

Oconto Falls Elementary School

Parent/Student Handbook

2020-21

Summary of key sections

All parents are encouraged to review the entire handbook and discuss expectations with their child. For those who are familiar with the handbook from prior years, you will find that there are few changes this year. **However, please pay particular attention to the following summary of certain sections, which are deserving of particular emphasis.** If you have any questions, please contact Principal Neil Hall or Assistant Principal Matthew Paris at 920-848-4476. Please see the attached COVID-19 addendum for the 2020-2021 school year.

➤ **Attendance (p. 1)**

School attendance is such an important topic that **expectations should be carefully reviewed annually.**

Note that the average student is absent from school six days per year. Some children are regularly absent for significantly more days than this. Unless some type of serious medical condition is present, this is not a good pattern and will hinder learning.

Please note that **absences in excess of 15 days** per school year will only be excused for documented professional appointments or with prior administrative approval.

Also note the section on tardiness and the **provision regarding excessive tardiness** (over three tardies in a trimester = ½ day absence).

➤ **Bullying (p. 3)**

Bullying is a serious behavioral issue – one that we spend a considerable amount of time addressing and tracking when it occurs. Please encourage your child to report situations if he/she encounters bullying or to let us know yourself.

➤ **Cafeteria expectations (p. 3)**

This section summarizes our cafeteria goals and expectations.

➤ **Divorced or legally separated parents (p.4)**

The school asks for an **up-to-date court document** detailing the current custody order on file.

➤ **Field trips and chaperoning (p.5)**

This section **clarifies guidelines regarding field trip chaperones.** If you would like to volunteer to chaperone a field trip, please make sure to read this section.

➤ **General complaint procedure/due process (p. 5)**

Outlines the process for addressing a parent concern regarding a staff member. **Please speak directly to the person with whom you have the concern as a first step,** as opposed to immediately speaking with a supervisor. This is particularly important if you have not spoken with the person with whom you have the concern and are relying on some other individual's version of events. Please hear the other perspective, and if you are still concerned, you can always take it to the next level.

- **Lunch/lunch recess schedule (p. 7)**
Please note that the times for lunch/lunch recess have changed for some grades this year.
- **Medication (p. 7)**
This section explains procedures for administering prescription and over the counter medication. Note the guidelines regarding administration of over-the-counter medication – **schools may not provide Tylenol, Advil, Tums, etc. to students.** If there is a need for students to have access to these medications, parents must provide them.
- **Personal communication devices (cell phones) (p. 8)**
Possession of personal communication devices such as cell phones by students is **not allowed unless parents have contacted the principal or teacher.** If permission is given, personal communication devices must be powered off and in the student's backpack while at school.
- **Personal possessions (p. 8)**
This topic comes up every year – so **we have provided guidelines.** A good common sense rule is not to send anything with your child that you would not want to see lost, stolen, or broken (because it could happen).
- **Recess dress guidelines (p. 9)**
Again, this topic comes up every year – so **we have provided guidelines.** We do have a fair number of students who arrive at school without adequate jackets, boots, hats, etc. – so if **your family needs assistance in this area, please contact the office** – we would be glad to help.
- **Student behavior (p. 10)**
Student behavior is such an important topic that **expectations should be carefully reviewed annually.**
- **Student safety (p. 12)**
Please review this section to remind yourself of expectations and procedures for **displaying photo ID, student drop off, and student pick up.**
- **Video surveillance/electronic monitoring (p. 15)**
In order to help maintain a safe and orderly school climate, video cameras have been installed in hallways and outside of school.
- **Visitors and volunteering (p. 15)**
Please review this section, particularly paragraphs regarding **communication prior to visits and volunteering.**

Oconto Falls Elementary School

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COVID-19 Addendum

This is an addendum to our Family Handbook located in the assignment notebook. Any items within this packet that may contradict the handbook should be followed. These procedures will supersede the already established handbook.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken as normal and monitored but consideration will be given to absences due to Covid-19. Parents are still expected to call in all absences.

Birthday Treats

No birthday treats will be allowed this year.

Breakfast

Breakfast will be offered similar to last year except kids will eat in their classrooms.

Bus Information

Only 1 drop off location is allowed this year so this means no bus passes will be given out.

Drop off & Pick up

Visitors and parents will not be allowed into the building except for planned meetings so we have developed a new procedure which will be detailed at the end of this document.

Health Room/Health Assessment Room

Parents are asked to do a health assessment each morning to ensure that kids are not coming to school with illness symptoms. Please check for the following things each morning and if they have these symptoms, please call school and let us know that is why they are staying home. If symptoms arise at school, students will be assessed and parents notified.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| ⇒ Fever 100.4 or higher | ⇒ Diarrhea | ⇒ Chills |
| ⇒ Sore throat | ⇒ Shortness of breath | ⇒ Cough |
| ⇒ Muscle Pain | ⇒ Loss of taste or smell | |

Homework requests

These can be requested and every attempt will be made to send things home virtually so parents don't have to come to school to get things. Teachers will communicate with families how this will happen.

Visitors and Volunteers

Visitors will not be allowed into the school unless there are extenuating circumstances and these must be preapproved by the principal. If you need to bring something for your child that they forgot, once you ring for the office you will be asked how we can help you. You will be asked to leave it by the door and someone will come out and get it so it can be brought to the child. If your child is arriving late, please bring them to the door. Once greeted, give a reason for your child being late. The child will enter

the building and come to the office where we will get them signed in and to class. If your child needs to leave school early, we will bring them to the door and sign them out for you.

Toys and Electronics

Due to all that is happening, we ask that all toys and personal items stay at home. This will help with the temptation to share and trade these items.

Social Distancing

We will work with students daily to help them understand the rationale behind stay distance from one another. We will set up learning environments to assist with students staying distance from one another. While on the playground, we will allow students to play with one another but will work to control how many kids are in certain areas and what toys they are playing with.

Students Drop-Off and Pick-up Plan

Student drop-offs at the beginning of the school day will remain the same. At the end of the school day, parents will not be able to enter the building to pick their child up. Parents will remain in their vehicles and a car rider line will be established. Students will be escorted to cars by staff. No visitors are allowed to enter the building after the end of the school day.

OCONTO FALLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent/Student Handbook 2020-21



**415 Maria Volk Drive
Oconto Falls, WI 54154**

Phone: 920/848-4476

Fax: 920/848-4454

Email: ofesoffice@of-ps.org

<https://ofpanthers.com/schools/oconto-falls-elementary/>

NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

(Summary of Board of Education Policy 2260)

The Board of Education is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students in the District.

The Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including transgender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability ("Protected Classes") in any of its student program and activities.

Reporting Procedures

Students, parents and all other members of the School District community are encouraged to promptly report suspected violations of this policy to a teacher or administrator. Any teacher or administrator who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Compliance Officer at his/her first opportunity.

Students who believe they have been denied equal access to District educational opportunities, in a manner inconsistent with this policy may initiate a complaint and the investigation process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint will not adversely affect the complaining individual's participation in educational or extra-curricular programs unless the complaining individual makes the complaint maliciously or with knowledge that it is false.

District Compliance Officers

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as the District's "Compliance Officers" (hereinafter referred to as the "COs").

Dr. Dean Hess	Terri Olsen
District Administrator	Director of Pupil Services
Oconto Falls Public School District	Oconto Falls Public School District
200 N. Farm Road	415 Maria Volk Drive
Oconto Falls, WI 54154	Oconto Falls, WI 54154
920-848-4471	920-848-4476

A CO will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to student discrimination in educational opportunities under this policy.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

- The CO shall investigate any complaints brought under this policy.
- All complaints must include the following information to the extent it is available: a description of the alleged violation, the identity of the individual(s) believed to have engaged in, or to be actively engaging in, conduct in violation of this policy, if any; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based; and a list of potential witnesses. If the complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the CO shall ask for such details in an oral interview.
- Upon receiving a complaint, the CO will consider whether any action should be taken during the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further loss of educational opportunity. The Complainant should be notified of any proposed action prior to such action being taken.
- As soon as appropriate in the investigation process, the CO will inform any individual named by the Complainant in connection with an alleged violation of this policy, that a complaint has been received. The person(s) must also be provided an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- Within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint, the CO will initiate an investigation.
- Although certain cases may require additional time, the CO will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of harassment within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include: 1) interviews with the complainant; 2) interviews with any persons named in the complaint; 3) interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations; and 4) consideration of any documentation or other evidence presented by the complainant, respondent, or any other witness which is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, the CO shall prepare and deliver a written report to the District Administrator which summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definitions in this Policy, as well as in State and Federal law as to whether the complainant has been denied access to educational opportunities on the basis of one of the protected classifications, based on a preponderance of evidence standard.
- Absent extenuating circumstances, within ten (10) business days of receiving the report of the CO, the District Administrator must either issue a final decision regarding or request the complaint further investigation. A copy of the District Administrator's final decision will be delivered to the complainant.
- If the District Administrator requests additional investigation, the District Administrator must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10) business days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the District Administrator must issue a final written decision as described above. The decision of the District Administrator shall be final. If the complainant feels that the decision does not adequately address the complaint s/he may appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of regardless of whether the member of the School District community or third party chooses to pursue the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board.

Confidentiality

The District will make reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of any individuals involved in the investigation process. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed however. All complainants proceeding through the investigation process should be advised that as a result of the investigation, allegations against individuals may become known to those individuals, including the complainant's identity.

During the course of an investigation, the CO will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of an investigation is expected not to disclose any information that s/he learns or that s/he provides during the course of the investigation.

All public records created as a part of an investigation will be maintained by the CO in accordance with the Board's records retention policy. Any records which are considered student records in accordance with the state or Federal law will be maintained in a manner consistent with the provisions of the law.

MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of the Oconto Falls School District is to provide a high quality comprehensive education program for all students."

To accomplish this mission we will collaborate with the community to provide:

Access to quality teachers

Appropriate support services

A safe, well maintained learning environment

High expectations for all

BELIEFS

1. We believe that "good enough" is not enough. We will continually strive for excellence in everything we do.
2. We believe that positive, upbeat attitudes contribute to everyone's self-esteem. Feel free to give a compliment.
3. We operate on a team concept. Everyone's participation and contributions are appreciated.
4. We recognize and respect each other's differences. Everyone will be treated with dignity and worth.
5. We realize the importance of availability. We will attempt to make ourselves visible and accessible to everyone.
6. We share a common and important goal. Through our combined efforts this community will continue to grow.
7. We believe everyone has the right to learn in a safe, risk-free environment. We will create a relaxed classroom atmosphere conducive to learning.

We model our commitment to education on a daily basis. Our actions and interactions are as important to learning as the curriculum we deliver.

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ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to attend school regularly and to be on time. **Students who have good attendance generally learn more, earn higher grades, and enjoy school more than those with irregular attendance.** In addition, regular school attendance helps students to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility that are important throughout one's life. **Wisconsin state law requires regular school attendance for all children between the ages of six and eighteen. Also, please note that state statutes require students who are enrolled in 5-year old kindergarten to attend school regularly if so enrolled.** Completion of 5-year old kindergarten is now also a requirement for enrollment in 1st Grade. .

Types of absences/reporting procedures:

1. Planned absences – excused

- Includes family vacations, extended holidays, hunting/fishing trips, etc. Typically these absences are recreational or family related; however, they could be for any reason as long as they are planned and communicated to the school in advance.
- **Please notify both your child's teacher and the office of the planned absence at least one week in advance.** This is important to ensure that a plan is in place for making up work missed due to the absence.
- As per state statute, these absences are **limited to not more than ten (10) days** per school year.

2. Other types of absences - excused

- Includes absences due to the following:
 - o Illnesses;
 - o Professional appointments (medical, dental, counseling, and legal);
 - o Family emergencies;
 - o Funerals;
 - o Other reasons as approved by the principal.
- **If your child will be absent from school or late in arriving, parents should call Oconto Falls Elementary School at 848-4476 prior to 8:30 a.m. to report the absence.** Please note that messages can be left on the attendance answering machine 24 hours a day. Prompt notification helps us to account for all students each day.
- **If the absence is caused by a contagious disease,** a statement from a physician may be required upon the child's return to school.

3. Unexcused absences and truancy

- These include absences for which the school has not been contacted by the child's parent as per the reporting procedures; absences for reasons other than those indicated above; and/or absences in excess of the limits stated below.
- **When a child accumulates five (5) unexcused absences in a trimester or semester, the school will begin the truancy referral process.**

Limits on absences:

- Statistics show that the average student is absent from school for approximately six (6) days per year.
- Using this total as a guide, and understanding that some students may exceed this average because of serious medical conditions and/or unique circumstances, **we have established the limit for total student absences (all types – excused and unexcused) at no more than fifteen (15) days during the school year.**

- o If this threshold is reached, subsequent absences will be excused only for documented professional appointments OR with prior administrative approval.
- o Parents are encouraged to bring professional appointment cards and specific medical excuses to the office in a timely manner so that we can code these absences as such. This will help us to apply the attendance guidelines with good judgment and reason.

Tardiness:

- When a student arrives late to school between 8:05–8:30 a.m. for reasons other than professional appointments, the student is considered tardy. Regardless of the reason for your child's late arrival, please stop in the office to sign your child in.
- Absences are recorded in ½ -day increments. Students arriving to school after 8:30 a.m. are recorded as absent for ½ -day, and students leaving in the afternoon before 2:30 p.m. are considered absent for ½ -day.
- **If a student accumulates over three tardies in a trimester, subsequent tardies during that trimester will be counted as ½-day absences for the purposes of attendance monitoring.** Please make every effort to drop off students by the designated time, as students consistently arriving late often miss important directions for the day and disrupt the start of class as the teacher works to provide them with the missed information.

Attendance notices and meetings:

- When a child begins to accumulate a considerable number of absences, the school will send the parent an attendance notice and summary attendance report.
- If a student reaches the point in which subsequent absences will require professional documentation, a notice will be sent to the parents requesting a meeting with the child's teacher and the principal.
- If a child accumulates five (5) unexcused absences in a semester, a truancy notice will be mailed to the parent and a meeting with the principal requested to discuss the problem and ways to solve it. If the truancy continues, the matter will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency for follow up.

Final note on attendance:

Obviously there are many times in which it is necessary for a child to miss school. If a child is truly ill, please keep the child home – it will help facilitate a speedy recovery and will reduce the chance of passing along the illness to others. Family vacations are important, and we realize that sometimes these must be scheduled during the school year. Ultimately, parents are responsible for their child's attendance and for making decisions within the guidelines set by the state and by the school. **But the simple truth is that when a child is absent from school, he/she misses out on learning. For this reason, we ask that parents attempt to minimize school absences to the extent possible.**

BICYCLES

During the fall and spring, students are encouraged to ride their bicycles to school if parents feel they can do so safely. Parents are asked to send a note giving the student permission to bike to school, and we will then create a backpack tag (similar to a bus tag) indicating that permission has been received. Bicycles must be "walked" on sidewalks adjacent to school and at all times on school property before and after school. All bicycles should be parked and locked in the

bicycle rack near the 4th grade entrance. During the school day, the area around the bicycle rack is off limits to students.

BREAKFAST SCHEDULE

Grades EC, 4K, and 5K will be served breakfast from 8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

Grades 1-2 will be served breakfast from 8:00-8:20 a.m.

Grades 3-5 will be served breakfast from 8:00-8:20 a.m.

BULLYING

The Oconto Falls School District is committed to providing a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events. Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation, or harm. Bullying is a repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. Bullying is not a rite of passage that must be endured by young people. Instead, it is a behavior that must be addressed because of the harmful social, physical, psychological, and academic impact on all those involved. Examples of bullying include physical (ex. hitting, kicking, taking property), verbal (ex. name calling, threatening), psychological (ex. spreading rumors, extortion), and cyberbullying (ex. using email or social media to spread rumors). **Bullying is a serious behavioral infraction, and the consequences of bullying include parent contact, loss of privileges, and possible in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and /or expulsion.**

Any student that believes he/she has been or is the victim of bullying should immediately report the situation to the building principal or a school staff member. Student witnesses, as well as parents, are encouraged to report potential acts of bullying. **All reports will be promptly and fairly investigated to verify the circumstances and seriousness of the situation; addressed through educational and/or disciplinary interventions as the situations warrant; and documented.** Filing a report in good faith will not reflect negatively on a complainant's status, and the school staff and administration will support students making such reports and protect them against any potential retaliation.

Bullying will not be tolerated at Oconto Falls Elementary School. Please contact the building principal or assistant principal if you have any questions about this important issue. Board of Education Policy 5517.01 (available at <http://www.neola.com/ocontofalls-wi/>) addresses this topic.

BUS RIDER RULES

Bus rules are sent home at the beginning of each year. Please take some time to carefully discuss the rules with your child, as behavioral problems can potentially endanger the safety of everyone on the bus. Consequences for not following the rules may include a change in seat assignment, writing the rules and their rationale, recess restrictions, and/or possibly being removed from the bus for a period of time. If you become aware of serious or ongoing problems on the bus, please notify the bus garage or principal immediately so that the concern can be addressed.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

The OFES cafeteria is a busy place each day, with over 500 students scheduled throughout the various grade level lunch periods. The following is a summary of key points regarding our goals and expectations:

- **We want students to have a positive experience at lunch.**

- o Children are working hard in class in the morning learning – they need to have some social “down time” at lunch that is relaxing and enjoyable.
- **We encourage all students to eat a well-balanced, nutritious lunch.**
 - o The portions given to students by our food service staff are appropriate for elementary aged children. Unfortunately, most visitors to the cafeteria are shocked by the amount of food that children waste each day. And some students, unless reminded, will spend too much time socializing and not enough time eating. Our cafeteria supervisors do **encourage** children to try to eat the food that they have in front of them before dumping their trays – particularly if they see that they have eaten very little or if they have voluntarily taken additional food from the front table. However, **they do not force children to eat.**
 - o Parents sending cold lunches with students are asked to **consider the nutritional value** of the lunches and to refrain from sending excessive amounts of “junk food”. **Please note that soda is not allowed in the cafeteria during lunch and should not be sent with students to school.**
- **Students need to exhibit a level of self-control while in the cafeteria.**
 - o Children can have a positive experience in the cafeteria while still demonstrating good manners and appropriate, respectful, and orderly behaviors. The role of the cafeteria supervisors is to make sure that the environment is “school-appropriate”.
 - o Because there are a large number of students in the cafeteria for each lunch session, children need to keep their voices at a conversation level; otherwise, the atmosphere becomes uncomfortable for all. Movement throughout the cafeteria also needs to take place carefully, as space is limited. Students are expected to treat others with respect; keep their hands to themselves; and clean up after themselves while in the cafeteria.
 - o Lunch sessions are 20 minutes long. For most children, this is more than enough time to eat their lunch. If special circumstances warrant additional time, it will be provided.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Each teacher will adopt a set of classroom rules and consequences to be displayed in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the specific rules of their child's teacher.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Disease	Time from Exposure to Symptoms	Number of Days to keep Student at Home
Chickenpox	14-21 days	7 days, or until all scabs have crusted over
German measles	10-21 days	3 days from onset
Measles	10-21 days	7 days
Mumps	16-26 days (usually 18)	1 week or until swelling disappears
Scabies, Lice	1-7 days	Exclude until adequately treated
Streptococcal Diseases (Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Impetigo)	2-7 days	Child given oral antibiotics and completely recovered may return 24 hours after start of treatment

Whooping Cough	Within 14 days	3 weeks from start of “whooping” or 28 days from start of symptoms
Pink Eye	24-72 hours	Keep at home during acute stage
Ringworm	10-14 days	Should be treated and covered

DIVORCED OR LEGALLY SEPARATED PARENTS

Only the parent granted primary placement or sole custody will be authorized to pick up his/her child from school unless shared custody is documented in an official court order or unless mutually agreed upon, in writing, by both parties. **It is important that parents supply the school office with the most recent custody documents so that custody orders can be followed by the school in a fair, unbiased, and legal manner.**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

If it becomes necessary to close school due to inclement weather or other hazardous conditions, notification will be given over the school district’s Skylert communication system. Notification will also be given over the following television and radio stations:

WOCO (Oconto)	107.1 FM	WIXX (Green Bay)	101.1 FM	WBAY
WAPL (Appleton)	105.7 FM	WDUZ (Green Bay)	102.5 FM	WFRV
WGEE (Green Bay)	93.5 FM	WNCY (Green Bay)	100.3 FM	WLUK-FOX
WRVM (Suring)	102.7 FM	WTCH (Green Bay)	96.1 FM	WGBA

FIELD TRIPS AND CHAPERONING

Field trips offer students unique opportunities to learn and apply knowledge and concepts from the curriculum in real world settings. These trips can be valuable, enriching experiences that are both engaging and fun for students.

Because field trips occur away from school, it is necessary to provide adequate adult chaperones to insure that students are safe in the new setting. Parent volunteers have been invaluable in providing this supervision, and we appreciate parent willingness to chaperone.

Having said that, certain difficulties have arisen over the years with field trip chaperones, and as a result, the following guidelines have been established:

- Chaperones are expected to ride school transportation (not in private vehicles for reasons of convenience);
- To insure the focus on the chaperone on supervising the students, younger siblings may not accompany the chaperone on the field trip;
- Because of the high number of parents/guardians who offer to chaperone, other relatives will not be selected as chaperones unless a need arises.

Again, while field trips are excellent experiences for students, they do create considerable extra responsibility for staff members as they work to ensure that the trips go safely and smoothly, and minimizing variables is essential. Thank you in advance for understanding.

GENERAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE/DUE PROCESS

In the event of a student or parent disagreement with a staff member, the following procedures have been identified for resolution of the conflict:

1. Attempts should be made to resolve all conflicts at the lowest level possible with the appropriate staff member(s) involved before moving on to the next step.
2. If the grievant(s) is still in disagreement with the situation, he/she may appeal to the principal within five school days of the disagreement. The principal will respond to the complaint within three school days.

3. If disagreements still exist, the grievant(s) may appeal to the district administrator within five school days. If the superintendent is unable to satisfactorily resolve the complaint, it shall be referred to the school board, whose decision shall be final.

In situations involving student suspension from school, the parent will be given prompt notice of the suspension and the reason for the suspension. The parent may, within five school days following the beginning of the suspension, have a conference with the district administrator. If the district administrator finds that the student was suspended unfairly or unjustly, the student's record will be expunged.

GUM

Students are not allowed to chew gum in the school building or on school grounds unless unique circumstances exist and permission from the classroom teacher is granted.

HARASSMENT

"Harassment" is defined as any behavior towards others based in whole or in part on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, disability (physical, mental, emotional, or learning), or any other characteristic protected by federal or state civil rights law, that 1- places a student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; 2- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or 3- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school. **Harassment is a serious behavioral infraction, and the consequences of harassment include parent contact, loss of privileges, and possible in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and /or expulsion.**

Any student that believes he/she has been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the building principal, a school staff member, or a district compliance officer (CO). The following individuals serve as district compliance officers:

Dr. Dean Hess
District Administrator
Oconto Falls School District
200 N. Farm Road
Oconto Falls, WI 54154
920-848-4471

Terri Olsen
Director of Pupil Services
Oconto Falls School District
210 N. Farm Road
Oconto Falls, WI 54154
920-848-4443

Student witnesses, as well as parents, are encouraged to report potential acts of harassment. **All reports will be promptly and fairly investigated to verify the circumstances and seriousness of the situation; addressed through educational and/or disciplinary interventions as the situations warrant; and documented.** Filing a report in good faith will not reflect negatively on a complainant's status, and the school staff and administration will support students making such reports and protect them against any potential retaliation.

Harassment will not be tolerated at Oconto Falls Elementary School. Please contact the building principal or a compliance officer if you have any questions about this important issue. Board of Education Policy 5517 (available at <http://www.neola.com/ocontofalls-wi/>) addresses this topic.

HEAD LICE

Head lice is a fairly common problem in school age children. It is most prevalent among preschool and elementary school age children and their household members or caregivers. While head lice is inconvenient, it does not pose a significant health hazard. Head lice can be acquired anywhere in the community and may not be identified until weeks or months after exposure. Having head lice is not related to cleanliness of the person or their environment.

If a child is assessed as having head lice, confidentiality will be maintained so the child is not embarrassed. We will discreetly check other family members within the school district. The child's parent or guardian will be notified as soon as possible. The child will stay in the office until he or she can be picked up from school. Educational information will be given and reviewed with the family regarding safe and effective treatment of head lice. The child will be allowed to return to school after proper treatment. Upon the student's return, the school office personnel or school nurse will re-check affected students to ensure they do not have live lice. The school will also periodically recheck this student within the next 7 to 10 days to ensure the head lice treatment was successful.

If several cases of head lice occur in the same classroom, the principal or school nurse may choose to send a letter home notifying classmates' parents that a case of head lice is suspected and asking them to check all of their children for head lice. All students in the classroom/grade will not be checked unless unusual circumstances warrant it.

The school will continue to keep a clean environment and extra vacuuming and washing/cleansing will be done in the classrooms when head lice cases are detected.

Parents have the ultimate responsibility for their children. This includes assisting in the prevention and management of head lice cases by regularly checking their children's hair and immediately treating when head lice is detected.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

With respect to inclement weather resulting in hazardous driving conditions, parents make the ultimate decision regarding their child's attendance at school. Absences due to inclement weather will be considered excused.

LOCKERS

A hall locker is provided for students to store books, coats, and other personal belongings. Valuable items should not be brought to school or stored in lockers. Lockers are the property of the school and are provided as a convenience and a privilege. At no time does the school relinquish its exclusive control of lockers, and they may be opened or inspected by school personnel at any time. Students may not place locks on the lockers.

LOST AND FOUND

In order to assist in the identification of missing items of clothing, it is recommended that all boots, mittens, hats, coats, etc., be plainly marked with your child's name. A lost and found box is kept outside the office. Unclaimed articles will be donated to a charitable organization at the end of each trimester.

LOST OR DAMAGED BOOKS

Students are responsible for books and materials given to them for use by the school. Fines are assessed for damaged books. Students that lose a book or damage it beyond repair will be required to pay the replacement cost of the book(s).

LUNCH/LUNCH RECESS SCHEDULE

Grade	Lunch	Lunch Recess
4 Year Old Kindergarten	12:25-12:45	N/A
5 Year Old Kindergarten	11:50 -12:10	12:10-12:30
1 st grade	10:55-11:15	11:15-11:35
2 nd grade	11:10-11:30	11:30-11:50
3 rd grade	11:20-11:40	11:40-12:00
4 th grade	12:05-12:25	12:25-12:45
5 th grade	11:40-12:00	12:00-12:20

MEDICATION

The school may administer prescription medication if the medication is:

- Provided in a pharmacy labeled container;
- Accompanied by a parent/legal guardian consent form;
- Accompanied by a written order from the physician.

Verbal permission may be acceptable, providing written consent follows. Medication must be taken by the student at a designated time and supervised by authorized personnel. It is the responsibility of the student, if appropriate, not school personnel, to get his/her medication at the designated time. Parents must notify school when the drug is discontinued and the dosage or time is changed. If the medication is resumed, a new order must be received.

Schools are not allowed to supply students with any type of over-the-counter medication (ex. Tylenol, Tums, Benadryl). Parents may supply the school with these over the counter medications for their children, to be administered by authorized personnel, if the medication is:

- Provided in the original container;
- Accompanied by a parent/legal guardian consent form

Both prescription and over-the-counter medication will be stored in a locked cabinet. The school will establish an accurate and confidential record-keeping system for each pupil receiving medication.

NON-SUFFICIENT FUND CHECKS

A service charge of \$25.00 will be assessed each individual who writes a non-sufficient funds check. The charge may be waived by the District accountant if the error was caused by a financial institution and the appropriate documentation is submitted. After the second non-sufficient funds check has been received, the district may require cash payment for the remainder of the school year. Names of repeat offenders will be placed on a confidential list to be distributed to the appropriate school buildings with instructions to accept no further checks.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION DEVICES (CELL PHONES)

Students **are not permitted** to possess or use personal communication devices (ex. cell phones, computers, tablets, etc.) at school **without the specific permission of the teacher or principal**. For most elementary school students, there is not a need to bring personal communication devices to school.

However, in some cases, a parent may wish a student to have access to a cell phone, tablet, etc., for use after school hours. In these cases, the parent should contact the classroom teacher or principal to discuss this. **If approved, the personal communication device must remain powered off and in the student's backpack at all times during the school day.**

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

OFES discourages students from bringing valuable toys, games, or other items to school, as we do not wish to see these items stolen, damaged, or misused. Students are not allowed to play with these items in the classroom or to bring them onto the playground at recess. **We have defined "valuable" to be items valued at \$20 or more.** Game Boys, iPods, Nintendo DSs, and CD players are all examples of items that cannot be used during the school day.

However, we understand that **some students have very long bus rides** (some up to an hour) and that having access to these types of items may help them to pass the time. If you choose to allow your child to take Game Boys, iPods, etc. to school, **please communicate to your child that the item is for use on the bus only** and that the school cannot be responsible if the item is lost, stolen, or damaged. **If a less valuable item can be substituted, please consider doing so.**

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Students will show respect for other people and for school property.
 - No teasing, bullying, harassment, fighting, and unkind words.
 - Equipment should be used correctly. Students should take turns when using equipment.
 - No intentional damage to grounds (trees, flowers, grass, etc.) Wood chips should not be picked up and thrown.
2. All students will go and stay outside unless told otherwise by school personnel.
 - Special health circumstances should be documented with a doctor's note.
3. Students must obey safety rules, including the following:
 - Stay in designated areas of the playground.
 - No food, drinks, candy, or gum on the playground.
 - No dangerous, valuable, or breakable items on the playground.
 - No climbing on top of the slides.
 - One student per swing; do not walk in front of the swings.
 - No tackle football or other rough games allowed.
 - If students are hurt, they should find a supervisor or ask another student to get help.
4. Students must follow the directions of the playground supervisor the first time given. When the bell rings, they should line up quickly.

During the winter months...

5. Snow stays on the ground, unless students are building a snowman or structure.
 - Ice should not be picked up.
 - No running or sliding games on ice.
6. Sledding is permitted at the discretion of the teacher/playground supervisor.
 - Only one student may sled at a time.
 - No sleds with sharp plastic or metal edges.
 - No standing on sleds; snowboards are not allowed.

At all times, students should think before they act. The playground should be a place for students to have fun and get some exercise in a safe and pleasant environment. **Any behavior that creates an unsafe or unpleasant environment will not be allowed.**

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress reports will be sent home at approximately the sixth week of the trimester, and report cards will be sent home at the end of each trimester. However, if parents have questions or concerns about their child's progress prior to these grade reports being issued, they should not hesitate to contact their child's teacher via telephone or email to discuss the matter. This early communication is particularly important if the child has previously struggled in some way at school in order to address problems early.

PUPIL RECORDS

Pupil records are maintained in the interest of the student to assist the school in providing appropriate educational experiences. Retention and destruction of student records will be done in accordance with school district policies and DPI guidelines. Parents may inspect, review, and amend a student's educational record in accordance with FERPA guidelines.

RECESS DRESS GUIDELINES

Students should wear comfortable clothing that is appropriate for our Wisconsin weather. Students are required to go outside for recess unless the temperature or wind chill is below zero or it is raining. Therefore, it is important that students are dressed appropriately, especially when the weather is cold or damp. The following temperature guidelines have been developed to help with the selection of clothes. Parents are encouraged to direct their children to dress warmer than the temperature ranges indicated if they feel it is necessary. However, given the length of our recesses (15 or 20 minutes) and the active nature of play by most children, these guidelines should be appropriate for most.

- Over 60 degrees - Short sleeved shirts and shorts are OK.
- 50 – 59 degrees - Long sleeved shirt.
- 40 – 49 degrees - Lighter jacket. If in the upper range, then a heavy hooded sweatshirt is OK.
- Under 40 degrees - Winter jacket, hat or headband, mittens or gloves. K – 3 students are expected to wear snow pants outside if parents sent them to school with the child and the temperatures warrant their wear. Students in grades 4 – 5 may choose to wear/not wear snow pants on the blacktop area.
- Snow conditions - When snow is present, snow pants and boots must be worn to play off the blacktop area. When the ground is sufficiently dry such that if students step off the blacktop area they will not track mud into the school and classrooms, then boots will not be required.
 - * Older student's (4th and 5th grade) often prefer not to wear boots at recess. When the asphalt is dry, this is not a problem. However, occasionally the asphalt area on the playground is snow covered or covered with slush (sometimes this happens during the school day). For that reason, **we recommend that all students have a pair of boots available at school to wear during recess as needed.**

Please note that these are approximate guidelines, not absolutes. If the temperatures are close to the next range, supervisors will use their discretion if they feel some modification is OK. If other conditions are present, such as heavy wind or a very light mist (one not hard enough to call for inside recess), then warmer dress will be called for.

It is highly recommended that each student have a heavy sweatshirt, sweater, or light jacket at school each day to allow for variations in temperature throughout the day.

SICK CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

If students are seriously ill, please keep them home until they are able to participate in all school activities. An exception to this would be a student providing a medical excuse exempting that student from a particular school activity. This applies to outdoor recess participation. **We do expect all students to go outside for recess – even if they are not feeling 100% (ex. cold, sore throat, etc.) – unless a medical excuse is provided.** Recesses are short in duration, and we have found that, if dressed appropriately, all children can benefit from the time outdoors.

SCHOOL DAY

EC and 4K morning students whose parents provide transportation to school are to arrive no earlier than 7:52 a.m. and no later than 8:05 a.m. Morning EC and 4K classes begin at 8:05 a.m. and dismiss at 10:55 a.m.

4K afternoon students whose parents provide transportation to school are to arrive no earlier than 12:05 p.m. and no later than 12:15 p.m. Afternoon 4K classes begin at 12:05 p.m. and dismiss at 3:15 p.m.

5K through 5th grade students whose parents provide transportation to school are to arrive no earlier than 7:52 a.m. and no later than 8:05 a.m. Students are allowed to enter the building at 7:52 a.m., except in cases of severe weather, when they are allowed inside the entryways. 5K through 5th grade classes begin at 8:00 a.m. and dismiss at 3:15 p.m.

SCHOOL NURSE

The School Nurse visits Oconto Falls Elementary School every Wednesday.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Oconto Falls Elementary School is committed to creating and maintaining a positive school climate that is safe, orderly, and conducive to learning. In order to provide this climate, the school will do the following:

1. Clarify for students and parents the expectations that will exist school wide and in individual classrooms;
2. Provide positive feedback to students who meet or exceed behavioral expectations; and
3. Hold accountable those students whose behavior falls short of meeting expectations with the goal being to facilitate a change in their behavior.

Specific student behaviors at OFES can be classified in one of three types:

- **Desired behavior;**
- **Unacceptable behavior (mild to moderate);**
- **Unacceptable behavior (serious).**

Desired behavior meets or exceeds classroom and school wide expectations. The following general behavioral expectations will be in effect at OFES (please note that specific guidelines for the cafeteria and playground are included in this handbook; also that specific rules for the school bus and for individual classrooms will be provided to students during the first week of school).

1. **Students are to behave in a manner conducive to learning.**
2. **Students are to give their best effort to learn while in school.**
3. **Students are to cooperate with all school staff members, crossing guards, and bus drivers.**

4. **Students are to act in a respectful manner toward themselves, toward others (peers, teachers, staff members, visitors and guests), and toward the property of the school and others at all times.**
5. **Students are to attend school and to remain in their scheduled classes or areas at all times unless excused by their parents through established procedures.**

In order to help teach these behavior and attitudes and recognize those students who are demonstrating them, OFES will emphasize character traits such as respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, ethical decision-making, fairness, caring, sportsmanship, and citizenship.

Unacceptable behavior (mild to moderate) is that which is unsafe, disorderly, and/or interferes with the ability of teachers to teach and others to learn. When a student exhibits this type of behavior, a classroom teacher or staff member will intervene. **Students are reminded that all staff members in the school have the right and responsibility to address inappropriate student behavior at any place and at any time.** Interventions will vary, depending upon the level of seriousness of the behavior and the age/level of development of the student. Examples of interventions may include, but are not limited to, verbal warnings, time outs, withdrawal of privileges (ex. recess), and/or parent telephone calls. Unacceptable behaviors in this category include the following (please note that this is not intended to be all-inclusive list – it is simply a guide to some of the more common issues that may arise at the elementary level):

- Running in the halls
- Climbing on desks/other furniture
- Littering inside and outside school
- Chewing gum
- Behavior that disrupts teaching and learning in the classroom (ex. talking out of turn)
- Loud and disorderly behavior anywhere in school or on school grounds
- Name calling and teasing
- Bullying (first incident)
- Inappropriate language (depending upon the content and frequency)
- Inappropriate dress
- Taking the possessions of others without permission (less serious incidents)
- Disrespect or insubordination toward staff members (less serious incidents)
- Possession of items disruptive to learning and or items not allowed at school
- Leaving the classroom or playground without permission
- Violating established playground and cafeteria rules

Unacceptable behavior (serious) is that which results in a referral to the principal and the involvement of parents. When this type of serious unacceptable behavior takes place, interventions may include required conferences between the student, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, and principal; temporary isolation of the student through in-school or out-of-school suspensions; referral to outside agencies (ex. social services or law enforcement); and/or expulsion from school for a period of time. Unacceptable behaviors in this category include the following (again – this is not intended to be an all-inclusive list):

- Disrespect or insubordination toward staff members (more serious or repeated incidents)
- Taking the possessions of others (including those belonging to teachers or the school) without permission (more serious or repeated incidents)
- Defacing the property of others or the school (vandalism)
- Bullying and harassment (serious or repeated incidents)
- Inappropriate language (depending upon the content and frequency)
- Leaving the school without permission

- Gang related activity
- Use or possession of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco
- Fighting, intimidation, and/or threatening to cause bodily harm to any person
- Inappropriate touching
- Possession of weapons (any object which could cause bodily harm or property damage, including, but not limited to, firearms, knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, ammunition, martial arts weapons, etc.)
- Possession or transmission of pornographic material

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Student dress should be clean, comfortable, modest, and in good taste. Because student dress is a subject that is open to varying interpretations, the following guidelines have been set:

1. Students are to dress in a manner that does not distract others from learning. Choices of hair styles and hair colors also fall under this guideline. While our goal is not to unduly inhibit creativity or expression, our first priority is to maintain an appropriate learning environment.
2. Clothing and shoes should provide for the safety of your child. For this reason, students must wear shoes at all times, and flip-flops are not allowed.
3. Students are not permitted to wear tube tops, halter-tops, see-through shirts, or midriff tops.
4. Skirts and shorts must be no more than four inches above the kneecap.
5. Clothing that advertises alcoholic beverages or tobacco products, promotes drug or drug use, and/or contains inappropriate language or messages is not allowed.
6. Appropriate gym shoes must be worn during physical education class.
7. Students will not wear hats, caps, or other head coverings inside the building.
8. Jewelry, clothing, and other ornamental wear (including wallet chains) must be deemed safe and must not be worn to designate any group/gang affiliation.

NOTE: The school retains the right to determine the appropriateness of student dress, with the final decision resting with the building principal.

STUDENT SAFETY

Oconto Falls is a great community to live in – friendly, caring, and overall very safe. In many ways, our school practices at OFES reflect the type of community that we are a part of. We have tried to maintain a level of informality and “small town” feel as we consider how our school will operate. It has served us well over the years in providing a quality education for our children in an environment that we hope parents and visitors have found to be welcoming.

Sadly, we live in a world in which violent, random things sometimes occur, and this is increasingly happening in schools. Over the years, Oconto Falls Elementary School has taken reasonable steps in response. Locking all building entrances, installing a buzz in system, requiring staff and visitors to wear ID tags while in the building, and running criminal background checks on all volunteers are examples of such steps.

In recent years, several additional steps were taken in order to improve school security. These involved 1- ID checks; 2- beginning of the day drop off procedures; 3- end of the day dismissal procedures; and 4- traffic flow in the parking lot.

ID checks: between 7:45 a.m. and 3:20 p.m., all adults who are visiting or volunteering at school or who are picking up a student will be asked to show a photo ID.

Rationale:

- We want to make sure that children are released only to adults who are authorized to pick them up.

- We are a relatively large school, and there are several different staff members who could potentially be monitoring student sign outs.
- Asking all adults for an ID, regardless of their familiarity with staff, takes the awkwardness out of asking others who may be less familiar to staff. We simply ask everyone.
- Most adults carry an ID with them anyway, and pulling it out of one's purse or wallet requires very little effort.
- This is a common practice in many other schools, and we feel that it is a simple and reasonable expectation.
- If you happen to forget your ID, we will work to verify your identity through different means. This may be very quick (ex. a staff member recognizes you) or it may take more time (ex. a new visitor that is unfamiliar to staff). If we are unable to verify an identity, we will not provide access to the school or students.

Beginning of the day arrival: from 7:50-8:05 a.m., 4K through 2nd grade student drop off will take place at the rear of school and 3rd through 5th grade student drop off will be outside the 4th and 5th grade entrances.

Rationale:

- The previous traffic patterns and drop off practices were inefficient and unsafe, as there was a large volume of vehicle traffic in a very small area.

Procedure – student drop offs:

- Incoming vehicles must **enter the school grounds from the north** (on hill) and **exit to the south** (Maria Volk Drive). This traffic pattern **applies at all times** of the day when entering and leaving the school.

4K through 2nd grade students

- **Enter through the cafeteria doors in the rear of the school.** Follow the arrows on the playground to avoid the steeper slope in the middle.
- A staff member will be stationed outside the cafeteria entrance. **Do not drop off students in the rear of school before 7:50 a.m. or after 8:05 a.m. when there is not a supervisor present.** After 8:05 a.m., always walk the student to the office when dropping off.
- **Wait until you approach the cafeteria doors** before dropping off children. Be aware of other vehicles/children.
- If you would like to sign into the building, **park in the visitor parking in the front of the school** and enter through the main entrance (no signs-ins through the cafeteria).

3rd through 5th grade students

- **The drop off zone is between the 4th and 5th grade entrances.** This is a quick drop off area – 30 seconds or less (use visitor parking if you need to sign in).
- **Always pull alongside the curb to the left when dropping off students (never drop off from the right lane).**
- Pull up as far as possible in the zone when dropping off so that traffic does not back up.
- 4th and 5th grade students enter through their respective entrance doors (3rd grade may enter through either of these entrances).
- **Parking/signing in:** please make sure to only use designated areas for parking (visitor spaces or staff lot). Thank you for helping us keep the traffic flow organized and safe.

End of the day dismissal: after 3:05 p.m., all student pick-ups will take place in the cafeteria. Students with permission to walk or bike home will report to the lobby until after the busses have left.

Rationale:

- Given that most OFES students (over 500) are exiting the school through the front between 3:10-3:20 p.m., we need to have a good system of monitoring and accountability for students who do not take the bus (walkers, bikers, and students being picked up). The easiest way to accomplish this is to have each group report to a different area at the end of the day.

Procedure – student pick-ups:

- If you will be picking up your child from school, it is important that you provide timely notice. If we have not heard from you, we will send the student on the bus. No exceptions.
 - **If at all possible, please send a written note with your child in the morning – that is the best way to ensure that the message will be received.**
 - If the request for pick up will be on a permanent basis, we will make a “pick up tag”, similar to a bus tag, that the child will affix to his/her backpack.
 - If you do need to make a phone call with the pickup request, please do so **no later than 2:15 p.m.**
 - Email is usually **not the best way** to communicate these pickup requests – if the teacher is absent, the message will not be received.
 - Obviously emergencies may occasionally come up that will require a call past 2:15 p.m. – we understand that. However, please keep in mind that non-essential, last minute requests for transportation changes at the end of the day, made for reasons of convenience rather than necessity, have the effect of taxing the school's limited resources and ultimately undermining safety. **Please help us out and plan ahead.**
- If picking up a student before 3:05 p.m., simply report to the office and sign your child out.
- If picking up your child after 3:05 p.m., drive around back and park on the playground asphalt. Please note that there is a small slope to a portion of the asphalt (for drainage purposes) – so make sure to pay careful attention and drive slowly in this area to avoid potentially damaging your vehicle.
- Enter through the center cafeteria door. Have a photo ID ready to show the staff member on duty.
- Your child will arrive in the cafeteria between 3:10-3:15 p.m.

Procedure – student walkers and bikers:

- Parents wishing their children to walk or bike to/from school should send a note giving permission. The office will then create a backpack tag indicating this for the student.
- Walkers and bikers will report to the lobby at dismissal and will wait to exit until the buses have left at 3:20 p.m.
- In both the morning and afternoon, walkers and bikers should always enter and exit the property from the south – along Maria Volk Drive – where there is a sidewalk. They should never walk up or down the hill (the vehicle entrance), where there is no sidewalk.

STUDENT SIGN-IN

When dropping your child off at school after the school day has started (8:05 a.m.), please report to the office and sign your child in.

STUDENT SIGN-OUT

When picking your child up from school, please report to the office and sign your child out (if picking up after 3:05 p.m., please note the procedure under "SCHOOL SAFETY" section above). You will be asked to show a photo ID, and then your child will be called to the office to meet you. Children will not be permitted to sign themselves out or wait in the parking lot for their parents' arrival. Only authorized individuals, as reported on your child's emergency information sheet, will be allowed to sign your student out. Siblings, relatives or friends will not be allowed to pick up your child unless written notification has been received. This is a precautionary measure to insure the safety of all children.

TOBACCO/NICOTINE USE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Oconto Falls School Board is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable, productive environment for staff, students, and citizens. The School Board is concerned about the health of its employees and others and recognizes the importance of role modeling for students during formative years. **Therefore, tobacco/nicotine use is strictly prohibited on or in school district property.** This will include school buildings, grounds, school owned vehicles, and all property owned by, rented by and/or under the control of the Oconto Falls School District. This ban is in effect during all times including vacations, holidays, summer etc. and therefore is not limited to the school year or school day.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE/ELECTRONIC MONITORING

In order to further the safe and orderly operation of the school, video surveillance/electronic monitoring may be used in commons areas such as hallways, entryways, parking lots/outside areas, buses, the cafeteria, and the gymnasium. Board of Education Policy 7440.01 (available at <http://www.neola.com/ocontofalls-wi/>) addresses this topic.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERING

As discussed in a previous section, school safety is always of primary concern at OFES. **In order to help us keep our children safe, we require that all parents and other visitors report to the office; show a photo ID; obtain a visitor tag; and sign in if they enter the building between 7:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m.** Even if your visit will be brief (i.e. dropping something off for a teacher or walking a younger child to class), please follow this procedure. All OFES staff members will be wearing their school ID badges during school hours – thus all adults who "belong" in the building (staff and authorized visitors) will be easily identifiable.

Each year, hundreds of volunteer hours are documented at OFES by parents and community members. This commitment to our school is greatly appreciated by our students and staff. In addition, parents are welcome and encouraged to spend time in their child's classroom if they believe that it would be valuable to gain insight into their child's learning.

We do require, however, that classroom volunteering opportunities be arranged with the teacher in advance via email or a telephone call. A considerable amount of time and planning goes into preparation for a volunteer visit in order to make the time productive for all, and it is difficult for a teacher to do this without some advance notice (the day before is usually sufficient).

Classroom visits, while encouraged, should similarly be arranged with the teacher in advance. While visits work out well most of the time, there are occasions when a classroom

activity does not lend itself to having visitors in the classroom. For example, if students are taking a test, we want children to be as relaxed and focused as possible. For some children, having someone new in the classroom can be quite distracting. Other times, there are already additional support professionals in the classroom (aides, therapists, etc.) and it is simply too crowded to accommodate visitors. **Obviously there might be times in which a quick “drop in” is required – to deliver a snack, to drop off a forgotten article of clothing, to deliver an important message to your child, etc.** However, when a longer visit is desired, we do ask that there be some advanced planning with the teacher.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS and SERVICES

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Our Guidance Counselor provides counseling services for individuals and groups. Students meet in a class-like setting weekly and have access to individual and small group counseling sessions.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special Education is a program provided for children for whom it is shown through evaluation, observation, and medical diagnosis to be in need of special services. Its purpose is to assure that each child who has special needs will receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Areas of disability include: Significant Developmental Delay served through the Early Childhood Program, Cognitive Disability, Emotional Behavioral Disability, Significant Learning Disability, Other Health Impairment, Autism, Orthopedic Impairment, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Speech & Language, and Traumatic Brain Injury. Occupational and/or Physical Therapy may also be provided for those children who need the service in conjunction with an established area of disability.

SPECIAL EDUCATION REFERRAL POLICY

Upon request, the Oconto Falls School District is required to evaluate a child for eligibility for special education services. A request for evaluation is known as a referral. When the district receives a referral, the district will appoint an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to determine if the child has a disability, and if the child needs special education services. The district locates, identifies, and evaluates all children with disabilities who are enrolled by their parents in private (including religious) schools, elementary schools and secondary schools located in the school district.

A physician, nurse, psychologist, social worker, or administrator of a social agency who reasonably believes a child brought to him or her for services is a child with a disability has a legal duty to refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides. Before referring the child, the person making the referral must inform the child's parent that the referral will be made.

Others, including parents, who reasonably believe a child is a child with a disability may also refer the child, including a homeless child, to the school district in which the child resides.

Referrals must be in writing and include the reason why the person believes the child is a child with a disability. A referral may be made by contacting Terri Olsen, Director of Pupil Services, Oconto Falls School District, via telephone (920-848-4443); mail (Oconto Falls High School 210 N. N. Farm Road Oconto Falls, WI 54154); or email (terri.olsen@of-ps.org).

INCLUSION OF STUDENTS

As per federal statutes, students with exceptional needs are included in the regular school program to the maximum extent appropriate. There are social and academic benefits for all children when educated together. Some of the values of inclusion are:

- The opportunity to develop friendships
- The opportunity to fully realize potential skills
- The opportunity to learn from peers
- Learning to accept differences in people
- Learning to be helping, caring people
- Learning how and when to help

TITLE I SERVICES

Title I is a federally funded program designed to provide regular education children with extra help in reading/language arts or math. It is not a Special Education Program.

Students in kindergarten through grade 5 can be selected for Title I services based on test results, teacher recommendation, and/or if classroom performance indicates that additional help is needed. Students are involved in small group or individual learning experiences in the regular classroom or in the Title I room. Sometimes the Title I teacher works in the classroom with the whole class, in cooperation with the classroom teacher. The Title I teacher works closely with the classroom teacher to provide positive, supplemental learning experiences targeted to meet each student's needs.

In accordance with federal Title I requirements, parents may request the following information regarding their child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade level and subject area he/she is teaching;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or provisional status;
- The undergraduate major of the teacher and area of study /certificates for any graduate degrees earned;
- Qualifications of any paraprofessionals providing services to their children.

Parents will also be provided with information on the level of achievement of their child on required state academic assessments, as well as timely notice if their child has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not "highly qualified".

STUDENT CONSULTATION TEAM

The Student Consultation Team (SCT) is the school's problem solving team. The SCT consists of the student's classroom teacher, school counselor, and other specialists, who meet as needed to discuss academic and behavioral concerns with students and to identify possible interventions. The SCT works closely with parents and makes referrals to community-based agencies when school-based services are not appropriate or sufficient to meet student needs.

DESTINATION IMAGINATION (D.I.) is an after school activity that emphasizes creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and performing skills. Teams of up to seven students work together from approximately November through March to create a solution to a Team Challenge. Teams also learn and practice creative quick-thinking skills for the Instant Challenge portion of the program. The activity culminates in a regional competition in March, with top teams having the ability to advance to higher levels of competition.

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please sign this sheet confirming that you have read the Oconto Falls Elementary School Parent-Student Handbook. Forms should be returned to your child's teacher by **Friday, September 11, 2020**.

If you have any questions regarding the information in the handbook, please do not hesitate to contact Principal Neil Hall or Assistant Principal Mat Paris at 920-848-4476.

Student Name

Grade / Homeroom

Parent's Signature

Date

