

OHIO STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

School Hours:

- 8:05 am – Students Enter/Breakfast
- 8:25 am – Doors are Locked
- 8:25 am – Attendance Taken
- 2:40 pm – Cut off for Early Dismissal
- 2:55 pm – Dismissal, beginning with Kindergarten
- 3:00 pm – Buses Leave



Important Phone Numbers:

- Main Office – (315) 785-3755
- Nurse's Office – (315) 779-5504

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES: Students may not enter the building before 8:05 am. The safety of our children is of the utmost importance to us. We have been working with the city, the police department and the school district to ensure that each child arrives at school safely. Please obey all traffic signs in front of the school. Parents should not enter the building during drop off unless instructed to do so by the school secretary. The speed limit is 15 mph in the Ohio School Zone. **You must use the school side of the street for pulling over, dropping off your child and pulling away.**

When dropping your child off in the morning, the area directly in front of the school will be for **Drop and Go Only**. This area will be marked by cones and will allow 6-8 cars to drop off at one time. Students should utilize the passenger side of the vehicle for exiting. We ask that no parent get out of their car when pulling up to this area. This will provide for a smooth Drop and Go transition.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU (THE PARENT/GUARDIAN):

- Please do not park between the cones prior to 8:00 a.m.
- If you are not in between the cones, do not release your child.
- You will be notified when to move forward by school staff located outside.
- If you choose to walk your child to the door, you will need to use the parking lot to the right of the school.
- Please practice with your child(ren) exiting a vehicle with a backpack as we do not have enough staff to assist every student.

***PLEASE DO NOT USE THE WEST PARKING LOT TO DROP OFF CHILDREN. THIS IS FOR BUSES TO UNLOAD AND PICK UP CHILDREN ON SCHEDULE. ***

Dismissal Procedures:

- 2:50 p.m. Announcement to clean up around our work areas
- 2:54 p.m. Kindergarten students begin dismissal
- 2:55 p.m. 4-H/SACC students and walkers line up to dismiss.
Bus students will proceed to the bus waiting room.
- 3:00 p.m. Buses depart

REQUEST FOR EARLY DISMISSAL (PRIOR TO 2:40 PM): There are times when it may be necessary for you to pick up your child before the end of the school day. If you know this information before your child leaves for school, please send a written note to the teacher that contains the child's name, time you will pick up and the reason for the early dismissal. All parents must sign out their child on the sign out sheet provided by the entrance in the grey box. Your child will be brought to you. Please do not attempt to enter the building.

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED FROM THE CLASSROOM TO GO WITH THEIR PARENTS. The teacher will be called from the main office to release each child and they will be sent to the office. Only parents/guardians will be allowed to take the child from the school without written permission. If anyone else is picking up the child, they will need a note from the parent with signed authorization and will be asked to present identification at the time of pick up. **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED WITHOUT WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS.**

After 2:40 pm, parents will be directed to their designated dismissal exit to pick up their child for regular dismissal.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS: The school nurse must have on file a written request from the family physician and parent for prescription and over-the-counter medications. The note must state the dosage and frequency of the prescribed medication. It must be in the original labeled container with the child's name on it and be delivered to the school by the parent or parent's adult designee. **A verbal or telephone request from the parent or physician is not acceptable.** The school nurse can be reached at (315) 7798-5504 for more information.

ATTENDANCE: Any student not in their assigned classroom at 8:25 AM is considered tardy. Upon arrival at the school, the parents must sign their student in on the sign in/sign out sheet provided by the entrance and then the student alone should report to the office for a tardy slip. A written excuse, signed by the parent/guardian must be submitted. Please allow for extra time as the weather conditions worsen.

Each student's presence, absence, tardiness and early departure shall be recorded (in writing or electronically) in a register of attendance during each school day. Any absence will be recorded as excused or unexcused. Parents must notify the school at (315) 785-3755 by 9:00 AM on the day the child will not be in attendance. You may also use the Attendance Feature on Parent Square to send a note to the teacher or the school. If we have not received any notification by 9:00 AM, our automated attendance system will attempt to notify parents/guardians that their child is not in attendance.

BABYSITTERS: If your child goes to a babysitter at the end of the day, please notify your child's teacher so that they have a record of this. This note only needs to be written once for the school year and updated in the event the after-school situation changes.

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS/SCOOTERS: Students are welcome to ride bicycles and scooters to and from school. For your convenience, bicycle racks are found at the front of the school. For security, place your bicycle in the rack and be sure to lock it. The school cannot be responsible if your child's bike is lost or stolen. Students are to walk their bicycles and scooters on the sidewalk entering the school grounds. All scooters are to be folded and skateboards are to be carried into the building for proper storage during the school day. All students must wear helmets to ensure their safety and abide by NYS law.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH: All students who are enrolled at Watertown City School District are eligible to receive a healthy breakfast and lunch **MEAL** at school at **NO CHARGE** to your household. If your student chooses to purchase extra items (a la carte items) such as a second entrée or milk, this will be an additional charge to the student.

Children may also bring their lunch and purchase milk. Milk cannot be charged. Pricing will be available on our website www.watertowncsd.org under the Food Service link. Students must have a positive meal account balance in order to purchase any items. Parents can deposit money into student accounts via www.myschoolbucks.com. Payment will also be accepted in the form of cash or check. These funds will be deposited into your student's account to make purchases.

**Please Note:* We do not have the capacity to heat items sent from home or prepare other food in the event your child does not like the menu entrée being offered. Menus are available on our website at www.watertowncsd.org.

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. If a student breaks the rules, he/she will be issued a bus infraction by the driver. This notice is brought to the principal and acted upon accordingly. If the child is suspended from riding the bus, please be aware that it is the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to and from school. A child needs to be in attendance for a bus suspension to be counted. Keeping the child at home will not satisfy the suspension requirement.

Bus Rules:

- Always follow the driver's instructions
- Stay seated
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself
- Always use appropriate language

Bus Infractions:

- Intervention/Verbal warning
- 2-day bus suspension
- 5-day bus suspension
- 20-day bus suspension and a meeting with the Principal, Transportation Director and Parent to determine reinstatement.

Please Note – Passing a stopped school bus with its lights flashing is against NEW YORK STATE LAW. This includes buses in school driveways as well as roadways.** THIS INCLUDES PARKING LOTS.

CELLULAR PHONE POLICY: V.A. Internet-Enabled Device Policy - Students are prohibited from using internet-enabled devices on school grounds during the school day, including Bluetooth headphones or earbuds, except as expressly permitted under the limited exceptions outlined in this policy. Storage Requirements - Students will be required to store internet-enabled devices securely during the school day. Students in grades PreK-6 must place their devices in a lockable storage container within their classroom.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING: During our long winter months, we often have various weather changes. In the event of a school closing, delayed opening or early dismissal, information will be given over the following radio and television stations and websites.

Radio
WTNY 790 AM
WANT 1240 AM
WCIZ 93.5 FM
WTOJ 103.7 FM

Television
WWNY TV7
WWTI TV50
TV 3 Syracuse

Websites
www.newzjunky.com
www.watertowncsd.org
www.watertowndailytimes.com
Parent Square

Please pay close attention to determine whether it is the WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS that are delaying, closing or dismissing early. They will not mention Ohio Street Elementary School by name in these announcements.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING FORM: Each family is asked to provide the school with information regarding where their child will go in the event of an early school closing. Forms are provided to you each September. If this information should change throughout the year, please notify the classroom teacher and main office with the new information.

EXCUSES: Each time your child is absent from school, NYS Law requires that a written excuse be on file with the school for the absence. If no excuse is written, then it is documented in the child's attendance record as an unexcused absence. Please send excuses with your child the day they return to school. Even though you may have called your child's in absent from school, a written excuse signed by a parent or legal guardian is needed for your child's record.

FIRE DRILLS: Students are instructed and trained to leave the building in a calm and orderly manner should there be an emergency. Eight drills must be held during the school year. Fire prevention instructions are also given to students.

HOME-SCHOOL COORDINATOR'S ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: This 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 the students and makes home visits to parents. If you have any questions or need help dealing with a child's specific attendance problem, please contact Mr. Craig Randall at (315) 778-3029.

IMMUNIZATIONS: Children entering school must be properly immunized, as mandated by NYS Law. Each student entering must show proof of having had at least the minimum required vaccinations. If you have any questions concerning requirements for New York State, please contact the nurse at (315) 779-5504.

LOCK DOWN DRILLS: Periodically, throughout the school year, we perform Lock Down Drills. Teachers and students have pre-established plans in place in the event that an intruder or unsafe situation should arise in our school. Advance notice of these drills will be given on Parent Square.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES: Two parent/teacher conferences are held each year. One conference at the end of the first quarter (December 11th & 12th 2025) to discuss your child's progress and the second conference is held in March (March 13th, 2026). If you wish to set up a conference with your child's teacher at other times, you are encouraged to contact the teacher.

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. There will be opportunities through the PBIS program for rewards throughout the year.

PERSONAL ITEMS: Because we cannot always place personal items in a safe location, it is suggested that personal items of value not be brought in or left at school. Money should not be left in either a student or teacher's desk. Please discourage your child from bringing in person items (toys) unless they are directly related to a class lesson or project and have prior permission from the teacher.

PHYSICAL EXAMS: At Kindergarten Registration, a physician's report form is given to each parent to be completed by their family physician at the time of enrollment. NYS requires that all students new to the district and all K, 2 and 4 students have a physical on file for that school year.

PRESS/MEDIA COVERAGE PERMISSION: A form is sent home for all children attending school. Parents/Guardians are asked to check the applicable box and return the form to school. Should a field trip or activity in school or on school grounds receive press/media coverage, parents would give/deny consent for their child to be taped or have his/her picture taken and possibly show on public television, printed in the newspaper or displayed on the Watertown City School District web page.

PROLONGED ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS: The school nurse's telephone number is (315) 779-5504. The school nurse should be notified if a child will be absent for a long period of time. If in doubt, check with your physician. The school needs to be aware of communicable diseases to protect other students. Should you suspect one of these diseases, contact your physician. School nurses do not diagnose conditions and sending an ill child to school exposes other children.

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 wonderful memories for the elementary school years. You are 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
- Email us at ohioschoolpto@yahoo.com.

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

RECESS: Recess is held daily. Weather permitting, the children will play outside. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the outside weather conditions. For safety reasons, children will not be allowed on the playground equipment during the winter months.

REPORT CARDS: Students will receive a report card three (3) times a year. The report card envelope must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school for the first 2 report periods. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

SACC: The YMCA provides before and after school care at Ohio School for any child enrolled in school. All inquiries about the program must be directed to the SACC staff at (315) 755-2005.

SICKNESS IN SCHOOL: Please be sure that the school has an emergency phone number in case your child becomes sick at school.

SIX-DAY ROTATION: Ohio School runs on a six day rotation schedule. Each student will have PE, Music, Art and Library during the cycle. Your child’s teacher will notify you of the class schedule. Snow days and vacation days are not counted. **Sneakers are required for gym. An old shirt or smock is required for art class.**

TRANSPORTATION: If your child is transported by bus, they will always be sent home by bus unless you send a WRITTEN note to the contrary prior to 2:15 p.m. Permission for a child to ride a different bus home at a different stop CANNOT be given.

VISITORS: ALL VISITORS must report to the main front doors to speak with the office. Please note that after 8:25 AM all doors will be locked. To reach the main office please press the doorbell one time by the door. When answered, state why you are here. Please do not attempt to enter the building unless instructed to do so. Your cooperation is expected.

The Watertown City School District hereby advises students, parents, employees and the general public that it offers employment and educational opportunities without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, creed or religion, marital status, age, gender preference or disability. Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to: Coordinator, Title IX, Section 504 @ 1351 Washington St: P.O. Box 586, Watertown, NY 13601-0586; 315-785-3714.