

# WELCOME TO NORTH COLONIE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The North Colonie Central School District comprises approximately 45,000 persons who live as some 19,000 families within the northern and eastern half of the Town of Colonie. The Town of Colonie is a growing suburban area located in the triangle created by the cities of Albany, Troy and Schenectady. It is a forward thinking community with major business, industrial and recreational opportunities located within its boundaries.

North Colonie, whose student population is the larger of the two major school districts within the town, enrolls in its public schools approximately 87% or over 5600 of its school age children. All of our district kindergarten through sixth grade students attend either Blue Creek, Boght Hills, Forts Ferry, Latham Ridge, Loudonville, Maplewood or Southgate School. The remaining children are enrolled in the six parochial and private schools located within the school district or in similar schools within the greater Capital District. Transportation and safety make it necessary to transport almost all our student population in our fleet of approximately 73 buses.



In this handbook we have attempted to provide information about current procedures, practices and policies in the elementary schools of the North Colonie Central School District. We hope it will serve as a ready resource for you when questions arise pertaining to services offered. Specific information regarding the elementary school that your child will be attending is also included in this handbook. We encourage you to call the principal of your school as questions arise or to contact any of the persons listed in the directory of services provided.

We hope you will want to become actively involved in our school system. We view the education of your children as a partnership and most certainly need and welcome your support. We urge you to become an active member and a strong supporter of our parent/teacher groups that meet regularly during the school year. Each building has a building council of teachers, parents and administrators who work together to improve the school. Principals also have a parent teacher association, (PTA) or a parent advisory council (PAC) who provide helpful assistance in developing special program opportunities for all children. The Superintendent of Schools also receives advice from members of a district level parent advisory council. These groups meet throughout the year to discuss various issues, interests and concerns and are an important source of guidance for our administrators. Each summer the PTA Council coordinates an August evening program for families new to the district and for families who have a child entering a North Colonie school for the first time. We invite you to attend.



To help keep you informed, you will receive a number of publications both from your individual school and from the district. School newsletters are sent home periodically with your child or through the mail at the junior high and high school levels. From the district you will receive the district newsletter, Inside North Colonie. In the spring of the year you will receive our Comprehensive Annual Evaluation along with a budget document and fact sheet that should assist you in making informed judgments when voting on the school budget each May.

The district has a website containing comprehensive information about district programs and events. It can be accessed at [www.northcolonie.org](http://www.northcolonie.org).

We believe you will find the North Colonie community and school system an excellent environment in which to raise and educate your children. Because your thoughts and suggestions are appreciated, never hesitate to call when you need information or wish to discuss something related to your child's education.



# POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

## REGISTRATION

The district now uses central registration. Central registration is located in the district administrative building at the Goodrich School at 91 Fiddlers Lane in Latham. Please contact the Central Registrar at 785-8591, extension 3130, and make an appointment prior to registering your child. The Registrar will inform you of all the materials you need to bring to registration.

## RESIDENCY

Parents and community members should understand that in order for a child to attend the North Colonie Central School District or any district in New York State, the parent or guardian must reside within the district. The interpretation of this regulation is specific. The domicile of the parent or guardian and student must be within the school district boundaries. The definition of domicile is the place where an individual both resides and sleeps in the evening.

Our district and many other school districts are developing strict procedures to ensure that only students who are district residents attend classes. This is a protection to you as it is unreasonable for taxpayers to underwrite the education of a child who resides in a different school district. In order for us to ensure residency, we ask for your help. Prior to registering your child, it is important that you bring the following required proof of residence documents:

- Proof of residency in North Colonie School District
    - 1) **One** of the following: Deed/Mortgage  
Lease
    - 2) **Two** supporting documents with the correct name and address listed:  
Bank Account/Credit Union Statement  
Paycheck Stub  
Phone Bill  
Automobile/Home Insurance Policy  
National Grid Bill  
Voter Registration Card
- OR**
- Contract to build

We thank you very much for your help and understanding.

## AGE OF ENTRANCE

To be eligible to enter kindergarten a child must be five years of age on or before December 1<sup>st</sup>. (No exception to this policy has ever been made.) A child who has successfully completed a full kindergarten program in an accredited school, public or private, is eligible for placement in grade 1 regardless of age. (Board of Education Policy #5140)

## SCREENING OF ENTRANTS

New York State Education Law requires local school districts to screen all new entrants to determine those students who may possibly be gifted or who may possibly have disabling conditions. Only students registered will be screened. In the case of kindergarten students, this screening takes place in the spring prior to their entrance into school. The screening typically involves a reading specialist, learning resource teacher, speech therapist, nurse and school psychologist. Those students not screened at that time and all other new students must be screened prior to December 1<sup>st</sup> of the year they enter school. Parents are notified if, as a result of these screenings, their children may require any type of special services.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

According to New York State Education Department Regulations and Public Health Law 2164, prior to entering kindergarten or any grade for students new to the district, children must have received the following immunizations:

- **3 doses** **Diphtheria Toxoid vaccine** (usually administered as DTP, DTaP, or DT)
- **3 doses** **Tetanus Toxoid** containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine for children born on or after 1/1/05 (DtaP, DTP)
- **3 doses** **Polio vaccine** (OPV and/or IPV)
- **2 doses** **Measles vaccine**, must be administered no more than 4 days prior to the first birthday
- **1 dose** **Mumps vaccine**, must be administered no more than 4 days prior to the first birthday
- **1 dose** **Rubella vaccine**, must be administered no more than 4 days prior to the first birthday
- **1 dose** **Varicella vaccine** (Chickenpox)
  - Administered no more than 4 days before the first birthday
  - Applies to all children born on or after 1/1/98 or children born on or after 1/1/94 who are enrolling in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade
- **3 doses** **Hepatitis B vaccine**
  - The 2 dose adult Recombivax Hepatitis B series for students 11-15 year of age meets the requirements for Hepatitis B
- **1 dose** **Tdap** for enrolling 6<sup>th</sup> graders born on or after 1/1/94

HIB is not required for entry/attendance in grades K-12

*Revised Jan. 2008*

Documentation of immunizations by a physician (or certification of having had the disease) must be presented to the school in order for the child to be considered registered.

STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND SCHOOL WITHOUT PROPER DOCUMENTATION. Boosters are recommended when indicated.

Please consult your doctor regarding your child's individual needs.



## CLASS SIZE POLICY

The issue of class size has been studied by parents, teachers, administrators and community members in two major review committees during the past decade. The Class Size Policy, which the Board of Education adopted June 21, 1982, and amended November 24, 1997, reads as follows:

*Class size determinations in budget planning shall be made to maintain smaller classes in the primary grades - kindergarten through third grade. Classes in the intermediate and secondary grades may be larger in order to allow for the small class programming in the primary grades. Factors that will be considered in determining class size for all grade levels will include physical plant capabilities, financial resources, contractual limitations, and special student needs. Therefore, the district's practice regarding kindergarten through sixth grade class size determinations will be made public on an annual basis.*



On occasion, class size in a given grade level in a given elementary school makes it impossible for a student to attend the school in his or her neighborhood zone. In these cases, a student is “overflowed” to one of the other elementary schools in our district. Thereafter, the parent may choose to have the child continue in the “overflow” school or return to the home school when space becomes available. The building principals and the Superintendent work closely with parents when this situation occurs.

## PUPIL TRANSFER

There are times when parents may request a transfer from the Superintendent of Schools for their child to another elementary building. The following Board of Education Policy addresses this issue:

### Voluntary Transfers from Larger Classes

Policy # 4420

*Because the District's commitment to smaller neighborhood elementary schools makes inevitable certain imbalances in size among classes at any given grade level, parents/guardians of children who are assigned to larger classes may have the option of reassignment to another school where a smaller class permits such reassignment. Any parent who wishes to have a child reassigned needs to make a written request to the Superintendent. These requests, which must be renewed each year, will be approved or disapproved by the Superintendent, based on space availability. The District, in such cases, cannot make special transportation arrangements. Hence, transportation to the new school, or a bus stop serving that school, must be the parents'/guardians' responsibility.*

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular and prompt attendance is an extremely important part of your child's education. By scheduling appointments with the doctor or dentist outside school hours and by planning trips and vacations only when school is not in session, you can help us to achieve the goal of providing your child with the best possible education. Parents are asked to notify the school each day their child is absent. A written note is required from parents upon the student's return to school.



## **SMOKING POLICY**

On August 22, 1994, the Board of Education responded to Public Health Law, Art. 13-E; Secs. 1399-n et seq. regarding adult and student smoking on school or municipal property.

Policy #1530 states that neither students nor adults including parents are permitted to smoke in buildings or on school grounds. This includes during extra curricular or evening performances, back-to-school nights, adult education classes, sports events or other events.

## **PARENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS BOARD POLICY #1925**

Those parents with hearing impairments who request interpreter services at school events should contact Mrs. Sheelah Lucier, Director of Pupil Services, at 785-5511 or their individual building principal. Please be sure to allow sufficient time for us to arrange for services.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

Productive, satisfying, and wholesome learning environments depend upon relationships that permit students to learn and teachers to teach.

Each student is expected to be responsible for his/her own behavior. The district's rules of conduct, focusing on personal safety and respect for the rights and property of others, apply both in the classrooms and throughout the school. Students who violate school rules will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and more regulated supervision.

The following is excerpted from Student Rights and Responsibilities, a district publication.

### *Students' Rights and Responsibilities*

The North Colonie Central School District has a tradition of care and respect for the individual student and holds high expectations for all. Each student is encouraged to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially.

All members of the community are entitled to feel safe and to expect that their person, property and opinions will be respected. Of equal importance is the expectation that everyone shares the responsibility for creating an atmosphere of trust. School must be a setting in which respect for rules and common decency are accepted by all as the necessary structure for learning and community.

The school has an obligation to educate students in the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. As part of their education, students should be made aware of, and should exercise, those rights and responsibilities as they exist within the school environment.

Students should strive for academic excellence. In doing so, students should be knowledgeable about and abide by rules and regulations of the school and district. They should be regular and punctual in attendance and show respect for themselves and others.

When concerns or complaints arise, students should contact their counselor, department supervisor, hall or building principal.

### *Student Dress Code*

While the Board of Education does not establish a specific dress code, students will be expected to maintain dress and appearance which are appropriate for school in this community.

The use of any attire bearing an expression or insignia which can be interpreted to be in any of the following categories is forbidden:

- is obscene or libelous, contains objectionable message, graphic, or language, including insults, whether directed to themselves or others;
- advocates prejudice toward race, color, religion, national origin, disability or any group;
- is harassing or discriminatory;
- displays or advocates the use of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances, or
- knowingly displays gang colors or identification.

The Commissioner of Education has held certain categories of clothing based on other factors to be impermissible:

- health and safety to the wearer and others,
- possibility of damage to school property,
- indecency,
- distraction so as to interfere with the learning and teaching process.

Students will be asked to change their appearance to conform to these regulations. A student may be barred from regular classroom attendance until the matter has been resolved. Students also may be excluded from field trips and extra-curricular activities for inappropriate dress or appearance.

### *Student Conduct and Discipline*

Productive, satisfying, and wholesome learning environments depend upon relationships which permit students to learn and teachers to teach.

Each student is responsible for his/her own behavior. The district's rules of conduct, focusing on personal safety and respect for the rights and property of others, apply throughout the school, on field trips and at any function sponsored by North Colonie schools. Students who violate school rules will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and more regulated supervision.

Disciplinary action will be firm, fair, and consistent in order to be most effective in changing behavior, and will be appropriate to the seriousness of the offense.

**A single flagrant violation may result, depending on the seriousness of the offense, in immediate suspension, referral to police, Family Court, or the Superintendent. A Superintendent's Hearing may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion.**

The administration reserves the right to assess disciplinary actions based upon particular situations. Disciplinary action, which may include the teacher removing the student from class or the student's suspension by the principal from school, will occur when a student behaves in a manner which constitutes:

1. Conduct dangerous to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others, including but not limited to:
  - a) fighting or behaving violently,
  - b) threatening another with bodily harm,
  - c) intimidating or harassing students or school personnel,
  - d) discrimination or discriminatory actions,
  - e) making unreasonable noise,
  - f) using inappropriate language or gestures,
  - g) inappropriately displaying affection in public,
  - h) dressing inappropriately,
  - i) engaging in misconduct on bus or at school activities,
  - j) creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition,
  - k) possessing or using beeper, portable phones or pagers in school or on school buses;
  - l) using slurs based on race, creed, color, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, genetic disposition, or HIV or Hepatitis Carrier status.

- 2) Insubordination, that is, failing to comply with the lawful directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in a supervising capacity or missing or leaving school without permission.
- 3) Academic misconduct, including but not limited to:
  - a) academic fraud or cheating,
  - b) tardiness to school or class,
  - c) failure to attend class,
  - d) failure to complete homework,
  - e) plagiarism,
  - f) inappropriate use of technology,
  - g) disruption of teaching and/or learning.
- 4) Conduct which violates Board rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on school property, including but not limited to:
  - a) vandalism or any destruction of real and/or personal property (including graffiti or arson),
  - b) theft,
  - c) truancy (the district will file a Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) petition for students who are chronically truant),
  - d) possession/possession with the intent to sell/use/sale/under the influence of drugs or alcohol,
  - e) possession, use or threatened use of weapons or fire works,
  - f) possession or use of tobacco or tobacco products,
  - g) hazing and harassment,
  - h) possessing or using beepers, portable phones or pagers in school or on school buses.

3. Mandatory one hour instruction session with student assistance counselor to discuss harmful effects of using tobacco
3. Probation - conditions set by building principal
4. Recommended counseling sessions with student assistance counselor.
4. Mandatory weekly counseling sessions with student assistance counselor.

**Third Violation (same school year) OR Violation of Probation Conditions: Disciplinary Hearing before the Superintendent.**

***Drug and Alcohol Abuse***

North Colonie’s Schools are Drug Free Zones. Possession, possession with the intent to sell, use, distribution or sale of alcoholic beverages, marijuana or its derivatives, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances or prescription drugs by students on school property or in school sponsored activities is prohibited. Medication prescribed by the student’s physician must be kept in the nurse’s office except that students who are asthmatic or have allergic reactions may self-administer medication so long as Board policy conditions are satisfied.

Any student who is found under the influence of or in possession of drugs or alcohol will be suspended immediately. Any repeated offense for possession and/or use shall subject the offender to a disciplinary hearing before the Superintendent and a possible long-term suspension.

Any student who distributes or sells drugs, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, marijuana or its derivatives or prescription drugs on school premises or in school sponsored activities will be suspended immediately, pending a formal Superintendent’s Hearing on the matter.

***Fighting***

We teach students that there are other ways, such as discussion and mediation, to resolve disagreements. Students and faculty members are available as mediators if students cannot resolve their own disputes. If someone is harassing a student, the student should find an adult who will see that the aggressor is disciplined. If students in the secondary schools do participate in a fight, all participants will be suspended.

***Dangerous Weapons in School***

No person shall bring, possess or use any weapons, including small pocketknives, on school property or in school-sponsored activities.

No student shall bring, possess or use a firearm on school property or in school-sponsored activities. Any student found guilty of bringing, possessing or using a firearm on school property or in school-sponsored activities may be subject to a long-term suspension from school, the length of which shall be determined by the Superintendent.

Bringing or possessing a weapon other than a firearm on the person of a student or on the premises of a school but not on the person shall subject the offender to a minimum of an immediate suspension from school for a five day

***Smoking and Tobacco Products***

Possession of tobacco products, smoking or any other use of tobacco products is prohibited on school premises. Penalties for student violations of this policy include:

<b>First Violation</b>	<b>Second Violation (same school year)</b>
1. 3-day external suspension	1. 5-day external suspension
2. Reinstatement conference (parent(s), student assistance counselor, hall principal, guidance counselor in attendance)	2. Reinstatement conference (parent(s), student assistance counselor, hall principal, guidance counselor in attendance)

period for grades 7-12 and two to five days for grades K-6. The Superintendent will review the matter and determine whether to conduct a disciplinary hearing that could result in a long-term suspension.

If a student uses or threatens to use any weapon, the student shall be suspended immediately, pending a disciplinary hearing before the Superintendent, which could result in a long-term suspension.

The Colonie Police will be notified any time a student brings a weapon to school so that criminal proceedings, if appropriate, may be instituted.

Students with disabilities can be suspended consistent with the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Article 89 of the Education Law.

### ***Discrimination and Harassment***

The district prohibits discrimination and harassment by employees and students based upon age, race, creed, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, genetic disposition, or HIV or hepatitis carrier status.

Discrimination is the showing of partiality or prejudice in the treatment of a student based on the student's membership or perceived membership in one of the mentioned classes. Harassment is a course of conduct that is unwelcome and has the effect of causing torment or worry, thereby causing a hostile learning environment.

Discrimination and harassment are prohibited on school district premises, while students are being transported to and from school on district busses, and during school or district sponsored events and activities.

Any student who believes that he/she has been the subject of harassment or discrimination or who believes that discrimination has occurred is encouraged to report the incidents to the building principal, unless the Principal is the offender, in which case the report should be made to the immediate supervisor of the Principal. In the case of the elementary principals, the immediate supervisor is the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. At the secondary level, in the case of the hall principals, the immediate supervisor is the building principal. The immediate supervisor of the secondary building principals is the Superintendent.

If an investigation concludes that a student is guilty of harassment or discrimination, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken, up to and including suspension and possible Superintendent's Hearing.

### ***Sexual Harassment***

Sexual harassment is a violation of the law and stands in direct opposition to District policy. The Board, therefore,

prohibits all forms of sexual harassment by employees and students on school district premises or during school district-sponsored activities.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcome verbal, non-verbal or physical sexual advance, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made to or about a person by another person in the school district which a reasonable person would find to meet any of the following conditions:

- is offensive or objectionable to the person who is the object of the advance, statement or remark,
- causes that person discomfort or humiliation or interferes with his/her academic or professional performance, or
- creates a hostile educational or employment environment.

Sexual harassment can be initiated by persons of either sex, by peers as well as by supervisors, and can be directed towards a person of either the opposite or the same sex.

The confidentiality of the reporting party will be observed provided it does not interfere with the institution's ability to investigate or take corrective action or the due process rights of the accused.

Any student who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment or who believes that sexual harassment has occurred shall be encouraged to report all incidents of such conduct to the building principal. (Level 1)

Upon receipt of a formal complaint (Level II), the District will conduct a thorough investigation of the charges. If the District has knowledge of or has reason to know of any incidents or allegations of sexual harassment, however, the District is obligated, even in the absence of a complaint, to investigate such conduct promptly and thoroughly.

The Board prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainant, accused and/or witnesses.

If, through investigation, a charge of sexual harassment is determined to be false or fabricated, it will be treated as a serious offense. Charges may be brought against the person who has made the false or fabricated accusation.

If the District's investigation concludes that harassment has occurred, immediate corrective action will be taken. Although the first goals shall be to stop the offending behavior and educate the harasser, depending upon the severity of the charges, the administrator will impose appropriate sanctions in a manner consistent with the North Colonie discipline code.

Should the offending individual be a student, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied, up to and including suspension, subject to the provisions of Section 3214 of the Education Law. Students with disabilities are not exempt from discipline if they have engaged in sexual harassment.

If the sanctions would potentially involve a suspension of more than 5 days, the Superintendent will conduct a student disciplinary hearing to determine the findings of guilt and the recommended punishment.

### ***Trespassing***

A student is not permitted in any school building, other than the one that he/she regularly attends, without permission from the administrator in charge of the building. Should a student be found in a building without permission, the necessary authorities may be called and trespassing charges may be lodged against the student.

***A full description of the Board of Education Policies regarding these disciplinary matters is available in each school.***

## USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Student use of school computers is for school related use only. Foreign or home software is permitted on school computers only with the expressed permission of a building principal, librarian, technology staff or computer room aide. The District reserves the right to review the contents of disks and E-mail of any user. The District takes no responsibility for losses sustained by students as a result of system or network failure.



Network etiquette, consistent with expected school behavior, should be observed at all times. Real time conference uses must be approved and supervised by an adult. Proper Internet behavior includes the following:

1. Do not misrepresent yourself or North Colonie Central Schools.
2. Assume that all materials over the Internet are copyrighted for citation purposes. (The school district has no responsibility for the accuracy or the quality of information obtained through Internet services.)
3. Report any Internet security problems to a supervising adult.
4. Do not give out personal identifying information such as home address, age, telephone number or physical location in an E-mail message or on-line post without approval of parent or teacher.
5. Do not agree to a face-to-face meeting with the Internet user without parental permission. (The anonymity of the Net allows some users to pretend to be other than who they are. It is for this reason that only those Internet exchanges approved by school personnel should be completed by students.)
6. Never send or respond to E-mail messages that are threatening or obscene.
7. No photographs of students will be displayed on the Internet without the permission of parent or guardian. Students' names should not be provided.

The district prohibits inappropriate uses of computers and computer services such as:

- Theft, vandalism or other malicious acts involving school district hardware or software.
- Use of another student's access code.
- Subscriptions to listservs using school accounts without authorization.
- Hosting of usenet groups and listservs without authorization.
- Lending or selling of software copies without express written permission from the copyright holder with the exception of shareware or public domain software.
- Unauthorized downloading of information onto district owned hard drives.
- Unauthorized attempts to access passwords of others, to access the system's programs and/or computer equipment, to harass others by E-mail and any other such actions.
- Any malicious attempt to destroy material of another user including the up loading or creation of computer viruses.
- Unauthorized copying of software.
- Revealing student account numbers to other students.
- Harassment of others by E-mail or any other means.
- Use of school technology for purposes other than completing school district activities.

Failure to comply with any of the District regulations about use of technology will result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, loss of school privileges including technology use, detention,

suspension from school and where warranted, other civil or criminal proceedings.

## **VISITORS - PICKING UP CHILDREN, SCHOOLWORK**

Recently we have implemented new security procedures in each of our elementary school buildings. Visitors must first press the button near the front door of each building. Office staff will then ask you to identify yourself and your purpose for being in the school, and if necessary produce a photo ID. You will then be buzzed into the school. Anyone visiting our schools for any reason must first go to the school office. Visitors are not permitted to go directly to a class because it is very important to have a standard procedure and control over access to our buildings and classrooms. This procedure makes sense both in terms of safety for the children and disruption of the classroom routine. Our office staff will be happy to see that forgotten items are given to your child or they can call your child to the office for early dismissal.



## **EARLY DISMISSAL AND/OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

If there is an important reason for your child to be dismissed early from school, please send a note on that morning. If someone other than a parent is to call for a child, New York State law requires that person's name to appear on a list provided by the child's parents. Otherwise, the school will not release your child to anyone other than a parent or, under emergency conditions, to a law enforcement official or a child protective worker. It is also very important that you provide a current emergency phone number where you or a friend or relative can be reached should the need arise.

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**



For 2008-2009 we are planning two early release days and the afternoon of Election Day in the fall for parent conferences. Parents of students in grades K through 6 will be invited to attend a parent/teacher conference. We hope you will plan to attend since these conferences offer an important means for information to be exchanged. Because kindergarten teachers have different groups of children in the morning and afternoon, three additional days are provided for conferences. Should either parents or teacher feel a need, additional conferences may be scheduled. The telephone also provides many other opportunities for teachers and parents to share accomplishments and concerns.

## **PROMOTION**

To be eligible for promotion a pupil is expected to demonstrate sufficient competency in the basic academic skills of reading and mathematics to permit functioning at the next grade level. The final decision regarding promotion of individual students is the responsibility of the building principal (Board of Education Policy #4750). Parents are made aware of the possibility of a student's non-promotion at least by the time of the second quarter report card distribution. In the event that a parent disagrees with a decision to retain a student, a formal appeal procedure exists.



## **HOMEWORK**

The concept of homework is introduced as early as kindergarten. When initiating homework at this level, teachers make every effort to ensure that parents are aware of the expectations being placed upon their children. Throughout the primary grades (K-3) assignments to be completed out of school are gradually increased in frequency and length of time required. When students enter the intermediate grades (4-6), it is expected they will be assigned approximately 30 to 60 minutes of homework daily. If you have concerns about your child's homework, please do not hesitate to call his or her teacher or the building principal.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION GRADES 1 - 6**

### **EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Evaluation of student performance in North Colonie Central Schools has the following goals:

- Enable students to assess themselves and prescribe for themselves the efforts they must make to improve their work.
- Enable the schools to assess the performance of both students and staff.
- Enable the district to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of its many programs.
- Enable the public to be informed about how well students do in relation to district goals and objectives.

The district has a balanced assessment program that includes standardized tests and performance assessments.

In the fall of the year the *Cognitive Abilities Tests (CAT)* are administered to all students in grades 3 and 6. In the spring the *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)* are also administered. A district end-of-the-year (DEOY) test in science is administered to students in grade 6. Additionally, all students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 take the New York State English language arts assessment in January and the New York State math assessment in March. Fourth graders also take the New York State science assessment in the spring, and fifth graders take the New York State social studies assessment in the fall. The results of the ITBS, DEOY and New York State Assessments are sent home to parents. The results of the Cognitive Abilities Tests are available in November of the school year. Parents should contact the building principal if they wish to find out the results of this test or if they wish to discuss these results in greater depth.

Another form of evaluation is called authentic or performance assessment. Performance assessment requires students to complete a specific task and construct a response, create a product or perform a demonstration. Such assessment gives students an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. A baseball tryout, writing portfolio or a student's art portfolio are illustrations of ongoing authentic assessments. In North Colonie Central Schools, our professional staff is working together to develop more performance-based assessments. You will hear more about this as your child progresses through the grades.

(Insert Testing Schedule)

## KEY TO TESTING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

**CAT - COGNITIVE ABILITIES TEST** - A group test of intellectual functioning administered to all students in grades 3 and 6.

**DEOY - DISTRICT END-OF-YEAR EXAMINATIONS** - Developed by North Colonie staff. The purpose is to ensure that all elementary students are offered the same basic educational program.

**ITBS - IOWA TESTS OF BASIC SKILLS** - A battery of achievement tests that tests basic skills and recall of factual information. The subtests used at each grade level are listed.

**NYS ELA/MATH - NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST AND MATH TEST** - Developed at the State Education Department. English/Language Arts and math tests are required in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6.

**NYS GRADE 4 SCIENCE ASSESSMENT** - The science program is tested at grade 4.

**NYS ASSESSMENT IN SOCIAL STUDIES** - Developed at the State Education Department. The social studies test is required in grade 5.

### STANDARDIZED TESTING INFORMATION:

Scores from standardized tests may be used to determine a student's achievement in different subject areas, placement in grade levels, need for remediation, curriculum improvement and development of new programs. Test results are generally used in comparison with the scores of other students taking the same test throughout the country.

There are specific terms related to standardized tests. It is important to understand the meaning of these terms in order to interpret test results:

**Percentile Rank** - This compares a student to other students in the same grade level nationwide or locally. For example, if a student earns a percentile rank of 70 on a particular test, it means that he/she scored equal to or better than 70 percent of the students in the same grade level nationally or locally.

**Composite** - This is the average of the subtests. This usually does not include social studies or science subtest scores.

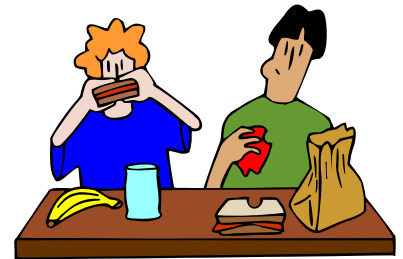
If you have questions about your child's scores on standardized tests, please contact your building principal.

## SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE

All elementary schools participate in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs. These programs offer a nutritionally balanced, low cost meal that meets one-third of the students' daily nutritional requirements per meal. At breakfast we offer a variety of hot and cold items daily. A variety of fruit juices, fresh or canned fruit and milk are offered with each breakfast. Items are also available on an a la carte basis.

Breakfast - Student Price \$1.25  
Reduced Students are free with application on file

Daily lunch menus offer four different entrée selections plus choices in fruits, vegetables, grains, and milk. This gives students a variety from which to choose. Items may also be purchased a la carte. Snack items are also available to our students. Examples are fresh fruit, juice, water, popcorn, baked chips and cookies. All snack items meet the Choose Sensible guidelines.



Lunch - Student Price \$1.50  
Reduced Students \$.25 with application on file

## PRE-PAID MEALS

For your convenience we offer pre-paid meals to our students. Our cafeterias have a computerized system that gives each student a PIN (personal identification number). Money can be placed into their private account for them to access for meals. For each \$30.00 (\$5.00 with reduced application on file) per student that is paid into their account, one (1) bonus meal will be given. If paying by check, please make the check payable to **North Colonie Food Service**. This system is easy for students to use and eliminates worries about having the correct change in the morning or losing money.

Applications for free and reduced priced student meals are available from the Food Service Office located at Shaker Junior High as well as the Registrar's office located at the North Colonie District Office.

Easy to use on-line payments to your child's account can be made using your Visa, MasterCard or Discover Card. Log onto [www.paypams.com](http://www.paypams.com) and follow the easy to use instructions. Once an account is in place, you can view from home your child's daily balance. Please remember funds from PAYPAMS will take 2 business days to reach your child's meal account.

Any questions regarding Food Services, please contact the Food Service Office at 786-8856.

## DAILY PLANNER

The District Study Skills Review Committee has recommended that each student in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 and beyond utilize a daily planner. A planner is provided at no charge to elementary students. Secondary level students, grades 7-12, are asked to purchase a planner. Parents are asked to check the planner for homework assignments, long-term projects and other class assignments.



## SNOW DAYS

There are days when school must be closed or delayed due to inclement weather. Parents must listen to local radio or television stations to hear the school closings.



It should be noted that sometimes an announcement will be made that school is one hour late or more. This announcement does not mean that the decision will not change. If the weather continues to create unsafe traveling conditions, it is possible that school will close. Again, please continue to listen to your radio or television stations.

Announcements will be made on the following stations:

**WGY, WROW, WNYT-TV, WPTR, WQBK, WFLY,  
WTRY, WRGB-TV, WGNA, WTEN-TV, WPYX, WKLI**

School delays and closings can also be found on our website [www.northcolonie.org](http://www.northcolonie.org).

## ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS' ROTATION

The Board of Education has approved a Board Policy, #3210-R, addressing the rotation of elementary principals. The district has found that there are advantages in rotating elementary principals. In education we learn from each other. Teachers learn from colleagues, principals, students, and parents. Principals learn from teachers, colleagues, students, and parents. When principals move from one school to another, everyone has an opportunity to work with different staff and grow professionally.

While rotating the principals has produced positive change for the schools, it is also important that change be balanced with stability for students, parents, teachers and staff involved in the rotation. Therefore, if a rotation is considered, all factors are carefully considered. Furthermore, per Board of Education policy, where possible, elementary principals shall be assigned to a school for no less than ten years so that children shall preferably have no more than two principals while in the elementary school.

# CURRICULUM TOPICS

## MATHEMATICS

We use the Houghton-Mifflin text series for grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 and the New York State Mathematics Standards as basis for our instruction. At the elementary level our goal is to have students master the basic concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division as well as application of these skills in problem-solving situations. Students are taught to understand mathematics by communicating and reasoning mathematically, by applying mathematics in real-world settings and by solving problems through the integrated study of number systems, geometry, measurement, probability, data collection and analysis. A hands-on approach with the use of manipulatives assists in the development of concepts for our students.



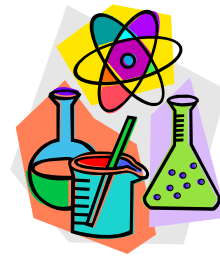
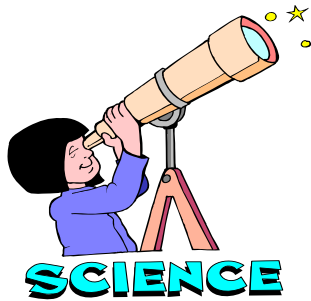
Assessment occurs at each unit through district tests, teacher-directed assessments, through yearly standardized tests, and through a New York State Assessment given to third, fourth, fifth and sixth graders.

An Alternate Math program is offered at grades 5 and 6 for students who demonstrate a math talent well beyond the enriched classroom curriculum. Although the classroom-taught concepts are reviewed, the pace and topics covered are accelerated. Assessment includes unit tests for each topic, yearly standardized tests, New York State Assessments, and an end-of-the-year assessment which includes core math skills and a long-term novel problem. The Alternate Math teachers prepare the students for all of these assessments.

## READING/ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Our primary goal is to develop proficiency in the skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The reading program incorporates a balanced literacy approach that includes the following components: read alouds, shared reading, guided reading, literature study, and independent reading. A wide range of literary genres and other materials are used, and instruction varies from full class to small groups to individualized work.

Writing is an important part of each curriculum area. The students learn all the components of good writing, are involved in research projects, use the computers to assist them in writing and also learn to produce writing on a given topic within a designated period of time. Writing is also integrated into other subject areas. For example, they are expected to write in math to explain how they solved a problem. Assessment occurs through teacher-directed assessments and through a New York State English language arts assessment administered to all third, fourth, fifth and sixth graders.



Our primary goal is to help students to better understand the world through study of the physical, earth, and life sciences. The science program features a well-developed, balanced curriculum, with an emphasis on hands-on learning, research and problem solving. There is no textbook. Rather, teachers use a variety of resources including computers, the Windows on Science laser disc program, and supplemental printed materials. All of these materials are parallel with the NYS curriculum standards.

Assessment occurs through a New York State Grade 4 Science Assessment as well as unit tests and district assessments.

## **SOCIAL STUDIES**

The primary goal is to gain understanding of people's social, political and economic cultures through the use of the skills of exploration, analysis and discovery. Also, students learn and demonstrate citizenship and democratic values.

Following New York State Curriculum Standards, our students begin with study about themselves and their community, and progress to studying regions around the world. In fourth grade the emphasis is on local history. In fifth grade the curriculum emphasizes the regions of the Western Hemisphere, particularly Canada and Mexico, and in sixth grade Europe and the ancient civilizations of Greece, Egypt, and Rome are studied. At every grade level, the children are required to read and write about what they are studying.

Ongoing assessment occurs at the conclusion of units of study and projects. A New York State test is given at the beginning of grade five.



## SPECIAL CLASSES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

### ART

Art instruction is provided for each child beginning in grade one. In grades one and two the art period is 45 minutes per week, in grades three and four 50 minutes per week, and in grades five and six 60 minutes per week.



The primary goal of the art program is to assist your child in developing an appreciation for and an understanding of the various art disciplines and to explore the art forms as an opportunity for personal expression. Your child will be introduced to a variety of hands-on activities and experiences that develop perceptual, creative, and motor skills. Art class also provides a time for problem solving and exploration with a wide range of art materials and tools including the computer. Your child will be introduced to the artwork of the great masters and many cultures. Some projects and/or activities will be integrated with grade level curricula. Caring for classroom supplies, respecting the work of others, achieving independence, and learning to communicate through art are stressed.

The Art Explorers Program is an enrichment opportunity primarily for students in grades 5 and 6. At each elementary school, select students will be referred by their art teacher for their exceptional skill level, motivation, and creativity. The Art Explorers Program consists of two offerings – an extra art session once a week at each elementary school, and an invitation to participate in an after school art class series. One series takes place in the fall, and the other is in the spring. Students from the six elementary schools participate at one school location.

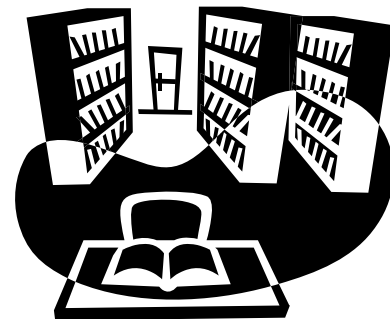
As a parent, you may assist by creating and maintaining an exhibition space in your home for your child's artwork. Always use encouraging remarks and listen to what your child has to say about his/her artwork.

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The Elementary Foreign Language Program will provide our students with a comparative experience in four foreign languages and related cultures. The instruction will be linked to social studies content at the fifth grade level (French and Spanish) and sixth grade level (Russian and German). The course will provide students with the ability to use basic expressions and vocabulary for communication in the target language, develop cross-cultural understanding, and draw from their experiences in order to make an informed decision about which language they will pursue in seventh through twelfth grades. (Pending Board of Education approval)

## LIBRARY/AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES

Each elementary school student has access to the building library. A children's librarian creates an inviting place where books, magazines, computer programs, audio and videotapes, and many other materials may be used. The computers provide for both CD-ROM software use and online searches. Books and magazines may be borrowed to take home. Students may come freely to the library to exchange books. Children are encouraged to read for recreation and for information about classroom studies. Classroom teachers borrow classroom collections of books for leisure reading and also collections of book and non-book resources to reinforce subject units as they are taught.



A formal program of library/research skills instruction, literature and reading motivation and computer literacy is presented weekly. In grades K through three, classes are 30 minutes long and in grades four through six classes are 45 minutes in length. In the primary grades, books, authors and illustrators are emphasized to encourage a love for reading. Children are also taught library citizenship and responsibility for materials borrowed. They learn to return or renew books by the date due and to make payment for missing or damaged books in order that replacements may be purchased.

Librarians and classroom teachers engage in collaborative research projects that bring grade 4-6 students to the library for authentic research at times in addition to the scheduled library periods.

Although the story hours, book talks, puppet shows, and other learning activities reinforce the subjects of mathematics, social studies and science, emphasis is given to supporting the reading program and to acquainting students with our literary heritage. Classroom teachers are encouraged to arrange additional library-related activities. Parents are urged to participate in reading activities with their children. Upon request, librarians will suggest books to be read at home.

## MUSIC



Each child in grades one through six experiences music class for 30 minutes, twice a week. Kindergarten classes are 20 minutes long. In music class, children are exposed to a variety of activities designed to broaden musical experiences and develop musical skills. Listening activities help develop the child's perception of music. Musical response is developed through movement, rhythmic activities, singing and playing instruments. The child is also encouraged to create and organize sounds into musical patterns.

Participation in chorus is expected of all students in grades five and six. Rehearsals are held once a week and two evening concerts are performed during the school year. The experience of rehearsing and performing before an audience is a valuable means of developing a true appreciation of music performance, as well as reinforcing habits of cooperation and self-discipline.

Students in intermediate (4-6) grades may elect to participate in band or orchestra. During the instrumental recruitment period in the spring, third grade students are screened for their interest, physical development and demonstrated music ability. Each student accepted into the instrumental program receives a



small group lesson once a week. As the performance level increases, the student is accepted into band or orchestra, which rehearses a minimum of once a week.

Advanced opportunities are available to students who excel in music in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Students may participate in the Suburban Council Music Festival, the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA), Solo and Ensemble Festivals, the North Colonie All-District Concert, grade level plays, or other performance opportunities. Students are encouraged to participate fully in the music program and work hard to achieve a high level of skill and enjoyment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical education is concerned with total mental, emotional and physical development of the individual. This development is attained through physical activities that promote sportsmanship, muscular coordination, leadership and the ability to follow others. Children are taught to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of other children.

In kindergarten, two 30-minute periods for physical education are provided per week. In grades one through three, each child is scheduled for three times per week for 30 minutes. In grades four through six, students have physical education four times per week for a total of 120 minutes. A before or after-school intramural program is also available for students featuring many activities.

Adaptive physical education as defined by the Committee on Adaptive Physical Education of the AAHPER is "a diversified program of developmental activities, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the interest, capabilities and limitations of students with disabilities who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted activities of the general physical education program." Adaptive physical education will be provided for pupils with chronic disabling conditions and also for those recuperating from injuries and accidents and those convalescing from long and short-term illnesses. This point of view precludes the concept of "gym excuses." Special evaluation will be made to determine the most appropriate program for your child. Close coordination will be needed between you, your family physician, and the school.

The President's Challenge Physical Fitness Test is administered annually to youngsters beginning in the fourth grade. Students who qualify with high physical fitness scores receive Physical Fitness Award patches. This testing program is offered by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports in cooperation with the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Dance.

In October of each year, the department conducts an after-school cross-country meet for boys and girls in grades 4-6. Held at the Colonie Town Park, this event has six races, where over 500 students compete. In the late spring, we have an annual track and field meet for boys and girls in grades 5 and 6 during the school day at the Shaker High School track.

## **HEALTH EDUCATION**

New York State requires districts to provide health education at all levels. Our elementary health teacher and classroom teachers provide lessons from our curriculum in the areas including safety, nutrition, body systems, adolescent growth and development, HIV/AIDS awareness and other related instruction. Parents will be notified prior to the fifth and sixth grade adolescent growth and development lessons. Parents may choose to opt children out of family life lessons but not HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **CHILD STUDY TEAM**

Building Principals meet bi-weekly with instructional and support staff as needed to review the progress of individual students. Often adjustments to specific academic lessons or student assignments result from these meetings. An action plan for increasing student success is developed and the student's progress is monitored by the team.

## **PUPIL SERVICES TEAM**

Each elementary school has a Pupil Services Team that meets bi-weekly to review referrals made by parents or staff for students who may be gifted learners, who may have a disabling condition, or who may be in need of Academic Intervention Services. The team is comprised of the reading specialist, speech therapist, school psychologist, learning resource area teacher, a representative classroom teacher, building principal, the director of pupil services, and the director of library/audio-visual services. The child's classroom teacher serves as a member of each team.

The Pupil Services Team also serves as a screening committee for the District Committee on Special Education and the District Committee for Gifted/Talented Students. In this role it is the team's responsibility to formulate recommendations concerning students identified as having disabling conditions or special education needs regarding the development of highly individualized educational programs. Similar individualized educational programs are also developed for gifted students. Parents are kept informed throughout the PST referral and evaluation process. They are invited to attend the meetings.



## **PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED/TALENTED**

The New York State Education Law defines gifted children as those "who show evidence of high performance capability and exceptional potential in areas such as general intellectual ability, special academic aptitude and performing arts."

Children in the elementary school who demonstrate unusual potential for achievement at any time during their school career may be screened by the school Pupil Services Team as nominees for special programming. Students are initially brought to the attention of the team in a variety of ways. Either parents or school staff members may nominate a child for consideration. Entering kindergarten children are screened for intellectual aptitude by mandate from New York State and progress of the children so identified is monitored in the event that further screening is warranted later. District standardized test results are scrutinized annually as another initial screening procedure.

Challenging programs are available for those students whose unusual ability requires some modification of the regular curriculum. Each of the children formally labeled as gifted by the Pupil Services Team is provided an Individual Education Plan to describe the objectives and resources that will best fit the intellectual needs of that student. The elementary counselor is assigned as an advocate to look after the educational well-being of the student and to maintain communication with the parents.

Once the advocate is assigned, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) conference is scheduled with the parents and subsequent recommended program changes are instituted as soon as possible. These intellectually capable students are scheduled into a pullout learning enrichment program taught by a teacher

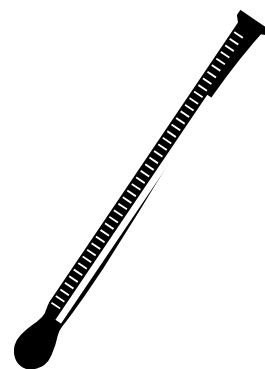
of gifted education. The class meets weekly for 60 minutes at the primary grades and 90 minutes for grades 4-6. The curriculum focuses on the skills of critical and creative thinking, introspection and reflection, problem-solving and effective communication and presentation skills. Students learn various styles of research and appropriate uses. They also reinforce problem-solving and interpersonal communication skills as they work together on complex simulations.

Other out-of-classroom opportunities are provided for talented students to benefit from the stimulation and challenge of working with small groups of talented peers. An accelerated alternate mathematics curriculum taught by a mathematics teacher is provided at the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades for 12-15% of the students. Students who are gifted in math and others with a special talent in mathematics are placed in the program. Also, a one-semester writing experience for gifted writers and students with a special talent in writing is offered in grades 4-6. The resulting written pieces are published in a literary journal.

Additional programs for all interested students are sponsored as we become aware of them. Some current ones are the district spelling bee, a Kids' Stuff Literary and Art Journal and math and science Olympiads. Further, in grades 3, 4, 5 and 6, the Junior Great Books Program of Classic Literature is offered to students if they are identified by their teachers as advanced readers.

## HEALTH SERVICES

You are strongly urged to see that your child has a complete physical examination (including eyes, for disease or abnormal condition) by your family physician and dentist, so that remedial defects may be corrected before the child begins school. A school health form is available for your family physician to complete and sign. It should then be returned by you to the school.



In an effort to control illness/communicable diseases, we ask for your cooperation by following these guidelines: 1) do NOT send your child to school with a fever (100EF or higher); 2) do NOT send your child to school until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours, to ensure that your child is free of infection; 3) do NOT send your child to school if he/she has been vomiting during the night and/or the early morning hours; 4) if your physician is considering streptococcal infection, and a throat culture has been taken, do NOT send your child to school until the results are known; 5) when your child has a positive throat culture, he/she should have at least 24 hours of an antibiotic prior to returning to school; 6) do NOT send your child to school if he/she has a rash or any other symptom of a communicable disease; 7) for a child having been identified as having head lice, the student will be isolated and the parent contacted in order to provide the appropriate treatment. The student may return to school following verified treatment, but should receive a follow-up treatment in 7-10 days. Students will be reexamined to determine whether or not nits have hatched or lice have reappeared; 8) if your physician suspects a bacterial infection and places your child on an antibiotic, he/she must have at least 24 hours of the antibiotic before returning to school; 9) if Pertussis is diagnosed in your child, five days of the antibiotic must be administered before he/she can return to school.

If your child requires special attention or accommodations in school, due to a temporary or permanent physical disability or illness, please advise the classroom teacher and the school nurse. The school nurse conducts a school health appraisal consisting of height and weight measurement annually; vision screening in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10; hearing screening in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 10; and scoliosis screening in grades 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. Additionally, physician's appraisals are required in grades K, 2, 4, 7 and 10. Although the form must be returned by the end of September, an examination administered not more than twelve months prior to commencement of the school year in which the examination is required, will be accepted. Starting

in September 2008 **all kindergarten or first graders in a public elementary school in this state shall present a dental health certificate; such dental health certificate must be signed by a duly licensed dentist who is authorized by law to practice in this state.**

First Aid is rendered according to procedures recommended for dealing with sudden illness or accident. The school may not diagnose or give treatment since this lies within the province of the family physician. If there is a problem requiring the administration of medication in school, please contact the school nurse so that appropriate arrangements may be discussed with your family physician. **STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO CARRY MEDICATION IN THEIR POSSESSION FOR SELF-ADMINISTRATION.** The only exception is for emergency medications for certain children with a doctor's prescription.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are available in all school district buildings.

## **PRIMARY LANGUAGE PROGRAM**

Small group language development activities are provided by a speech therapist to students in kindergarten and grades one and two who require further attention in this area. These lessons are provided by the speech and language specialists assigned to the school.

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

New York State law requires that all students with limited English proficiency receive English as a Second Language services. If a student speaks or understands a language other than English, the student will be tested to determine if ESL services are necessary. Students will take a Language Assessment Battery Test, which assesses their listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. Each school has an ESL teacher who instructs students who score below a cut-off on this test. Students are grouped according to student ability level and age. This program is designed to help students acquire both language and academic skills. The ESL curriculum is based on the New York State Learning Standards and instruction is designed to provide the students with an equal opportunity for academic success. At the end of each school year, ESL students are retested to determine their placement for the following year.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES**

A school psychologist is assigned to each elementary school. The school psychologist serves as an advocate for students referred either by staff members or parents. Those students who demonstrate exceptional learning abilities, who show evidence of severe academic or learning deficiencies or who are experiencing emotional or adjustment problems are referred to the school psychologist. Where informal observation or other tests indicate that a formal psychological evaluation is necessary, parents will be requested to complete a form granting their approval. When other than short-term assistance from the school psychologist is required, a referral to an outside agency is often suggested.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR PROGRAM**

Each school is assigned the services of an elementary counselor. Small counseling groups are scheduled which are topic specific to the needs of an identified group of students. Subjects may deal with academic, behavioral or adjustment issues. Students enrolled in the Learning Enrichment Program engage in group discussion on a schedule established by the counselor. The duration of sessions with all other groups varies with need and topic. Short-term individual counseling is provided; referrals to outside agencies are suggested when other than short-term counseling assistance is required. A developmental guidance curriculum is presented during the primary years. One major focus is on the prevention of bullying. Counselors also present awareness sessions in the intermediate classrooms, e.g. prevention of discrimination and harassment including sexual harassment. Parents are made aware of all counseling activity related to their children's educational well-being. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's counselor at any time.

## **REMEDIAL READING**

A certified reading specialist works closely with the principal and classroom teacher in the implementation of the total reading program. Assistance is given to teachers for any classroom concerns regarding reading. Evaluation of students with significant reading problems is carried out on an individual basis and a plan for a suitable program is developed for them. Students who are reading significantly below grade level are seen by the reading specialist individually or in small groups. Instruction occurs two or three times per week for 30 minutes. Some primary grade students receive services daily.

## **REMEDIAL MATHEMATICS**

Students achieving significantly below grade level in math are seen in small groups by a remedial math teacher. Instruction occurs thirty minutes a session, two times a week.



## **WRITING MONITORING**

Students in grades two through six whose New York State assessment scores and/or classroom writing indicates significant weaknesses in writing are provided with additional instruction by their classroom teacher and/or one of our support teachers. Included in these writing periods are a pre-writing activity, instructional writing activities, and application and evaluation of various types of writing assignments.

## **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY**

Speech and language therapy is provided for children disabled in the area of speech and language and/or communication skills. Students are selected for the program on the basis of a speech and language screening and, if necessary, subsequent evaluation of kindergarten children and students new to the district at the time they enter school. Parent referrals, teacher referrals and recommendations from other professional sources are considered. Parents of selected children will be notified of their inclusion in the program before therapy begins.

## **LEARNING RESOURCE AREA (LRA)**

The learning resource area, served by certified special education teachers, provides supportive help to students with disabling conditions. Children spend one to two and one-half hours in the learning resource area three to five days per week in order to receive individual or small group instruction based upon objectives included in the child's Individual Education Plan.

## **CONSULTANT TEACHER SERVICES (CT)**

Consultant teacher services are provided to pupils with disabling conditions who are mainstreamed one hundred percent of the day and require support from a certified special education teacher.

## **INTEGRATED KINDERGARTEN/ACADEMIC SKILLS CLASS (ASC)**

At the elementary school level the district offers three integrated kindergarten classes for severely disabled five-year-old children. In addition, Blue Creek and Southgate Schools offer an Academic Skills Class for elementary children in grades one through six who can benefit from integration in special area classes but require additional academic assistance from a special education teacher.

## **KINDERGARTEN INTERVENTION PROGRAM (K.I.P.)**

In order to meet the needs of entering kindergartners who demonstrate a special need for additional support services, the district has developed a full-day program. This Kindergarten Intervention Program (K.I.P.) is currently offered in Forts Ferry and Latham Ridge Schools and will be offered in Maplewood School pending Board of Education and budget approval. Regular education students are invited on a needs basis. For the first half of the day, participating students are part of the regular kindergarten program. For the afternoon session these students meet with various service providers in small groups. Pre reading and readiness skills are emphasized.



*If we can assist you in further explaining the information contained in this publication, please feel free to contact the appropriate staff listed under the school directory.*