

**McKinley Elementary School
2026-2027
Student Handbook**



**7 Elm Street
Poland, Ohio 44514**

Phone: 330-757-7014

<https://www.polandbulldogs.com/>

Dear McKinley Family,

I would like to welcome all of you to McKinley Elementary School and to the start of the 2026-2027 school year.

With the start of a new school year comes the feelings of excitement and the nervous energy that is common for everyone. In our Student Handbook, we have included some tips to help with nerves as students transition back to school. Please make sure you read the Student Handbook prior to the start of school.

As educators, we understand that our purpose is to provide high quality education that meets the needs of each individual child. We understand the value of meaningful connections between home and school, and the importance of teaching our children how to be responsible and respectful members of our community. Throughout my 20 years in education, I have realized one thing that has always remained true, when all adults are working together and emphasizing the importance of school, school becomes very important to the child.

As educators, parents, and students, we all have a great responsibility ahead of us. Let us work together to ensure that all of our children have a safe, healthy, and productive start to the school year.

Respectfully,
Matt Beard



WELCOME TO MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!

Here are a few tips to help your child get ready for McKinley!

1. Play School. Have your child sit in a chair or on the couch while you read or speak. Encourage and expect him/her to raise his/her hand to answer questions. Ask him/her to share something related to the topic, too.
2. Take a scheduled bathroom break each day. Ensure your child uses appropriate bathroom skills.
3. Play simple games that emphasize the importance of taking turns.
4. Work on tying shoes, zipping zippers, and fastening pants. **Considering the circumstances, velcro shoes may be best for some of the younger students.**
5. Lunch at school will be very different. Please stress independence and manners when eating. Play “school lunch” and have your child practice opening his/her own juice box and containers. Make sure he or she cleans up after himself/herself, too.
6. Give your child two, three, or four step instructions and check to see how well he/she completes the tasks. Be sure he/she knows what is expected. For example, instruct your child to put all his/her clothes away, straighten up his/her room, and completely empty the dishwasher. Encourage him/her to let you know when the last task is finished so you can check to see what was completed.
7. Play follow the leader. It will be of the utmost importance for students to be able to follow the instructions of their teachers.
8. Limit screen time to the greatest extent possible and encourage your child to read, write, and illustrate stories. Display his/her work on the refrigerator or send it to a relative or friend. Teach your child what it means to have pride in his/her work.
9. Say “No”.

The start of any school year is an exciting time. Let’s do all we can to make sure the start of this one is as rewarding as possible for all McKinley’s students, families, and staff members. Thank you very much.

McKinley Elementary School

McKinley Elementary School offers a safe, warm environment where all students feel welcomed and appreciated. The friendly, nurturing staff provides all students with opportunities to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Our school strives to inspire, engage, and support students in a climate of respect, enthusiasm, and kindness.



McKinley P.A.W.S. Buckets

Positive. **A**lways respectful. **W**orking responsibly. **S**afe.

WHO:

As part of our schoolwide PBIS program, McKinley Elementary students will be rewarded for demonstrating behaviors that align with our PAWS. All staff will pass out PAWS when students are caught being positive, always respectful, working responsibly, and/or safe.

WHAT:

ALL staff members will be given PAWS to pass out to students who are demonstrating PAWS behaviors in the school setting and on the bus. Students will place their earned PAW in one of the PAWS buckets in the school.

WHEN:

As students earn a PAW, they will place the PAW in one of our PAWS buckets in the school. On the last day of each week, we will hold drawings at 2:45. Four students will be selected from each grade to report to the office to choose a prize.

WHERE:

There will be a bucket located in each hallway, in the cafeteria, and in the office.

WHY:

McKinley Elementary staff and students deserve a *Pawsitive* school culture.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule for students will begin at 8:45 a.m. and end at 3:10 p.m.



Beginning of the Day

The start to the first few days of school will be very hectic and may lead to revised plans being shared. I certainly do not expect all students to be settled in their classrooms or even in the building by 8:45 a.m. until a solid routine is established. It will take time and adjustments will be made. Please be patient as student safety is our top priority.

If transporting your child to school yourself, please do not plan on dropping him/her off prior to 8:25 a.m. Our doors will not open until then. Drop off will take place near our Gymnasium doors identified as **B7**. Be very mindful of the buses and other vehicles that will be coming and going. Upon arrival, car riders will use Cortland Street, make a left into the lot and continue around the track to the gym door labeled B7. Have your child exit the vehicle by himself/herself and from the right-hand side. When instructed, pull away slowly.



Families that are returning to McKinley already know it is not the most conducive to morning traffic. With parents planning on transporting their children to school, there is no doubt traffic will be challenging. I certainly realize that a 20-minute window (8:25 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.) is not ideal. Please understand that adjustments can and will be made to procedures. Once a solid routine to the start of the day is established, students arriving after 8:45 a.m. will be considered tardy. All attendance policies will still be followed.

End of the Day

If you wish to pick up your child at the end of the day, understand it will be your responsibility to inform the office and your child's teacher. You can do so by providing a written note to the teacher and calling the school's office. This cannot be a daily decision.

Parents/Guardians when picking up will use Cortland Street.

1. Use Cortland Street for car riders.
2. Make a left into the lot and go around the track, and you will be greeted by a teacher.
3. Be prepared to show identification.
4. Pull up to a designated loading area at the gym doors B7.
5. For the time being, your child will be brought to the vehicle.
6. Make sure his/her seatbelt is fastened.
7. When directed, slowly pull away.



It may take a few days to iron out the kinks, but it will not take long for us to establish a smooth process. The Poland Village Police Officer assigned to our school will be assisting staff with drop-off and pick-up procedures along with another adult.

Transportation

State law mandates that all children must be picked up and dropped off at the same stop daily. State law also mandates that there can be no short-term bus changes. By written request to the bus coordinator, bus changes may be made for the entire school year. **If you wish for your child to be a car rider, you need to inform the school.**

When necessary, the bus driver will issue “white slips” to indicate bus violations. White slips may be sent to the building principals who may then meet with students and contact parents. Repeated violations may lead to suspension from the bus.

State law mandates we enforce these rules and regulations:

- ALL STUDENTS MUST BE AT A DESIGNATED PLACE OF SAFETY DETERMINED BY THE DRIVER.
EXAMPLE : PLACE OF SAFETY IS 10 FEET FROM THE STREET ON YOUR DRIVEWAY.
- STUDENTS SHOULD BE AT THEIR BUS STOP (5) FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE BUS ARRIVAL TIME.
- STUDENTS MUST GO DIRECTLY TO AN AVAILABLE SEAT OR ASSIGNED SEAT AND REMAIN SEATED.
KEEP AISLES CLEAR. NO STANDING.
- NO EATING, DRINKING OR CHEWING GUM, OR USE OF TOBACCO ON THE BUS.
- STUDENTS MUST NOT PUT ARMS, HEADS OR THROW OBJECTS OUT THE WINDOW.
- WINDOWS MAY BE OPENED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE BUS DRIVER.
- STUDENTS MUST LEAVE OR BOARD THE BUS AT THE LOCATION THEY HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED
UNLESS THEY HAVE PARENTAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORIZATION TO DO OTHERWISE.
- MARKING OR POKING HOLES IN SEATS IS NOT PERMITTED.
- CONTINUED DISORDERLY CONDUCT OR PERSISTENT REFUSAL TO FOLLOW THE RULES PRESENTS
A SAFETY HAZARD WHICH CAN RESULT IN LOSING BUS RIDE PRIVILEGES.

School Attendance

Regular attendance will be a key component of your child's future success. Absences, tardiness, and early dismissals need to be kept to an absolute minimum. In some cases, problems with any of the above will be turned over to the Mahoning County Attendance Officer.



If your child is going to be absent, please call the school at 330-757-7014 between 8:00 a.m and 8:30 a.m.

A note from a parent/guardian is required by state law when a student returns from an absence. The note should contain the reason why the student was absent. If your child has been seen by a physician, please request a note for our school records in order to excuse the absence. All notes (signed excuses) must be turned in 24-48 hours after the child returns to school.

Family Vacations

We encourage all vacations to be taken during designated school vacation times. However, we realize that this is not always possible. If you are taking a vacation during school time, please follow the following Board of Education vacation policy:

Students may use five days of the school year for family vacations. No work may be made up for any days missed beyond these five days. A grade of zero will be given for this missed work. All requests for vacation-absence must be made in writing at least one week prior to the time the student will be absent.

Personal Appearance

Students should wear clothing with an emphasis on modesty, neatness, and good taste. All clothing must be appropriate for the school setting. The school has the right to rule against specific articles of clothing and general appearance for reasons of safety, health, appropriateness, and/or disruption of the educational setting.



Items not permitted to be worn in school and/or classrooms are hats (for boys and girls), short-shorts, bare midriff or spaghetti strap tops, and clothing with improper language, pictures, messages, or drawings. Extreme dress/clothing or hairstyles that attract undue attention or cause a disruption to the educational process are not permitted.

Shorts may be worn year-round. Please be aware of the fact that we do have outdoor recess during the cold winter months. Socks must be worn at all times. Students must wear shoes that cover their toes and the backs of their feet. Sandals/Flip flops are not permitted in the elementary buildings due to safety issues.

Please notify the school if your child is diagnosed with a communicable/contagious illness. The Ohio Department of Health's Guidelines are followed for communicable/contagious diseases. Thank you.

Those who may become injured or feel ill should let a staff member know immediately. If an injury is minor, the school nurse or designee will treat the child. If any injury or illness is of a serious nature, the procedure on the student's Pupil Emergency Card will be followed.

Bathroom accidents are simply part of an elementary school. A parent/guardian of a student who has one will be notified as soon as possible. In most cases, clean clothes can be provided. However, the accident may require the student to be picked up from school. Please have a plan in place.

Dispensing of a Medication at School

There are some instances when a student must take medication during school hours. If and when this is necessary, parental permission authorizing the student to selfadminister and/or dispense said medication is required. In all such instances, the parent or guardian has assumed full responsibility.

In instances where medication must be taken during the school year, the following procedures are to be followed.

- A. A medication form is to be completed and signed by the student's parent or guardian authorizing school personnel to witness the student's self-administration of the medication, and agreeing they will (1) deliver the medication to the school, (2) notify the school if they change physicians, and (3) notify the school if the medication, dosage, or procedure has changed, or should be discontinued. A physician signature is required for all prescription medications administered at school.
- B. The written and signed physician's request must identify:
 - 1. The student
 - 2. The medication and dosage or procedure required
 - 3. The times required

4. Possible reactions which should be reported to the physician
5. Special instruction including storage and sterile requirements
6. Date when medication or procedure should be terminated
7. Physician's name, address, and phone number

C. A section on the form is to be completed and signed by the school principal and/or each person witnessing the student's self-administration of the medication.

D. Medication must be brought to the school office in the original prescription bottle.

School Breakfast/Lunch Program

Students will be eating in the cafeteria and under the direct supervision of teachers and staff members.

Students may pack a lunch from home or purchase one from the cafeteria. Weekly/Monthly menus are posted on the district's website. Students must remain seated at the tables during breakfast/lunch and follow all of the established rules. Custodians and other members of the staff will be nearby to deal with spills and the collection and disposal of trash.



If your child will be packing a lunch, please be sure to provide items he/she can **EASILY** manage and independently open. In consideration of the district's Wellness Policy, our students are not permitted to bring carbonated beverages to school. In addition, parents may not drop off fast food lunches.

Negative Account Balances

Negative lunch account balances will carry over from year-to-year until paid in full or until a student enters 9th grade. Upon entering 9th grade, any negative lunch account balances will be converted to school fees.

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for paying all fees in accordance with Policy 6152 Student Fees, Fines, and Charges. Fee waivers are applied in accordance with Policy 6152.01 - Waivers of School Fees for Instructional Materials.

Students who have qualified for Free lunches are still responsible for paying off any debt that was incurred prior to qualifying for free lunches.

Recess/Movement Breaks

Students will have daily recess and movement breaks.

Personal Property

All personal property should be marked with the student's name. Children are also discouraged from wearing expensive items such as jewelry and/or Apple Watches.

Backpacks are permitted for K-3 students. Upon arriving, the classroom teacher will determine how the backpacks will be stored.



Students are not permitted to bring toys, games, playground balls, and/or electronic devices such as cell phones or tablets. If an expensive and/or valuable item is not brought to school, it cannot be misplaced, lost, or stolen.

Code of Conduct

The Poland Board of Education has adopted a Code of Conduct that governs students attending the Poland Schools. The Code of Conduct is posted at various locations in the building. Simply stated, any conduct that causes disruption with any school function or activity or interferes with the health, safety, or rights of others is prohibited.

This code of conduct is in effect while students are under the authority of the school personnel or involved in any school activity.

Anti-Harassment, Anti-Intimidation, or Anti-Bullying

As Per Ohio Legislative House Bill 276, the Ohio State Board of Education ANTIHARASSMENT, ANTI-INTIMIDATION OR ANTI-BULLYING Model Policy, and this School District's Board of Education Policy:

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in this school district is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying”, in accordance with Ohio law, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts i.e., Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any

official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel including placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students'/personal property; and,
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

Anyone who witnesses or suspects that a student or adult is being harassed, intimidated, or bullied in any way should report it immediately to a staff member.

Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment

The following policy applies to all Poland students:

“Students who engage in sexual harassment on school premises or off school premises at a school-sponsored activity will be subject to appropriate discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion. Sexual harassment is any activity of a sexual nature that is unwanted or unwelcome, including but not limited to, unwanted touching, pinching, patting, verbal comments of a sexual nature, sexual name-calling, pressure to engage in sexual activity, repeated propositions, and unwanted body contact.”

School Fee

The Poland Board of Education requires a general fee. The \$20.00 fee is due during the first week of school. Checks should be made payable to the Poland Schools. Please advise the school as soon as possible if you are unable to pay the fee.

Reporting Academic Progress

Students will receive report cards one week after grading periods end with the exception of the last grading period. (These report cards are sent home on the last day of school.)



Special Areas

All students will have the opportunity to attend specials throughout the week. McKinley Elementary offers five specials classes that are each 40 minutes in length:

- Physical Education
- Library
- Art
- Music
- Technology

Birthdays

Celebrating a student's birthday is permitted during school hours and will be left up to the discretion of the classroom teacher. **However, no homemade treats will be distributed to students.** Please do not have items such as balloons or flowers sent to the school. They will not be delivered. Invitations to parties outside of the school will not be distributed at school *unless* **everyone** in the class is invited and/or all boys are invited to a boy party and/or all girls are invited to a girl party.