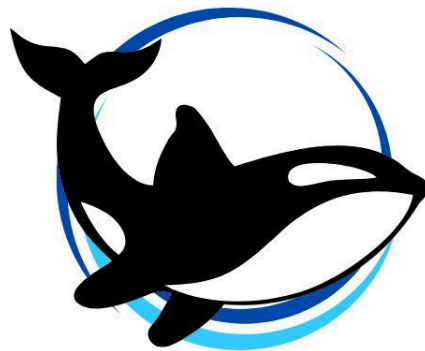


Welcome to
EAST PORT ORCHARD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2025-2026



Family Information and Student Handbook

Ashley Cashman, Principal
Shayla Sharlow, Assistant Principal

East Port Orchard Elementary
2649 Hoover Ave. SE
Port Orchard, WA 98366
(360) 443-3170

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are the lifeline of our school. During the school year, thousands of volunteer hours are given by our parents and by members of the community, including several senior citizens and representatives from several service organizations. Volunteers serve in many capacities. You can find them in the library, classroom, field day, and with individual projects during the course of the year.

All volunteers must pass a background check as required by Washington State Law prior to volunteering. All you need to do is come to the EPO front office or head to the SK District Office next door, to fill out the necessary paperwork. Please provide a picture I.D. (i.e., Driver's License). However, be sure and have this done at least two weeks prior to the day of a field trip you're planning to go on to allow for the paperwork to be processed. Your cooperation with this is greatly appreciated.

Once you are cleared, it is very important that volunteers sign-in each time you visit. Be sure to stop by our office to sign in. You will also wear an EPO Volunteer badge so that adults and students know you are cleared to be here.

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED: CHANGES IN PHONE/ADDRESSES/EMERGENCY NUMBERS, ETC.

Please update Skyward if there are any changes in information at home or at work. If you need assistance with updating this information, please call our office. Having current data is important to the welfare of your student. In case of an emergency, we need to know how to reach a parent, guardian, or a designated adult at all times.

Complex social and family issues affect your student at school. Changes in the family structure need to be shared with the school. If there are restrictions or restraining orders within a family, in order to protect the child, a copy of the appropriate court documents must be on file in the office.

Schools cannot release a child to any individual not named by the parent or guardian. The importance of keeping emergency names and phone numbers current cannot be emphasized enough.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

Breakfast and lunches are offered through the District's Central Kitchen. Students may also bring sack lunches from home. Breakfast and lunch are free to all students who attend EPO!

SCHOOL CLOSURE OR DELAYS

When school closes or there are delays or changes to the bus routes due to severe weather conditions, information will be given to families through ParentSquare, social media, or a Robo call from the district.

NOTE: If South Kitsap School District does not reach out by one of the methods above, it can be assumed that school will open as usual. PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS ARE REQUESTED **NOT** TO CALL THE SCHOOL OR THE TRANSPORTATION CENTER. PHONE LINES ARE NEEDED FOR OPERATIONAL PURPOSES. Please discuss with your children an alternative place to go after school in case of an emergency or early dismissal.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

School attendance is very important to the academic success of each child. This cannot be emphasized too much. When a child is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to call the office (443-3170), email us at fenton@skschools.org, or send a note to excuse the absence.

If you have questions about district attendance policy please see [Policy 3122, Excused and Unexcused Absences](#).

Punctuality is essential to the educational development of the child. All tardy students check-in at the office upon their arrival. Failure to check-in could result in a student being marked absent all day. Washington State law requires us to report chronic attendance problems to the court system, so any effort parents or guardians can make to get their children to school on time will be greatly appreciated. We ask that parents/guardians sign the "In Log" as provided. For further information regarding absences and tardies, see the **South Kitsap School District Rights and Responsibilities Students, Parents/Guardians, and School Personnel Handbook**.

Some of the children who attend **East Port Orchard Elementary** come to us on Open Enrollment. We are pleased that you selected our school and appreciate your recognition of our reputation as a family-oriented school. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians who open enroll their children to transport them to and from school in a timely manner. Students must be in their seats at 8:45 am (9:35 am on Wednesdays) or they are tardy to school. **The Open Enrollment privilege can be rescinded if chronic absences and tardies occur.**

The school realizes that there are occasions when a child must be dismissed early from school. If at all possible, we would encourage you to schedule appointments before or after school hours. It is especially important not to schedule appointments during district testing which takes place in May. When checking your child(ren) out early, all guardians are asked to come to the office to sign their student(s) out. Office personnel will call the student to the office once you arrive, in order to avoid interrupting the classroom.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the schools have made preparations to respond effectively to such situations. Our school and school district have detailed disaster plans formulated to respond to emergency situations.

Your cooperation is necessary in any emergency.

1. Since telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication, please do not telephone the school.
2. Student safety is the top priority. In the event of a serious earthquake, students will be kept at school until they are picked up by an identified, responsible adult who has been designated on the school emergency card. This is required to be filled out at the beginning of every school year. In the event of a lockdown, students will not be released until the situation is judged safe.
3. Turn your radio or TV to an EMERGENCY BROADCAST SYSTEM.

4. Impress upon your child(ren) the need for them to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency.

PARENT/GUARDIAN REQUEST FOR TEACHER

The task of placing over 400 students is a big one! We take placement very seriously. At East Port Orchard Elementary, we use our professional judgment to place each child and create balanced classes in terms of gender, academic progress, disciplinary needs, and the individual needs of students. You may request placement for your student by emailing Principal Cashman, cashmana@skschools.org. Please understand that this is a request and cannot be guaranteed.

LOST AND FOUND

Procedures are simplified if all coats, hats, lunch boxes, etc. are marked with the child's name. If possible, clothing should be marked with a permanent marker. The Lost and Found rack is located in the hallway next to the recess doors. Small items are kept in the office (i.e. watches, rings, glasses, etc.). It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and child to go through the Lost and Found prior to its distribution to a charitable organization. Donations are made at the end of each trimester.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

See South Kitsap School District Family Handbook for information about Student Accident Insurance. It is located on the district website.

SAFETY INFORMATION

Doors to the school are locked at all times. A staff member will open the front door at 8:10 AM for students to enter the building and will remain at the door until 8:35 AM (9:25 on Wednesdays). The side lunchroom door will be opened by a staff member at 3:00 PM for dismissal. The staff member will remain at the door until 3:15 PM, at which point, remaining students will be taken to the office for late pick up. All doors are locked any other time of day and you must go to the front entrance and use the intercom system to be let into the building. Thank you for your assistance in keeping our students and staff safe at school.

Parking

Parking is very limited, families are asked to use the parking lot across from the main entrance to the school. Families should make certain that their child(ren) cross either in a designated crosswalk or under the supervision of the adult. **Please do not park in the fire lane or block other vehicles in front of the school. This lane must be left open for safety purposes. Also, do not block the special education bus loading/district office area at the southwest end of the school. Vehicles must be able to enter and leave that area safely.**

PLEASE USE THE DESIGNATED CROSSING AREAS. CHILDREN SHOULD ONLY CROSS THE STREET AT THE MARKED CROSSWALKS.

Pick-Up and Dismissal (PM)

School dismissal begins at 3:00 pm daily (except for the following half days at which point students will be released at 12:00 PM; Please see our [district calendar](#) for specific dates.

Kindergarten: All Kindergarteners will release students via the classroom doors at the front of the school to the right of the entrance.

1st and 2nd Grade: Families and caregivers will enter the lunchroom via the doors by the district office, check your student out with their teacher and exit through the hallway to the left of the lunchroom.

3rd - 5th Grade: The back parking lot will open at 2:55pm. Busses are moving in/out before this time, please do not come early. Please do not park or exit your car. Staff will direct cars and deliver your student to your vehicle. For the safety of students and staff, do not go around other cars and remember to not block driveways of neighboring homes.

Innovation Learning: Students who attend the before and after school program will go to the lunchroom.

WeeCare: Students who attend WeeCare will wait in their classrooms and be called to the hallway near the office when the WeeCare provider has arrived.

*If you have **students in multiple grade levels**, please go to the dismissal area of the youngest student. Older siblings will be sent to this area where all can be picked up.*

CHANGE IN PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Please call by 2:30 pm if there are any changes in your child's pick up plans. **Notes are delivered to students at 2:30 pm.** Messages received from you **after** that time are not guaranteed to get to your student, even though every effort will be made to do so. Many times students are in other classes at the end of the day (P.E., Music, Library, etc.). Please help us by either sending a note in the morning or calling before the 2:30 pm deadline.

STUDENT WALKERS

Because EPO is a neighborhood school, many of our students walk. Families of walking students should discuss their child's route to and from school. Walking with a buddy or a group of children is safer than walking alone. In the event of trouble, families should identify a "safe" house where children can go for help. Please have students cross at the marked crosswalks.

SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students on school buses are subject to a uniform set of rules as determined by the State Department of Public Instruction and supplemented by school district regulations.

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. The bus driver is in charge of students during the busing operation.

Problems with students on buses or at bus stops will be routed to the director of transportation and the principal for appropriate action and notification.

Please see the **South Kitsap School District Rights and Responsibilities Students, Parents, and School Personnel Handbook** for more information regarding the school bus.

BICYCLES

Students are discouraged from riding their bicycles to school. Aside from the obvious danger from traffic, bicycles can be vandalized or stolen during school hours. Primary students (grades K-3) should not ride their bicycles to school at any time. If intermediate students (grades 4-5) ride their bicycles, it is their responsibility to properly secure their bicycles. Students riding bicycles **must always wear a helmet**. Skateboards and scooters are not allowed at school! There is a bike rack located on the lunchroom side of the building.

DRESS CODE

Dressing appropriately for school insures a student's safety and is important to the learning process. Students not adhering to these policies may be removed from the classroom until appropriate changes are made.

Shoes

For safety reasons, we ask that students not wear open-toed, high-heeled shoes or shoes with foam soles to school. Shoes need to be suitable for running, walking and PE and be securely fastened due to the terrain. Crocs should be avoided due to bark piercing the bottom of the shoe.

Blouses, Shirts, Tops

Sheer, mesh, halters, low cut, spaghetti straps, strapless and short-shirts are not appropriate for school wear. **Shirt straps/sleeves need to be at least two fingers wide.** T-shirts will not display any suggestive or profane writing or advertising for alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal substances.

Pants, Skirts, Shorts

Short shorts and short skirts should not be worn to school. **Shorts should be fingertip length.** Lycra shorts may be worn only with a suitable long top.

Dresses and skirts must be appropriate for sitting on the floor and for PE and recess activities.

Hats, Hoods

Hoods are to be removed when entering the building. Hats should not display suggestive or profane language or advertising for alcohol, tobacco products, or illegal substances.

Hair, Make-up and Jewelry

Fifth grade students may use a modest amount of make-up. Earrings, necklaces and bracelets should not interfere with play at recess or in PE. Due to allergies, **perfume/body sprays are not to be worn in large amounts.**

In the event that a child wears an inappropriate article of clothing to school, the family will be notified to bring more suitable attire. If staff is unable to reach the family, the school will provide an appropriate item for the child to wear.

VALUABLES

All personal possessions, except school supplies, must be turned off and left in bags. This includes cell phones and smart watches. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken items. Electronic items and other valuables such as handheld games should not be brought to school.

Trading/Selling

Students are not allowed to trade or sell items to each other at school.

PETS/ANIMALS

No pets or other animals will be allowed on school grounds or in the classroom due to safety, liability and health reasons (allergies, for example). Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

East Port Orchard Discipline Policy

This year, we will strive to create a safe, fun, learning environment for your child. We believe that dealing with classroom discipline issues provides an extremely valuable opportunity for teaching and learning to occur. We also believe that focusing on the positive and having students take ownership of their actions helps decrease less desirable behaviors.

We will be using the "Responsibility Centered Discipline" approach to classroom management. A component of this program is a five-step guided conversation, call "Give 'em Five," which will be conducted privately between the student and classroom teacher when undesirable behaviors do occur. The five steps to the conversation are as follows:

1. Support (Offers something positive to start out)
2. Breakdown (Insures that the student knows what was not acceptable)
3. Expectation (Insures that the student knows what is expected)
4. Benefit (Explains why it is important for the student to choose the more desirable behavior)
5. Closure (Provides closure so that the teacher/student relationship is left intact)

Another component of the Responsibility-Centered Discipline program is an area designated for "The Response-Ability Process." In our classrooms, teachers will use calm corners for when a student is not ready to accept feedback; the child may need an opportunity to cool down or think. If the child is very upset or even angry, he/she may choose to move to this area signaling, "I am not ready to talk." When the child is calm and ready, he/she will signal the teacher they are ready to complete their "Give 'em Five" conversation. Using the program allows EPO staff to build relationships with students while we model respect and promote responsibility. We look forward to a wonderful year building strong, positive relationships with your child!

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

MATERIALS

E.P.O. uses District-adopted curriculum materials, as do all other elementary schools in our District. The importance of reading (both fiction and research based materials) is emphasized. Our school will be provided with all supplies needed for the classroom. However, classroom teachers may provide families with lists of other desired classroom materials. Please check periodically with your child's teacher to see if additional supplies are needed.

REPORT CARDS – CONFERENCES

Report cards will be issued for all grade levels three times each year. Fall conferences will take place **Oct. 27 – 31, 2025**. Spring conferences will be held **April 6 - 10, 2026**. This is an opportune time for families to discuss their child's progress on an individual basis. If you feel your student is having a problem, please call his/her teacher for a conference at any time. Report cards are hand-carried home by the student.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The E.P.O. Library/Media Center is an excellent facility filled with books, magazines, and chromebooks. The library/media specialist teaches weekly classes for grades K-5. Classes emphasize research skills, how to use technology, and literature appreciation. The library/media specialist also provides guidance in the selection of materials of interest and use. The library/media specialist is available to assist students, staff, and guardians.

LOST AND/OR DAMAGED TEXTBOOKS, LIBRARY BOOKS, AND MATH SUPPLIES

Lost/damaged book fees are assessed at the end of the school year for library and textbooks. Students are responsible for returning books and supplies to the school in good condition. Families will be notified of any charges for loss or damage repair prior to the last day, so restitution can be made. **All outstanding fees need to be paid by the end of the school year.** Thank you for your help!

CLASSROOM FOOD

Any food brought to share must be store bought. Classroom celebrations are held at the discretion of the teacher/principal. Most celebrations take place during lunch time or the last part of the school day. **Families are asked to bring only store-bought items to a celebration.** This is school district policy.

SNACKS

Here at EPO we have a designated snack time for each classroom. We encourage students to bring their own snack each day. However, if a student does not have a snack then we will provide them with one. If you would like to donate snacks, you can donate directly to the classroom. Please reach out to the teacher for more information.

SPECIALISTS

Several specialists are assigned to each school to support staff and help with student needs.

A registered nurse is assigned to each school. The nurse conducts vision and hearing screening. She attends to the health room on her regularly scheduled day. She furnishes information and services to guardians as needed. The Health Room is staffed by office personnel on a daily basis.

A psychologist provides testing services to the school and the community to determine eligibility for special programs. The psychologist serves as a member of the Child Study Team.

A counselor is on site each day. Her time is spent conducting lessons in the classroom and doing short-term advising of individual students and groups of students. A member of the Child Study Team and the Crisis Team, the counselor also is the 504 coordinator and is important to the health and welfare of our students.

An Occupational Therapist serves those students who have special motor skills needs.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT POLICY

At EPO we recognize that parents/guardians are the most important teachers of their students. A complete copy of East Port Orchard Elementary's Parent/Guardian Involvement Policy is available in the office. We are committed to providing a variety of opportunities for parent/guardian involvement:

- An annual public meeting for parents/guardians of EPO students will provide school and program information.
- Parents/guardians will be invited to all school activities including Family Learning Nights, reading and math nights, and all pertinent workshops, meetings, and classes that address working with their child.
- Parents/guardians have an opportunity to participate on the Parent Advisory Board.
- Parents/guardians will be involved in an annual needs assessment and program evaluation.
- Teacher-parent/guardian communication concerning student progress is ongoing.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please check ParentSquare, fliers, and the web site at www.skschools.org for announcements about upcoming events and activities!

PTA meetings are held on a regular basis. You may contact the office by calling 443-3170 for times and dates.

All important dates will be added to the calendar as they are set. Information will be sent home via ParentSquare or with your student.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

See South Kitsap School District Family Handbook for information about Equal Education Opportunities. It is located on the district website.

WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU

Ashley Cashman - Principal

Shayla Sharlow - Assistant Principal

Anne-Marie Thresher - Office Coordinator

Angela Fenton - Office Coordinator's Assistant

Barbara Willis - Health Room Assistant

If we can be of assistance to you in any way, please do not hesitate to call us at (360) 443-3170.