

Lancaster Central School District

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Superintendent of Schools
Bethany Henke, Principal



Como Park Elementary School

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A Note from the Principal

Dear Como Park Families,

Welcome to a new school year! I am excited and honored to join the Como Park Elementary School community as your new principal. As we begin this school year together, I want to thank you for the warm welcome and kindness so many of you have already shown. Our first day of learning, a full school day, is **Tuesday, September 8th**.

Our team is looking forward to a year filled with learning, friendship, and memorable experiences. We believe that strong partnerships between home and school are essential to student success, and I encourage you to stay connected throughout the year. Together, we can make this an outstanding year for every student.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children each day. I look forward to getting to know your family and seeing all that we will accomplish together. If you ever have questions or wish to reach me, please call the school and set up an appointment or email me at bhenke@lancasterschools.org. Here's to a wonderful school year!

Warmly,

Bethany Henke

Mrs. Bethany Henke, Principal

Important Dates

- Tuesday, September 1st: Grades 1-3 Supply Drop Off (4:00-6:00 PM)
 - This year's Grade 1-3 supply drop off will be a drive through event. Please label your supply bags with your child's name, teacher name and room number. Families can bring supplies to the front doors and we will deliver items to the classrooms so they are ready to go on your child's first day of school. The building will not be open to families that night. Medication drop-off will also occur at this time.
- Thursday, September 3rd: Kindergarten Supply Drop Off

- Kindergarten families will be coming at a separate time to drop off their supplies. Please see the additional document provided to kindergarten families for information. Medication drop-off will also occur at this time.
- Friday, September 18th: PTO Welcome Back Social
- Thursday, September 24th: Curriculum Night - Early Release Day

Handbook Highlights

1. New Attendance & Absence Notification Policy

The biggest change this year is that parents no longer need to call the school on the morning of an absence. Instead, the custodial parent will receive an automated phone call whenever their child is reported absent. To ensure this system works, families must keep their contact information current in the Parent Portal. Additionally, the school has set a goal for students to miss no more than 8 days of school per year to ensure educational success.

2. Arrival and Late Procedures

School hours are 9:20 AM - 4:00 PM. Students may enter classrooms at 9:20 AM. Doors are locked at 9:30 AM. Late arrivals must be signed into the main office by an adult. For morning drop-offs, please have your child seated on the passenger side to exit independently at our six designated unloading spots. For safety, approach the parking lot heading north on Oxford from Richmond (avoiding Como Park Blvd). You are welcome to park and walk your child to the door.

3. Dismissal Protocols and Deadlines

Early dismissals are not permitted after 3:30 PM. We use a pickup number system. If you need a number, we will assign one. Please park in the front and report to the pickup entrance near the main doors at 3:50 PM with your assigned number and photo identification.

4. Changes in Dismissal Arrangements

We encourage families to use our district's bus service. For any changes to a student's typical dismissal routine, please send a signed note that morning. We cannot process dismissal changes via email or verbal updates. While the office can be called in emergencies, we strongly prefer written notes and ask that parents avoid making calls close to dismissal time.

5. Free Breakfast and Lunch Services

A helpful reminder for families is that all students are eligible to receive free breakfast and lunch for the school year. Students make their lunch selections in the classroom each morning. Breakfast is served when school starts, and students do not need to arrive early to participate. For any additional snack purchases, parents can use the electronic Point-of-Sales system to prepay, which helps the lines move faster.

The full version of the [Como Park Student Handbook](#) is available on our website.

Attendance Matters

Every day counts! Our goal is for every student to attend school regularly so they can learn, build friendships, and be part of our school community. Research suggests that children who are chronically absent for multiple school years between preschool and second grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the third grade. This has been shown elsewhere to make students four times more likely to not graduate from high school. Please reach out to us if you need support with attendance.

Information from our District Office

Water Safety: Education Law section 926, effective July 1, 2026, requires school districts to provide electronic or written information on water safety to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, the school district has published this information on its website: [Lancaster Central School District water safety information](#)

In addition, the New York State Department of Health has created a tip card titled [Safe Swimming Tips for Everyone](#) for the purpose of providing information regarding drowning prevention, water safety, and safe and healthy swimming. Please review this information with your child.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: To learn more about FERPA, please visit our website: [Lancaster Central School District FERPA information](#)

Get Involved (PTO)

We invite all families to join our Parent Teacher Organization to help create a vibrant and supportive community for our students. We look forward to working together to make this a fantastic year for everyone! See below for a list of PTO meeting dates this school year:

- Wednesday September 23, 2026 @ 6 pm
- Thursday October 15, 2026 @ 6 pm
- Wednesday November 18, 2026 @ 6 pm
- Monday December 7, 2026 @ 5 pm (Holiday Hallways event set up/Not a regular meeting)
- Wednesday January 13, 2027 @ 6 pm
- Thursday February 11, 2027 @ 6 pm
- Wednesday March 10, 2027 @ 6 pm
- Thursday April 15, 2027 @ 6 pm
- Wednesday May 12, 2027 @ 5:30 pm
- Wednesday June 9, 2027 @ 6 pm