary music curriculum is “Spotlight on Music” published by McGraw/Hill. Music programs focus on making music, and listening to and responding to music others have produced. Music programs are coordinated by our Music Specialist.

**Physical Education**

Oak Ridge Elementary students receive instruction in physical education on a regular basis. Physical education is based on learning basic movements and skills, and refining these movements and skills into specific activities. Skills include loco motor movement, non-loco motor movement, perceptual movement and manipulatives. At Oak Ridge, students have the opportunity to learn about Health Science topics that relate to the way the body systems work when engaged in physical activity. Our health science magnet theme is enhanced through physical education opportunities.

Please send a doctor’s note with your child if he/she cannot participate in physical education class. In order for your child to participate in class, he or she must wear tennis shoes with non-marking soles.

**STEM**

Our designated Ology Lab serves as a gathering point for our students to access and engage in STEM learning experiences. Incorporating outdoor learning, gardening and a Makerspace model, students participate in projects covering robots, 3D printing, engineering and more.

**Elementary Mathematics**

The elementary school mathematics curriculum is based on the Minnesota Academic Standards in Mathematics. The curriculum builds students’ mathematical understanding, skill and proficiency at each grade level within the strands of number and operations, algebra, geometry, measurement, data analysis and probability. The focus is also on developing a growth mindset for math, engaging in “number talk” and seeing different solutions for number problems to understand and learn ways to act on numbers flexibility, and seeing mathematical patterns and strategies in life, nature, and future careers.

## **Resources**

Grades K-2

*Bridges in Mathematics* published by The Math Learning Center

Grades 3-5

*Bridges in Mathematics* published by The Math Learning Center

## **Health and Drug Education**

Our district offers a number of programs for elementary students in the areas of health education and drug prevention. These programs are an important part of our total curriculum. A brief description of each program is below:

*Human Growth and Development and HIV/AIDS (During COVID 19, these resources will be available online to families to facilitate.)*

District 196 teaches a human growth and development curriculum to fourth and fifth grade students, and an HIV/AIDS prevention curriculum to fifth grade students. If you would like more specific information about what is taught in this area, please contact your school principal. Families who are uncomfortable with the curriculum, after talking with the principal, may withhold their child from specific class sessions in which the curriculum is taught.

The Human Growth and Development curriculum covers basic information about reproductive anatomy, physical and emotional changes during puberty, and proper hygiene. Parents/guardians will be notified of the date this curriculum will be taught and will be able to come to school and preview the curriculum by appointment.

The section of the grade five communicable disease unit deals with HIV/AIDS. The content of the HIV/AIDS lessons includes such topics as the transmission, prevention and myths associated with the disease. Students will learn that HIV/AIDS is transmitted through bodily fluids and the ways bodily fluids can be transmitted. It is the intention of the district to provide the students with factual information at an age-appropriate level.

## **Language Arts**

K-5 classrooms will be implementing units of study that integrate reading, writing, word study, research, social studies, science, and health. Math is also integrated in each unit in addition to being taught in its own block. Each grade level will have several units of study across the year. During each unit students will research different types of reading and writing, as well as a topic. Students will present out their individual and classroom research at the end of every unit.

## **Science**

Students will be immersed in 3 different science research units of study (earth science, life science, and physical science) across each school year. Students are immersed in the topic of study through research and hands-on investigations and are responsible for presenting out their research in

writing, as well as sharing their research with an audience. Students at Oak Ridge spend time outdoors as part of our magnet theme. A large emphasis on environmental learning and stewardship is at the heart of science learning at Oak Ridge.

### **Social Studies**

Students will research social studies topics home through integrated units of study. Every classroom will begin with a community unit as they establish the habits of mind of a strong learning and research community. The social studies program will provide the opportunity for each student to acquire the knowledge of content and concepts, develop the critical thinking skills and processing skills necessary for responsible social, political and economic participation in a diverse, interdependent and changing world.

### **Word Study**

Students will primarily learn word study through the curriculum of Benchmark Phonics and Word Study. It includes a sequential scope and sequence with a spiral review. Each explicit and systemic lesson teaches an isolated skill, then includes practice opportunities in addition to authentic reading and writing applications.

### **Home Extensions**

Students will carry their research topics home for lively discussions around different topics. Families will be encouraged to join in the research conversations with their child, and compare research across grade levels. Students will bring home interesting books that match their research topics and will be eager to share out their new learning.

### **EXTENDED DAY**

Extended day classes at Oak Ridge typically take place after school in the fall and spring for 8 week sessions. Class information and enrollment applications will be sent home with students. Students must be registered to attend classes. Both Targeted Services and Community Education classes will be offered.

Targeted Services programming is funded by the state and is an extension of summer school. Classes are designed to assist struggling students by strengthening academic and social skills. Programming is usually hands-on and activity based. Course offerings may include: math, reading, language arts, music, physical education, science, social studies, the arts, recreational games, study skills, social skills, and technology. In order to qualify for Targeted Services, a student must meet state criteria under the Minnesota Graduation Incentives Act and a Continual Learning Plan (CLP) must be signed by a parent. Licensed teachers teach all Targeted Services classes, and programming is offered at no charge to students who meet criteria.

Community Education classes are fee-based and taught by Community Education instructors. All students are invited to participate in Community Education programming after school. Scholarships are available on a limited basis.

For more information about extended day classes at Oak Ridge, you may contact our School Leadership TOSA, Sarina Baker.

## **FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES**

The goal of the Food and Nutrition Services Department is to provide high quality, nutritious meals for all students. ***(Through an extension of the US Department of Agriculture's free meals program, District 196 is currently not charging students for breakfast or lunch.)***

### **Menus**

School lunch menus are on the District 196 and Oak Ridge websites or by going to [www.district196.nutrislice.com](http://www.district196.nutrislice.com). Paper copies are available in the office if requested.

### **Breakfast**

An optional breakfast is available for all students on a daily basis. Students who eat breakfast at school should enter through the community events entrance where they will pick up their breakfast and take it to the classroom.

### **Lunch**

Students may purchase lunch at school or bring a lunch from home. We schedule 25 minutes per day for lunch time. Clerical staff supervise students in the both the cafeteria and the classrooms during lunch depending on the grade level.

### **Educational Benefits Applications**

Applications for Educational Benefits are available at: <http://www.district196.org/District/Departments/FoodNutrition/Index.cfm>. You may also request an application by calling our office or the Food Services office. Educational Benefits participation is confidential. This form should still be completed for eligible families even though meals are free at this time. We are uncertain how long the free program will continue.

## **GIFTED/TALENTED DEVELOPMENT**

Gifted and talented development services at Oak Ridge follows the District 196 inclusive, flexible and fluid model. A student does not need to be formally identified as gifted and talented to receive support for their high academic and learning ability and/or high achievement needs. Gifted services are provided through flexible grouping based on formative and ongoing assessment of student needs in the classroom based on the content and standards being presented at that time. District 196 provides universal screening for gifted and talented students annually in grades 2 through 5. We use multiple criteria for a strengths-based formal identification of gifted and talented students.

## **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

Independent School District 196 provides homebound instruction for all students who are homebound with a serious illness. Students are eligible for this instruction when it becomes apparent that they will be absent for fifteen (15) consecutive days. Please keep the school informed if you know that your child is expected to be out that long.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

District 196 offers only full day kindergarten for all students. Parents requesting half-day kindergarten programming should contact the school principal.

## **RECESS**

All Oak Ridge students participate in 20 minutes of recess two times each day. Recess is an important time for students to exercise, play outdoors, and practice social skills with peers. Recess is not optional. Students who are present at school are expected to go outdoors for recess. Family requests for children to be excluded from recess must be approved by our school nurse. Only rare exceptions will be allowed. Indoor recess will occur due to severe weather or significant rain. Students go outside for play in all seasons. If the temperature/wind chill is zero degrees or colder, time outside will be limited for safety. Children are expected to have appropriate clothing for outdoor play every day. Families are encouraged to label all coats, snow pants, hats, gloves, and boots. Students may bring soft balls from home (tennis balls, Nerf balls, volleyballs) and jump ropes. This equipment is your child's responsibility and should be labeled with his/her name.

## **SCHOOL AGE CARE (YMCA)**

Child Care is available before and after school for Oak Ridge students through the YMCA. Morning hours are 6:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. and afternoon hours are 3:50 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This program is fee-based. For more information call our office or go to: [https://www.ymcatwincities.org/child\\_care/school\\_age\\_care/school\\_age\\_care\\_locations/eagan\\_isd\\_196/](https://www.ymcatwincities.org/child_care/school_age_care/school_age_care_locations/eagan_isd_196/).

## **SOCIAL WORKER**

The goal of the elementary school social work program is to partner directly with families, educators, students and our communities to address and overcome barriers to academic achievement. Ultimately this partnership provides the necessary support, guidance and nurturance that are essential to academic success and sound life decisions. Elementary school social workers provide a variety of services that aim to empower both the individual student and his/her family. Interventions are driven by the belief that early detection and prevention are crucial to stable outcomes in our schools and communities. Social workers are uniquely qualified to support clients in a variety of ways. This is achieved through ongoing professional consultation with parents, educators and administrators, which promotes a team orientated approach to maximize each child's potential. School social workers are licensed mental health professionals who are trained to provide support and interventions to children and families in times of emotional/mental health crisis. Helping to sustain and endure in times of need is an avenue in which social workers advocate for the needs of the children and families. The elementary school social program addresses an array of psychosocial needs through the provision of individual instruction, classroom based intervention and guidance within small group settings. Finally, the elementary school social work program works closely with social service agencies within our communities to provide comprehensive support to families with specific needs. For more information contact Alisha Kaul, Oak Ridge School Social Worker.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special education services are provided to students who qualify. Service areas include, but are not limited to: learning disability, speech/language, autism spectrum disorder, emotional/behavioral disorder, and other health disabilities.

Children may be referred to the evaluation team by parents/guardians, classroom teachers, special education staff, or an outside agency already serving the child. After an assessment is completed, a meeting is arranged with appropriate staff members and parents to analyze results and to determine if special education services are needed. Parents/guardians are essential members of the special education team and are directly involved in all decisions regarding their child's educational plan.

## **STATE TESTING**

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA's) were developed by the State of Minnesota to evaluate district, school and individual student progress on the State standards. These tests are administered to all grade 3, 4 and 5 students in public schools throughout the state of Minnesota. There is no minimum passing score required on the MCA's. Test dates are in April and May and will be posted on our school website calendar. On testing days it is important for students to have adequate rest and a healthy breakfast. Please avoid late arrivals or appointments, as they disrupt testing schedules and can be distracting for students. Results are typically sent home in September or October.

## **TITLE ONE**

Oak Ridge is a Schoolwide Title One School. Title One is a federally funded program whose purpose is to improve student achievement in reading and math. It does not replace classroom reading instruction but provides supplemental assistance to students who are performing below grade level. Oak Ridge is a Schoolwide Title One School. All teachers are licensed and support staff have achieved "Highly Qualified" designation. Parent communication and involvement is an important aspect of Title One service. Parents are invited to Title One events at school and receive routine updates about their child's progress.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

District 196 owns and operates a fleet of approximately 220 buses and employs drivers, chaperones and other support staff to safely transport more than 22,000 students to and from school each day.

Service distances for transportation are 1 mile and further from school for elementary students and 1.5 miles and further for middle school and high school students. These service distance criteria also apply to students attending the district's magnet schools and all non-public school students. Minnesota law requires school districts to provide transportation to any student who lives 2 miles and further from their assigned school. A fee for service option is available for students who do not qualify for transportation. For more information call our school office or go to: <http://www.district196.org/District/Departments/Transportation/Index.cfm>.

The transportation department communicates pickup and drop off times for students who are bused to Oak Ridge. Families receive a post card with this information before the school year begins. School bus patrol members are placed on every bus to assist the driver with loading and unloading passengers safely.

#### Special Transportation Requests

The following procedures will be used when parents request to have their children ride a bus not assigned to them:

1. After the routes are established in the fall, the Transportation Department will inform the school of the number of extra seats available for each bus.
2. Students may be authorized to transfer buses only if a seat is available.
3. The student must have a note signed by his/her parent or guardian for each request to transfer buses.
4. "Generic" notes cannot be honored. i.e. "Please allow Tyler to ride Bus #7 to Scouts every Thursday for the year." The approval of one note does not imply that future notes will be approved. The student load on each bus changes with new enrollment, therefore, a seat may not be available at a later date.
5. Notes should be given to the classroom teacher by the student first thing in the morning. Notes will be forwarded to the office and will be approved or not approved after checking the list of available seats.
6. When a note is not approved, the student will be instructed to call his/her parents to make other arrangements for transportation.

## **IV. DISTRICT AND SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special events for young children. Classroom teachers recognize students in special ways on their birthdays. In accordance with our District Wellness policy, **food, beverages, or gifts may not be included in student birthday events at school.**

### **BULLYING PROHIBITION**

Administrative Regulation 503.8AR, Bullying Prohibition, defines bullying as being an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in the conduct and the target of the conduct and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern, or materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services or privileges. Negative behavior by students is addressed by school staff, regardless of whether it has happened before, but it is not defined as bullying until it becomes repeated.

In terms of bullying prevention, the new regulation requires all schools to have a program in place that reinforces positive behavior and fosters a culture of respect in the school. Most District 196 schools already have these programs in place, like Restorative Practices, Responsive Classroom,



Conscious Discipline and Leader in Me at Oak Ridge. Restorative practices focuses on building strong relationships and taking responsibility for actions and repairing harm. Restorative practices consists of a continuum of interventions including affective questions, impromptu conferences, circles and formal conferences. The Responsive Classroom approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. Responsive Classroom consists of a set of practices that build academic and social-emotional competencies.

Students who are victims of bullying or who witness bullying of others can report the negative behavior to any adult at school. Dr. Kindem (Principal) and Oak Ridge's Assistant Administrator, Donald Backner, as well as our School Social Worker, Alisha Kaul, have been designated as the people responsible for receiving reports of bullying for Oak Ridge students. Reports may be submitted in person, by telephone, on Procedure 503.8P, Report of Bullying Behavior, or anonymously (although this may limit the school's ability to take action against the alleged perpetrator).

In response to a report of bullying, if the behavior meets the definition of bullying, we will undertake or authorize an investigation. If the investigation determines that bullying occurred, school staff will notify the parents or guardians of the victim and the perpetrator and will take action against the perpetrator, which may include, but is not limited to, restorative interventions, a warning, or suspension. School staff will conduct a follow-up meeting with the victim approximately two weeks after the investigation is complete to ensure that the bullying behavior has stopped. Students have the right to be safe and free from threatening situations in schools. For more information go to:

<http://www.district196.org/District/schoolboard/policies/500/503.8AR.pdf>

### **CHECKING IN/CHECKING OUT A STUDENT**

If you need to pick up or drop off your child during the school day, park your vehicle in the parking lot. Please avoid the yellow curbs. If you are picking up your child, enter the main entrance and sign your child out in the mail office. He/She will be called to the office to meet you. If you have an appointment, remember that it may take a few minutes for your child to be prepared to leave school. If your child is being dropped off at school in the morning after 9:30 a.m., **park your car and walk to the main entrance with your child and call the school number to let us know they have arrived.**

We understand that changes in pick up arrangements occur from time to time, and our office staff will assist you to make sure that students get home safely. Call the office or send a note to school if your child will be going home with a friend or another person who does not normally pick up. If at all possible, please notify us in advance and before 3pm so we can avoid classroom interruptions and communicate information to staff in a timely manner. Do not email your child's teacher, as he/she may not have the opportunity to check email messages during the school day.

**Consistent pick up routines are safest, as they minimize last minute changes and prevent confusion.** Parents will need to come in the school to sign out students in the office vestibule when this is not a daily routine.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Oak Ridge's daily schedule is as follows:

7:30 a.m.	Office opens
8:00 a.m.	Teacher day begins
9:15 a.m.	Parent drop off starts. Students enter through main entrance. If eating breakfast, students must enter through the community events entrance by the gym.
9:15- 9:30 a.m.	Busses arrive.
9:25 a.m.	First Bell
9:30 a.m.	Start of school day; classes begin
3:45 p.m.	Dismissal for walkers, students going to parent pick up and SAC students
3:45-3:50 p.m.	Dismissal for grades Preschool-5
3:55 p.m.	Busses leave
4:00 p.m.	Teacher day ends
4:30 p.m.	Office closes

Students should not be dropped off prior to 9:15 a.m.

Students who wish to have breakfast should arrive at school at 9:15 a.m. to allow time to eat and be in class on time at 9:30 a.m.

All other students should arrive at 9:15 a.m. No supervision is available before this time since the staff is involved in meetings and preparation for the school day. Students who arrive before 9:15 a.m. because they walk to school or have rides from family members will remain outside until the bell rings.

## **DRESS**

Clothing with statements or advertisements that reference messages which are inappropriate for young children are not allowed (i.e., cigarettes, violence). If a student wears clothing to school that is inappropriate a staff member will speak with him/her privately. This student will be offered the option of turning a shirt inside out or wearing another shirt over the original. Parents will be informed as needed. Shoes worn should be appropriate for steps, since our school is two levels and students will be going up and down steps, and for outdoor play at recess and gym. Close-toed shoes and weather appropriate clothing are needed for outdoor learning. The wearing of hats or hoods is reserved for recess and outdoor learning.

### **ELECTRONICS**

We strongly recommend that students do not bring cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices to school. These items tend to distract or interfere with the learning process, and are at risk of being stolen or lost. If brought to school, electronic devices should remain in the student's backpack and turned off in all areas of the school and on the school bus. Students who bring electronics in contradiction of this policy do so at their own risk and are subject to district policy on responsible use.

### **HOMEMADE TREATS**

Homemade treats may not be distributed to students at school. This practice is requested by the Minnesota Department of Health.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is not assigned as a daily requirement, but rather as an outgrowth or continuation of learning at school. Daily reading at home is required at most grade levels and parent signature is often requested to verify the reading minutes. Students should complete at least 2 Dreambox lessons outside of school each week.

### **LATEX BALLOONS**

Latex balloons are not allowed at Oak Ridge. This practice protects students with latex allergies. Also, deflated or broken balloons are a choking hazard.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Please label all your child's belongings so that they may be identified when misplaced. A lost and found closet is located in the hallway by the nurse's office. Items are kept for one month and if not claimed after one month, they are donated. Make sure your child looks for lost items promptly. If items are left on a bus, check with the Transportation Department at (651) 423-7685.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

District 196 does not discriminate in employment or in any of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, familial status, membership or activity in a local human rights commission, disability, sexual orientation, age or genetic information. District 196 provides equal access to designated youth groups. The Director of Human Resources (651-423-7859) has been designated to respond to employment-related inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies. The Director of Elementary Education (651-423-7782) and the Director of Secondary Education (651-423-7712) have been designated to respond to student-related inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies. The Director of Special Education (651-423-7629) has been designated to respond to inquiries concerning the rights of a student with a disability. The mailing address for all directors is 3455 153rd Street W, Rosemount, MN 55068.

## **PARTY INVITATIONS**

Invitations to parties or celebrations should not be distributed at school or on the bus. This practice supports an inclusive environment at our school and your cooperation is appreciated.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK**

The District publishes a STUDENTS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK and mails it to every family in the fall. Included in the handbook are behavioral expectations and consequences for misbehavior that are enforced district-wide. Families and students are asked to become familiar with the expectations and consequences as early in the school year as possible. Teachers review the handbook with students during the first two weeks of school, as developmentally appropriate.

## **STUDENT WITHDRAWALS**

If you are planning to move out of the Oak Ridge attendance area, please call us at (651) 683-6970. Records for students enrolling in a school outside of District 196 will be requested in writing by the new school.

## **TELEPHONE CALLS/USAGE**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the classroom teacher if there is ever a concern or question. If the teacher is not available, please leave your name and number, and the teacher will return your call at his/her first opportunity. We will not interrupt classrooms during the normal student day.

Please do not call and ask to speak with your child in the classroom. For emergency purposes, a student may be sent to the office for a phone call. Students should use the telephone at school only when absolutely necessary. Arrangements for transportation, visiting another child, etc., should be made before the student leaves home.

## **VISITING SCHOOL** *(Due to COVID 19, this feature is on hold.)*

All visitors should check in at the front desk in the office. You will be asked to scan your driver's license or enter your personal data before receiving a visitor sticker badge. You will wear the visitor sticker badge during your visit. Classroom visits must be prearranged with the teacher. Parents may visit school to have lunch with their child.

Student visitors such as cousins and out-of-town friends are not allowed to visit during the school day. Visitors may join parents/guardians who choose to have lunch with their child in the cafeteria.

## **VOLUNTEER OPTIONS** *(Due to COVID 19, this feature is on hold.)*

Volunteers are often needed for special events (i.e. field trips, classroom parties) or school events and are scheduled by school staff or listed on our website. Volunteers are also trained to support students with reading and math and to prep materials for teachers. Training and materials are provided. For more information you may contact Oak Ridge's Administrative Assistant.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

Philosophy: District 196 and Oak Ridge Elementary School are committed to providing a healthy environment that enhances student learning and the development of lifelong wellness practices. Achieving a healthy environment for physical, social, and emotional health includes nutrition education, physical education opportunities, and the provision of nutritious food and beverage options through community partnerships and actions designed to promote student and staff wellness.

### Beliefs:

1. District 196 has a responsibility to foster a learning environment that encourages students to maintain lifelong healthy eating habits, and physical, social, and emotional health.
2. There is an evidence-based link between healthy lifestyles and improved student attendance and educational outcomes.
3. Nutrition and physical activity are essential components of the educational process.

Curriculum: Students at Oak Ridge participate in 40 minutes of recess each day and receive regular physical education instruction. Teachers incorporate frequent movement breaks during classroom instruction, and students receive nutrition education that is developmentally appropriate. After school program options include classes focused on physical activity. In addition, food services staff engage students in opportunities to make healthy food choices.

## **V. SCHOOL NURSE AND STUDENT HEALTH**

### Student Health/School Nurse

Licensed school nurses provide a variety of services that support a healthy learning environment for all students and staff in District 196.

### **Illness and Injury**

In cases of illness or significant injury at school, a parent or guardian will be contacted by the Health Office. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. The emergency contact must be willing and able to provide transportation and supervision of the student. It is important the parent/guardian and emergency contact information is current for all students. If no one can be reached, 911 will be contacted as necessary. Please keep your contact and emergency contact information up to date.

### **Guidelines for whether or not to send your child to school (*Refer to District 196 website for updated COVID 19 Protocols*)**

We want children in school and ready to learn. The following guidelines have been established to help determine when children should remain at home. They may need to rest at home if they have:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Any rash, of which you do not know the cause
- Or they are not feeling well enough to participate in the school day.

When your child is feeling ill please don't hesitate to call your school nurse with questions or concerns. We would prefer your child remain at home for 24 hours after the above symptoms have subsided. This helps prevent the spread of communicable diseases and allows the opportunity to rest and recover fully from the illness.

The school district will follow the guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health for recommended exclusion and notification for vaccine-preventable diseases (mumps, measles, rubella, pertussis, diphtheria, viral hepatitis, chickenpox and meningitis). There will be no other classroom or grade level notification for communicable diseases.

### **Establish Healthy Habits**

We know that too many absences/tardies, for whatever reason, can cause children to fall behind both academically and socially. Encourage healthy habits and routines, including adequate sleep and nutrition, and consistent attendance for your child's success.

### **Immunizations**

In order for students to enroll or remain enrolled in elementary or secondary school, MN state law requires documentation of required immunizations, written proof of exemption, or conscientious objection. Students will not be allowed to start school until this information is returned to the Health Office. Your child can meet the immunization requirements through being fully immunized, providing a signed medical exemption letter or through a notarized conscientious objection. <http://www.district196.org/student-services/health-services/immunization-requirements/>

### **Medications**

To ensure students receive needed medication and that it is not misused, the school district has developed rules for the administration of medication in school. Please note the following points:

- All medication must be kept in the office of the school nurse and must be administered by the school nurse or other appropriate school personnel unless there is authorization for self-carry/self-administration on file with the health office
- Medication guidelines:
  1. A completed Prescription Medication Authorization Form from a student's parent or guardian and

2. Medication in a prescription bottle or original container is required before a school nurse will give a student prescription or non-prescription medication
  3. Only FDA approved medications will be administered by school personnel
  4. Parent/guardian consent for non-prescription medications is required
- If medication is to be given for more than two weeks, a written order from a physician or dentist must be provided to the school
  - If prescription medication remains in the nurse's office after the end of a school year or when the student is no longer attending the school, the nurse will contact the student's parent or guardian to pick up the medication. If the medication is not picked up within one month, it will be destroyed. With parent permission, epi pens, inhalers and insulin can be sent home with the student at the end of the school year
  - Questions should be discussed with your school nurse.

<http://www.district196.org/student-services/health-services/rules-for-taking-medication/>

### **Health Screenings**

Each year students participate in screening. Students also receive hearing and/or vision screening upon request from a parent/guardian or if the teacher suspects a hearing or vision concern that is affecting the student's ability to learn. *If you do not wish to have your child screened please contact the School Nurse.*

### **Health Plans**

If your student has a health condition that could result in an **emergency** (for example, serious allergy with epi pen, diabetes, seizure disorder or asthma) or has a health condition requiring **accommodations** (for example, medication administration, treatments, or restrictions) contact the School Nurse before the school year starts or as soon as the condition develops. Our school and district websites have the necessary forms for you and your child's physician to complete. <http://www.district196.org/student-services/health-services/>

***“Educating our students to reach their full potential”***

**ADMINISTRATION**

Mary M. Kreger, Superintendent  
Tony Taschner, Communications Director  
Dr. Cathy Kindem, Principal

**SCHOOL BOARD**

Jackie Magnuson, Chairperson  
Joel Albright, Vice Chairperson  
Sachin Isaacs, Clerk  
Art Coulson, Treasurer  
Craig Angrimson, Director  
Mike Roseen, Director  
Cory Johnson, Director