

New Kent Elementary



River Otters

Parent Handbook

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NKES Mission and Vision

MISSION STATEMENT

New Kent Elementary School recognizes each student as an important individual. We are dedicated to the educational development of the whole person, striving for each student's happiness and acceptance and providing love and insight in order to develop his/her greatest potential. Each student is provided with many opportunities to achieve success in a warm, happy, and secure atmosphere. We realize that the complete and wholesome development of our students requires the joint efforts of school, home, and community.

To this end, New Kent Elementary School will strive to:

1. Provide each student with a happy, responsive learning environment in which he/she is free to explore his/her surroundings, work at his/her own pace, and experience opportunities for enrichment.
2. Promote in each student healthy physical, mental, emotional, and social development.
3. Provide a safe, secure environment conducive to the student's positive self-concept and by that nourish independence and responsibility.
4. Help the student become more aware of the world around him, how he relates to it, and how he can enhance the beauty of his environment.
5. Provide instruction that will meet the needs of each student by providing them with essential academic skills.
6. Foster positive human relations at school and in the community.
7. Consider the interests and needs of the community and involve the community with the student's needs.
8. Utilize a variety of materials and strategies to provide a necessary balance between theory and practice and develop the student's interest and creativity.
9. Offer the resources of staff and materials to our community and encourage participation and involvement of the county citizens in our schools.

VISION

We believe that:

All children can learn.

Children learn best when parents and
Teachers work as partners to support
Each child's developing skills.

NEW KENT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL'S MISSION

To provide a supportive environment where all employees are creative and empowered in their work, caring for others, and engaged in higher-order thinking.

<p style="text-align: center;">VISION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Inspire, Engage, and Empower</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GOALS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● New Kent County Public Schools will provide relevant, engaging learning experiences to encourage higher-order thinking, innovation, and lifelong learning● New Kent County Public Schools will provide a safe, supportive, inclusive environment focused on community engagement, civic responsibility, and global awareness.● New Kent County Public Schools will provide a quality education for all students through the effective, efficient, and accountable use of resource

Support and Resource Classes

New Kent Elementary School has a full range of support classes to meet the needs of the students. At present, these classes include:

GIFTED SERVICES

Gifted and Talented students exist in all ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic groups. They possess talents and abilities that differ from those of their peers to such a degree that differentiated educational provisions must be made to encourage their development.

TITLE I READING

Title I of the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981, known as ECIA, Public Law 97-35, provides individual and small group remedial reading instruction at New Kent Elementary School. The school will hold two activity nights during the year to promote reading.

MATH SUPPORT

New Kent Elementary School provides individual, small, and whole-group remedial instruction in math.

SPEECH

Speech and Language services are provided in all schools in New Kent County. Currently, New Kent Elementary School has two speech/language pathologists. Children identified from screening and teacher referrals are further evaluated after parental permission has been obtained. Evaluation includes assessment of the oral mechanism, all speech sounds, language, voice, and fluency patterns. Individualized Educational Plans are designed to meet the needs of those receiving speech and language services.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is an integral part of the total educational process. It makes a unique contribution to the growth and motor development of children. Our Physical Education program provides a variety of opportunities for quality instruction, positive encouragement, and practice.

TECHNOLOGY

Our technology program is designed to help both students and teachers develop proficient technological skills.

MUSIC

Our music program provides a background in music theory and appreciation while allowing opportunities for enjoyable musical experiences. The students develop an understanding of music through singing, moving, listening, and playing instruments.

ART

Our art program is designed to expose students to materials and mediums which will enrich motor skills and mental growth. The children will be exploring drawing, pottery, sculpture, weaving, and painting. A variety of materials will be used and experimented with: magic markers, colored pencils, construction paper, paper bags, tempera paint, pencils, scissors, tape, crayons, and reusable junk.

LIBRARY

The NKES Library is an open and inviting place where students can develop a lifelong love of reading. Students have a scheduled library time with their class each week but also have additional opportunities during the week to check out books.

Instruction in the library supports classroom instruction in all subjects, especially reading. It covers the necessary literacy skills from kindergarten through fifth grade. This includes information literacy with instruction on computers, interactive whiteboard technology, and multimedia equipment.

Please encourage your children to make full use of all the resources in the library.

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School Counseling

New Kent County Schools are committed to continuing to provide guidance and counseling services in accordance with state guidelines and objectives. Counseling policies can be found online at www.newkentschools.org (click on "About NKCPs," and then click on "NKCPs Policy Manual" from the dropdown box). A hard copy of the Policy Manual is available at the School Board Office.

If you wish to have your child excluded from any of the services offered by our school counselors, you may do so by providing a written request on an opt-out form. This form can be obtained from the building administrator or school counselor.

NKES COUNSELING

New Kent Elementary School's counseling program is designed to meet the developmental needs of students. The purpose of the program is to enhance social, emotional, and academic growth. Goals include increased self-esteem and effective social interaction. When students feel good about themselves and their abilities, they exhibit better classroom performance and have a positive outlook.

The counseling program serves to aid in adjustment to new situations such as entering school for the first time or preparing for the transition to middle school. The program emphasizes self-knowledge, the development of a positive self-image, and an effective means of relating to others.

The school counselor works with the classroom teacher in planning and conducting activities for the entire class. In addition, the school counselor meets with small groups and individuals. Activities focus on developmental needs as well as individual concerns. The school counselor meets with parents and consults with faculty members. The counseling program strives to develop a school environment that encourages high self-esteem in each student.

SCHOOL COUNSELING POLICY

The New Kent County School Board affirms that parents are the student's first teachers and that the public schools serve to strengthen family and parental support. No student will be required to participate in any counseling program to which the student's parents object.

For this policy, the following definitions apply:

1. **Academic Guidance** - Guidance that assists students and their parents to acquire knowledge of curricula choices available to students, to plan a program of studies, arrange and interpret academic testing, and seek post-secondary academic opportunities.
2. **Career Guidance** - Guidance that helps students become aware of and knowledgeable about the world of work and careers and helps students plan action about work, jobs, apprenticeships, and post-secondary educational and career opportunities.
3. **Personal/Social Counseling** - Counseling that assists a student in developing an understanding of themselves, the rights and needs of others, how to resolve conflict, and how to define individual goals which reflect their interests, abilities, and aptitudes. Such counseling may be provided either in 1) in groups in which generic issues of social development are addressed or 2) through structured individual or small group multi-session counseling which focuses on the specific concerns of the participant(s).
4. At least annually, parents will be notified in writing about the academic and career programs and the personal/social counseling programs available to students within the school division. Parents will be advised concerning the purpose, general description of the programs, how parents may review materials to be used in the programs, and procedure by which parents may limit the student's participation in the program. Information and records of personal/social counseling shall be kept confidential and separate and not disclosed to third parties without prior parental consent or as otherwise provided by law.

It shall be the policy of the New Kent School Board for personal/social counseling that parents will notify the school division in writing if the student is **not** to participate in the personal/social counseling program.

Counseling techniques that are beyond the scope of the professional certification or training of counselors, including hypnosis or other psychotherapeutic techniques that are normally employed in medical or clinical settings and focus on mental illness or psychotherapy, are **strictly prohibited**.

Clinic Guidelines

The nurse's duties will include first aid, emergencies, and assessing health problems. After parental permission has been obtained, children identified from the screening will be recommended for further evaluation. She will also supervise the clinic with the aid of the clinic assistant.

We at New Kent Elementary consider safety to be a top priority. Injuries that occur at school, home, or play require extra planning to ensure a safe return to the school environment. Please inform the nurse if your child has sustained any of these types of injuries: fractures, sprains, sutures, concussions, and injuries that require limited activity. The school will need documentation from your primary care provider to most effectively assist the child at school. **Please note that any medications that need to be administered during school hours must be transported to the school by a parent or legal guardian and delivered to the school clinic.**

GUIDELINES

Children who are sick or injured receive prompt medical attention. Periodic inspections of students for communicable diseases or conditions will be conducted. Students who appear to have a communicable disease that can be spread by contact will be excluded from school until that condition has been remedied. **We cannot administer any medication here at school without written parental and physician's instructions.** Please fill out your child's contact card accurately in the event of a medical emergency.

Please keep your children home if they are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

1. Fevers of 100 degrees or above – keep at home until fever-free for 24 hours **without fever-reducing medication.**
2. Vomiting/diarrhea – keep at home for at least 24 hours or until symptoms subside.
3. Eyes that are red, bloodshot, itchy, oozy, or running or that have lashes that are stuck together upon waking. This condition is possible Conjunctivitis or “pink eye,” a very contagious condition that may require a visit to your child’s physician.
4. Headaches - Please encourage your child to eat breakfast and hydrate.

If your child is sent home from the clinic, please keep your child home for an additional **24 hours** to ensure that they are healthy enough to return to school. Together we can provide a healthy place of learning and keep our children well and happy.

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration)

Under the OSHA (Occupational Safety and Administration) Exposure to Blood-Borne Pathogen Plan, we are required to request that an individual's blood be tested if any infectivity status is unknown where a situation indicates that the potential exposure to bloodborne pathogens has occurred. Under 32.1-45.1 of the Code of Virginia, the persons whose body fluids were involved in the exposure shall be deemed to have consented to test for infection with human immunodeficiency virus.

When a student has an accident or experiences a nosebleed at school which results in soiled clothing, the school will no longer be sending the soiled clothing home on the bus (no matter how insignificant the clothing is stained). Parents or guardians will be required to come to their child's school to collect the soiled clothing and transport home.

Transportation

New Kent Elementary School works hard to ensure that its students are transferred from the school to the home safely. We recognize that on some days students need to be transported to locations other than their homes. To ensure your child's safety, we ask that you adhere to the following bus change request regulations:

1. **No** permanent/long-term bus change requests will be accepted by phone.
2. All requests will be written on a standard form (see sample on the next page). The form must be submitted in person by the parent or student, faxed to the office at 804-966-9602, or emailed to nkesoffice@nkcps.k12.va.us. Please remember that this request will take 24 hours to process (see #3 below) and up to two weeks to develop a route.
 - a. Bus Change Request Forms are also available in the main office or online at www.newkentschools.org (Click "About NKCPs," and then click on "Departments" from the drop-down box. The form is located on the "Transportation" page).
3. The form **may take up to two weeks to create a permanent bus change.**
4. Parents will be limited to drop-off points within the regular schedule.

5. All changes are subject to available space on the requested bus.

***We realize that unexpected situations arise that may warrant a change in your child's afternoon dismissal plans. If such a situation occurs, please call (804-966-9663) or email (nkesoffice@newkentschools.org) the office with dismissal instructions. You do not need to fill out a Bus Change Request Form but will need to provide an accurate description of the change needed. This is only in the event of an unforeseen circumstance and is not to be a daily occurrence.*

***No dismissal changes after 2:30pm.*

AFTERNOON BUS DROP-OFF POLICY:

Students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade will not be dropped at the afternoon bus stop unless they are met by a parent/guardian. If no one is at the bus stop to meet the child, he/she will be brought back to the school and the parent/guardian will be contacted to come to the school and pick up the child at the main office.

MORNING STUDENT DROP-OFF (8:40-8:55 a.m.):

If you are going to drop off your child at school in the mornings, please do so in the designated area on the side of the school near the old tennis courts. Students may be dropped off **no earlier than 8:40 a.m.** when adult supervision is available. If the student is being dropped off after 8:55 a.m., then he/she will need to be escorted to the main office and signed in by a parent/guardian. Please be sure to use the designated parking spaces if you need to enter the building.

**NEW KENT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUS CHANGE REQUEST FORM**

DATE _____

STUDENT _____

CURRENT INFORMATION

Grade _____ Bus # _____ Teacher _____

School _____

Home/Cell Phone _____

Address _____

BUS CHANGE INFORMATION

Adult Contact _____ Phone _____

Description of change (New bus# / Address of drop off):

Start & Ending Date(s) _____

I, _____, hereby authorize the Department of Transportation to implement the above request.

I understand that the pick up/drop off address **MUST BE ON AN EXISTING ROUTE**. I will accept full responsibility for my child when he/she is at this address.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

**THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED IN PERSON OR BY FAX TO THE MAIN OFFICE OF
YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL 24 HOURS PRIOR TO THE REQUESTED CHANGE.
PHONE CALLS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Visitor Procedures

You are welcome to visit our school and your child's classroom with an appointment; however, to ensure the safety of our students and to help our school run more efficiently, the following procedures must be followed when visiting New Kent Elementary School:

1. A valid picture ID will be required for all visitors to the school.
2. All visitors must enter by the front door--all other doors will be locked.
3. Visitors must report to the front office where they will present their picture ID, sign in, and receive a visitor's pass.
4. Visits to your child's classroom must be scheduled with the teacher in advance. Whether you are observing instruction, helping in the classroom, or attending a class function, your visit must be arranged in advance. Unscheduled visits will not be permitted.
5. If you want to have lunch with your child, check-in at the front office. When your child reports to the cafeteria with his/her class, you may join them at two designated visitor tables .

Parent Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures

1. Parents/guardians who bring their children to school will not be allowed to go to classrooms during morning drop-off. We will have staff available to escort preschool, kindergarten, and new students who need help getting to class.
2. Parents/guardians who need to pick up their child before 3:15 p.m. will need to sign out their child in the front office, and the student will be called to the office.
 - a. ***Please keep in mind that our instructional day runs from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Students who are continually picked up before 3:30 p.m. miss valuable instruction time, which may be reflected in their academic achievement.***
3. Parents/guardians who pick up their child in the afternoon will not be allowed to go to the classroom to pick up their child. They will need to remain in their car and proceed through the parent pick-up line near the old tennis courts.

Academic Progress Reports

Report cards convey the progress of the student to the parent. Kindergarten through second grade will be non-graded. Grades will be given in all core areas in the third through fifth grades. Core subjects include reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks. These report cards are yours to keep; however, the envelope should be signed and returned to school the day after it comes home.

PROMOTION POLICIES

The decision of retention, placement, or promotion is made as a team decision with teachers, administrators, and support personnel in partnership with parent(s)/guardian(s). Within the third marking period, student support teams will meet to discuss the progress of each child that may not be progressing in the class as expected. The decision of retention, placement, or promotion will be based on the progress in the Standards of Learning, grade-level assessments, standardized or norm-referenced assessments, disability, and input from the team. The principal will review the recommendation from the team and make the final determination. Communication between the teacher and the parents will be at the direction of the school principal regarding the child's possible retention.

GRADING SCALE:

A=90 to 100

B=80 to 89

C=70 to 79

D=60 to 69

F=59 and below

Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous, orderly, and respectful manner. Students are expected to exhibit proper behavior at school and on the school bus. Please consult the division's Discipline Handbook. Students are responsible for their actions. Fighting, use of profanity, stealing, disrespect to others, or any behavior that infringes on the rights of others will not be tolerated.

In most cases, a firm reprimand by the teacher or administrator will be sufficient to extinguish the undesirable behavior. In cases of severe or repeated offenses, the cooperation of the parents will be secured. Disciplinary actions ranging from suspended privileges or behavior modification plans to suspension or expulsion may be used for correcting or alleviating student misbehavior.

Cell Phone Conduct

Student's cell phones must remain turned off while on school property and in their backpack at all times. Failure to do so following a warning will result in the need to turn the cell phone into the office. Confiscated cell phones may be picked up by a parent or guardian during school hours.

Attendance

One important factor for your child's success in school is **regular attendance**. Consistent attendance in the elementary school years sets a positive pattern for future educational and work experiences.

REPORTING A CHILD'S ABSENCE:

If your child is going to be absent, please contact the school to report the reason for the absence. You may leave a message on the attendance line at 804-966-9663, option 1. Even if you report the child's absence to the teacher, you must call the office so that the absence will be recorded correctly in PowerSchool. If the office has not received notification of the absence by 11:00 a.m., then you will be contacted to verify your child's absence. You may also email nkesoffice@nkpcs.k12.va.us.

ABSENCES:

A student's absence is not considered excused until the school receives a verbal or written notification from a parent citing the reason for the absence. Without such notification, the absence will be coded as unexcused. A student is permitted a maximum of ten "parent phonecalls", or verbal notification, before legal documentation (ex: a doctor's note) is required.

The school administrator, social worker, or attendance committee may require any student who receives a total of ten absences to either provide documentation other than parental notes and/or meet with the attendance committee for additional absences to be excused.

Unexcused absences will be addressed during the school year as follows:

1. 2nd Unexcused Absence - Counselor phone call
2. 3rd Unexcused Absence - Form letter sent to parent by attendance committee.
3. 5th+ Unexcused Absence - Parent and student will be referred for a mandatory meeting with the school social worker/truancy officer to develop an attendance intervention plan. **Please be advised that failure to participate in the attendance conference may result in a referral to Court Services for further interventions.**

Coming to school on time is important. Arriving late and/or leaving early may affect a student's performance over time.

A student must be present for at least one hour of instruction to be counted as present for the day. The principal may waive this requirement under extenuating circumstances such as a shortened school day or for other reasons presented on a case-by-case basis. (See Policy Manual - File: JED-R)

Any student missing more than 10% of the school year, for any reason, is considered chronically absent. This equals 18 school days.

Thank you for your adherence to our attendance policy. We are confident these guidelines will help us to identify and assist those students experiencing attendance difficulties. As always, we are dedicated to working with you to ensure the success of your child in his/her student role.

Field Trips

To help ensure a safe and focused environment for all students and staff, NKCPs kindly asks that only one parent or guardian attend per child. Please note, for some field trips parent attendance may not be permitted at all due to location guidelines or space limitations. We will always communicate those details in advance when applicable.

Additionally, field trips are instructional experiences that are targeted to provide learning opportunities for the students in the class and these opportunities are discussed in the classroom following the field trip. This requires that students attending be focused just as they would in the classroom. As such, if you are attending with your child, please do not bring siblings, older or younger, as space is limited and we want to minimize distractions so that all students can fully enjoy and benefit from the educational experience.

NKCPs appreciates your understanding and support as we work to create the best possible experience for our students.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The objectives of our PTO are:

1. To build a relationship between the home and school in which parents and teachers may cooperate in the education of youth.
2. To promote the welfare and education of children in the community.
3. To improve the laws for the care and protection of children and to raise the standards of the community and its educational programs.

The basic policies under which this organization will operate are:

1. The organization shall cooperate with the school to support the improvement of education.
2. The organization may cooperate with other organizations and agencies concerned with child welfare and education, but persons representing the organization in such matters shall make no commitments that bind the organization except as authorized by the Board of Directors.

Our P.T.O. is a very active organization that meets at the school monthly (meeting dates and times will be announced during the school year). Listed below are some of the many activities in which our P.T.O. is involved.

1. Assisted with School Orientation and Kindergarten Registration.
2. Provided spirit wear to all students.
3. Sponsored school assemblies.
4. Provided volunteers in different areas of classroom work.
5. Paid for academic programs to support instruction.
6. Bought additional 2-way radios for school use and replenished radio batteries.
7. Helped the P.E. department sponsor Field Day.
8. Purchased items for teachers and classrooms.
9. Cleaned school grounds.
10. Held appreciation meals and snacks for teachers and staff.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

The General Assembly enacted legislation that requires certain persons (including teachers or any other person employed in public or private schools, kindergartens or nursery schools) to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect so that protective services may be given to these children and their families. (Section 63.1-248 through 248.17, Code of VA)

According to the law, the definition of an abused or neglected child is any child less than 18 years of age whose parent or another person who is responsible for their care:

1. Creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions;
2. Neglects or refuses to provide the care necessary for the child's health;
3. Abandons the child;
4. Commits or allows to be committed any sexual act in violation of the law.

The law gives the responsibility to receive and investigate these reports to the local Department of Welfare.

TITLE IX

The New Kent County School Board complies with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended by Public L. #93-568,88 Stat. 1955 (except Sections 904 and 906 of those amendments) which is designed to eliminate (with certain exceptions) discrimination based on sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, whether or not such program or activity is offered or sponsored by an educational institution as defined in this part. This part is also intended to effectuate Section 844 of the Education Amendments of 1974, Pub. L. 93-380, 88 Stat. 484.

This information is on file at the principal's office of your child's school.

The New Kent County School Board does not discriminate based on sex when employing personnel.

Special Education Services

State and Federal Laws guarantee every handicapped child the right to a free appropriate public education. If your child or another child you know is suspected of having a handicapping condition, please refer the child to our school division. We provide special education to children identified with a disability between the ages of two and twenty-one. For children below age two, we work in cooperation with a local Mental Health Board in identifying such children and providing appropriate services.

If you have any of the following concerns regarding your child, please contact the school administration.

My child has:

- a diagnosed handicapping condition or special syndrome
- a disabling disease or chronic illness (for example heart problems, failure to thrive, leukemia, epilepsy, diabetes, etc.)
- a hearing problem
- a visual impairment
- poor speech, unclear speech, or no speech
- a birth defect
- a physical disability
- slow physical development (example: delayed sitting or walking)
- symptoms of hyperactivity
- orthopedic problems

NOTIFICATION OF SCREENING

Speech, language, motor development, hearing, and vision are all vital in ensuring school success. It is because of this that the Commonwealth of Virginia requires that all children new to public schools will be screened in these areas within 60 days of their initial enrollment. To meet this requirement, New Kent County Public Schools will conduct speech/language, hearing, vision, and motor development screenings during the first few months of school. The speech pathologist, school nurse, or clinic attendant, and other appropriate personnel will complete these screenings. It is through this screening process that potential problems can be identified and addressed before any adverse effect on school performance. You will be notified only if the need for further evaluation is indicated or a problem is suspected. Students in grades 3, 7, and 10 will be screened for sight and hearing defects. This is in accordance with state and county policy.

Notice of Compliance

NOTICE OF NEW KENT PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPLIANCE OFFICER FOR EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Please be advised that the New Kent Public School's Compliance Officer is the Executive Director of Human Resources. Any person who believes that he/she has not received equal employment opportunities should immediately report the incident by calling 804-966-8526 or by writing to New Kent School Board, ATTN: Executive Director of Human Resources, P.O. Box 110, New Kent, VA 23124.

NOTICE OF NEW KENT PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPLIANCE OFFICER FOR EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Please be advised that the New Kent Public School's Compliance Officer is the Director of Student Services. Any student who believes he/she has been the victim of prohibited discrimination should report that alleged discrimination as soon as possible by calling 804-966-8523 or writing to New Kent School Board, ATTN: Director of Student Services, P.O. Box 110, New Kent, VA 23124.

NOTICE OF NEW KENT PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPLIANCE OFFICER AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Please be advised that the New Kent Public School's Compliance Officer is the Executive Director of Human Resources. Students and employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed should immediately report the incident by calling 966-8526 or by writing to New Kent School Board, ATTN: Executive Director of Human Resources, P.O. Box 110, New Kent, VA 23124.