Pequenakonck Elementary School
August 2026

PQ POINTERS



Our School Colors: Blue and Gold

Our School Mascot: Cubby the Tiger

Website: www.northsalemschools.org

Instagram: pq_elemenentary

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NorthSalemSchoolDistrict

North Salem Mission and Beliefs

Engage students to continuously learn, question, define, and solve problems through critical and creative thinking.

In pursuit of this, we believe that:

- All students are capable of learning.
- All students are supported and challenged to continuously improve.
- Academic, intra and interpersonal skills are essential for success.
- The learning environment must be safe, ethical and respectful.
- Everyone in the community shares responsibility for student development.
- Collaboration, data, and evidence guide decision-making.

Profile of a North Salem Fifth Grader as a Problem Solver

Welcome from Mrs. Snowdon

Principal

Welcome to Pequenakonck Elementary School! We are proud to lead this wonderful learning community. PQ Pointers was created to provide some basic information for families about the ins and outs of daily life at PQ. The topics are in alphabetical order for ease in finding what you are looking for. We hope you find this helpful and welcome any feedback that would make this as useful as possible!

Helpful Numbers

Pequenakonck Telephone Number (914) 669-5317
Pequenakonck Fax (914) 669-4326
Health Office Fax (914) 669-5442
District Office (914) 669-5414 ext. 1011
Transportation (914) 669-5414 ext. 1038
Bus Garage (914) 669-5854
School address: 173 June Road, North Salem, NY 10560

School and Office Hours

Main Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
School Hours: 8:55 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.
Two-Hour Delay: 10:55 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.
Early or Emergency Dismissal: Dismiss at 11:55 a.m.
Pre K - 9:15 - 2:15

School and District Communication Tools

All of these resources are available on the district website.

District Website: www.northsalemschools.org

Parent Portal-REQUIRED	This provides parents access to their child's teacher in August as well as report cards in January and June. Parents can update phone numbers and email addresses as well throughout the school year.	Click here to link to Parent Portal Click here to link to Parent Portal Tutorial Click here for First Time Parent Portal Registration
Superintendent's News Service - IMPORTANT	E-mail, text, and phone notifications for emergency situations, such as a delayed opening or early closing, is sent as soon as possible after a decision is reached.	
Arbiter (formerly Family ID) - REQUIRED	A service to help parents sign-off annually on required district policies like attendance, the Code of Conduct, permission for photos and computer acceptable use.	Click here to link to Arbiter
School Dismissal Manager - REQUIRED	This is a REQUIRED service for school safety. This app lets you notify the school about your child's dismissal plan each day as well as the way to report absences and late arrivals. All families will receive an email in late August to get started using this service for the 26-27 school year.	Click here to link to School Dismissal Manager
PTC Wizard - Required to sign up for conferences	A service to sign up for parent/teacher conferences in November and April.	Click here to link to PTC Wizard
My SchoolBucks	A service for paying for breakfast, lunch, milk or a snack. Please be sure to look at setting up alerts to remind you when your account gets low. In addition, there are controls to help you manage what you	Click here to link to My SchoolBucks

	would like your child to purchase or not purchase. You need your child's ID number for this service as well. We will be piloting using My SchoolBucks as a way to pay for field trips in conjunction with Family ID and field trip permissions. You will learn more about this during the year.	
Membership Toolkit- PTO Information NEW	PTO activities and services as well as the School Directory for PTO Members	Click here to link to Membership Toolkit
Blackboard Notifications	A communication vehicle from the District to PQ and the MS/HS parents. Used for routine announcements and for some emergencies such as power outages. **We use the phone, text and email information you provide each year.** Please keep your own and emergency contact information current in the Parent Portal.	Click here to link to Parent Portal Click here to link to Parent Portal Tutorial Click here for First Time Parent Portal Registration

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Afterschool Enrichment Activities (ASE)

The PQ PTO offers a large assortment of afterschool enrichment activities in the Fall and Spring. These classes range from cooking, dance, art, soccer, etc.. Each class runs for 6-10 weeks from 3:35 - 4:30 (unless otherwise noted in class description) and has a fee attached to it. Registration for classes is through the PTO Membership Toolkit app and is on a first-come first-serve basis! Parents are responsible for picking up their children at 4:30. The late bus is NOT available for ASE. Please put this recurring dismissal change in School Dismissal Manager. For safety reasons, parents are required to sign students out at the end of ASE class. Please note that some ASE classes are held off-site and may require transportation.

Allergies in the Classroom

Some students have food allergies that require us to ensure the safety of those students when food is being eaten in the classroom. The school nurse makes accommodation decisions based on the information from parents and physicians. Sometimes that means that the particular food can not be brought to the classroom for snack time. Parents in a particular class where there are food restrictions will receive a letter from the nurse stating this. Due to food allergies, food sharing among students is not allowed. While we discourage food treats for celebrations like birthdays and class parties, all food items brought into a classroom where there are students with allergies must be approved by the school nurse. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our children safe.

Assemblies /Field Trips

Assembly programs are considered an important extension of the regular instructional program. During assemblies, we expect students to relax and enjoy themselves, but also learn from what is being presented. We teach appropriate audience participation at assemblies to make the experience enjoyable for everyone. Most assemblies are sponsored by our PTO and enrich our learning environment.

Every grade level participates in a number of wonderful curriculum-related field trips. Some of these are also subsidized by the PTO. An additional payment from families may be required. Your classroom teacher will inform you of all field trip details, including date, time, cost, and if chaperones are needed. Scholarships are available for field trips. Please contact the classroom teacher if you would like more information. Parents are required to sign a permission slip in order for their child to attend.

Behavioral Expectations, Yale RULER, Ben's Bells

Our philosophy at PQ is to teach expected behaviors in all areas of the school. We review these expectations on a regular basis and refer to them often. All teachers and staff at PQ help and encourage students to follow these expectations and use restorative practices to correct inappropriate behaviors.

Yale RULER is our program to support people of all ages to develop emotional intelligence skills. We help students understand the value of emotions as well as teach them the skills of self-awareness, emotional regulation with the goal of creating positive relationships and a positive learning environment. These lessons happen throughout the school year in every classroom.

PQ students are kind! In collaboration with Ben's Bells, we implement the Kind Campus program throughout the school to teach the skills of intentional kindness.

Birthdays and Classroom Celebrations

We do love to celebrate birthdays and other special events at PQ. We would prefer non-food ways to honor your child on his/her birthday due to allergies as well as to follow our wellness policy. Ideas include reading a book to the class, passing out a token (like a birthday pencil) to celebrate the special day. We do not allow children to pass out invitations to birthday parties in school or on the bus. This activity detracts from the business of school and may lead to hurt feelings. Class parties are periodically planned by teachers with the help of volunteer class parents. Occasions such as holidays or a special class achievement are often celebrated. Healthy food (if served) and awareness of students with allergies are required.

Breakfast/Lunch/Snack

Breakfast and lunch are available daily at PQ. Breakfast is grab-and-go style. Students who want breakfast should go to the cafeteria at arrival time before heading to their classroom

Lunch is thirty minutes long for each grade level. Students may bring lunch from home or they may order a lunch from the cafeteria. The school menu is published monthly on the district website. Our food service company serves hot lunch, sandwiches, salads, bagels or yogurt daily. Other items are available such as fruit, snacks, milk, juices, and water. These may be purchased independently from lunch. We are constantly reviewing and improving our food service to include greater selections and many healthy choices.

The North Salem Central School District uses MySchoolBucks as a means for parents to automatically pay for school snacks. In NYS breakfast and lunch is currently free to all students.

Parents can load money onto their child's account or can send a check to the cafeteria and the food service vendor will upload the check to the account. If parents do not wish for their children to purchase certain items, please contact our food service director, Kaycee Czyzak at **Czyzak-Kaycee@aramark.com**
and she will be able to put notes on your child's account to indicate your preferences.

Although School breakfast and lunch are free to all, if you qualify for Free breakfast/ lunch according to federal financial guidelines, you still need to complete the application. Forms are available here.

Many classrooms have a snack time during the school day. Teachers will provide information to parents for their particular child's classroom. The district encourages healthy snacks in accordance with the district wellness policy.

Bus Expectations

It is important for students to be **Responsible, Respectful, and Safe** on the bus by following the rules below:

Use a level 1 or 2 voice so the bus driver can stay focused and calm.
Be respectful by moving into the window seat so that others will have a place to sit.
Stay safe by remaining seated, facing forward, and buckled until the bus comes to your stop.

Please review these rules with your child regularly to ensure students' safety.

Code of Conduct

The North Salem School District Code of Conduct can be accessed through this link. You will need to sign-off using Family ID to let us know you understand the Code of Conduct. This happens before school starts each year.

Curriculum/Curriculum Nights

PQ curricula follows New York State Next Generation Learning Standards.

Curriculum Nights are held annually in September for all grade levels. This is an important evening to meet your child's teacher and hear about the learning that will take place for the year. Classroom teachers share curriculum, communication vehicles, behavioral expectations as well as how you can support your child throughout the year. These are evenings for parents ONLY.

District Calendar

Each Spring the district adopts a school calendar for the following year. It is important for children to be in school as many days as possible. If students are not in school, they miss important instruction. Please plan vacations during scheduled school vacations in order to

maximize student attendance and learning. The school calendar also indicates early dismissal days as well as days set aside for Parent-Teacher Conferences and Professional Development days. The district calendar can be found on the district website.

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

Student drop-off takes place in the lower parking lot in front of the gym and begins at 8:05. For safety reasons, children should be ready to get out of the car when you pull up to the curb. It is important that children have their backpacks on and other items ready to be able to step out of the car. Parents should not be getting out of their cars in the drop-off line. If your child needs a little extra time or help to get out of the car, please pull into a parking spot and walk your child to the sidewalk via the crosswalk. This better ensures safety for everyone and keeps the drop-off line moving.

Parent pick-up takes place in the lower parking lot in front of the gym and begins at 3:25. Parents/adults remain in their cars and wait patiently for a staff member to bring your child to the car. All children going to parent pick-up must have permission to do so through School Dismissal Manager. All adults who pick up students must be prepared to show identification should the adults managing parent pick-up not know them.

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Genius Hour

Genius Hour is an opportunity for students in Grades 3-5 to engage in several STEAM type activities that take place during lunch and recess throughout the school in the Library Media Center. This program is part of our schoolwide enrichment program and is available to all students in grades 3-5. Students can self-select any activity in which they would like to participate. The topics range from rocketry, coding, and green screen videos. Students find out about the different offerings when they visit the library each week with their classroom teacher.

PQ Enrichment Program

PQ is proud to offer an enrichment program for students in grades 3 - 5. Students have many opportunities to get involved in a variety of ways. All students in grades 3 -5 are evaluated through multiple assessments as well as teacher recommendation to qualify for different aspects of the program. Students may qualify to participate in one or more of the following: Junior Great Books (grade 3), Math Olympiad, Independent Projects, Math Compacting, and more! The enrichment teacher holds an information session for parents each fall.

Instrumental Music

PQ offers students in Grades 4 and 5 the opportunity to join the school band. At the end of Grade 3, students have the opportunity to see, hear, and view the individual band instruments and then indicate their top three instrument choices. Once the children have been assigned their instruments, lessons take place each week in small groups on a rotating basis. Students

are pulled out of academic classes and specials for their lessons and are required to make up any missed work. Beginning in February, students will practice as a band once a week during recess until their concert in June.

STEAM

Once in a six-day cycle, every class in grades K-5 takes part in a STEAM Class. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math. Dr. Hundzyski works with students, engaging them in the engineering and design processes. This hands-on class allows students to collaborate with peers and engage in Critical and Creative thinking.

Kindergarten - Half Days/Full Days

Kindergartners begin each school year with half days - 8:25 - 11:30 am. During these days, each student is assigned a callback appointment where he/she meets individually with the classroom teacher to get to know one another and administer some baseline assessments. There are approximately 5-7 half days based on enrollment. Bus transportation is provided home at 11:55. The YMCA provides childcare for students who need supervision from 12:00 - 3:35 for a fee.

Late Bus

The late bus leaves PQ at 4:30 p.m. This is only for school-sponsored activities and available for students Tuesday through Thursday. Late buses cannot be used for transportation from ASE activities. Please contact the bus company at (914) 669-5854 to find out your child's drop-off point and drop-off time on the late bus route. Please note that the late bus also serves students from the MS/HS. In addition, your bus stop may be different from your usual stop. For these reasons and to ensure student safety, we recommend that only students in grades 3 - 5 take the late bus home. Parents are advised to pick up students in grades K-2 who stay beyond 3:35.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held in December and April. Conferences are held from 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm, and children do not attend school that day. These are opportunities for parents to speak with any of their child's teachers about their progress towards standards. These conferences fall at the end of Trimester 1 and Trimester 2. We believe parent-teacher conferences are important for understanding your child's strengths and areas for growth. Parents make appointments for these conferences using PTC Wizard, an app that can be accessed on the district website or district app. Classroom teachers as well as specialists are available for parent-teacher conferences on these days. Parents are also welcome to reach out to teachers at other times of the year if they have concerns about their child's progress.

Parking

Visitor parking is available in the lower parking lot in front of the school. The bus loading area/fire lane must remain vacant at all times. Parking in the front of the building is not permitted.

PTO and Membership Toolkit

PQ welcomes all parents and guardians to be a part of our PTO. This group sponsors many family activities like the Harvest Festival as well as cultural performances and Afterschool Enrichment Activities (ASE). Parents are asked to join the PTO by using the MembershipToolkit app. This provides parents access to communications from the PTO, access to register for Afterschool Enrichment Activities, as well as the school directory so you are able to contact your child's friends. PTO meetings take place in the Multipurpose Room or at the MSHS. Most meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 am. The first meeting of the year is always the first day of school at 9:30 am. All are welcome and encouraged to attend! If you have any questions regarding the PTO send an email to PQPTO@northsalemschools.org.

Recess

Recess is a wonderful opportunity for students to engage in free play with friends across their grade level. Each class has recess for 30 minutes daily. Students are able to participate in recess games such as soccer, basketball, gaga and more as well as play imaginative games and utilize the playground equipment. It is a chance to enjoy some physical activity as well as social engagement. Our trained paras and TAs supervise students during recess and facilitate when problems arise. Children should wear appropriate clothing for recess conditions including snow gear during the winter months. Indoor recess during rainy or very cold days are also supervised by para/TA staff. Students in grades 3 - 5 will have opportunities to choose from a variety of activities for indoor recess. Students are expected to follow school behavioral expectations during indoor and outdoor recess.

MTSS and Remedial Services

In accordance with NYS Response-to-Intervention, PQ is committed to providing high-quality instruction and intervention to match student needs. To this end, students are assessed, instructed with tiered interventions, and progress monitored. We offer a variety of remedial services, including remedial reading and math services provided by specialists as well as targeted in-class instruction to ensure students' success.

School Dismissal Manager

Pequenakonck Elementary has adopted an electronic dismissal management system called School Dismissal Manager. This web-based program allows you, the parent, to schedule and update your child(ren)'s dismissal plans at the click of a button on your mobile device or laptop computer. This system allows parents to communicate their child's change in dismissal plans safely, easily, and quickly! It replaces notes and phone calls to the office since all the information you enter can be viewed by school staff. This is also the mechanism by which parents log their students' absences, early pickup, or late arrivals.

Parents will have until 12:00 pm each full school day (and 10:00 am on half days) to change the arrangements for that day. Parents can even enter recurring dismissals into the system quickly and easily. Each school day, School Dismissal Manager sends a comprehensive dismissal listing to the school shortly after the cutoff time. Your cooperation is appreciated in using this tool to help keep dismissal time safe and orderly.

School Hours

Students arriving by car before 8:05 am must wait with their parents.
Supervision for students begins at 8:05 am in the multipurpose room.
Grades K-5 8:55 am - 3:35 pm
Early dismissal: 11:55 am
Two-hour delay: School starts at 10:55 am
Three-hour delay: School starts at 11:55 am
Please make any changes to your child's dismissal, including an early dismissal, in School Dismissal Manager. Also, please log absences or late arrivals in the School Dismissal Manager.
Parent Pickup at the end of the day will begin at 3:25 pm at the lower parking lot.

PRE-K School Hours
9:15 - 2:15
Drop-off begins at 9:00 and ends at 9:15 at the lower parking lot. Please do not pull up to the curb until all buses have left the upper parking lot.

School Sponsored Activities (Running Club, Chorus, Basketball, Student Council)

PQ offers a few activities for students. We do not run very many activities because we do not want to compete with town athletics as well as the comprehensive ASE program. Fourth and fifth graders can participate in the fall Running Club organized by Mr. Gilchrist as well as the winter basketball club run by Mr. Mackenzie. Our wonderful music teacher, Mr. Franzone, organizes a chorus program from January to June for 4th and 5th graders. Mrs. Bartholdi and Dr. Hester run the Student Council from January to June. All of these activities run from 3:35

pm - 4:30 pm and students may take the late bus home. Teachers will send out additional information in Tuesday Newsday at the appropriate time of year.

School Safety Procedures

Safety is very important in the North Salem Central School District. We conduct the required safety drills each year, including evacuation and lockdown drills. Each year, parents receive our Emergency and Reunification Brochure as a reminder of procedures should we ever have a situation that warrants them.
PQ has a school Resource Officer from the Westchester County PD in the building 5 days a week.

Six-Day Cycle/Specials

PQ is on a six-day schedule, "A-F" days. In the event that the school is closed due to inclement weather, we will change the letter day to accommodate the snow day. If Monday is an "A" day and Tuesday is a snow day, Wednesday will be a "B" day. This will ensure students the most opportunities to visit specials, such as art, music, and physical education, as well as their support services and STEAM classes. Letter days are posted on the website each day.

Special Education and Related Services

PQ offers a full continuum of services for students with special education needs. A formal process through the Committee on Special Education is required to determine eligibility and create an Individualized Education Plan. PQ also serves students who are eligible under Section 504. PQ offers related services including speech and language, occupational therapy, physical therapy and/or counseling services for students determined to be in need of these therapies.

Student Absences and Tardiness

Student attendance is very important at PQ. Students miss important lessons and activities when they are absent from school. It is our belief that good attendance and on-time arrivals are essential to success in school. Being late to school/class can be upsetting for a child because he/she arrives after work has started and misses general directions for the day.

When a student is absent from school, we require parents to use the School Dismissal Manager to report that absence. We ask parents to report their child's absence by 8:00 am. If a parent neglects to notify us, we will call the parent at home or at work, if necessary. This procedure protects all of our students, confirming their arrival at school or non-attendance for the day. Upon returning to school after an absence, a note to the teacher is required. This note must contain the date/days of absence, the reason for the absence, and the parent's signature. In accordance with the North Salem Attendance Policy, all absences and late arrivals are recorded. Students reported absent more than nine times per semester or late regularly will be reported to the principal for consultation and action.

Students arriving late report directly to the office before going to class. If you know your child is going to be late, please report that in the School Dismissal Manager.

Student Assessment/Report Cards

Students at PQ take a variety of assessments throughout the year. Three times each year, students in grades 1 - 5 take the STAR assessment as a universal screener to establish a baseline level of performance, monitor progress, and help identify academic needs. Students in kindergarten take STAR as well as other baseline assessments to inform instruction. A variety of other standardized and informal assessments are administered throughout the year, including DIBELS and curriculum-based assessments. We strongly encourage all students in grades 3-5 to participate in the NYS ELA and Math assessments. These assessments help inform our curriculum, instruction, and student performance levels. Teachers also use assessments to determine proficiency of curriculum standards that are recorded on our biannual report cards (January and June). Click here for more information about assessments at PQ!

Student Council

The Student Council is organized for students in grades 1-5. We are proud of our school's student leaders! The Student Council serves the following purposes: To provide a forum for sharing ideas from the entire student body; to offer opportunities to develop leadership and expression of ideas; to help students take an interest in school activities and to help provide these activities; to assist the teachers and principal in formulating school policies and programs. Student Council representatives are appointed or elected by each class in the fall. The following is expected of the representatives: to attend all meetings; to be willing to make constructive contributions to the quality of school life; to report back to the class about Student Council activities and decisions; to ask others their opinions and to convey those opinions at the Student Council meetings. Students MUST have permission through the School Dismissal Manager to stay after school for each of these meetings.

Student Dress

Students' clothing should not be a distraction to their learning or other students' learning. It should be comfortable and enable them to safely play and learn, both outdoors and in the classroom. Sneakers with wheels and flip-flops are not permitted. Hats, hoods and bandanas may be worn to school, but not in the classroom. T-shirts, hats, buttons, etc. should display language and content appropriate for school. For more information, see the district policy for student dress.

Student Performances/Audience Support

During the year, the students along with the teaching staff work very hard in preparing public performances for family and friends. We ask all attendees to demonstrate appropriate audience behavior. We teach our students these behaviors throughout the school year and these performances are wonderful ways for students and adults to practice these skills and honor the work of the performers. Siblings and other students not participating in the concert are asked to sit with their parents during the performance.

Tuesday Newsday

Tuesday Newsday is our weekly communication to parents with information regarding school-based activities and events. Each Tuesday you will receive an email providing you with up-to-date school information. Links to community groups for upcoming events are also available. Tuesday Newsday will include administrative communications and timely PTO information. Classroom teachers will inform you of their communication method on Curriculum Night.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome at PQ! All visitors, including parents and school volunteers, are required to stop and sign in at the security office. Visitors should be prepared to show identification and have their picture taken for visitor badges. A new visitor badge is required for each visit. We ask that visitors identify where they are going in the building and limit any interruptions to classroom instruction. Visitors must have an appointment or reason for visiting the building. This is for the safety of everyone in the building. Students are not allowed to bring school-aged friends or relatives to school without prior permission from the principal. Visitor's badges must be returned to the security office at the end of the visit.

Weather/Emergency Closings/Delays and Notifications

When it becomes necessary to close the schools prior to the start of the school day or delay the opening due to hazardous weather conditions you will receive a Superintendent's message by phone, text, email. It will also be posted on the district homepage.

YMCA - Before and Afterschool Care

The YMCA provides before and after school care for students in grades K-5 in the school cafeteria. The program runs from 7:00 am - 8:55 am in the morning and from 3:35 pm -6:30 pm in the evening. The cost of the program varies based on how often you use the program. They also have some flexible options for the occasional user. Please contact the YMCA directly for more information - 914-276-2398 or click here for more information.