

Maize Elementary School

4360 Maize Rd.

Columbus, Ohio 43224

(614) 365-6040



Student-Family Handbook

2025-26

WELCOME TO MAIZE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!

Welcome to Maize Elementary. We are so glad that you have chosen Maize for your child's school. Maize offers the family of a small neighborhood school, while also providing the opportunities of a larger district. Maize's vision is, "Each child will develop a positive self-worth, have an attitude of inclusiveness, and be reading at or above grade level." Our team is ready to help your child reach our vision and their full potential~

We hope this handbook provides useful information, policies, and procedures you need to help us provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for easy reference. Please feel free to call the school (365-6040) if you have questions or concerns.

We look forward to an exciting and productive year of learning and growing!

Sincerely,

Tiffany R. Genton

Tiffany R. Genton

Principal

Columbus City Schools' Mission Statement:

Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

Maize's Vision, Mission, and Core Values

Vision: Each child will develop a positive self-worth, have an attitude of inclusiveness, and be reading at or above grade level.

Mission: The Maize Team will collaborate together to support student growth academically, socially, and emotionally.

Core Values: We will be dedicated, open minded, and ready to help foster growth in our students each day.

The Columbus City School District does not discriminate because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex or handicap with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. This policy is applicable in all district programs and activities.

2025-2026 School Calendar

First Semester: August 25, 2024 through January 16, 2025

First Day of School	Aug. 25
Kindergarten Assessment/Orientation	Aug. 25, 26, 27
Kindergarten First Day	Aug. 28
Labor Day (No School)	Sept. 1
Professional Development (No School)	Oct. 17
End of 1st Grading Period	Oct. 21
Records Day (No School)	Oct. 22
Professional Development (No School)	Nov. 4
Wellness Week/Thanksgiving Holiday	Nov. 24-28
30 Minute Early Release (3:00)	Dec. 19
Winter Break	Dec. 22-Jan. 2
Students return to school	Jan. 5
End of 2 nd Grading Period	Jan. 16
Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (No School)	Jan. 19
Professional Development (No School)	Jan. 20
Records Day (No School)	Jan. 21

Second Semester: January 22, 2025 through May 28, 2025

Parent Teacher Conference Comp Day (No School)	Feb. 16
Professional Development (No School)	Feb. 17
End of 3 rd Grading Period	Mar. 13
Records Day (No School)	Mar. 18
30 Minute Early Release (3:00)	April 2
Spring Break	April 3-10
Students return	April 13
Memorial Day (No School)	May 25
Last Day for students	May 28
Records Day (No School)	May 29

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30-8:55	Breakfast
9:00-11:45	Classroom Instruction
11:30-12:00	Lunch (Grades K, 1 & 2) Recess (Grades 3, 4 & 5)
12:00-12:30	Lunch (Grades 3, 4 & 5) Recess (Grades K, 1 & 2)
12:45-1:45	Classroom Instruction
2:00-2:15	Afternoon Recess (Grade 3, 4 & 5)
2:15-2:30	Afternoon Recess (Grades K, 1 & 2)
2:30-3:15	Classroom Instruction
3:15	Dismissal – Walkers/Parent Pick-Up

Parking

Our seasoned Maize Mustang car riders are already aware of our "European" style drop off/pick up line (driving in the left lane), but I wanted to remind EVERYONE of the importance of following the route, while also providing information to our new students and families. At Maize You will enter the car line from the left of the parking lot and school entrance. There are Signs at the Entrance to guide you as well as large yellow arrows painted on the blacktop. We cannot stress enough to PLEASE STAY IN LINE and follow the path all the way, rounding through the gravel portion of the lot, and continuing to the sidewalk portion of the building. Once you arrive to the section from the corner of the Sidewalk to the end of the building (where staff is opening car doors from 8:30-9) may your child exit your car. We ask that you pull all the way to the last Staff Member in line in order to keep the line efficiently moving. Please stay in line even if your child has exited your car. This ensures the safety of everyone exiting cars and entering the parking lot. Please also keep in mind that we have children with varying abilities. Maize elementary is a diverse building educating those with multiple disabilities and special needs as well as new little ones entering preschool. Your patience is doubly important as some of these children need extra time getting in and out of their cars. We assure you that typically the longest time from start to finish, even in a long moving line, will take you 2 minutes to get through. If you feel that the line is not something you can safely or patiently sit through, you may also park on the gravel adjacent to Maize Rd, BUT DO NOT ENTER THE PARKING LOT/BUS DROP OFF ZONE. This is also a hazard to the safety of the children and drivers. When dropping off from Maize rd, please walk your child to the crosswalk to ensure they are safely arriving at school.

During Pick up (3:20) , the routine is the same, though we stress when entering the back of the lot to please make the line as wide and long as possible by rounding around into the gravel portion. By doing so, this will provide at least 3 more cars to enter the lot. Please also pull up close to the car in front of you, this also adds many car lengths to the line. We have staff outside using the

walkie talkies to call your children outside to be escorted to your cars as you pull to the side of the building. Once your child is in the car, please stay in line as you exit. Your children's safety and education is the utmost importance to us all!!! Thank you so much for your patience and understanding.

Absence/Tardiness from School

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the school office **before 9:30 a.m.** each day the student is absent. In the event that such a report is not made, school officials shall attempt to notify the person responsible for the student of the absence. **Unreported absences are unexcused absences.** Absence and Tardiness will be excused for the following reasons only:

1. Illness of student,
2. Death in family,
3. Quarantine of the home,
4. Superintendent's designation (snow days, etc.),
5. Family emergency (must be approved by principal).

While we hope that families will schedule vacations/long weekends etc. at times when school is not in session, we understand there are times when this may not be possible. Students **MAY** be excused for such absences provided the following steps are followed:

1. Parents request a 'Pre-excused Absence Form' from the school office, complete and return at least 5 days prior to the planned absence.
2. If approved by the principal, the teacher will provide assignments which must be completed and returned within 5 school days of the end of the absence.
3. Such absences must not exceed 10 days per school year.
4. Please note that students with excessive amounts of absenteeism will not be approved for vacation days.

Parents of students who have accrued more than three unexcused absences will receive a letter regarding those absences. School personnel will work with the family to improve student attendance. If attendance continues to be unsatisfactory, parents will be asked to meet with the school attendance team and/or a Columbus City Schools' social worker. If, after that meeting, student attendance does not improve, a referral to Franklin County Children's Services will be made.

School begins at 9:00 a.m. Students who arrive after that are considered tardy. Students' academic instructional time is vital to his/her overall achievement. Every minute counts therefore it is very important that your child is here every day, on time, ready to learn.

Students who need to leave school during the day must be signed out through the office before 3:00 pm. Please do not ask to sign your child out early on a routine basis.

Absence Due to Vacations

We strongly encourage families to plan vacations at times that do not conflict with your child's education. When a student misses several days of classroom instruction, it is impossible to completely make up for that with out of class assignments. Parents who choose to schedule vacations during the school year should understand that the interactive, hands on nature of the elementary classroom make it impossible to provide all the material missed. In order for absences due to vacations to be excused, all assigned work must be completed and returned to your child's teacher within 5 school days of their return to school.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Breakfast is free for all students and is served from 8:30 to 8:55 am. Students who wish to eat breakfast at school must arrive at school no later than 8:45 am so they are able to finish breakfast by 8:55 am. Students are not permitted to eat or drink any beverage other than water in the classrooms.

Students may carry sack lunches and if they wish, receive a vegetable, fruit, and milk in the cafeteria. If they wish to have a milk alone it will cost 50 cents. Students **may not bring pop** to school or any beverage/food in a glass container. Please note that we do not have the ability to heat student lunches from home. It is also very helpful when parents send lunch items in containers/packages that students can open independently. Lunch count is taken each day at 9:00 am. If you know your child is going to be arriving late and will need a lunch, **please call before 9:30 am or plan to bring a packed lunch.**

Immunization Requirements

Our school nurse will work with parents to ensure that all children receive the required immunizations. Children who do not have evidence of proper immunizations will be excluded from school after 14 days of admission.

Medications

Students who must take medication at school must have the appropriate authorization form (available in school office) signed by both the prescribing physician and parent before the medication can be brought to school. The medication and form will be kept locked in the school office and administered by designated staff members. This procedure is required for both prescription and over the counter medications. Children who use inhalers have the option of carrying the inhaler with them provided the above mentioned form is on file in the office. **If parents choose this option, it is advisable to also have an inhaler kept in the office as experience has shown that children often cannot find the inhaler when it is needed.**

This authorization must include the following:

1. The name and address of the student.
2. The school and class in which the student is enrolled.
3. The name of the medication and the dosage to be administered.
4. The times or intervals at which each dosage of the medication is to be administered.
5. The date the administration of the medication is to begin.
6. The date the administration of the medication is to cease, if applicable.
7. Any special instructions for the administration of the medication, including sterile conditions and storage.
8. The parent or guardian agrees to submit a revised statement signed by the physician if the previously provided information changes.

(ALL MEDICATION MUST BE IN ITS ORIGINAL, LABELED CONTAINER)

Bee Stings and Other Allergies:

1. **Parents are responsible for informing the school of a child's allergies, particularly any that are potentially life threatening. Food allergies which require diet accommodations must be documented by a physician's note.**
2. In the event that emergency medication needs to be administered (e.g. bee stings or for any severe allergic reaction), it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the medication and appropriate forms signed by the physician.

Illness at School

Students with fevers of 100.0 degrees F. or higher, vomiting and/or diarrhea will be excluded from school. **Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.** If your child is sick (fever, nausea, vomiting, a rash) please keep him/her home and notify the school of the illness. If your child should become ill or injured during school time, you or the individual(s) you have specified as an emergency contact will be notified and asked to pick him/her up from school. Please remember that we are not equipped to care for very ill children at school.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

Board of Education policy #5161.8 and Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421 requires school personnel to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate agency. The law also makes the reporting personnel immune from related criminal or civil liability.

Emergency Medical Treatment

Parents are responsible for informing the school of emergency medical treatment they desire for their child. This includes the name of the doctor they wish to treat the child and the hospital they wish to care for the child in an emergency. **Emergency Information and Emergency Medical Treatment** forms are sent home with students at the beginning of the school year. If you did not receive the forms, please contact our office. We must have completed forms for your child on file in our office.

If you have a change of address, work location, or phone number, please notify the school immediately so we have current information in the event of an emergency.

Mustang Way:

“I will be respectful, be responsible, and be safe.”

Are you following the Mustang Way?

<u>Expectation</u>	<u>Hallway</u>	<u>Restroom</u>	<u>Cafeteria</u>	<u>Recess</u>	<u>Classroom</u>	<u>Arrival and Dismissal</u>	<u>Bus</u>
<p>Be Respectful</p> <p><i>Treat others the way you want to be treated.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voices off • Hands, feet and mouth are to yourself • Follow directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet voices • Flush • Honor privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet voices • Only take food that is allowed • Use appropriate, positive language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be kind to everyone • Listen to adults • Take turns with the equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use appropriate language • Listen to the speaker • Keep classroom clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use quiet voices • Be kind to everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the bus driver • Keep the bus clean • Use appropriate language
<p>Be Responsible</p> <p><i>Do what you're supposed to be doing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go directly to your destination • Stay in line • Eyes and feet face forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get in and out • Put toilet paper in the toilet and paper towels in the trash • Got a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise your hand if you need help • Stay seated at your own table • Clean up all the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions • Line up quickly and quietly when the whistle blows • Got a proble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always do your best • Follow all directions • Take care of all property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow all directions • Stay seated until released • Be in the correct place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow directions • Keep your belongings in your backpack • Pay attention

		problem? Tell an adult	trash	problem? Tell an adult			
<p>Be Safe</p> <p>Follow all directions so that no one gets hurt.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking feet • Pay attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep feet on the floor • Keep water off the floor • Wash hands with soap and water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk • Only eat your own food • Sit with feet on the floor, facing the table 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet and mouth to yourself • Use equipment safely • Stay on school property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself • Walk in the classroom • Stay in your seat with feet and chair on the floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet and mouth to yourself • Stay seated • Walking feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat to seat, back to back • Use quiet voices • Keep hands, feet and mouth to yourself

Playground Rules/School Rules

1. Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds.
2. Respect others at all times:
 - a. Play fair and by the rules.
 - b. No foul or abusive language (this includes name calling)
 - c. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
 - d. Be kind....do not hurt others (verbally or physically)
 - e. Do not threaten others.
3. All toys (including cards, balls and electronics) should be left at home unless the teacher has given permission to bring one to school.
4. Children are not permitted to sell, trade or give away personal items (toys, cards, etc.) at school.

5. NO WEAPONS OR LOOK ALIKE WEAPONS ARE ALLOWED.
6. NO ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES ARE ALLOWED.
7. Respect others' and school property.
8. Line up and enter the building quietly at the end of each recess.
9. As per Columbus City Schools' policy, cell phones must be turned off and in bookbags during the entire school day. First violation of this rule will result in the cell phone being kept in the office until the end of the day when the student may retrieve it. A second offense will result in the cell phone being kept in the school office until a parent retrieves it.

School Bus Rules

For the safety of all of our students who depend on bus transportation, it is very important that everyone does their part to keep our buses safe. To that end, we expect all students to follow these bus rules:

1. Stay seated at all times.
2. Follow the directions given by the bus driver and / or assistant.
3. Keep hands and feet inside the bus and to yourself.
4. No eating, drinking or chewing gum allowed on the bus.
5. Use an 'inside voice' on the bus.
6. Do not throw anything inside or outside the bus.
7. Follow school rules on the bus.

Students who do not comply with these rules may receive a disciplinary report completed by the transportation staff and given to the principal. The first such report will be sent home by the principal with a letter to parents asking you to speak with your child about appropriate behavior on the school bus. A second offense may result in a suspension of bus riding privileges for a period of time. Additionally, a first offense which jeopardizes the safety and welfare of any person on the bus will result in a suspension of bus privileges for a period of time.

Discipline Plan

To help students develop socially and emotionally and to achieve at their highest levels, it is vital that we have a safe and orderly school environment in which students enjoy learning and have respect for themselves and others. Our primary concern is for each individual child. However, it must be known that no individual may interfere with the welfare of a group, the rights of others, or the educational process. Whenever such interference occurs, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

As an extension to the school rules formerly delineated in this handbook, each classroom will have posted expectations/rules with which students will be expected to comply. Within the classroom, teachers will employ positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior and corrective measures when students make a choice not to comply with the classroom expectations. In the event that the teacher's efforts within the classroom have not resulted in a change in behavior, parent contact and/or a PEAK referral will be made. Usually these procedures are sufficient to help a student decide to make better choices. However, if they are not (or if the behavior presents a danger to the student, others and/or property) that student will be referred to the principal who will contact the parent. Additionally, depending on the nature and severity of the offense the student may face a possible suspension or expulsion.

The code of Conduct adopted by the Columbus Board of Education is sent home at the beginning of each school year. Parents should sign and return the form on the back cover to indicate that you have received, read and shared with your student.

Possession of Drugs, Alcohol and Weapons

Use of drugs and alcohol. The use and abuse of drugs and alcohol have harmful effects on the social and intellectual development of children and youth and on their mental, physical, and emotional health.

Except for supervised, prescribed medications, students shall not be under the influence of--nor use, possess, offer for sale, or distribute drugs or alcohol in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-controlled vehicles, at school sponsored events, or in other situations under the authority of the district.

Under no circumstances should any student be in possession of any weapon (including look-a-likes and/or toy weapons) including, but not limited to knives and guns.

Violation of the above rules will result in disciplinary action which will include suspension or expulsion from school.

Anti-harassment / Bullying policy:

At Winterset, we believe that each child is worthy of respect and kindness from all and that each child has the right to come to school each day and feel safe, both physically and emotionally. To that end, our staff teach and model respect for students. Classroom discussions regarding what constitutes harassment and bullying are held in developmentally appropriate ways across grade levels. It is our expectation that students behave in ways that demonstrate others' rights not to be harassed, bullied, picked on, made fun of, laughed at, etc.

Bullying is defined as an unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

If students choose not to abide by this policy, they will first be counseled regarding their behavior and a parent contact will be made. If the behavior continues, disciplinary action will be taken.

P.E.A.K.

P.E.A.K. stands for Positive Efforts for Adjustment and Knowledge. This is a district wide program housed in all elementary buildings and is supervised by a trained Instructional Assistant. This program is used for many purposes including:

- Academic tutoring
- Short time outs (usually less than 15 minutes) for students to process their behavior choices and return to class as soon as possible.
- Referral for Disciplinary Infractions (Parents will be notified via a completed PEAK referral form which will be sent home with the student to be signed by parent and

returned the following day. Please note that in the event the signed form is not returned the following day, students will have recess detention and the PEAK staff will attempt to contact the parent by phone.)

- In School Suspension for a period of days to be determined by the principal after parents have been given the opportunity to attend a disciplinary hearing.

It is our goal to have students in the classrooms as much as possible and to limit the amount of time in the PEAK room to only what is necessary to ensure that learning for all students is not disrupted by the behavior of any student.

Parent Involvement

At Maize Elementary, we value the importance of true partnerships between parents and school staff. Your involvement in your child's education will greatly enhance his or her success in school. We have a very active PTA with numerous opportunities for you to become involved. We welcome any and all time and talent which you are able to share!

Parents wishing to have a conference with their child's teacher must schedule it in advance by calling the school office or e-mailing the teacher directly (Teacher email addresses are available on the web page). Please understand we value parent contact and engagement however, due to the myriad of responsibilities of our teachers, they are not able to facilitate a drop in conference request but are happy to schedule a time when they are available for a conference with you.

If you are looking to support and help our staff and students, our family ambassador Christie Gianni, will help you find opportunities that fit your desire and schedule!

School Safety

1. Monthly fire drills and seasonal tornado drills will be conducted to prepare children in the event of a fire or tornado.
2. The following crisis drills will be conducted per district requirements:
 - Lock down drill (all children are in classrooms with doors locked. All outside entrances are locked) Classroom doors will only be opened from outside) In an actual lock down, or lock down drill, nobody (including parents) will be allowed to enter the building until the crisis (drill) is

resolved. Attempts will be made to post a red 'Lock Down' on the main entrance door.

- Evacuation from premises (all children will evacuate to the rear of playground field)
- Shelter in place (all students are moved into gymnasium)
In the event of an actual need to shelter in place, the doorways of the gym will be sealed with heavy duty plastic and duct tape.
- Reverse evacuation (in the event that students are on the playground and an unsafe situation arises outside, 5 bells will be rung to signal all children immediately into the building without lining up)

(Any visitors who are in the building at the time of an emergency drill will be expected to participate in the drill.)

3. All visitors (including parents) must check in at the office upon entering the school (or playground during periods of student use) and sign in using the Lobby Guard system. This measure is in place to keep our children and staff safe. In the event that a staff member sees a visitor without a pass, he / she will ask that person to check into the office.

Emergency Evacuation

In the unlikely event that we need to evacuate the premises e.g. gas leak, bomb threat, etc., our plan is to take our students to the Atonement Lutheran Church located at 1621 Francisco Road. In the event that such an evacuation is necessary, we will do everything possible to maintain a calm and reassuring atmosphere for the children until such time that parents are able to pick them up. You will receive a written 'Emergency Plan' to complete the first week of school which will be kept in a portable file in the school office. Please complete this plan fully, including the names of any possible individual who has your permission to pick up your child from the evacuation site, as the information will be needed in the event of an emergency. Assume that we will not be able to contact you by phone. We typically do an evacuation/relocation drill in early fall. More information will be shared when that date is decided.

Cell Phones

Columbus City Schools' does allow students to bring cell phones and other personal electronic devices (lasers and electronic games are not considered to be personal electronic devices) to school. **However, their use is prohibited during school or school sponsored or related activities except in instances in which permission to use the device has been granted by either the teacher or principal. All such devices are to be kept out of sight during the school day and turned off.** The first violation of this rule will result in the device being kept in the school office until dismissal time and returned to the student. The second offense will result in the device being kept in the office until picked up by a parent. Further offenses will result in the suspension of privileges to bring said devices to school. A complete copy of this policy is posted on the Parent Information Board inside the main entrance.

Dress Code

The Columbus Board of Education has established the following dress code:

Specific provisions include:

- Dress length not shorter than mid-thigh and undergarments concealed at all times.
- No bare midriffs or see-through clothing, including no tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, halter tops and / or strapless top or dress revealing the midriff or breasts; no tight or form-fitting clothing; no night or sleeping clothes; and no underwear as outerwear;
- Shoes worn at all time with slippers / bedroom shoes/beach shoes and flip-flops not permitted;
- No words or writing across the seat of shorts, pants and skirts;
- No hats, caps and other types of head covering other than those for religious purposes and no sunglasses worn inside buildings;
- Shorts must be hemmed and straight legged, no shorter than mid-thigh and must be worn at the waist. No saggy shorts and short shorts /gym shorts only in physical education classes.
- Long pants must be of proper waist size and must not hang below the waist with pants not touching or dragging on the ground.
- Belts must not be more than three inches longer than the student's measured waist size.
- Clothing and jewelry shall be free of writing, pictures or any other insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane, sexually suggestive or which advocate negative racial, ethnic, gender or religious prejudice, or glorify the use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or violence.

Hats

Students are not permitted to wear hats inside the school building. Only if approved for a special event or holiday.

ESSA: Parents Right to Know:

As per the national Every Student Succeeds Act, parents have the right to know the following information about the school their child attends:

1. Is the school making Adequate Yearly Progress and what options are available to them if the school is identified as ‘in need of improvement.’”
2. Their child’s level of achievement on the state assessments.
3. The qualifications of their child’s teacher.
4. If their child is being taught by a teacher who is ‘not highly qualified’ for more than four weeks.
5. That they may agree / disagree with the limited English language program participation of their child and to know his / her progress in Limited English Proficient (LEP) assessments.