

Dodge Elementary School Parent Handbook



Be Safe, Be Kind, Work Hard!

Principal..... Mr. Charles A. Smilinich
Assistant Principal..... Mrs. Nicole Mayers

Secretaries: Mrs. LaDuca, Mrs. Pelonero, and Mrs. Mang

1900 Dodge Road, East Amherst, NY 14051
Phone: 716-626-9820, Fax 716-626-9849

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Mission Statements

Williamsville Central School District Mission and Beliefs

Our Mission:

The Williamsville Central School District is committed to educational excellence that empowers all students to develop their unique potential and thrive as learners, citizens, and leaders in a diverse global community.

In our commitment to educational excellence, we believe:

- Students are our highest priority.
- All members of our diverse school community are valued and respected.
- A welcoming environment that prioritizes safety, wellness, and belonging is essential.
- Effective partnerships among schools, educators, families, and community, support student learning and well-being.
- All students deserve equitable access to engaging instructional and curricular opportunities to support their success.
- Strong social-emotional competencies enhance learning and success.
- Growth and excellence are to be encouraged, supported, and celebrated.
- Learning is a continuous, lifelong process

General Building Information

Dodge is one of six elementary schools in the Williamsville Central School District. The district also has four middle schools and three high schools. Our student population across the district is around 10,000, while Dodge typically houses approximately 550-650 students.

Dodge was first known as North Elementary when built in 1952. It was the fourth school built in district. Being an older school, it has exceptional charm, including large trees on a vast campus. The area used to be farmland. So although Dodge was originally a rural school, it is now considered a suburban school. We have two playgrounds on our campus. The first is known as the Fitness Center. It builds upper body strength with its mini climbing walls and horizontal ladder. The other has been dubbed by the students as the Dodge Tree House. It is a more typical playground with slides, swings and climbing elements. We also have a sports court, where students can play basketball and other activities. Another special feature of Dodge is our beautiful Auditorium. It can seat around 400. Students enjoy performing concerts and plays on stage. We also have our art gallery in the transition space that leads to the first grade wing. We have named it BRAG (Brick Room Art Gallery). Various art pieces are on display throughout the year for all to see and enjoy.

Office Hours: 7:30am-3:00 pm (Summer hours are from 7:30 am-2:30 pm, but we encourage you to please call first to be sure someone is available.)

School Day Hours: 8:05 am-2:20 pm

- Early drop off begins at 7:45 am. Students who arrive to school between 7:45am-8:05 pm will wait in the auditorium until 8:05 am
- Morning announcements begin at 8:15 am sharp, officially beginning the instructional part of our day. Any student arriving to the classroom after 8:15 am requires a late pass from the attendance office.
- Dismissal begins at 2:10 pm, with pickups starting at that time from the auditorium. The buses leave our lot at 2:20pm. **Parents need to pick their children up no later than 2:20 pm.**

Office Phone number: 716-626-9820

Main Office Fax: 716-626-9849

Nurse's Office Fax 716-626-9848

Extension Directory:

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Attendance office | Mrs. Allison Lonczak |
| 2. Health Office | Mrs. Linda Markarian |
| 3. Social Worker | Mrs. Stephanie Wood |
| 4. School Psychologist | Mrs. Rebecca Cashmore |
| 5. Main Office | Mrs. LaDuca, Mrs. Pelonero, Mrs. Mang |

Mascot: Roadrunner

School Colors: Green and Gold

Grades K-4

Interpreter Service Availability

Dodge is a diverse school, to ensure all parents have access to their child's educational program, we are committed to providing many memos, letters and documents in a family's first language. In addition, we may use translators for various educational purposes. Some examples include:

- Face to Face Interpreters- the school can arrange to have a translator present for parent teacher conferences, Open House and other meetings and school events.
- Phone conference Interpreter Services- the school can use a phone service for meetings and conversations. An interpreter may be accessed by conference call, this is a "live" translation service.
- American Sign Language Interpreters- the school may also utilize an interpreter for face to face meetings, however the school is not equipped for text telephone.

Visitor Parking and School Access

On a typical day, our staff uses the rear parking lot, accessed via North French Rd. School visitors are asked to use the Dodge Rd. lot and use the visitors entrance. Please park in designated spots only. Parking along Dodge Rd. is another option on busy days. The Dodge **entrance loop is for dropping off passengers only**. Because the loop is our emergency vehicle access, **there is never any parking or standing allowed there**, even after hours and on busy evening events. Please also reserve the Handicapped Accessible parking spots for their intended purpose. For large- scale evening events, the rear parking lot is also available for parking.

The front doors are locked and monitored during the school day. To enter the building, please press the buzzer on the right side of the door at the visitors entrance. You will be greeted, asked your purpose and advised where to report. All visitors will enter through

the visitors entrance and will remain in the secured vestibule prior to entering the school building. It is important to note, that in order to enter a building, parents/guardians and visitors will be required to sign the visitors log and provide a government issued ID, such as a driver's license. In doing so, the Raptor system will:

- Keep potential threats out by instantly screening each visitor's government issued ID card.
- Sync with our student information system to ensure students are released to approved guardians
- Let the school community know visitors are approved by requiring visitors to wear a badge that shows their role, name, destination, date of entry and photo.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Arrival

Parents who wish to drive their children to school may drop their children off at school starting at 7:45 am. Students who arrive at school between 7:45 am-8:05 am will be supervised in the auditorium. Students arriving between 8:05 am-8:15 am will report directly to their classroom. Parents should drive their car around the front circle and pull as far up as possible, **students should exit the car on the passenger side of the car.** Parents should **NOT** be getting out of their cars to help students or to walk them to the doors. If your child requires help in the morning getting out of the car, we ask that you park in the parking lot on Dodge Rd. and walk your child to the door. This will help to ensure a smooth flow of traffic as well as the safety of all the students.

Pick-Up at Dismissal

Parents who wish to pick up their children at dismissal are required to send a note to school that morning, unless this is your daily routine. If so, one note for the year is fine. If an emergency occurs or you must change your child's dismissal procedures during the school day, it is strongly recommended that parents call the school (626-9820) before 1:00 PM as it is often difficult to locate classroom teachers beyond that time. Please do not use email to send this information, as we may not see it in time. Sending written notices or calling the office is the safest route. Once students are on the bus to go home, parents cannot remove them. Pick up begins at approximately 2:10 pm each day. **Parents need to pick their children up from the Auditorium by 2:20 pm.**

Transportation

All Dodge attendance area students are eligible for bus transportation to and from school. The school bus is the safest and most efficient way to get students to school on time. Any students who are currently open enrolled will need to be transported to and from school.

Parents with kindergarten students receive written notice (late in August, directly from the Transportation Department) detailing bus numbers and approximate pick up times. A second letter (late in August, directly from Dodge) will include the room assignment and information tag for parents to complete. Please have your kindergartner wear it the first week of school to assist staff in getting your child to the appropriate classroom in the morning and bus in the afternoon.

For all students (grades 1-4), you will access your child's bus information via WITS. This information is usually available the last week of August (roughly around August 26-27). There you will find the most specific busing information for your child. Usually the nearest corner is the pick-up/drop off point. Students are asked to be there several minutes prior to the bus arrival (regardless of weather.) This is to avoid delaying traffic while the bus waits for students to get to the bus and to keep students from dangerously chasing the bus. For our youngest Dodgers, we ask that an adult be present at drop off and pick up.

It may take almost two weeks to initiate any change in transportation plans, so don't delay the request! If a child needs to change the bus stop or bus number due to childcare needs for that short-term emergency situation, the principal may issue a bus pass for single day use only. Otherwise, children must take the bus assigned. Our goal is to get students to and from school in the safest possible manner.

Riding a school bus is a privilege that may be denied to students who disregard the rules of good conduct and safety regulations.

Cancellation of Afterschool Activities

There have been a few occasions in the past when inclement weather or power failure resulted in the cancellation of after school and evening school activities. Such a decision is not made lightly and is often made by about 1:00 PM. This time frame provides the school staff the opportunity to contact the families of students who had planned to stay late and make alternate end- of-day plans. It is critical for the school to have several methods to reach parents/guardians as well as other emergency contacts for such a situation.

Just for Kids***, an afterschool program that rents space from the district at Dodge, would also be closed when the district cancels after school activities. The program, as well as our staff will hold students here until a family member can pick them up, which may be much earlier than the usual pick up. However, we will do everything in our power to communicate as early as possible with families when this needs to happen. So, again, be sure we have multiple ways we can reach you in such an emergency.

Just For Kids is an independently operated after school/before school program that is not affiliated with the Williamsville Central School District

EMERGENCY EARLY RELEASE PLAN

Each year on the first Friday in October, the district holds an Early Release Emergency Drill. Students are dismissed 15 minutes earlier than usual. The intended purpose is to simulate an unexpected need to release students during the day. Although this is unlikely to happen, it is a great opportunity to practice your family's back-up plan. Discuss in advance with your child where he or she would go if they were released from the bus and the usual responsible adult was not there. Be sure to identify the neighbors your child has your permission to go to and communicate the plan with the neighbor. You are encouraged to practice this on the day of the emergency early release drill.

For students who remain at school or are driven to another after school care program, that plan continues on the emergency release drill. Please alert your childcare provider to expect the student at that time which will be approximately 15 minutes earlier than usual.

EMERGENCY SHELTERING PLAN

The school has in its Emergency Plan, procedures and expectations for staff in the case of extreme weather or any other emergency that keeps us from bussing students home. Our first obligation is to your children, our students. We will remain at school to provide safe shelter, food and drink to the best of our ability. Students would be released to parents who were able to get safely to the school using slightly modified family pick-up protocols.

Attendance Information

Late Arrival

Being on time for school is the best way to start a child's day. They have time to settle in, hear morning announcements, order lunch, hear the plan for the day, etc. No one likes to start the day feeling rushed, late and stressed; however, we know that sometimes emergencies happen. We encourage families to schedule doctor appointments beyond the school day to ensure your child's full access to the program.

If you know your child won't be able to make it into homeroom by 8:15 AM sharp, the adult dropping off the child should park the car in our parking lot and walk the child to the main doors. The office staff will direct the student to the attendance office. (Students need to be in their homeroom and ready to start their day by 8:15.) A note is needed for our files explaining the reason for the lateness.

Early Pick-Up

On the rare occasion that a pre-planned, early pick-up is needed, a note must be sent to school that morning indicating the person who will be picking up your child, as well as the time of the pick-up. The parent/guardian or designee reports to the **visitor entrance** to wait for the child to be sent down. Without a note, only custodial parents may pick up their child, unless you have a signed letter on file indicating those designated to pick up your child (this letter must be updated each year).

A student may be released to either parent unless a certified copy of a court order or divorce decree, provided by custodial parent indicates otherwise.

When a child is going home early due to illness, the child is released to the parent/guardian or designee directly from the **health office**.

School Absences/Tardies

Students at Dodge typically have excellent attendance. It is not unusual for many students to have perfect attendance for the year and the average student misses only 2-3 days a year. When students are here, they can access the curriculum and feel like a valued member of our school. Education Law also mandates caregivers send their school-aged students every day.

Keep your child home only if he or she....

- Has had a fever in the last 24 hours*
- Has vomited in the last 24 hours
- Has any other communicable illness (until past the contagious stage)

*Note: Your child needs to have been fever free without medication for 24 hours to return to school

If your child is staying at home, please...

- Alert the attendance office for any absence. If it is a planned absence, alert us in advance. If it is an unplanned absence, a call may be made at any hour, leaving a voicemail message during non-school hours. If you do not alert us, we will call you to verify the reason for the absence and ensure we don't have a "missing child".
- Follow up upon the child's return, within 3 days, with a written excuse (for our records) to make it an excused absence. Absences without such explanation will be considered unexcused after three days.
- If a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in afterschool activities on that day.

Excused absence/tardy (legitimate in the eyes of the Law) include:

- Personal Illness
- Serious Illness or death in the family
- Impassable roads due to weather
- Religious observance
- Medical appointments
- Required court appearances
- Late bus
- Participation in "Take Your Child" to Work Day

Unexcused absence/tardy include:

- Family vacation
- Babysitting
- Oversleeping
- Missed bus
- Non-school related instruction or competition
- Any reason other than those noted *Excused* above

Missed Work

It is almost impossible to make up for time lost in the classroom. Our instruction is not textbook reading followed by worksheets (something that would be easy to assign). Although family vacations should be scheduled during student vacation periods, we know that sometimes families can't make that happen. Our expectation is that students bring a book(s) to read on the trip, write in a journal daily about their experiences, and practice their math facts. Upon the child's return, any paper activities that were distributed during the time out of class may be available. We do not prepare materials in advance for planned family vacations. For students who are home sick for several days, a parent may call the school to arrange a time to pick up those materials put aside by the teacher (if the child is well enough to concentrate on the work).

Attendance Committee

Dodge has an attendance committee which includes the administrators, the nurse and school social worker. Together they monitor student tardies/absence patterns and frequency. They work with families to find the root cause for chronic absenteeism and tardies. Chronic absenteeism, a primary cause of poor academic achievement, is defined as missing at least 10 percent of days in a school year for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences. For example, a student who misses as few as two days per month for each month of the school year is described as being chronically absent. In a school year, that's 18 to 20 total missed school days. If no resolution to the problem results, the committee has no option but to involve District Office staff and possibly Child Protective Services or Family Court to help resolve the attendance issue.

21 DAYS OF ABSENCE... School attendance is mandatory for school-aged children in this state. **Parents/Guardians, who know they will have their school-aged children out of our school for 21 consecutive days or more, must formally withdraw their child from our register.** If the parent does not, our school district automatically will. It is presumed that if gone for this length of time, your child will be enrolled in the school district you are visiting. Upon your return to Dodge, you must contact our Central Registrar at 626- 8001 to re-register.

Health Office Information

Our health office is staffed by our School Nurse, Mrs. Linda Markarian and our Attendance/Health Aide, Mrs. Allison Lonczak. Please contact the school nurse if you have any health concerns or questions regarding your child. You can contact the school nurse by phone at 716-626-9830 or by email at lmarkarian2@williamsvillek12.org

Medication Drop-off

If your child will need to have medication kept in the health office, please provide a written request from their physician that indicates the medical condition being treated and the length of time the medication is to be administered. In addition, the name of the drug, the dosage, the frequency and time to be administered, the route and potential side effects must be specified. Please bring the written order along with your child's medication. **Medication needs to be brought to school by the parent or guardian. Please do not send any medication to school with your child or in your child's backpack or on the school bus with the child.** Students who self-carry, or self-carry and self-administer their medication must have written permission from the prescribing physician, parent, and school nurse. Medication orders must be renewed annually and whenever there is any change. Any unused medication not picked up within a reasonable amount of time will be disposed of at the end of the school year.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION must be in the container prepared by the pharmacist with the original label specifying the name and strength of the medication.

NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION must be in the original and sealed manufacturer's container with the student's name affixed to the container. Please be sure all items being dropped off are labeled with the student's name. Please contact the school nurse by phone at 716-626-9830 or by email at lmarkarian2@williamsvillek12.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Sunscreen

A parent or guardian can authorize the application of sunscreen, no medical provider order needs to be completed. Parent authorization forms for the application of sunscreen are available from the District's website or from the school nurse. The school nurse does not stock sunscreen for students to use. The parent/guardian must provide the sunscreen to the school nurse. All sunscreen will be safely stored in the health office. Parent authorization for the application of sunscreen will need to be completed each school year

Health Records and Immunization Requirements

All students of the Williamsville School District must meet immunization requirements of New York State Public Health Law. The New York State Health Department issued new immunization requirements for school entrance/attendance for the 2023-2024 school year. Please work with your child's health care provider and school nurse to determine what immunizations are needed to comply with the vaccine requirements for school entrance and attendance.

These minimum requirements include:

1. **Diphtheria and Tetanus-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (DTaP/DTP/Tdap):** four doses, Pre-K: three to five doses, grades K through 5: three doses, grades 6 through 12;
2. **Tetanus and Diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis booster (Tdap):** one dose, students eleven years of age or older enrolling in grades 6 through 12 who have not previously received a Tdap at 7 years of age or older.
3. **Polio vaccine (IPV/OPV):** three doses, Pre-K; four doses, grades K through 12, unless third dose was received at four years of age or older.
4. **Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR):** one dose, Pre-K; two doses, grades K through 12.
5. **Hepatitis B vaccine:** three doses, grades Pre-K through 12.
6. **Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine:** one dose, Pre-K; two doses, grades K through 12 OR documentation of positive disease history from the health care provider.
7. **Meningococcal type A, C, W and Y (MenACWY) vaccine:** one dose, grades 7 through 11; two doses, grade 12 with one dose on or after the age of sixteen

Physical Examinations and Health Screenings

New York State education law requires that a physical exam be done on all new entrants (including pre-kindergartners and kindergartners), and at regular intervals during enrollment (Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11). Students participating in interscholastic sports must have a current exam (within 12 months of the start of season) and an

updated health history. Students desiring work permits also must have a current physical exam. It is also advisable that your child have a full dental examination, once completed it can be submitted to the school nurse along with your child's health appraisal.

The Board of Education recommends that medical examinations be done by a family's private health care provider for optimal continuity of health care. Parents/guardians must furnish a health certificate signed by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant by September 15 in the years that are associated with mandated examinations. For families without private health care, the district will assist you in finding quality private care and may provide physical examinations scheduled at the convenience of the District during the school year. However, written parental permission is required for any in-school examination.

As part of the school health examination (new entrants, along with students enrolled in grades Pre-K, K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11), medical providers are now required to provide the child's Body Mass Index [BMI] and weight status category. Williamsville Central School District is required to complete a survey for the New York State Department of Health that will include a summary of this information with the purpose of assisting in the development of future health programs for children. No student will be personally identified. You may choose to have your child's BMI & weight status category excluded from this survey by contacting your child's school nurse.

Screenings

As mandated by State education law and District policy, during each school year students in Grades Pre-K, K, 1, 3, 5, 7 and 11 receive a vision screening for distance and near vision and hearing. In addition, students are screened once in kindergarten or upon entrance, for color perception. Finally, boys in Grade 9 and girls in Grades 5 and 7 are screened annually for scoliosis. Parents are advised of any recommended follow-up resulting from these screenings.

Please contact your child's health office by October 1 if you wish to have your child precluded from the screening process. It will then become the family's responsibility to provide information from their primary health care provider regarding the student's health in these areas.

Illness

Children are most vulnerable to contracting an illness while in school because of the close contact they maintain. While we cannot prevent this from occurring, with your help we can implement some simple guidelines to help promote a healthy environment.

Teach your child the importance of

- Correct handwashing as a means of preventing the spread of germs.
- Proper disposal of tissues and covering one's mouth when coughing or sneezing also prevents germs from circulating.
- Remind your child not to share personal items and to keep their hands away from their face.

Please note:

- If your child is coughing excessively, consider keeping him/her home to prevent exposing others.
- A child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Fever may indicate the onset of an illness.
- If your child is diagnosed as having a contagious disease, please inform the school nurse. This information is kept confidential. When necessary, letters will be sent home informing you of cases of a contagious illness in your child's classroom or grade.
- Children who show symptoms of illness in the morning should NOT be sent to school.
- Any child with an undiagnosed rash, temperature 100.4 degrees and higher, vomiting, diarrhea or any contagious disease will be excluded from school until diagnosed and/or treated.
- If a student must leave school during school hours due to illness or injury, the parent or designated guardian will be contacted by the health office. The parent or designated guardian should report to the visitors entrance to sign out and pick up their child.
- **Children must be fever free, vomiting free and diarrhea free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.**

Physical Education

Anytime there is an illness or injury that prevents your child from participating in physical education, a note is required. A parent's note is sufficient for restrictions of one week or less. If your child needs a longer restriction, a Doctor's note is required. When your child is excluded from physical education class, he/she is also excluded from any recreational playground activity as well. A Doctor's order is also required for a student who needs to use crutches or a wheelchair in school.

Food Allergies

You will notice that some of our classrooms are designated as allergen restricted. We ask that all members of the school community work collaboratively to safeguard children with life-threatening food allergies. Protocols exist in the allergen restricted classrooms and are designed to facilitate safe and inclusive participation for all students.

Expectations for these classrooms include washing hands before and after eating, no food sharing or trading, no home baked goods or bulk items due to the potential of unknown ingredients and/or cross contaminated ingredients, and signage posted outside the classroom as a reminder that allergens are prohibited. Additionally, in these classrooms, snacks and celebrations must consist of one of the following options: 1) fresh fruits or vegetables, 2) pre-packaged food items containing an ingredient label, 3) non-edibles (stickers, pencils, erasers, coloring books), 4) non-food activities (games, book reading, person of the day, etc.). Please consult with your child's teacher for more information regarding the celebratory practices for his/her classroom.

Product & Ingredient Labeling Information

Should your child be enrolled in an allergen restricted classroom, please carefully look at product and ingredient labels and do not send in items for snacks or celebrations that state any of the following:

- "Contains peanuts, tree nuts"
- "May contain peanuts, tree nuts"
- "Manufactured in a facility...with peanuts, tree nuts"
- "Manufactured on shared equipment...with peanuts, tree nuts"

The above statements may be found throughout the ingredient list or at the end of the ingredient list as a separate statement. Manufacturers also list a contact number that you can call to verify the safety of a product. Additionally, the school nurse is a valuable resource and may assist you in your selection of safe food items and/or verify the safety of a food product. All snacks, including snacks off the safe snack list, must be prepackaged and contain an ingredient label. No bulk items or home baked goods can be sent into the classroom due to the potential for cross contaminated ingredients.

School Rules and Expectations

At Dodge Elementary, we pride ourselves on being the **MOST DYNAMIC SCHOOL ON THE PLANET!** Our students and staff function on three basic school rules: **BE SAFE!** **BE KIND!** **WORK HARD!** Students are explicitly taught what this looks like in a variety of school settings. See the matrix below to get a sense of what this entails.



DODGERS ARE SAFE, KIND AND WORK HARD!



	Hallways	Restrooms	Cafeteria	Playground
Be Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk face forward • Keep to the right • Keep hallways clear and clean • 0 voice level in hallways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands • Walk at all times • Keep water in sink • Report problems to an adult 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions from adults • Walk at all times • Eat only your food • Raise your hand for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow adult directions • Do not run on wood chips • Follow playground rules • Keep hands and feet to yourself
Be Kind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect other's personal space • Keep hands to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give others privacy • Use quiet voices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet inside voices • Clean up after yourself • Stay seated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include others • Take turns • Keep hands and feet to yourself
Work Hard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 voice level • Walk face forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go, flush, wash hands and return to your classroom • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet voices • Clean up after yourself • Follow directions • Stay in seat until called on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk don't run to the playground • Pick up any garbage that belongs to you • Bring all your belongings back into the school • Bring in any recess equipment you bring outside.

BUG PARADES



Additionally, each month, a student is chosen by teachers to become a BUG(Being unusually good) based on their ability and effort to be safe, be kind, and work hard while at Dodge. Each month we will have a BUG parade to celebrate our Dodgers who have earned this award. Parents of our BUGS will be notified by the staff member who has chosen their child so that they can attend our parade and join us in celebrating their child in this accomplishment. Families are welcome to line the main hallway to watch their BUG parade the halls. We ask that after the parade is over that families, take a photo with their child then exit the building. This is not a time for families to visit classrooms.

Consequences for inappropriate or unsafe behavior choices

Our goal at Dodge is to create a safe and nurturing environment to support all students. All students have the right to come to a school where they feel safe, accepted and respected. In turn we expect our students to follow our school rules and work hard each day. However, there are times when it becomes necessary to address inappropriate, or unsafe behaviors at school. When a report is made to administration for poor behavior choices, the incident will be investigated by administration and consequences (if warranted will be given).

Some consequences that could be given for inappropriate or unsafe behaviors include (but are not limited to, and are not listed in any particular order)

- Verbal warning
- Phone call to parents
- Assigned seat
- Lunch detention
- Referral to school social worker
- Parent conference with administration
- In-school suspension (ISS)
- Assigned seats on the bus
- Suspension from school bus
- Out of school suspension (OSS)

If your child is spoken to and given a consequence beyond a verbal warning by administration, parents/guardians can expect a phone call home explaining the incident.

Dignity Act for All Students (DASA)

In September 2010, the New York State Legislature enacted the Dignity for All Students Act (“Dignity Act” or “Act”), which took effect on July 1, 2012, to make it the policy of the State to provide all students in New York public schools an environment free of discrimination and harassment. The Act applies to all New York public school districts (“districts”), Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (“BOCES”), and charter schools. This Summit seeks to build upon the foundation provided in the Dignity Act to discuss addressing school discipline policies more broadly in New York public schools. Below is a brief overview of the Dignity Act.

THE PURPOSE OF THE DIGNITY ACT

- New York State’s Dignity for All Students Act was established with the broad legislative intent to provide a school environment free of discrimination and harassment.
- The goal of the Act is to create a safe and supportive school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against and/or verbally and/or physically harassed.
- The Act provides a response to the large number of harassed and stigmatized students skipping school and engaging in high-risk behaviors, by prohibiting discrimination in public schools and establishing the basis for protective measures such as training and model policies.
- The Act takes a major step in creating more nurturing environments in all New York public schools.

WHAT THE DIGNITY ACT DOES

- The Dignity Act states that no student shall be subjected to harassment or discrimination by employees or students on school property or at a school function based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.
- The Act also focuses on the prevention of harassment and discriminatory behaviors through the promotion of educational measures meant to positively impact school culture and climate.
- The Act also requires to schools to collect and report data regarding material incidents of discrimination and harassment.

DASA Coordinators at Dodge: Mr. Charles Smilinich and Mrs. Nicole Mayers

School Wide Information/Policies

Birthday Celebrations

We will be honoring and celebrating each child's birthday **without** food treats. Your child's classroom teachers will provide specific details regarding nonfood birthday celebration activities.

Each student at Dodge will receive a book token to be used to select a book of their choice from our book vending machine for their birthday. Our book vending machine was graciously donated to our school by the Dodge PTA.

Please make arrangements with your child's teacher prior to their birthday before sending anything into school.

Other School Initiated Celebrations or Events

Throughout the school year, there may be other school initiated celebrations. Room Parents along with classroom teachers will work together to plan for these celebrations. Please do not send any food into school for celebrations unless they have been approved by the classroom teacher/room parents.

Materials Distributed at School

We ask that everyone respect and follow these guidelines:

- Birthday Party invitations and valentine cards may be shared as long as everyone in the class receives one. Distribution to ALL girls or ALL boys is also acceptable.
- Students may hand out non-food treats/goody bags to classmates, as long as there are enough for every child in the class. Please be mindful of the following when making goody bags
 - Items should not be disruptive (obscene, promote illegal actions or substance for minors, do not step on rights of others, or disruptive to school program) AND approved by classroom teacher and/or administration.
 - Materials must be distributed by the student without adult assistance.

School Visitation/Parent Participation

We encourage parents/guardians to have an active role in their child's education and school program. Throughout the school year, there will be several opportunities for parents/guardians to come to school for special events, conferences, and celebrations.

If you would like to set up a time to meet with your child's teacher, please contact the teacher directly via email or SeeSaw to set up a time that is convenient for all involved.

- **Open House:** Typically takes place at the end of August and is grade level specific. This event is for parents/guardians only, and usually consists of an overview of the grade level program. Teachers will share information about routines, communication, homework and general expectations.
- **Parent Teacher Conferences:** Will take place at the end of November or beginning of December. At this time report card grades are shared with parents as well as academic progress being made. Teachers will inform parents/guardians about setting up a time for individual conferences. These conferences are meant for parents and teachers only.
- **School Tours:** The administration is always happy to provide a building tour to new families anytime during the school year. Just call the main office to make an appointment.
- **Parent Volunteers:** Most volunteer positions are available through our PTA. Parents help with everything from kindergarten orientation to fourth grade moving up day activities. Please consider volunteering for the PTA's activities. You can find more information on joining the PTA at www.dodgepta.com

Field Trips

We believe that learning can happen anywhere! Therefore, field trips are an important curricular activity. ALL field trips that take place outside of the district require parental permission to attend. The permission slip, sent home well in advance, is accompanied by important program information. Field trips to the North High School Planetarium, visits at other Williamsville schools do not require a signed permission slip. However, parents will be notified in advance when their child will be attending any district trips. We do not charge students for field trip admission or transportation. The school district budget plan covers our bussing costs and our wonderful PTA provides each grade level a generous sum to cover co-curricular learning events such as admission to a play, concert, etc. This donation from the PTA can also be used to bring special programs to Dodge as well.

Homework

We do not have a building wide homework policy. Homework will be assigned by individual teaches as they see fit. Homework can range from reading 20 minutes a night to practicing math facts, to studying for tests or quizzes. If you have any questions about homework that is assigned to your child, please contact the teacher directly.

Class Placements/Teacher Requests

Dodge will not be taking teacher requests from parents for the upcoming school year. However, we will take the following into consideration

- If your family (meaning a previous child) did not have a good experience with a certain teacher, they can request not to have that teacher.
- If a family wants their child separated from another child they can request that.
- If a parent would like siblings (twins, triplets) separated or kept together that request can be honored

Open Enrollment

Dodge will NOT be an open enrolled school for the 2024-2025 school year. Any student who is currently open enrolled during the 2023-2024 school year, may continue to attend school at Dodge (this does not apply to any younger siblings who are not yet attending school). **Please note, only siblings of students currently attending or will be attending the 15:1 District Classes at Dodge Elementary will have the option to open enroll and attend Dodge Elementary.**

Recess

Recess will occur daily for 20 minutes. Every effort will be made to get children outside for recess. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather, with sneakers, boots, coats, gloves/hats etc. When weather permits they will go outdoors. When the weather conditions are not ideal for outside play, recess will occur in the classroom. Classroom teachers will communicate with parents/guardians about specific rules for indoor recess.

Co-curricular Clubs:

Each year our school determines which co-curricular clubs to offer. We know that the elementary years are the perfect time to explore diverse interests. These experiences build background knowledge in new arenas or further develop specific areas of interest or talent. Therefore, we do our best to offer a set of activities that meet a broad range of student interests. School clubs vary so much year to year that they are not listed here. In the fall, teachers submit proposals for before or after school clubs that allow them to extend the curriculum. Past examples include: Eco Club, Chess Club, Spanish Club, Yoga Club, Math Club, etc. Once clubs are determined, permission slips are sent home. Depending on the number of interested students, students may be selected by a lottery system. Clubs usually run until 3:00 pm or 3:30 pm. **It is the parents/guardians responsibility to provide transportation home from school clubs.**

Intramurals: Students in grade 4 are afforded the opportunity to participate in intramurals. Intramurals is an after school elective which is offered at numerous times during the school year. The activity is usually an extension of the current PE unit. Notices and permission slips for intramurals will be sent home with students. Remember, once you have given your permission to participate, your child will be kept after school on each of the scheduled days UNLESS you send a note indicating you have changed the plan for that particular day. A ride home is needed promptly at the end of each session.

Playground access

Our PE staff and teachers often use the fitness center, sports court and Dodge Tree house throughout the day and across the year. Therefore, the playgrounds are only open to the community when not in use by Dodge students and staff during the school day. We apologize for any inconvenience however, our primary interest is safety first.

Lost and Found

We have a lost and found closet located on the first floor near the gym. Items that are found outside of the classroom are typically found in this closet. If your child is missing an item, please encourage them to check the lost and found closet. Throughout the school year, as the closet becomes full, items that have not been claimed will be sorted and donated to local charities. An email will go out to all families prior to this donation to allow families time to check for lost items. Any item lost on the school bus will need to be picked up from the bus garage.

Curriculum Extension Classes and School Wide Support Services

Curriculum Extension Classes

Each week your child will participate in the four curriculum extension classes. During the 5 day weekly rotation, they will have PE (2x), Art, Music and Library.

Physical Education: At this level, our focus is on good sportsmanship, cooperation, strength/ fitness, and skill building that leads up to sports/ games played later in school and for lifetime recreation. Students are asked to wear sneakers and clothing appropriate for PE on PE days.

Art: Our art program is as much about the process as the product. From Kindergarten through grade 4, students are exposed to a variety of art forms, processes, artists, and even a bit of art history. Some products are sent home throughout the year while a few key pieces are saved each year in a portfolio that students take home at the end of fourth grade. The portfolio is used with students to monitor progress.

Music: The Dodge general music program is five-fold. All K-4 students receive weekly instruction in singing, movement, listening, composition and the playing of rhythm and melody instruments. All fourth grade students participate in Chorus as part of their Curriculum Extension rotation. They perform concerts in both the winter and spring. Third graders have one performance in May.

Library: Our library is not only a great place to enjoy and select a good book, it is well poised for research using conventional reference books, a strong non-fiction collection and a computer lab with internet access as well as a classroom instructional area.

STEAM

In addition, students will also participate in a weekly STEAM class in our STEAM lab with Mrs. Mango. Mrs. Mango works alongside the classroom teachers to cover Next Generation Science Standards with an emphasis on STEAM integration.

Instrumental Music: Each year Dodge Elementary offers the chance for every 4th grader to participate in either Beginning Band or Orchestra. Students participate in weekly group lessons and rehearsals with the entire band or orchestra. All Dodge musicians perform two evening concerts per year. In order to have outstanding concerts, all band & orchestra members are asked to commit to home practicing. This allows young musicians to perfect what they have learned in school.

Gifted Programming

What is gifted programming?

- This is a special learning program designed to push our students and challenge their thinking in a way that enriches their knowledge as readers, authors, and mathematicians.

How does a child qualify for gifted services?

- Your child's classroom teacher and I work closely together to place children in gifted programming based on classroom observations, assessments, and conversations with school specialists and parents.

What does a gifted class look like?

- A child that qualifies for gifted programming will be learning in a small group setting multiple times a week. Our classes will have a similar structure to your child's reading, writing and math curriculum so the learning they do is transferable to the work they do in their classroom and beyond. Our gifted classes will change fluidly throughout the year to align with learning that occurs in your child's classroom. This means that the students in gifted Math and gifted ELA may dynamically change throughout the year.

How will my child be involved?

- All of our Dodge students are already stars; our kids know how to be safe, show kindness, and work hard. Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for all students [through the Wonder Museum](#). Students will explore, think, and question about a [theme](#), such as outer space. Throughout the year, the GT program works with CE teachers to provide a learning experience rich with information, exhibits, exploration and questioning.

School Wide Support Services

Math Support: Math support is mandated for those students who are at risk for not meeting the New York State standards in math at each grade level. In our district, students are eligible for math support when they demonstrate proficiency on fewer than 50% of the state standards at that grade level. Students who have not yet met proficiency on the NYS grade 3 and/or grade 4 Math Assessments automatically qualify as well. Such support is sometimes given in the form of classroom teacher monitoring with minor in-class intervention, class-size reduction (by placing a second teacher in the math class), student pull out in small groups with our math specialist or a teacher, and finally, before and after school Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

Literacy Support: Reading support comes in a variety of forms during the school day from classroom teacher monitoring with minor intervention to pull-aside or pull-out small group instruction with our reading specialists as well as before or after school AIS. This intervention is for students who have not yet met the district criteria, or have not yet shown proficiency on the New York State English Language Arts Assessment. Parent notification is required to provide the support, not parent permission. We are mandated to provide this intervention for those who qualify.

English as A New Language (ENL): Our ENL program is for students who have a dominant or native language at home that is not English. Once qualified to participate, students may only exit by achieving a proficient score on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) assessment administered annually in the spring. Students that are ENL may receive services from the certified ESOL teacher. The amount of time depends upon the level of proficiency of each student. Building background knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension and expression of social as well as academic-related concepts is the focus.

Counseling, evaluation and guidance: We are thrilled to have a school social work, school counselor and school psychologist at Dodge. Our School Counselor will be providing SEL lessons in the classrooms throughout the school year. Both our School Social Worker and School Psychologist can meet with students to assess needs and provide (when appropriate) short term counseling with our students. Our social worker may also help connect families with community resources. Our school psychologist, through his/her leadership on the Child Support Team (CST), may also be available to lead this multi-disciplinary team in academic related reviews, planning and evaluation, when a student is having difficulty reaching academic success.

Special Education Programs: Special Education consists of specifically designed instruction for students (ages 3-21 years) who are identified by either the district committee on Preschool Education (CPSE) or the Committee on Special Education (CSE) as having a disability which interferes with learning. The CPSE and CSE are

multidisciplinary teams of parents and professionals responsible for determining eligibility, coordinating evaluations, and recommending programs or services. Members of the committee include the child's parent(s), a school psychologist, a special education teacher, a general education teacher, a parent of a child with a disability, and an administrator. Additional participants, such as a building principal, speech/language pathologist, and the school physician, may also be present. In addition, all children receiving special education services are entitled to a review at least once yearly. The purpose of this annual review is to recommend the continuation, modification, or termination of the provision of special education programs and supports. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these annual reviews, typically held at the child's school of attendance.

Speech Language Support: Our speech language pathologists meet the needs of the speech and language impaired Dodgers. They build speech (i.e. articulation, voice, fluency) and receptive and expressive language (i.e. vocabulary, syntax, pragmatic) skills. The majority of the caseload is students who have been determined as having an educationally related disability via the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Students who are not classified may be seen if time permits. However, our SLPs are always willing to help families connect with community resources or create a home therapy plan for families to implement

Occupational Therapy: Occupational Therapy in the school system is an educationally related service that children may receive if determined eligible by the Committee on Special Education. Occupational Therapy (OT) focuses on developing and improving sensory-motor, fine motor, visual perceptual skills, handwriting, and self-care skills to access and succeed in the academic setting. Services may be provided in the classroom or in a separate therapy room, wherever most appropriate and least restrictive.

Physical Therapy: Physical Therapy (PT) focuses on gross motor skills such as strength, balance and coordination, mobility, and participation in physical activities with peers within the school environment. Team collaboration is an integral process in developing programs to help each child to reach their individual goals. Again, this is a service available only if recommended as a needed educationally related service by the CSE.

PTA

The Dodge PTA is committed to upholding the mission of the national PTA to make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children. We want every parent and teacher to be PTA members and have their voice heard to make a positive impact on the children at Dodge.

Dodge PTA strives to promote children's health, well-being, and educational success through strong parent, family, and community involvement.

We believe in educating and encouraging the whole child - academic, physical, emotional and social.

We highly value parent engagement and collaboration.

We are ordinary moms and ordinary dads.

And we need you.

JOIN US TODAY!

Visit www.dodgepta.com for all our communication. You can find volunteer opportunities, the school store, a family directory, a calendar of events, and receive updates on important school information. If you need help registering an account or have any other questions, please contact us at ptadodge@gmail.com

