

# **Blue Creek Elementary School**

**A PeaceAble School**

*North Colonie Central School District*

100 Clinton Road  
Latham, NY 12110

(518) 785-7451  
FAX (518) 785-3273

**Family Handbook**

**2019 - 2020**

## Table of Contents

Mission.....	4
Support for families.....	5
Financial Difficulties	
McKinney Vento homeless child act	
Emergency food assistance	
School Supplies	
Other resources – 211	
Other Stressors	
School Hours.....	6
Attendance.....	6
Arrival, Dismissal.....	8
Transportation.....	9
Communication .....	9
Student Records .....	10
Health and Safety .....	11
Illness, Medications, Food Allergies -----	11
Visitors -----	12
Traffic -----	13
Safety Drills -----	14
Student Rights and Responsibilities.....	14
Discrimination, Harassment, Bullying----	15
Student Dress Code-----	16
Student property, cell phones, lost & found, instrument --	17
Schedule.....	18
Academics.....	18
Curriculum-----	18
Special Areas Classes-----	19
Homework, planners, folder-----	20
Reporting Student Progress-----	21
Awards .....	21
Lunch & Recess .....	22
Fifth & Sixth Grade Events .....	24
Room Parents/ Room Helpers .....	26
Class Parties .....	26
Committees with Parent Membership.....	26
Ongoing Activities .....	27
Events .....	28

## **North Colonie Central School District**

### **Mission**

All students are provided the opportunity and necessary support to engage in relevant, challenging work which contributes to their academic and social growth and development.

All staff, teachers and administrators are part of a larger learning community, working together to build collective capacity in order to provide a high-quality, relevant, equitable education for all.

### **Vision**

North Colonie Schools will deliver a PK-12 educational experience that engages a joyful community of diverse learners with a challenging, highly personalized, supportive program that empowers all to connect, collaborate, create, communicate and explore in safe respectful, relevant and equitable places of learning, where interdisciplinary pathways that inspire all students to discover their passion, purpose and sense of belonging.

## **Blue Creek Elementary School**

We are "A PeaceAble School" and we strive to have a culture characterized by respect, kindness, compassion, inclusion and peace. We are a diverse community of learners with members of our community coming from a variety of continents, countries, ethnicities, cultures, faiths, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds and life experiences. Our diversity makes us stronger. Please come to Blue Creek with an open mind and heart. We are fortunate to have so many opportunities to learn from and with one another.

*Each month we focus on a character trait that helps students develop the understandings, attitudes and skills to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens.*

**September-** RESPECT

**October-** CITIZENSHIP

**November-** RESPONSIBILITY

**December-** CARING / COMPASSION

**January-** COOPERATION

**February-** FRIENDSHIP

**March-** PERSEVERANCE

**April-** HONESTY / TRUSTWORTHINESS

**May-** FAIRNESS / SELF DISCIPLINE

**June-** SPORTSMANSHIP

## Support for Families

Throughout the time that your child is at Blue Creek your family may encounter significant stressors that may impact your child and/or your family's well-being. In order to meet the unique needs of your child in a stressful time, understanding the stress or difficulties with which your child is trying to cope can assist us in this process. We believe in the dignity and privacy of every member of our school community. Information you provide will be kept confidential and only shared with parties that need the information to support your child.

### Financial Difficulties

- Homeless – If your family is or becomes homeless, please let us know. Federal law states that your child has the right to have uninterrupted schooling if your temporary residence is within 50 miles of the school he/she was in when you became homeless. These students are entitled to transportation to the school they had been attending prior to becoming homeless. This law defines "homeless" as meeting one of the following conditions:
  - *Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship or other similar reason*
  - *Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds*
  - *Living in emergency or transitional shelters*
  - *Abandoned in hospitals*
  - *Awaiting foster care placement*
  - *Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping*
  - *Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.*
  - *Migratory living in circumstances described above*

Please contact the principal for assistance.

- Free or Reduced Lunch Program- We can facilitate you completing the paperwork to apply for free/reduced price breakfast and lunch. Contact principal or kitchen.
- Emergency Food Assistance- We may be able to provide emergency (one day) supply and provide assistance locating a local food pantry. Contact nurse or principal.
- Weekend Backpack Program – If having additional meal items or snacks for your child would be helpful, please contact the school principal.
- School Supplies – If you cannot afford your child's school supplies or any other mandatory school related expense, we will find a way to provide these items. Contact principal.
- Other resources – United Way is offering assistance to individuals who need help getting connected with regional resources. Dial the number **2-1-1** for toll free assistance.

Other Stressors – Many other situations can be challenging for your child including: changes in family structure, death, divorce, military service, new baby, parent job change or work schedule change, sibling with special needs, family member moving in, parent getting married, family member with significant health concerns, etc.

Our school counselor and school psychologist can offer school-based check-ins to help your child develop healthy coping strategies. They can also recommend local professionals who can assist with more substantial work with families. Our school social worker can be of assistance in helping families access school and community-based resources.

## School Hours

Students may enter the building at 8:05 a.m. Families are encouraged to get children to school by 8:15. Students arriving after 8:25 are considered tardy (late). Family pick up at the end of the day is from 2:40 – 2:45 p.m. Buses begin loading students at 2:45 p.m. and finish loading students by 3 p.m. Please do not drop your child off before 8:05 a.m.; there is no supervision in the building before 8:05 a.m. or after the buses depart at dismissal.

## Attendance

Attendance is a critical factor in school success for students. Consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation. School attendance is both a right and a responsibility in New York State. Children have the right to attend school between the ages of 5 and 21, and are mandated to attend between the ages of 6 and 16 (students must complete the school year in which they turn 16). Guardians are required to make sure that their children attend school on a regular basis.

The goal of this attendance policy is to encourage students to come to school ready to learn. The purposes for attendance taking in schools are:

- to know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons
- to determine the district's average daily attendance for State Aid reimbursement
- to verify that individual students are complying with Education Law in relation to compulsory attendance
- to determine eligibility for course credit
- to identify individual and group attendance patterns in order to provide attendance improvement programs and services, to improve student academic performance and increase school completion.

### Excused and Illegal/Unexcused Absences and Tardiness (late arrival)

Excused absences and tardies are those due to illness or injury, death in family, medical appointments, appearance in family court, take your child to work day (with completed essay), suspension during which a student of compulsory school age attends tutoring, internal restriction, military obligations, religious observances, and school-sponsored or school-authorized activities. All other absences and tardies, even with the permission of a parent/guardian, are considered unexcused absences.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the District with **written notification** of the reason for such absence(s). For absences totaling five (5) consecutive days or less, including absences for medical reasons, written documentation may be signed by the student's parent/guardian. Absences for medical reasons totaling more than five (5) consecutive days must be supported by a note from a medical professional.

### Examples of illegal / unexcused absences and tardies:

- overslept; tired
- car related problems
- bad roads; weather
- missed bus or ride
- vacations
- needed at home
- loss of power
- visiting another school
- with parent on trip
- truant
- suspension (w/o tutoring)
- sporting or other activity not part of District's program
- absence for illness/injury in excess of 10 days without a doctor's note

**Blue Creek Attendance Procedures**

When a student is absent from school, the student’s parent/guardian must notify the attendance office of the absence. This helps us account for the whereabouts of each child in a timely manner. Please make these calls before 8:30 a.m.

You may notify school by calling the main office or emailing our attendance mailbox.

**(518) 785-7451**  
**BCAttendance@ncolonie.org**

**Homework Requests**

We are happy to provide work for absent students who feel well enough to complete the tasks. **Please make your requests for work by 8:30 a.m. in the morning when you call in your child’s absence.**

It is difficult for classroom teachers to interrupt lessons several times to gather work for individual students when parents call in for different students at different times throughout the school day.

**School work will not be provided in advance of illegal/unexcused absences.**

*Example of note describing absence, late arrival or early dismissal*

<b>Absent / Tardy Note</b>	
Date ____/____/____	
Child’s Name _____	
Grade _____	Teacher _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Was <b>LATE</b> on ____/____/____ because _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Will be <b>picked up early</b> at ____:____ By _____ because _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Was <b>ABSENT</b> on ____/____/____ because _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	
Signature _____	

## **Arrival, Dismissal and Transportation**

### **Arrival**

Please be advised that students will not be admitted into the school building prior to 8:05 a.m. unless they are attending school sponsored activities such as intramurals, Art Explorers, Bell Choir, Drama or are registered for the CYC morning program. Buses begin unloading at 8:05 when the front doors are opened for students.

Students should be dropped off in the new parking lot loop located on the right side of the driveway. Students in grade K-2 will enter the building by the kindergarten rooms. Students in grades 3-6 will walk down our new sidewalk and enter through the main entrance. No cars will be allowed in the front circle at any time.

### **Afternoon Pick Up**

At the end of the day, as parents/guardians arrive, they will gather at the exit near the new parking lot and the kindergarten rooms. Beginning at 2:35 p.m. a staff member will go outside to check off the names of students whose designated pick up person (proper identification required!) has arrived and is out of their vehicle, ready to greet the child. Individuals picking up children will remain outside. As students arrive at the exit, only students whose pick-up person has arrived will be allowed to exit the building. Please remember, you may not park on the sidewalk at any time.

For safety reasons, parents/guardians must wait by the exit doors. Students are not permitted to walk to the parking lot or across the driveway without an adult.

### **Walking or Biking**

Students who walk or bike home at the end of the day will be released after all of the buses have gone.

### **Change in Dismissal Plans**

Please be sure to send a note to your teacher if your child's dismissal plans change. Many times children think that a mention of the possibility that Mom or Dad will pick them up means not to take the bus. A note from you clarifies the plans.

Unless we have a written note of a change in plans, your child will be dismissed in the usual manner. If your child is going to a friend's home either on a different bus or to a different stop, a written note from you is required by the Transportation Department.

When alternate dismissal plans are stated in writing, your child will have a safer and less stressful dismissal.

## **Transportation**

Each child is assigned to the bus that brings them closest to their home. Please note that riding a bus is a privilege extended by the district for reasons of safety and convenience. This privilege may be suspended if a bus rider doesn't follow bus safety rules. Please review the rules for bus riders with your children.

- Bus riders are to board and leave buses in an orderly manner.
- Students must respect the safety and wellbeing of others.
- All instructions from the driver must be obeyed.
- Recording or photographing other students is prohibited.
- Excessive noise on the bus is not allowed.
- All belongings must fit into one seat.
- Glass or other breakable objects are not permitted.
- Musical instruments and projects must be easily carried and fit on the seat with the rider.
- Bus riders must remain seated & keep their arms, head and other items inside the bus.
- Students are not permitted to eat while on the bus.
- Students are to sit with students in their grade level. Oldest students are in the back of the bus.

If your child should miss the bus, we will contact the individual named on the emergency card. A person you designate will be responsible for picking the child up. Teachers and staff members are not allowed to offer rides to students.

## **Communication**

### **School Messenger**

We will continue to use our new system, School Messenger, which gathers contact information from our District's database for students. While families do not need to sign up for this, as all families are automatically enrolled, your contact information is only as good as the information in our database. If you do not get an electronic message from Blue Creek before school starts, please call our office to verify your contact information. Nearly all of our school notices will be sent through School Messenger. School Messenger will also send text messages regarding school delays and closures. While newsletters will be available through School Messenger, online and through paper copies sent home, many reminders and timely announcements will only be sent through School Messenger. You will miss these communications if your contact information is not up to date in our database.

### **Student Planners**

Students in grades 1-6 have an assignment book, a school "planner" which is to be used for recording both daily and long-term assignments. There is also a section devoted to Study Skills and Test Taking skills. This planner is provided by the district. If the planner is lost, a nominal fee is charged for a replacement. The planner is to be used by all students in grades 1-6.

### **Student Folders**

Each student will receive a plastic pocket folder with clear document sleeves inside. The pockets will be used to transport important documents and homework papers back and forth to school. The clear sleeves inside will hold papers that need to be regularly referenced by parents and students. Each grade level will determine the reference documents for their students. You can expect to find our lunch menu, day 1-6 schedule, websites and passwords, etc. Student should return the folders to school each day.

## **Monthly Newsletters**

Each month the school publishes a newsletter with information about upcoming events and other important announcements. These are sent home with students and sent out digitally via **School Messenger**.

## **Early Dismissal or School Closings**

School closing announcements in the event of severe weather conditions or other emergency closures will be made through **School Messenger** and over the following radio and television stations:

WROW WTRY WPTR WOKO WRGB-6 WNYT-13 WTEN-10

Please do not call the school to ask if we're going to be closed. The local media are very prompt with their announcements. These calls tie up the phone lines so that we cannot receive messages from our Central Office.

In the event that weather conditions force an early dismissal after classes are in session, announcements of such early closing will be made through **School Messenger** and over the same radio and television stations. We urge you to make arrangements for your child to go to a neighbor's house in the event that you might not be home and to be sure your child knows exactly what he/she should do in a situation such as this. Please keep in mind that some emergencies require everyone to leave the building. Your child must know what to do in these situations.

# **Student Records**

## **Access To Student Records**

Guardians have the right to inspect their child's academic records or to request the amendment of records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. In order to review the academic records, parents should make an appointment with the school principal. Student report cards and state test results are available on Infinite Campus.

## **Student Privacy**

Guardians must give consent for any personally identifiable information to be disclosed. Guardians must be given the opportunity to be informed before their children participate in any survey that reveals information on certain types of personal behavior or political beliefs.

Guardians must also be notified any time their children will participate in activities in which personal information will be gathered from students and used for marketing purposes. Guardians may exclude their children from participation in these activities.

Guardians have the right to "opt out" of several types of publications. An Opt Out form is distributed annually. It is the guardian's responsibility to complete and return this form to school if there is a desire to opt out of any of the publications listed on the form.

All visitors are expected to refrain from posting photographs or videos on social media without the consent of the guardians of children and/or the adults contained in such photographic content and permission of the principal.

## Health and Safety

### Illness

In an effort to control illness and communicable diseases, we ask for your cooperation by following these guidelines:

- *Do not send your child to school with a fever (100 degrees or higher).*
- *Do not send your child to school until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours **without medication**, to ensure that your child is free of infection.*
- *Do not send your child to school if he/she has been vomiting or has had diarrhea during the night and/or early morning hours.*
- *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.*
- *When your child has a positive throat culture, he/she should have at least 24 hours of an antibiotic before returning to school.*
- *Do not send your child to school if he/she has a rash or other symptoms of a communicable disease or infectious condition. Unexplained rashes need to be diagnosed by a physician before the child is allowed to return to school.*

Your cooperation helps to ensure the health and safety of all students. If you have any questions, please call our school nurse.

### Medication at School

There are times when a student is able to attend school only if medication can be administered during school hours. In such cases, NY State regulations state that the school nurse, or other member of the school staff, who has been properly instructed, may administer the medication if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- A written request from the family physician must be on file in the school indicating the medication, its frequency and dosage, observable symptoms indicating an emergency, and the duration of the order.
- A written request must also be on file in the school from the person in parental relationship to the child requesting the administration of medication as specified by the family physician.

An adequate supply of medication, syringes and needles must be delivered directly to the school nurse by the person in parental relationship to the child. **Do NOT send medication to school with your child!**

- The medication must be kept in the health office, in a locked drawer or file, completely separated from any supplies used for emergency care.
- A periodic evaluation of procedures must be made regarding the administration of medications in general, and a periodic evaluation must be made of the specific procedure for each individual pupil receiving medication.

**Sunscreen-** The school nurse is not permitted to apply sunscreen to your child without a doctor's note and parent permission. Teachers can apply sunscreen to children and children may apply their own sunscreen if there is written permission from a guardian.

**Cough Drops** – Children may self-administer cough drops, with written permission from a guardian. Cough drops must be stored in the nurse's office.

## **Food Allergies**

We have a number of students with life-threatening allergies to certain foods. Some allergies are so severe that we designate the child's classroom and lunch table as "free" of the allergen.

Currently, a number of students have life-threatening allergies to nut products. Several classrooms in the building are designated as "nut free." This means that no foods with nut products can enter the classroom. If your child is in a classroom designated as a "nut free" room, you will receive additional information about what your child can and cannot bring for snack.

In addition, the school nurse will check all food items brought in for class parties, regardless of whether the room is designated as allergen free. All food items brought in for parties must be commercially prepared (store-bought), unopened, and in the original packaging.

For more information on our District Life Threatening Allergic Reaction policy, you may go to the District website or call Blue Creek and a copy will be provided.

## **Visitor Expectations**

In order to establish and maintain a healthy, safe, and peaceful environment for our students, staff and community, Blue Creek School has established the following standards of behavior for all visitors to our school.

1. Visitors should only plan on visiting Blue Creek when picking up or dropping off a child, invited to attend an event or when coming in for a prescheduled meeting. In general, unplanned meetings cannot be accommodated.
2. All interactions, conducted in person or otherwise, are expected to be conducted in a respectful and peaceable manner. Please refrain from using profanity, excessive and/or abusive volume, aggression, threats, or similar communications.
3. Visitors must obey traffic patterns and directions of staff members directing traffic.
4. All visitors are expected to enter through the entry doors by the main office. Staff are not authorized to permit access through any other entrance.
5. Upon entry, visitors will report directly to the main office or staff in the lobby, explaining the purpose of their visit.
6. Any sticker or other identification provided to the visitor shall be clearly visible to staff during the entire time while on school premises.
7. Visitors must proceed directly to the destination designated for their visit, without deviation. No visitor shall enter upon any portion of the school premises for any purpose other than the authorized purpose of the visit.
8. While at school, visitors will not deviate from rules and prohibitions established by the school board (District Policy #1520 – Public Conduct on School Property). Prohibited behavior shall include:
  - Causing willful physical injury to any person
  - Causing willful damage to property
  - Causing willful disruption to the orderly conduct of classes, program, meeting, activity or daily operation
  - Causing willful interference with the lawful and authorized activities of others
  - Possessing, using, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
  - Using tobacco products or vaping
  - Possessing weapons, except for authorized law enforcement officers, as their duties require
  - Engaging in conduct which is a violation of the NYS Penal Code

### Visitor Expectations (continued)

9. All visitors shall comply with the provisions of the Dignity for All Students Act. Incident(s) of harassment, discrimination, or bullying based on another's race, color, religion, religious practice, gender, (including identity and expression), sex, sexual orientation, weight or disability are prohibited.
10. All visitors shall respect the privacy of students in our care. Sharing of information observed during visits related to students' programs, academic performance, behaviors, or other personal matters is prohibited.
11. All visitors shall refrain from posting photographs or videos on social media without the consent of the guardians of children and/or the adults contained in such photographic content and permission of the principal.
12. At the conclusion of the purpose of their visit, all visitors shall sign out at the office and promptly depart from school grounds.

These expectations apply to field trips and are a supplement, not a replacement of field trip protocols.

### **Traffic**

With nearly 100 staff members, 500 students and all of the family members of those students arriving and departing from Blue Creek on a daily basis, traffic safety rules are especially important.

**Please stop at our stop signs.** We have a stop sign by the crosswalk near the building. Please stop before driving over the crosswalk when traveling in either direction.

Please comply with school staff that are directing traffic. No cars will be allowed in the front circle at any time.

### **Please observe the NYS law (below) regarding pedestrians' right of way in the crosswalk.**

**§1151. Pedestrians' right of way in crosswalks.**(a) When traffic-control signals are not in place or not in operation, the driver of a **vehicle shall yield the right of way**, slowing down or stopping if need be to so yield, **to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk** on the roadway upon which the vehicle is traveling...

**Do not park in or next to crosswalks.** Parking in crosswalks blocks pedestrians. Parking next to crosswalks impedes motorist's view of the crosswalk. Further, parking next to a crosswalk often results in the driver needing to back up into a crosswalk when exiting the parking space, creating a pedestrian hazard.

**Please comply with our Morning Drop-off Traffic Pattern** located on page 8.

**Do not pass a school bus with its red lights flashing!** This is dangerous and illegal. Violators may be subject to fines, possible jail time and points on license.

**Our speed limit is 15 miles per hour.**

**Police Assistance-** The Colonie Police have agreed to assist us in enforcing traffic safety procedures on the Blue Creek campus. Please be advised that tickets will be issued for any violations of speed limit, passing school buses with flashing lights and other infractions.

## **Safety Drills**

Throughout the school year, our school will practice different safety drills. We have a number of drills, including fire drills, which most people remember from the days that they attended school. These drills are used to quickly get the entire school community to follow a set of procedures to ensure everyone's safety. These procedures can be implemented in a number of situations and are presented to students in a developmentally appropriate manner.

For example, we have a procedure that requires everyone to clear the hallways and remain in their current location. We might use this procedure if a member of our school had to be taken out of the building on a stretcher. This would allow for privacy of the injured person, allow for efficient evacuation of the individual by medical professionals and shield students from observing a potentially upsetting situation.

If you are in the building when one of these procedures is called, please follow the lead of our staff. When a strobe light is flashing outside the building, our school is in lock out. Lock out is called when there is a potential threat outside the building. In this situation, please go back to or remain in your vehicle. You may call the office to see if you will be permitted to enter the building.

We implement these procedures a number of times throughout the year. Some of these are drills and some are to manage situations that arise. Students become very accustomed to following the procedures and in general do not find them upsetting. We do not inform parents about routine drills or minor situations in which there is no threat to the safety of our students. *Significant incidents would result in official communication from the District or Blue Creek to provide more information to families.*

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Students have the right to be presented with a high quality educational program in a safe and nurturing environment. All members of the school community are responsible for not interfering with the rights of others. We expect adults and students to be polite and respectful to all members of our school community.

Each student in Blue Creek is responsible for helping to keep our school peaceable by:

- respecting the education, safety and wellbeing of others
- following staff directions
- keeping hands, feet and objects to themselves
- walking through the hallways quietly and in an orderly manner
- using appropriate voice level and school-appropriate language at all times
- respecting school property and the personal property of others.

## **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 and the developmental level of the child.

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
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
4. conduct which violates Board rules and regulations for the maintenance of public order on school property

### **Fighting**

We teach students that there are other ways, such as discussion and mediation, to resolve disagreements. Staff members are available as mediators if students cannot resolve their own disputes. If someone is harassing a student, the student should find an adult to investigate the situation and ensure that appropriate consequences and safety procedures are implemented. Any student participating in a fight can be suspended.

### **Weapons in School**

No student shall bring, possess or use any weapons, including small pocket knives, on school property, school bus or in school-sponsored activities. Toys that look like weapons are also prohibited.

### **Discrimination and Harassment**

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

Any student or visitor 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 incident to the building principal.

### **Prohibition of 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 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 is encouraged to report all incidents of such conduct to the building principal or school counselor.

### **Bullying**

Bullying is when a person or group of people use unwanted, unwelcomed words or actions that result in someone feeling sad, mad, uncomfortable or unsafe, and the target of the behavior *fears that it might happen again*.

Examples: pushing, hitting, hurting someone's body, threatening, teasing, leaving out, rumors, name-calling, ganging up, making faces, rolling eyes, whispering, mean text messages or other media, prank calls, repeated unwelcomed calls, etc.

Sometimes bullying that happens outside of school upsets the school environment. Off-campus misconduct and/or cyber bullying that happens outside of school but results in the target of the bullying feeling uncomfortable, sad, embarrassed or unsafe at school is prohibited. This behavior can include, but is not limited to, threatening, teasing, or embarrassing students or school personnel over the phone or other electronic medium.

Sometimes kids that are bullied feel sad all the time, worry it will happen again, don't want to come to school, feel left out, feel sick (stomachache, headache, etc.), feel hopeless, don't want to do things they have always enjoyed, feel bad about themselves, think about or choose to hurt themselves or others, laugh or don't seem to mind because they are uncomfortable or embarrassed and don't know what to do.

In order to prevent and stop bullying we ask that students understand and follow school rules that help make the school a safe and secure place. We ask that students be kind and respectful to **all** students and staff, whenever possible, try to include students who are left out and try to help others in need. Students need to report to adults when they experience any situation that makes them uncomfortable or upset. When students feel like they are being bullied, they are encouraged to tell an adult, go into any teacher's classroom or the office if they feel scared or worried that something is going to happen.

When an incident of suspected bullying is reported, an adult will ask questions to try to better understand what is happening. A teacher, school counselor, or a principal will review the report and will talk with students promptly to thoroughly investigate the concern. The privacy of the person reporting the incident is protected. Parents are notified promptly.

### **Student Dress Code**

Students are expected to maintain dress and appearance which is 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;
- is harassing, discriminatory, or advocates prejudice toward race, color, religion, national origin, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability or any group;
- displays or advocates the use of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances, or
- knowingly displays gang colors or identification.

The Commissioner of Education has identified other factors that can make certain clothing 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.

\*Flip flops are discouraged but not prohibited.

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. Guardians will be contacted.

## **Student Property**

### **Bringing Items to School**

Bringing unnecessary personal items to school is discouraged. These can be a distraction to students during the day and/or could become lost, stolen, damaged, or become a source of conflict. Unless special arrangements have been made with the teacher, these items should be left at home.

It is important that you label all things brought to school – jackets, sweaters, coats, books, lunch boxes, boots, etc. Popular items are often purchased by many families and ownership of these common items can become confusing. When an item is left at school and ownership is clear, we can often get the item back to the child.

### **Lost and Found**

Our Lost and Found items are kept on racks in the cafeteria, and smaller items are kept on a window sill in the office. Unclaimed items are typically donated a few times a year. The lost and found area may be checked during the school day or after 6 p.m.

### **Cell Phones**

Students who have been asked by their families to bring their cell phones to school may do so. These need to be kept out of sight with the ringer and vibration features turned off. Cell phones are not to be used during the school day or on school transportation. Students are not permitted to take photos, video or make audio recordings on their personal devices during the school day or on school transportation.

### **Returning to school for lost or forgotten items**

All students are given time to organize their belongings and gather needed materials before the end of the school day. Please help your child become more responsible so that trips back to school are not necessary. The school and classrooms are locked after 3:30 p.m. Staff has been told not to open the doors after 3:30 p.m.

### **Instrument Pick Up**

The school and classrooms are locked after 3:30 pm. Please contact the office to arrange for after-hours pick up of large musical instruments.

## **Schedule**

### **Six-Day Rotation**

All elementary schools in North Colonie operate on a six-day rotation. That means that instead of a Monday-Friday schedule, we operate on a Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, etc. schedule. Each month a calendar will be placed in student folders with the number of the six-day rotation filled in for each school day.

### **Intervention and Enrichment Block** - *sometimes called I/E*

A half hour block is designated for all grade levels each day for interventions and enrichment. During this time period, students who need extra help receive additional support. Students sometimes use this time for enrichment classes or projects.

## **Academics**

*More detailed information is available at <http://www.northcolonie.org/academics/>*

### **English Language Arts**- *sometimes called ELA*

*All grades K-6*

Students get instruction in ELA on a daily basis. This is the time when students learn and practice reading and writing skills.

### **Mathematics**- *often called Math*

*All grades K-6*

Students get math instruction on a daily basis. Students will learn basic number concepts in the early grades then move on to more complex concepts in the upper grades.

**Science and Social Studies block** – All students have a daily period designated as Science/Social Studies time. Some days the teacher may focus entirely on one subject, sometimes the period is shared between the two. Over the course of the year, half of the time is spent on each subject.

### **Science**

*All grades K-6*

Students will have opportunities for hands-on investigations, group work, reading, writing, skill development and vocabulary development in the content area. In the K-6 program students will explore Life, Earth and Physical sciences.

### **Social Studies**

*All grades K-6*

Students will learn about communities, cultures, geography as well as develop research, reading and writing skills in the content area.

## *Special Areas Classes*

### **Art**

*All grades K-6*

All students will have art for one hour during each six-day rotation. Kindergarten will have two, half hour classes; all other grades will have one, one-hour class. During their K-6 experience, students will learn about arts from different cultures and time periods. Students will create work from different traditions and mediums.

### **Band and Orchestra**

*Grades 4-6*

At the end of grade 3, students attend an informational session at Shaker High School. In this session, they hear different kinds of music and hear the sounds of different instruments. Students then use this information to guide their decisions about whether or not they would like to participate in instrumental lessons at school and which instrument they would like to learn. Lessons begin in grade 4 with some individual lesson time as well as some group practice during the regular school day.

### **Chorus**

*Grades 5 & 6*

Students have a 45 minute class during each six-day rotation.

Fifth and sixth grade rehearse separately until the December or May concert approaches, at which time common rehearsal times are scheduled.

### **Counseling**

*All Grades K-6*

Throughout the school year the school counselor works with children to help them develop social skills, self-esteem, positive thinking, conflict resolution skills, tolerance, respect, personal safety and skills to prevent bullying. The counselor provides a series of lessons in homerooms based on the District curriculum for the grade level.

### **Foreign Language Exploration**- *sometimes called FLEX*

*All grades K-6*

During a twelve week period every year, a foreign language teacher teaches two, half-hour classes during each six-day rotation for students in grades 1-6. Kindergarten students will have one, half-hour class during each cycle. These classes are designed to teach some basic words, songs and sounds of the language and introduce some aspects of the cultures that speak the language. During the K-6 FLEX experience, students will explore French, German, Russian and Spanish.

### **General Music**

*All grades K-6*

Students at all grade levels have two, half hour general music classes during each six-day rotation. During their K-6 experience, students will learn about music from different cultures and time periods. Students will learn and practice singing, basic percussion and recorder. Students will have opportunities to write lyrics and compose music.

### **Health**

*All grades K-6*

During a twelve week period every year, the District health teacher is stationed at Blue Creek. The teacher provides a series of lessons in homerooms based on the District curriculum for the grade level.

### **Library**

*All grades K-6*

Students in grades K-4 will have a designated time each six-day rotation to attend library class. In grades 5 and 6, students will have a short series of basic skills instruction followed by a flexible program that is integrated into other areas of the curriculum.

In the library, students are introduced to different types of literature, enjoy full books and previews by different authors, and make connections between classroom work in other areas of the curriculum to the resources available in the library. Students learn research skills, critical analysis and thinking skills. Students are encouraged to borrow books through our library's lending program. Families are typically charged for lost or damaged materials.

**Physical Education**- *sometimes called PE*

*All grades K-6*

Students in grades K-6 will have at least four, half-hour periods of PE during each six-day rotation.

Students will learn about different sports, develop some of the skills associated with the sports, learn about physical fitness and healthy habits. Students will have an opportunity to exercise during each class in an environment that encourages life-long physical fitness.

**Please observe the following PE rules:**

- All students must wear sneakers/tennis shoes, either tied or Velcro strapped for safety in gym. Students are asked to wear sneakers on PE days so that class time is not used for students to change their footwear.
- Students are not to wear jewelry during class, with the exception of post earrings smaller than the ear lobe.
- If you do not want your child to participate in physical education due to illness or injury, please send in a written note with the child stating the problem. If your child needs to be excused for longer than one week, a physician's medical note is required. (District policy)
- Clothing appropriate for participation (running, jumping, etc.) is necessary for each class.

**Homework**

Homework is an important part of the educational program contributing to the educational development of each student in the classroom. Homework is introduced in kindergarten. 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 Planners**

Students in grades 1-6 have an assignment book, a school "planner" which is to be used for recording both daily and long-term assignments. There is also a section devoted to Study Skills and Test Taking skills. This planner is provided by the district. If the planner is lost, a nominal fee is charged for a replacement. The planner is to be used by all students in grades 1-6.

**Student Folders**

Each student will receive a plastic pocket folder with clear document sleeves inside. The pockets will be used to transport important documents and homework papers back and forth to school. The clear sleeves inside will hold papers that need to be regularly referenced by parents and students. Each grade level will determine the reference documents for their students. You can expect to find our lunch menu, day 1-6 schedule, websites and passwords, etc.

## **Student Progress**

Student progress is formally reported at a few different times of the year. We have conference days, post report cards at the end of each trimester and have a short progress report that goes home in the middle of each trimester. While the dates of the trimesters change from year to year, below is a rough timeframe for reporting in grades 1-6. *Kindergarten reports are done on a slightly different schedule. Students with IEPs have updates mailed home each trimester.*

**Trimester 1** – Starts the first day of school and usually goes through early December.

Progress Report – a brief report, usually posted to the Parent Portal in late October

**Parent Conferences**-teachers contact families about setting up an appointment

Report Card – usually posted to the Parent Portal in mid-December

**Trimester 2** – Usually starts in early to mid-December and usually goes through mid-March

Progress Report – a brief report, usually posted to the Parent Portal in late January/early February

Report Card – usually posted to the Parent Portal in late March

**Trimester 3** – Usually starts in early to mid-March and goes through the end of year

Progress Report – a brief report, usually posted to the Parent Portal in early May

Report Card – usually posted to the Parent Portal on the last day of school

*\* If you have any concerns about your child's academic, social or emotional development at any point during the year, please contact your child's teacher. We can always set up additional conferences if necessary.*

## **Awards**

### **Primary Level:**

Dove Award – Recognizes student(s) from each homeroom each month who have done an outstanding job demonstrating the character trait of the month.

***At the end of the year:***

Perfect Attendance –all students who have no absences, late arrivals or early dismissals are recognized.

Outstanding Attendance –Recognizes all students who have a combined total of two or fewer days of absence from school. Tardy arrivals and early dismissals each count as a half-day absence.

### **Awards for grades 4-6**

Monthly: Homeroom teachers present **Dove Awards** recognizing student(s) from each homeroom who have done an outstanding job demonstrating the character trait of the month.

End of Year Awards Ceremonies (4-6): There are three award ceremonies at the end of the school year, one for each grade level. An updated list of the awards will be available on the website. More information about the award ceremonies will be sent in the spring.

## Lunch and Recess

### **Time for Lunch and Recess**

Grades K-3 will have a one hour period divided between lunch and recess.

Grades 4-6 will have a 45 minute period equally divided between lunch and recess.

### **Meals**

Children are welcome to bring their own lunch to school. Please make sure that items are packed in a way that your child can open these items independently. With more than 70 students at most grade levels, it is difficult for staff to assist many students in a timely manner. When sending hot food to school, please pack it hot in a thermos or other insulated container. Students do NOT have access to a microwave at lunchtime.

Many families have their children eat meals that have been prepared by our award-winning food service. Our cafeteria provides a balanced meal which includes a choice of entrees.

Breakfast is \$1.90 and Lunch is \$2.90. Prepaying for school meals is easy to do and may be helpful to you. When you prepay for 20 lunches, your child gets a bonus lunch for free. This can be done by sending money to school or paying online. When you send a check to school for prepay, please write your child's name and homeroom in the memo part of your check.

(Samantha Jones – 3S)

Checks should be made payable to North Colonie Food Service. If you send cash, please write your child's name, homeroom, and the amount enclosed on the envelope. Your child will be assigned a PIN (Personal Identification Number) for the account which will be used at the register when paying for a meal.

If your child is allowed to purchase snacks from this account, please send a note to school. Sometimes parents are caught off guard when the account is low. They don't realize that snacks have been purchased. We would like to eliminate that confusion.

To pay online, go to [www.ncoloniechildnutrition.com](http://www.ncoloniechildnutrition.com) and look for the icon.

### **Free and Reduced Price meals**

Many families meet the income requirements to receive free or reduced price meals for their children; this applies to both school breakfast and lunch. Students who qualify for the program use a PIN number at the cash register, just as those students who pay full price for their meals. To see if your family qualifies go to [www.ncoloniechildnutrition.com](http://www.ncoloniechildnutrition.com) and look for the meal application icon.

You may also request an application from the registrar, school kitchen or school office. This is a confidential process.

### **Recess and Lunch Times by Grade**

	<b>Recess</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Recess</b>
Kindergarten	11:00 – 11:35	11:35 – 12:00	
Grade 1	11:30– 12:00	12:00 - 12:30	
Grade 2	10:30 – 11:00	11:00 – 11:30	
Grade 3		12:30-1:00	1:00 – 1:30
Grade 4		11:30 –11:50	11:50 - 12:15
Grade 5		12:00 – 12:20	12:20– 12:45
Grade 6	12:30 – 12:50	12:50 – 1:15	

## **Recess**

All children are expected to go outside during playground time. During winter months students need to come to school dressed warmly so that they can enjoy their time outside; boots, snow pants, hats and gloves are strongly recommended. In general, we feel that a child well enough to come to school is well enough to go outside. A note from home is required if you wish to have your child remain indoors because of a medical problem for a limited number of days. Weather permitting, we provide daily outdoor play for students. Students go out if the temperature is above 20° F including wind chill. If you have difficulty purchasing winter boots, coat, gloves, etc. for your child, please contact the principal.

Indoor recess typically occurs in the classroom. Students can play board games, play with small toys, read, talk, color, etc.

## **Rules & Expectations for the Playground**

1. Play safely on the playground. Rough play is not allowed.
2. Respect others and follow directions.
3. Students will go outside at recess when weather permits. Students may be excused from outdoor recess with written permission from a guardian, not to exceed 5 days; that permission must be communicated to the noon aides.
4. Stop what you are doing when the whistle blows. One blow of the whistle indicates that an announcement needs to be made. Two blows of the whistle indicates that it is time for the children to line up quickly.
5. Use trash cans for garbage. Please do not litter.
6. Take turns on all playground equipment.
7. Leave personal items in the classroom or at home.
8. Settle problems peacefully. If you need help, find an adult.
9. Get adult permission before leaving the playground.
10. Students are not permitted to play tackle football, play fight, pick up other children or "rough house."
11. Students are not permitted to chew gum or eat candy on the playground.

## **Fifth and Sixth Grade Events**

There are a number of special events for sixth grade students that have been part of Blue Creek tradition for many years. These events are meant to be bonding experiences for students, celebrating their elementary journey, culminating experiences, as well as rites of passage as they move into adolescence.

With two grade levels leaving Blue Creek at the same time, some adjustments to traditions have been made in order to make this a memorable year for all. Please read carefully!

### **Drama Production / Drama Experience**

#### **Grade 6**

The sixth grade students will put on a play for the school and public. All sixth grade students have the opportunity to participate; roles include performers, stage hands, lighting, etc. Auditions typically occur in December with rehearsals beginning in January. Our production is scheduled for March. There are some mandatory meetings and rehearsals. Be sure to watch for notices and mark your calendars!

#### **Grade 5**

Fifth grade students will travel to Proctor's Theatre on a day in May for workshops with theater professionals. They will have the opportunity to learn about several aspects of theater productions such as make-up, set design, etc. This one day experience will include other fifth grade students from Boght Hills and Southgate. As a culminating activity, students will perform for families on an evening in June.

### **Grade 6 Bronx Zoo Field Trip (Grade 6 only)**

At the end of the school year (usually May or June) the entire sixth grade goes on a field trip to the Bronx Zoo. Fees for students are covered by the District; there is no cost for students. A limited number of seats are available for parents/guardians. Guardians who attend the trip will need to pay for a portion of the transportation costs as well as tickets for the zoo.

### **Grade 5 Great Escape Trip (Grade 5 only)**

Students will travel to the Great Escape for a fun-filled day, exploring the park. Fees for students will be covered by the District, there is no cost for students. A limited number of seats are available for parents/guardians. Guardians who attend the trip will need to pay for portion of the transportation costs as well as tickets for the park.

### **Yearbook Breakfast (Grades 5 and 6 – together)**

Per Blue Creek tradition, the graduating students are the first students to receive their yearbooks. This happens at a special breakfast put on by parents during the last week of school. With the exception of the parents helping with the event, this breakfast is for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students only.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance**

The sixth grade dance will be held on June 23. Doors will be open for the dance beginning at 7 p.m.; students may arrive at 6:45 for photos. The dance ends promptly at 9 p.m. Students typically wear party clothes to this event.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance**

The fifth grade dance will be held on June 22. Doors will be open for the dance beginning at 7 p.m.; students may arrive at 6:45 for photos. The dance ends promptly at 9 p.m. Students typically wear party clothes to this event.

**Graduation** – Separate ceremonies for grades 5 and 6

Most parents/guardians attend this event. Immediately following the ceremony there is a slide show of the graduate throughout the years. Families will be asked to submit photos for this slide show. A brief reception is held on our front patio after the slide show.

**Grade 6 will graduate on Thursday, June 25.**

**Grade 5 will graduate on Friday, June 26.**

**Graduation Picnic**

Blue Creek Graduation Picnic is scheduled for the afternoon following graduation. In the past, the event has usually been held at a local park. This is organized by parents, so it is a little different from year to year. Typically parents are asked to contribute a food or paper product along with a small contribution per family (~\$5). More information will be sent home later in the year.

## **Room Helpers/Class Photographer**

A Room Helper assists the classroom teacher and PTA to plan and organize special events. They also coordinate guardian collaboration for their child's homeroom. Room Helpers often have some flexibility in their schedules during the school day so that they can set up for class parties and events. Guardians typically volunteer by signing up at Open House. The PTA selects the Room Helper for each homeroom. If you are interested in becoming a Room Helper but cannot attend Open House, contact your child's teacher; your name will be sent to the PTA.

The class photographer documents classroom activities throughout the year and forwards the photos to the Yearbook editor. This job requires flexibility during school hours so that photos can be taken during events.

## **Class Parties/Special Events**

Throughout the year, there are some days where parties and special events occur. Classroom teachers will communicate with families to share what has been planned and whether or not families are invited to attend.

Special activities are usually planned for Halloween (or the last school day before Halloween), the last day of school in December, and Valentine's Day. Other special events may be planned throughout the year. Please watch for notices from your child's teacher for more information.

Food at special events is restricted. Please only send in the item that you have been asked to provide. We try to have most food that is available be healthy for children and limit parties to one sweet treat or junk food item. In addition, food may be restricted based on food allergies in the classroom. All food that is brought in for consumption at class parties must be reviewed by our school nurse. Only store-bought, prepackaged items are permitted. Items prepared at home are NOT permitted.

Your child's classroom teacher will communicate with you about how birthdays are handled in the classroom. We do not allow food items, goodie bags or trinkets from home to be distributed in class at birthday parties. Each teacher will plan class activities to ensure that your child is recognized on their special day.

## **Committees with Parent Membership**

### **Building Council**

The Building Council meets monthly and is a formal shared decision-making body whose task is school improvement. Members of the Building Council consist of: principal, teachers from various grade levels and special areas, non-instructional staff members and guardians. Members serve for two years on the council.

### **Crisis Response Team**

This team creates, reviews, and revises safety drills and addresses safety concerns at Blue Creek. The team, consisting of teachers, principal, office staff, custodian, police officers, and guardians, meets 3 to 4 times a year.

### **Parent –Teacher Association (PTA)**

The Blue Creek PTA meets most months during the school year to conduct PTA business. Throughout the school year the PTA sponsors special events, cultural programs, and activities for students. Nearly each month the PTA provides a family based activity. All families and staff members are encouraged to join the PTA. There are several committees that parents can support including yearbook, Harvest Dance, Present Palace, carnival, etc.

### **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

The Blue Creek PAC provides an opportunity for guardians to meet with the school principal three times during the school year. The principal will provide information regarding some of the school's programs. This is also an opportunity for guardians to ask questions and present concerns to the principal. All guardians are invited to attend the PAC meetings.

### **Special Education Parent Teacher Association (SEPTA)**

SEPTA is a District-wide association that serves special education and gifted students in grades preK–12.

## **Ongoing Activities**

**Art Explorers** -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.

**Banana Splits**- This program is facilitated by our school counselor. Banana Splits is group counseling for anyone in grades K through 6 whose family has changed. The kind of changes Banana Splits kids have experienced are: parents separating or divorcing; a parent remarrying; the death of a parent; living in a step- or "blended" family. Splits kids may live with Mom or Dad or a grandparent or a foster family or another adult.

**Bell Choir**- Interested students in grade 6 are selected by lottery to participate in bell choir. Students attend early morning rehearsals to prepare to perform at the December Concert for grades 5 and 6.

**D.A.R.E.**- In fifth grade all students participate in a class called Drug Abuse Resistance Education with a Colonie Police Department school safety specialist. In this class students learn about the health risks associated with drug abuse and learn how to stand up to peer pressure.

**ENL Club**- Blue Creek Elementary students who are learning English as a new language can stay after school on Thursdays to receive tutoring from Shaker High School students under the supervision of our English as a New Language teacher.

**Friendship Group** - This program is facilitated by our school counselor. This is a group for anyone in grades 1 through 6 who may have trouble making or keeping friends. When a student is referred or self-identified, we will create a group that includes his or her peers that meets on a regular basis. At times the group has multiple students who have had friendship issues and can work together to learn how to be good friends.

**Homework Club**- Students in grades 3-6 may be invited to an after school homework session on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. Students are nominated by their teachers to participate. This program is typically supervised by two adults. Students are provided with a quiet location, access to technology and internet and may receive minor assistance from the supervising adults. A late bus is available to take students home at 4 p.m.

**Intramurals**- Students in grade 4-6 are invited to participate in before-school physical education activities.

**Lunch Bunch**- Students at all levels may be invited to participate in Lunch Bunch. When a child has special needs that make socializing and making friends a challenge, a speech therapist may start a weekly lunch group with peers at the same grade level to help the child learn to make friends and participate in conversation.

**Peer Tutors**- Students in grades 5 and 6 can be recommended to serve as peer tutors. These students are trained by Blue Creek staff and then are assigned to a younger student. The tutor meets with the younger student twice a week during homeroom time to help with academic skills.

**School Banking**- The Blue Creek PTA has partnered with CAP COM Federal Credit Union to offer School Banking at Blue Creek. The School Banking Program is offered to students every Thursday from 8:05 – morning announcements. Blue Creek students can learn to save by making bank deposits at school. Students can deposit cash and checks. Prizes are awarded for every five deposits and no deposit is too small! CAP COM's Great Grades

Program gives students \$30 for their end of the year report card. Students can also earn up to \$30 per year in the Fall, Winter and Summer Reading Programs by reading books and submitting age-appropriate book reports and drawings. Open your child's account with as little as \$1 and let them watch their savings grow!

## **Events**

### *Before school starts*

#### **Kindergarten Orientation:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored)*

This is an opportunity to meet your child's kindergarten teacher and district transportation staff. Incoming kindergartners have an opportunity to take a short ride on a school bus while the director of transportation discusses transportation procedures with parents.

#### **Newcomers' Picnic:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored)*

This is an evening event at Shaker High School for new families entering the district. Enjoy food and meet the principal and members of the Blue Creek School PTA.

### *September - October*

#### **First Day of School Celebration:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored)*

Students and staff gather for an in-school assembly to welcome students back. Changes to the school are explained and our school-wide, year-long service project is explained. "Buddy" classes meet to work together on the first portion of our service project.

#### **Open House:** *(Parents & Guardians Only)*

This is an evening event where guardians meet with the principal, homeroom teachers and special area teachers to learn more about the school and the classes in which their children are enrolled. (This is not an opportunity for a private discussion regarding your child's upcoming year; those occur during the Parent Teacher Conferences later in the fall.) Childcare is available, but parents must sign-up in advance.

#### **International Peace Day:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students)*

International Peace Day is celebrated, including student work and poetry. Bus drivers are welcomed with a back to school greeting, thank you cards, breakfast and coffee.

#### **Pizza and Story Night:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Teachers and students join together in this informal evening to eat pizza and choose to hear one of our guest readers share a book. This is a kick-off event for our Parents as Reading Partners month in October.

#### **Pick a Reading Partner:** *also known as PARP (Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

In October – this is a month long activity for families where parents, guardians, and caregivers read with children.

#### **Elementary Cross Country Race:** *(Public Event)*

District annual cross country races are held at the Colonie Town Park after dismissal for participating students from grades 4, 5 and 6. Races conducted by grade and gender. This event has six races, where over 500 students compete. Students are guided by the Shaker Cross Country Team on the course. Parents provide transportation to the race. There is no cost for this event. Look for information to come home from the PE coaches.

#### **Harvest Costume Party:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

This is a late October tradition at Blue Creek. This is an evening event where all students and families are invited to wear their costumes, enjoy music, and celebrate the fall. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

#### **Special Class Activities on Halloween:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students)*

These are classroom activities the teacher hosts for students during the class day. These events are only attended by parents who have been contacted by the classroom teachers to assist with activities. Students do **NOT** wear costumes at school on this day.

## November

### **Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences:** *(Parents & Guardians Only)*

This is an opportunity to meet with your child(ren)'s teacher to discuss the specifics of your child's life at Blue Creek School. These generally occur on the days specified in the school calendar although exceptions can be made. Arrangements can also be made for the presence of a translator to facilitate the conference in cases where English is not spoken.

### **Faculty Recital:** *(Public Event)*

Conducted in November at Shaker Junior High School, come out to watch the Blue Creek and North Colonie music faculty entertain your family. All proceeds from admissions benefit scholarship funds.

### **Pizza and Movie Night:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Enjoy a pizza and movie with your child. Children are welcome to wear pajamas, bring a blanket and watch a free movie with their parents. Concessions are available for a small fee or you may bring snacks from home. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

### **Turkey Shoot:** *(Families Welcome)*

Come out for an evening of basketball fun before the Thanksgiving Holiday. Students and their siblings are welcome to shoot baskets in the gymnasium in this fun activity. All proceeds benefit the purchase of physical education equipment. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

## December

### **Scholastic Book Fair:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Students have an opportunity to purchase books to read at this new book sale. Families are welcome to attend the Saturday hours.

### **Breakfast with Santa:** *(Families Welcome)*

Families come on this December Saturday morning to eat a delicious pancake breakfast prepared by staff and have their picture taken with Santa. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

### **Present Palace:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Students are able to purchase gifts for family members at a special sale at school. A variety of items are purchased or donated for the sale. All items are \$1.

### **School Concert:** *(Public Event)*

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade band, orchestra, bell choir and chorus students entertain families at this evening concert at Shaker High School. There is no admission fee charge for this event. Students should wear concert clothing as specified by their teacher.

## January

### **Movie Night:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

This is the second movie night, where children and their siblings wear pajamas, bring blankets, and watch a free movie. Concession items are available for a small fee or you may bring a snack from home. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

## February

### **Bingo Night:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Families are invited out to Blue Creek for a night of Bingo games. This event is free of charge. Students must be supervised by a responsible adult.

### **Fourth Grade Beginners' Recital:** *(Families Welcome)*

Fourth Grade students taking a musical instrument make their debut in this recital for faculty and families held during the school day.

### March

#### **All District Concert:** *(Public Event)*

This concert at Shaker High School features select fifth and sixth grade band and orchestra, and sixth grade chorus students in the district. Because this is a district wide event, seating is limited. There is no admission charge. Students should wear concert clothing as directed by their teacher.

#### **Sixth Grade Drama Production:** *(Public Event) evening only*

This is a musical performed by participating Blue Creek Sixth Grade students. A performance is held during school hours for all Blue Creek students. Additional performances are held on two evenings for families and friends. Please purchase your tickets in advance as seating is limited.

### April

#### **Pizza and Movie Night:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

All students and their families are welcome for our final movie night of the year. Admission is free and concessions are available for a small fee or you may bring a snack from home. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

### May

#### **ENL Picnic:** *(Families Welcome)*

All English as a New Language / English Second Language families are invited to a picnic hosted by the district. The day will feature food and activities.

#### **Scholastic Book Fair:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Students have an opportunity to purchase books to read at this new book sale.

#### **Discovery Fair:** *(Public Event)*

Blue Creek students display their Discovery Fair projects for families to view. All family members are welcome.

#### **Spring School Concert for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades:** *(Public Event)*

This evening concert at Shaker High School features our fifth and sixth grade band, orchestra, and chorus students. There is no admission and families are encouraged to attend. Students should wear concert clothing as specified by their teacher.

#### **Bike Rodeo:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

This Saturday morning event is open to children and their families. Bring your child's bike for a quick tune up and get your child fitted for a free bike helmet (while supplies last). All students must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

### June

#### **Preschool Screening:** *(PTA sponsored)*

All incoming kindergartners and their parents/guardians are scheduled for a screening by Blue Creek staff. Guardians then meet with staff and principal to discuss their child.

#### **Fourth Grade Concert:** *(Families Welcome)*

This is the first concert performed by the fourth grade band, orchestra, and chorus. Families are welcome to attend this concert held during school hours in the Blue Creek cafeteria.

#### **Track Meet:** *(Public Event)*

In the late spring, we have an annual track and field meet for children in grades 5 and 6 during the school day at the Shaker High School track. This includes students from all elementary buildings in the District.

**Field Day:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored)*

This day of fun, service and activities is held for the students and staff. Students should come to school dressed to run and play. Weather permitting, many activities are held outside. Sunscreen should be applied at home before school. There are limited lunch selections this day as students picnic with their teachers.

**Carnival:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored, PTA organized)*

Families are welcome to come to this barbecue, raffle, and night of carnival games at Blue Creek. Tickets sold in advance are available at a discount. Tickets are also available at the door. All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

**Grade 5 Drama Event** *(Public Event)*

Students present a thematic production based on their work with theater professionals.

**Flag Day Celebration:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students)*

The Blue Creek students and staff have a special Flag Day school-wide assembly.

**Grade 4, 5, and 6 Awards:** *(Parents & Guardians Welcome)*

These morning assemblies honor students in grades 4 – 6 who have achieved recognition in physical education, art and music. Parents/guardians of students receiving awards are notified in advance and are welcome to attend.

**Fifth and Sixth Grade Graduation Breakfast:** *(Closed Event-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored)*

At this breakfast, graduating students receive their yearbooks.

**Fifth and Sixth Grade Dances:** *(Closed Events-only Blue Creek staff and students, PTA sponsored)*

This evening of fun features a DJ. Fifth and sixth grade students will have separate dances. Guardians are asked to drop off and pick up their child(ren).

**Fifth and Sixth Grade Graduations:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored)*

This honors our students who are graduating from Blue Creek School. Fifth and sixth grade students will have separate ceremonies. All families of graduating students are invited.

**Fifth and Sixth Grade Picnic:** *(Families Welcome, PTA sponsored)*

This is held during the afternoon after graduation for students and their families. All students must be supervised by a responsible adult.