

## Welcome to Ohio Elementary School!!

As you get to know us, you'll find that the teachers and staff are child-centered and very eager to ensure that your child has every opportunity for a quality education. We encourage you to work closely with us. Should you have any problems or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher, the secretary, or the principal. We look forward to working with you and your child!

# PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

## SCHOOL HOURS

### ARRIVAL

8:05 Doors Open – Student Arrival  
8:20 School Begins – Attendance Taken

### DISMISSAL

2:40 **Deadline for Early Dismissal**  
2:50 Clean-up Announcement  
2:55 SACC & Walkers Dismissed  
2:58 Bussers Dismissed



### Absences

Keep your child home if they have a fever or have vomited within the previous 24 hours. Other suspicious symptoms include a cough, sore throat, flushed face, skin rash, sores or pains. If your child has been absent, send them to school with a written excuse explaining their absence upon their return. Please be sure to state the child's full name, teacher's name, date(s) of absence, and reason for the absence.

Our school nurse should be notified if a child will be absent for surgery or is being excused by their physician for an extended time. The nurse's phone number is (315) 779-5504.

### Bus Transportation

If your child is transported by bus to school, then he/she will go home by bus unless you send a written note to the contrary. Permission for a child to ride a different bus home or to get off the bus at a different bus stop cannot be given.

### Bus Behavior

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to obey the rules posted on the bus and treat the driver and other riders with respect. Students who ride a bus are expected to follow district policy regarding behavior while on the bus. The following are general regulations to be followed concerning school busing:

1. Bus drivers are responsible for maintaining order and discipline on the bus.
2. Bus drivers are responsible for counseling students whose behavior is disruptive and threatens the safety of the bus and its occupants.
3. If a discipline problem persists, the bus driver will complete a bus referral form and give it to the building principal as soon as possible for disciplinary action.
4. When the Principal receives the first bus referral on a student, he/she should notify the parent(s) and discuss the problem with the student.
5. If another violation occurs, riding privileges will be suspended for two (2) days.
6. Should subsequent violations occur, the principal, in consultation with the transportation office and others connected with the circumstances, will determine appropriate measures.
7. In cases of a major violation, such as vandalism to the bus, use of unauthorized bus passes and flagrant defiance of the bus driver's authority, riding privileges will be suspended for one (1) week. If property damage occurs, arrangements for suitable restitution must be made before riding privileges are reinstated.

Please be aware that it is the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to and from school if the child is suspended from riding the bus. Keeping a child at home will be counted as an illegal absence.

### Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

The use of student cell phones and personal electronic devices (including smartwatches) is limited to before and after school for parent communication. The school is not responsible for loss, misplacement or theft of cell phones and/or electronic devices. These devices should not be heard or seen during school hours (8:05 – 2:55); they should be kept in the student's backpack and turned off or silenced.

### **Dismissal Policy**

Students are dismissed from school at the times outlined above. If you are picking up your child who normally rides the bus, please provide the teacher with a note stating this. The same procedure applies when your child is walking to a friend's house/babysitter or riding a bicycle when he/she normally rides the bus. **DON'T FORGET – DOORS ARE LOCKED AND STUDENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE BETWEEN 2:40 PM AND DISMISSAL. IF YOU NEED TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD EARLY, PLAN AHEAD, AND REQUEST THEIR DISMISSAL THROUGH THE MAIN OFFICE PRIOR TO 2:40 PM.** As you know, safety is an important priority in the education of your child. We ask you, as parents, to line up outside, along the front sidewalk to the building at approximately 2:55 pm. Please make sure you are also a short distance away from the building, leaving space for the students and staff to exit and easily find their parent/guardian. This will help children leave the building in a safe and orderly manner.

### **Emergency Information**

Demographic Validation reports are sent home twice a year for you to verify information that we have in School Tool on you and your emergency contacts for your children. **It is important that emergency phone numbers be kept current for parents and any emergency contacts. Changes should be made when jobs change and can easily be done by writing a note, sending a ParentSquare message, emailing the school secretary or principal, or calling the main office or nurse.** When parents cannot be reached, the persons named as responsible parties will be called to transport a child sent home for a minor illness or emergency.

### **Emergency School Closing**

In the event of delayed opening or the closing of schools due to inclement weather or other emergency, the ParentSquare system will call and/or send you a notification of the change in routine. Such changes will also be broadcast over all local radio and television stations, and the district website. In the event of delayed openings and emergency dismissal, transportation routes will be on an adjusted schedule.

### **Lunch**

Students may bring lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. Those who bring lunch may purchase milk, chocolate milk, and/or juice. The lunch menu is sent home monthly and will be posted on the district website. **Continuing this year, FREE breakfast and lunch will be provided for all Watertown City School District students.** Milk, water, or juice are all acceptable drinks to pack in your child's school lunch. Students should not be bringing soda to school.

### **Medication Policy**

Medication can be given in school, if necessary, but must be brought to the clinic by a parent in the original container, accompanied by a statement from the physician indicating the dose, time, and frequency the medication is to be given. The parent must also give written permission for the nurse to administer the medication. Medicine should **never** be brought to school by your child.

### **Parking Lot**

The parking lot on the west side of the building is NOT for student arrival and dismissal. The bus lane is in the parking lot, so parents should not be entering and/or exiting that lot during arrival or dismissal times.

### **PBIS**

PBIS is a positive behavior program that we have implemented at Ohio Elementary School. It focuses on 3 basic expectations for students: **Be Safe, Responsible, and Respectful**. Our students are given "Dino" tickets from staff whenever they are caught following these expectations throughout the school. Our ROAR Awards (**R**esponsible **O**hio students **A**re safe and **R**espectful) are given by classroom teachers to deserving students each month. Students have opportunities throughout the year to use their "Dino" tickets to purchase a variety of ROAR prizes. Students may also be selected to get a book from our **book vending machine** by using their "Dino" tickets. There will be other opportunities through the PBIS program for rewards throughout the year.

### **Parent – Teacher Conferences**

Two parent-teacher conferences will be held. One conference is at the end of the first trimester (December) to discuss individual progress. The second conference is held in the middle of March. If you wish to set up a conference with your child's teacher at other times you are encouraged to contact the teacher or the school office.

## **PTO**

The Ohio PTO is an active team of parents and teachers who provide enhancement for academic programs, performances in school that enrich the education of the children, and social events that build our Ohio Elementary community and make for wonderful memories for the elementary school years.

You are all welcome to become a part of the organization

- ✓ To make new friends and acquaintances in the community
- ✓ To become more involved in your child's schooling, which research has demonstrated increases student achievement and school adjustment
- ✓ To enjoy fun activities including book fairs, school pictures, bake sales, various fundraisers, and special events such as the ice cream social, movie night, and school dances.
- ✓ Join us on Facebook (Ohio Elementary School PTO) to stay connected!
- ✓ Email us at [ohiopto1537@yahoo.com](mailto:ohiopto1537@yahoo.com)

**We look forward to seeing you at the PTO meetings, typically the first Monday of every month.**

## **Positivity Project**

The Positivity Project is a program the district utilizes to support and develop the positive psychology of all our students. "Positive psychology is the scientific study of what makes life most worth living — and maintains that what is good in life is as genuine as what is bad. Positive psychology's 24-character strengths are grounded in extensive research and analysis. The positive psychology research presents evidence that all 24 strengths exist in every person — and in all cultures of the world. Character strengths define who, not what, a person is. Ranging from bravery and forgiveness to integrity and gratitude, these character strengths are the foundation of The Positivity Project's model." Students at Ohio Elementary will be introduced to these 24-character strengths and encouraged to develop a positive, growth mindset through the development of these strengths.

## **Recess**

Children will be going outside for fresh air and exercise with their classroom teacher in all but the most inclement weather. Please make sure that your child is always dressed appropriately. In winter, this will include boots, snow pants, hat, coat, and mittens/gloves.

## **Request for Early Dismissal**

When a student is to be excused earlier than regular dismissal time, a parent/guardian must send a written request to the classroom teacher stating the reason, time, and the name of the adult who will come to the school for the child. At the time requested, the parent/guardian should **alert the main office by ringing the intercom at the front door**, identify themselves, and sign the student out using the logbook in the cabinet/mailbox outside the main entrance. The child will be called to the office upon your arrival and promptly dismissed out the front entrance. **Don't Forget when students are released early from school, for any reason, it is noted on their attendance.**

## **Safe-To-School**

Safe-To-School is a district-wide program designed to ensure your child's safe arrival at school. You must provide a phone number where we can reach you in the morning. We ask that a **parent notify the school every day their child will be absent or tardy. Our attendance system will prompt ParentSquare to call / email you an alert that your child is not in school at this time if you have not already called the school.** If you have a child that will be tardy and needs a lunch ordered, please call the school by 9:00 am so that a lunch can be ordered for them.

## **Tardiness**

Students not in their assigned classroom at 8:30 are considered tardy. **Adults should accompany students to the main entrance to sign them in tardy. Once your child is let into the building, they should go to the main office to get a late pass and order lunch if needed.**

The Home-School Coordinator's attendance improvement program is designed to monitor student attendance and to offer assistance to those students and their families who have a high rate of absenteeism. The coordinator talks to students and may make a home visit to parents. If you have any questions or need help dealing with a child's specific attendance problem, please contact the Home School Coordinator at (315) 786-3122.

### **Visitors**

All entrances to the building will be locked at 8:30 a.m. Visitors should use the buzzer to the left of the door at the main entrance. All visitors must report to the main office to sign in and obtain a visitor's badge. You should bring a driver's license or appropriate form of identification when entering the building during school hours to process your visitor's badge through our Raptor system. The Ohio Elementary staff has been instructed to ask anyone without a visitor's badge to report to the office. Your cooperation is appreciated.

### **Water Bottles**

Water bottles to be used throughout the school day, at times other than lunch, should only contain water with no flavors added.

#### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Watertown City School District provides education programs and services without consideration of a student's race, color, national origin (regardless of English language skills), sex (including gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation), or disability. Our commitment to provide education programs and services without discrimination includes participation in nonacademic and extracurricular services such as transportation, counseling services, student clubs, and physical education and athletics. This Policy shall be interpreted and implemented so that the District complies with its obligations under Titles VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans With Disabilities Act. This Policy does not prohibit a denial of admission into, or an exclusion from, a course of instruction that is permissible under the New York State Education Law and Federal Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; nor does it prohibit actions that are permissible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.