WELCOME TO NORTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS

It is our pleasure to welcome you and your child to the North Colonie Central School district, where we believe education is one of the best investments you can make. Our school district is renowned for the outstanding academic achievement of its students as well as the superior financial management provided by its administrators and Board of Education. The district’s mission statement is “to provide all students the opportunity and necessary support to engage in relevant, challenging work to contribute to their academic and social growth and development. All staff, teachers and administrators are part of a larger learning community, working together to provide a high-quality, relevant, equitable education for all.” The district holds both our faculty and staff members and students to high performance standards, resulting in one of the Capital Region’s best quality educations, graduating some of the area’s brightest students. We look forward to beginning a partnership with you which will lay a strong foundation for your child’s academic, social, and emotional growth.

The North Colonie Central School District is comprised of approximately 45,000 persons who live within the northern and eastern half of the Town of Colonie. The Town of Colonie is a 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’s student population is the larger of the two major school districts within the town, with approximately 5,400 school age children. All of our district students, Kindergarten through sixth grade, attend Blue Creek, Boght Hills, Forts Ferry, Latham Ridge, Loudonville, or Southgate Elementary schools. 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 provided information about current procedures, practices and policies in the elementary schools in the 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 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.

At North Colonie, we strive to keep our community well-informed. You will receive the district newsletter, Inside North Colonie and in the spring of each year, our Comprehensive Annual Evaluation and budget newsletter, to help you make informed judgments when voting on the school budget in May. Additionally, your individual school will keep you up-to-date through the principal’s newsletter and, should you elect to sign up for School News Notifier, current postings with pertinent information for your individual school. Finally, the district’s website, www.northcolonie.org, contains comprehensive information about district programs and events.

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. Welcome to our school community!
REGISTRATION
The Central Registrar is located in the district administrative building at the Goodrich School at 91 Fiddlers Lane in Latham. Please call 785-8591, extension 3130 or 3135 to make an appointment to register your child. The Registrar will inform you of all the materials that need to be brought to the 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 the domicile is the place where an individual both resides and sleeps in the evening.

Our district has strict procedures to ensure that only students who are district residents attend classes, as it is unreasonable for our taxpayers to underwrite the education of a child who resides in a different school district. To ensure residency, we require the following documentation be brought to the registration appointment:

- Deed or Mortgage
- Lease
  A copy of a residential lease; deed; or mortgage statement;
  A statement by a third-party landlord, owner, or tenant from whom the parent(s)/guardian(s) lease from or live with (either sworn or unsworn);
  Such other statement(s) by a third party establishing the physical presence of the parents/guardian(s) in the school district
- Contract to Build/Buy a Home
  For September entrance only.

In the absence of the above, the following forms of documentation shall be considered for the purposes of determining residency:

- Pay stub;
- Income tax form;
- Utility or other bills;
- Membership documents based upon residency (e.g., library cards);
• Voter registration document(s);
• Official driver’s license, learner’s permit, or non-driver ID;
• State or other government issued identification;
• Documents issued by federal, state, or local agencies;
• Evidence of custody of the child, including but not limited to judicial custody orders or guardianship papers.

Documents must be current and original – they will be copied and returned to you immediately. Print-outs from online accounts will be accepted if they show the name and address of the resident and have a current date.

AGE OF ENTRANCE

To be eligible to enter kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before December 1. (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 require additional support services. 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 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.
NORTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOLS
LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS AND HEALTH INFORMATION

The following is a brief overview of the immunizations required prior to school entrance. These requirements and the accompanying guidelines are extracted from the New York State Education Department Regulations and Public Health Law 2164. These new requirements take effect July 1, 2016.

All children attending schools in New York State must be properly immunized as follows:
(See specifics for unvaccinated children at the following website:

• 3-5 doses Diphtheria Toxoid vaccine – 4 doses (if the 4th dose of DTaP was administered at age 4 years or older, then the fifth (booster) is not necessary. 3 doses if the series is started at 7 years of age or older
• 3-4 doses Polio vaccine (OPV and/or IPV) If 3 doses were administered before age 4 years, an additional dose should be received at age 4-6 years. For children 7 years or older who have previously received less than 3 doses, a total of 3 doses are required.
• 2 dose MMR given no more than 4 days prior to the first birthday
• 2 doses First Varicella given no more than 4 days prior to the first birthday for K-1
• 2 doses Varicella vaccine (Chickenpox) for all students entering 6th grade
• 3 doses Hepatitis B vaccine (with third dose given at or after 6 months of age)
  • The 2 dose adult Recombivax Hepatitis B series for students 11-15 years of age meets the requirements for Hepatitis B
• 1 dose Tetanus toxoid containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (Only required for students enrolling in grades 6-12 who have not previously received a Tdap at 7 years of age or older).
• 1 dose Meningococcal vaccine for students entering 7th grade age 11 or 12
• 1 dose Meningococcal (booster) vaccine for students entering 12th grade age 16 or older

The only students exempt from the above requirements are those having a certificate or written physician’s statement of medical exemption or a written statement of exemption for religious reasons. In these instances, however, it is likely that the Department of Health would require us to exclude from school those students who are not immunized against the disease.

Our records indicate that your child, has not returned documentation for the following immunizations ____________________. It is therefore imperative that we receive Doctor certification of the required immunization(s) as soon as possible prior to the start of the school year.

Should you need to have your child immunized, please feel free to contact the Albany County Department of Health, South Ferry and Green Streets, Albany (447-4589).

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to call the Health Office.

Very truly yours,

Health Office                Principal/Supervisor
TRANSPORTATION

School bus transportation information can be provided to parents only after the Registrar has informed the Transportation Department that all the requirements have been satisfied.

School Bus transportation is available for all eligible students. Once the Registrar has informed the Transportation Department that you have satisfied all the requirements for registration, you will receive a phone call from the department regarding your bus stop information. If your child will be going to and/or from a location other than home (such as a babysitter or daycare), please call the Transportation Department directly for more information, or consult our webpage at www.northcolonie.org. The transportation link is on the left side of the page at the bottom.

CLASS SIZE POLICY

The issue of class size has been studied by parents, teachers, administrators and community members in two major review committees. 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 extracurricular 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 Mr. David Semo, 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 in the classrooms, throughout the school, and on school buses. Students who violate school rules will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and more regulated supervision.

The following is excerpted from Students’ 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 school 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 district and school. 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 (phrase, word or words) or insignia (picture, symbols, patch or pin) 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 towards 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
- displays known gang colors or identification.

Certain categories of clothing have been held to be impermissible by the Commissioner of Education on the basis of factors other than appropriateness of style, fashion or taste. These categories are those constituting:

- 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 may also be excluded from field trips and extracurricular 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.

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 or continued violation may result, depending on the seriousness of the offense, in immediate suspension, referral to police, Family Court, or 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 from school by the principal, 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) using walkmans, iPods, portable radios, beepers, pagers, or cellular phones in school or on school buses;
   l) using slurs based on race, creed, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, genetic disposition, or HIV or Hepatitis Carrier status or
   m) cyber bullying, which is prohibited in any of its forms, can subject the offending student to appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with the student discipline code.

2. Insubordination, that is, failing to comply with the lawful directions of teachers, school administrators or other school employees in a supervisor capacity, leaving school without permission, or being in a school area that is unsupervised.

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) plagiarism,
   e) inappropriate use of technology,
   f) disruption of teaching and/or learning.

4) Conduct which violates Board of Education 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/use/sale or under the influence of drugs or alcohol,
   e) possession, use or threatened use of weapons or fireworks,
   f) possession or use of tobacco or tobacco products,
   g) hazing, harassment, fighting, or
   h) possessing or using walkmans, iPods, portable radios, beepers, pagers, or cellular phones in school or on school buses.

**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.

**Smoking and Tobacco Products**

Smoking, possession of tobacco products or any other use of tobacco products is prohibited on school premises or in school-sponsored activities. School “premises” is defined as any building, structure and surrounding grounds contained within the District’s legally defined property boundaries and vehicles used to transport children or school personnel. Penalties for student violations of this policy include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Violation</th>
<th>Second Violation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 3-day external suspension</td>
<td>1. 5-day external suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reinstatement conference (parent(s), student assistance counselor, Building principal, guidance counselor in attendance)</td>
<td>2. Reinstatement conference (parent(s), student assistance counselor, Building principal, guidance counselor in attendance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.Recommended one hour instruction session with student assistance counselor to discuss harmful effects of using tobacco</td>
<td>3. Probation - conditions set by Building principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recommended counseling sessions with student assistance counselor.</td>
<td>4. Recommended weekly counseling sessions with student assistance counselor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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, use, distribution or sale of alcoholic beverages, marijuana or its derivatives, controlled substances, imitation controlled substances,* prescription drugs or drug paraphernalia by students on school premises 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. The sale of drugs on school property or within 1,000 feet of school property will result in increased criminal penalties.

Any student who is found to be under the influence of or in possession of controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, marijuana or its derivatives, alcohol or prescription drugs (except when taken as directed by a physician), will be suspended immediately and the police may be involved. A recommended meeting with the student assistance counselor will be offered prior to a reinstatement conference. A reinstatement conference with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be held.

Any repeated offense for use, under the influence of, or possession of controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, prescription drugs (except when taken as directed by a physician), marijuana or its derivatives or drug paraphernalia by a student on school premises or in school sponsored activities shall subject the offender to a disciplinary hearing before the Superintendent and a possible long-term suspension.

The possession of controlled substances, imitation controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, marijuana or its derivatives, prescription drugs or drug paraphernalia on school premises by a student with intent to sell or distribute shall subject the offender to immediate suspension from school pending a formal Superintendent’s hearing which could result in a long-term suspension.

The police will be contacted in all drug related cases.

* Definition of controlled substances, or imitation controlled substances – (See Sec. 200.00 NYS Penal Law). (Reference: Board of Education Policy #5312.1)

**Dangerous Weapons in School**

No student shall bring, possess or use any weapons, including small pocket knives, on school property or in school-sponsored activities. A weapon is defined as any instrument capable of inflicting bodily harm or which might be used or threatened to be used to cause physical injury in offensive or defensive conduct against another person.

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 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. (Reference: Board of Education Policy #5312.2)

**Discrimination and Harassment**

The district prohibits discrimination and harassment by employees and students based upon age, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, 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 aforementioned classes. Harassment is a course of conduct that is unwelcome and has the effect of causing torment or worry, thereby creating a hostile learning environment.

Discrimination and harassment are prohibited on school district premises, while students are being transported to and from school, or during school 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, nonverbal 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.

Upon receipt of a formal “Complaint of Prohibited Discrimination or Harassment,” 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 goal 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 hold a student disciplinary hearing to determine the findings of guilt and the recommended punishment.

Should the offending individual be a school employee, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy #5020.1)

**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. A student is not permitted in his/her own school building outside of regular school hours except for school-approved activities or unless he/she has 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.

(Reference: Board of Education Policy #5300)

*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 member 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 online 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 uploading 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

We have implemented 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 which limits access to our buildings and classrooms. This procedure ensures the safety of the children and maintains 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

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 nonpromotion 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, in addition to their independent reading time. 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. 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 and Math assessments in April. Fourth graders also take the New York State Science assessment in the spring. 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.
January 2016

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Principals of Public and Nonpublic Schools
Leaders of Charter Schools

FROM: Angelica Infante-Green, Deputy Commissioner


### 2016–17 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Administration Dates</th>
<th>Make-up Dates</th>
<th>Scoring Dates</th>
<th>Final Dates to Submit Answer Sheets to Scanning Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NYSAA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Social Studies</td>
<td>Monday, September 26 – Friday, December 9</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>Tuesday, January 17 – Friday, February 24</td>
<td>Monday, February 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Arts and Math</td>
<td>Monday, March 20 – Friday, June 2</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grades 3-8</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper-based</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 28 – Thursday, March 30</td>
<td>Monday, April 3 – Wednesday, April 5</td>
<td>Friday, March 31 – Friday, April 7</td>
<td>Friday, April 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-based</td>
<td>Monday, March 27 – Friday, March 31</td>
<td>Monday, April 3 – Wednesday, April 5</td>
<td>Friday, March 31 – Friday, April 7</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grades 3-8</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper-based</td>
<td>Tuesday, May 2 – Thursday, May 4</td>
<td>Monday, May 8 – Wednesday, May 10</td>
<td>Friday, May 5 – Friday, May 12</td>
<td>Friday, May 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-based</td>
<td>Monday, May 1 – Friday, May 5</td>
<td>Monday, May 8 – Wednesday, May 10</td>
<td>Friday, May 5 – Friday, May 12</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NYSESLAT Speaking</strong></td>
<td>Monday, April 10 – Friday, May 19</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>Speaking is scored as it is administered</td>
<td>Thursday, June 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NYSESLAT Listening, Reading, Writing</strong></td>
<td>Monday, May 8 – Friday, May 19</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>Monday, May 22 – Thursday, June 1</td>
<td>Thursday, June 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>Administration Dates</td>
<td>Make-up Dates</td>
<td>Scoring Dates</td>
<td>Final Dates to Submit Answer Sheets to Scanning Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 Science Performance Test</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 24 – Friday, June 2</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>Scoring may start immediately following administration</td>
<td>Thursday, June 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8 Science Performance Test</td>
<td>Wednesday, May 24 – Friday, June 2</td>
<td>Make-ups must be given within the testing window</td>
<td>Scoring may start immediately following administration</td>
<td>Thursday, June 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 Science Written</td>
<td>Monday, June 5</td>
<td>Tuesday, June 6 – Wednesday June 7</td>
<td>Following make-up dates, but no later than Thursday, June 15</td>
<td>Thursday, June 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8 Science Written</td>
<td>Monday, June 5</td>
<td>Tuesday, June 6 – Wednesday June 7</td>
<td>Following make-up dates, but no later than Thursday, June 15</td>
<td>Thursday, June 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 and possibly administered to new students in grades 4 and 5.

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

**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.

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 à la carte basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakfast - Student Price $1.25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Students are free with application on file</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 à 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lunch - Student Price $2.00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Students $.25 with application on file</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPLICATION FOR FREE OR REDUCED PRICE SCHOOL MEALS

Applications for free or reduced price student meals are available at the Food Service Office located at the North Colonie Central School District Offices. To access an application online the North Colonie web page has a link to download the application. Applications should be submitted to Lisa Ostrowski, Food Service Director, North Colonie Central School District, 91 Fiddlers Lane, Latham, NY 12110. Applications may be submitted anytime during the school year.

PREPAID MEAL ACCOUNTS

For your convenience we offer prepaid meals to our students. Prepaid meal prices for elementary students are $37.00 and for junior high and high school students they are $42.00. 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 $37/$42($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.

PAY FOR MEALS ONLINE TOO!

The North Colonie Food Service Department offers all parents a secure and convenient way to pay for your child’s meals. You will need your child’s PIN to set up the account. Once an account is in place you can view your child’s daily balance from home. Go to www.paypams.com to set up an account today!
**DAILY PLANNER**

The District Study Skills Review Committee has recommended that each student in grades 3, 4, 5, 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. The district also announces closings and delays on the district website, Facebook and Twitter.

In the event of severe weather conditions or other emergencies, announcements of school closings or late openings will be made on the district website between 6:00 a.m. - 7:00 a.m. Closing information will also be sent directly to your e-mail account and cell phone (if desired) via the district’s School News Notifier (SNN) system. You must sign-up for SNN; visit [https://snn.neric.org/ncolonie](https://snn.neric.org/ncolonie) for more information.

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.

School closings are also announced on the following local TV and radio stations: Channel 6, Channel 10, YNN-Channel 9, Channel 13, FOX 23, WGY (810 AM), WFLY (92.3 FM), WYJB (95.5 FM), and WRVE (99.5 FM).

**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 New York State Common Core Learning Standards, with the Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt Go Math! textbook series, in grades K-6, as the 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 the application of these skills in problem-solving situations. Students are taught to understand mathematics through these standards of mathematical practice:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make sense of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

A hands-on approach, with the use of manipulatives and mathematical modeling, assists in the development of concepts for our students in the domains of:

- Counting and Cardinality
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Number and Operations in Base Ten
- Number and Operations – Fractions
- Geometry
- Measurement and Data
- Statistics and Probability
- Ratios and Proportional Relationships
- Expressions and Equations

Assessment occurs during each unit through teacher-directed assessments, district tests, annual standardized tests, and New York State Assessments given to students in grades three through six.

An Alternate Math program is offered at grades five and six for students who demonstrate a math talent well beyond the enriched classroom curriculum. Although the concepts taught in the general education classroom are reviewed, the pace and topics covered are accelerated. Assessment includes unit tests, annual standardized tests, New York State Assessments, and an end-of-year assessment which includes core math skills and a long-term novel problem. The alternate Math teachers prepare the student 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 as outlined in the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts. 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 is used. 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, in math students are expected to write an explanation of 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.

**SCIENCE**

Our primary goal is to help students 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, videos, lab kits, 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.
ART

Art instruction is provided for each child beginning in grade 1. Currently, in grades 1 through 3, the art period is 45 minutes per week. In grades 4 through 6, the art period is 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 as well as 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 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 based on their exceptional skill level, motivation, and creativity. The Art Explorers Program consists of an additional art session once a week at each elementary school, and an invitation to participate in a four-week, after-school art workshop during the year. Students from the six elementary schools participate at one designated school location for the after-school series.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The Elementary Foreign Language program provides students in grades 5 and 6 with a comparative experience in four languages and related cultures. Students in the program have an opportunity to use basic expressions and vocabulary for communication in the target language and develop cross-cultural understanding supporting the North Colonie social studies curriculum. While studying the Western hemisphere, students in grade 5 are exposed to French and Spanish. Sixth graders explore German and Russian to support their study of the Eastern hemisphere. In each grade, the instruction is delivered in two six-week blocks.

In their classes, students embark on virtual tours to different countries and engage in various cultural experiences. Through games, songs, and interactive activities, they learn the fundamentals of each language, develop new perspectives, and gain cultural awareness in an increasingly global society. Students will also be able to draw from these experiences in order to make an informed decision about which language they will pursue in seventh through twelfth grades.
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 DVD’s may be used. The computers provide for both database 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. Classroom teachers borrow classroom collections of books for leisure reading and also collections of book and nonbook 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 3, classes are 30 minutes long and in grades 4 through 6 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 borrowed materials. 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 once a week. 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 5 and 6. 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 participating in the instrumental program receives a small group lesson once a week. As the performance level increases, the student participates in band or orchestra, which rehearses a minimum of once a week.

Advanced opportunities are available to students who excel in music in grades 5 or 6. Students may be selected to 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 1 through 6, each child is scheduled for a total of 120 minutes. A before or after school intramural program is also available for students featuring various 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 North Colonie Physical Fitness Test is administered annually to youngsters beginning in the fourth grade. Students will be tested in six different areas to determine an overall fitness level. Each student, upon completion of the test, will receive an individualized report regarding their fitness level.

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 personal safety, nutrition, dental health, 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/Subcommittee of the CSE that meets bi-weekly to review referrals made by parents or staff for students who may be gifted learners, students with disabilities, or students in need of remediation. The team is comprised of the reading specialist, speech therapist, school psychologist, learning resource area teacher, a representative classroom teacher, a representative from LEP/alternate math/remedial math, building principal, and the Director of Pupil Services. The child’s classroom teacher serves as a member of each team.

The Pupil Services Team/Subcommittee of the CSE 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 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/Subcommittee of the CSE 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/Subcommittee of the CSE 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 grade levels 5 and 6 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. Some current ones are Kids’ Stuff Literary and Art Journal and math and science Olympiads.
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 (100°F or higher);
2) do NOT send your child to school until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication, 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 re-examined 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, 10 and for any student entering the school district for the first time. 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. Dental health certificates are requested in the same years.

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.

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

ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES

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.

Remedial Reading

A certified reading teacher 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 30 minutes a session, at least two times a week.

**Writing Monitoring**

Students in grades 2 through 6 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 prewriting 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 (Resource Room)**

The learning resource area, served by certified special education teachers, provides supportive help to students with disabilities. 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 students with disabilities who are mainstreamed one hundred percent of the day and require support from a certified special education teacher.

**INTEGRATED KINDERGARTEN/ACADEMIC SKILLS CLASS (SPECIAL CLASS)**

At the elementary school level, the district offers three integrated kindergarten classes for five-year old children with significant special education needs. In addition, Blue Creek and Southgate Schools offer an Academic Skills Class for elementary children in grades K through 6 who can benefit from integration in general education classes but require additional academic assistance from a special education teacher as well as supplemental supports and services.
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. 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. Prereading 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.*