

North Ridge Primary School



"It's a Very Fine Place"
Katherine Rihm, Principal



Dear Students and Parents,

A committee of parents, staff and administrators at the North Ridge Primary School initially developed this handbook. It has since been updated to reflect some of the new programs and procedures implemented at North Ridge.

Its purpose is to briefly outline routines and procedures that guide North Ridge in its daily operation.

Please refer to this handbook as your primary reference. Most topics have been listed alphabetically.

It is our hope that you find this handbook to be the helpful guide it was intended to be. We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,
North Ridge Staff & SBMT

MISSION STATEMENT

The North Ridge learning community is committed to helping all of our students become lifelong learners by building their social, emotional and academic skills. Together we will encourage them to develop self-confidence and promote respect for themselves and others. Through a growing understanding of their rights and responsibilities, our children will become contributing citizens of the world in which we live.

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SCHOOL PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL

Welcome! School doors will open at 9:25 a.m. All students should arrive on time each day in order to benefit from our enriched academic program. Any child brought to school earlier must be supervised by the parent/guardian until the start of school, as there are no staff members available for early morning supervision.

ABSENCES, LATE ARRIVALS & EARLY DEPARTURES

When your child is absent, please telephone the Health Office at **912-2196**. Give your child's name, teacher's name, date, and reason for absence. Upon your child's return to school, a note must be sent to the classroom teacher.

The instructional day begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 3:45 p.m. Late arrivals and early departures compromise your child's instructional time and consequently disrupt the instructional time for all children in the class. Late arrivals and early departures should be reserved for unavoidable and emergency situations only. Students arriving past 9:40 a.m. must be signed in at the Reception Desk and the parent must fill out a late slip. The teacher will be called to notify them that the student has arrived and the child will be sent to their classroom. Parents will not be able to escort a student to the classroom, as this would disrupt instruction. A late note will be submitted to the Health Office at this time.

Absences, late arrivals (past 9:40 a.m.) or early departures (prior to 3:15 p.m.) other than those due to illness, death in the family, religious observances, impassable roads or severe weather, quarantine, required court appearance, or attendance at a health clinic are considered unexcused.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please help us keep our children safe. Children who are driven to school should be dropped off at the designated area in the presence of assigned staff no earlier than 9:25a.m. Once the front door locks, at the start of the school day, children must be signed in as indicated above. Cars are **NOT** permitted in the bus lane in the front of the school during arrival and dismissal. **Please obey the No Parking and Handicapped signs.**

BUILDING SECURITY

During school hours, all visitors or parents who arrive at North Ridge must enter the building through the main entrance. The Reception Aide and Security Guard will greet all visitors. Visitors must sign in and will be asked to show identification. **You must have photo identification to sign into the building.** The Reception Aide will then direct visitors to the proper location within the building. Prior to exiting the building, visitors **must** return their visitors pass to the Reception Aide. Security hours are 7:45am to 8:00pm.

Drills and Evacuations

Please click the link below for NYS Requirements:

<https://www.commackschools.org/Downloads/RHDrillletter.pdf>



BUS INFORMATION

All K-2 children, with few exceptions, in the Commack School District receive bus transportation in accordance with District policy. This policy was determined by a community referendum.

If you have questions regarding transportation, you may contact the PTA Transportation Representative, or you may call our Transportation Office at 912-2020.

All students must ride their designated buses unless a written note is brought to school. If there is a need for your child to ride a different bus, or is to be picked up at school, a written note must be sent, and will be approved at the Principal's discretion. Requests should be reserved for emergency situations only. Playdates do not qualify as reasons for such a request. Parents of students who receive bus transportation need to sign their children out at the Walker Line if they are not taking the bus home. A child who is not entitled to busing may not ride the bus to or from school.

If a stop is missed, or there is no one present to meet your child, your child will remain on the bus. The driver will either take the child home at the end of the route if an authorized adult is present, or return the child to the school. Assure your child that he/she will arrive home safely.

BUS RULES

1. Please follow your child's bus pass regarding times for the bus arrival.
2. Watch the bus driver for the signal to cross in front of the bus.
3. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
4. Keep aisle clear.
5. Listen to the bus driver.
6. Respect the driver and other children riding the bus.

Safety belts are available for your child's use. It is the parents' responsibility to instruct the children as to the proper use of seat belts. Only school personnel and students are permitted to board the bus.

For additional Bus Rules and Information, refer to the District Website and click on the Transportation Link. <https://www.commack.k12.ny.us/TransportationDepartment.aspx>

SCHOOL BUS MISCONDUCT

Minor misbehaviors may be handled, collaboratively by the bus driver, student and parent when appropriate. If the Principal becomes involved, the child may receive a warning. A second meeting with the Principal will result in a phone call to the parent/guardian, followed by a formal written notice. Severe and repetitive occurrences of misconduct may result in a suspension of bus privileges for a period of time to be determined by the Principal, Director of Transportation, Superintendent of Schools, or his designee.

CLASS TRIPS

Field trips are an enjoyable enhancement to our educational program. Follow-up activities conducted in the classroom are for the educational benefit of all students. Therefore, please note that students, whose parents chaperone, are expected to remain in school for the remainder of the day following a field trip. Only designated parent chaperones are to attend class trips. Parents are urged to refrain from meeting their children at a trip destination. Class parents and teachers will try to accommodate as many chaperones as allowed. In some instances, parent chaperones may be expected to pay for admission to the event. Depending upon the nature of the trip, children may be encouraged to wear their North Ridge T-shirts, or school colors, for security purposes.

DISCIPLINE PROTOCOLS

The District has recently adopted a Code of Conduct for students and parents, as well as for all visitors of our school building. Copies of this code are available upon request. You may also read the Code of Conduct by accessing the School District's website:

https://filecabinet4.eschoolview.com/0342523C-1FE3-434C-9AA3-FD74A03FF8C0/CodeofConduct7_15_19.pdf

At North Ridge, the code is adapted to meet the needs of primary students. Disciplinary issues are usually handled by the classroom teacher. When necessary, the Principal intervenes. There is a program of progressive disciplinary action that is followed when necessary.

It is our practice that even young children should be held accountable for their own actions. We involve and inform parents when children demonstrate inappropriate behavior. These are the appropriate behaviors that are expected on the primary level:

BUILDING RULES

1. Walk in the building.
2. Talk quietly.
3. Respect classes in session.
4. Handle school and personal property with care.
5. Respect the property of others.
6. Respect other children and adults.

UNACCEPTABLE PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

1. Fighting:
 - i. Physical Conflict- touching, hitting, etc.
 - ii. Verbal Conflict- unkind words
2. Running in the halls
3. Use of obscenities, written or spoken
4. Destruction of personal and school property
5. Continuous disruptive behavior
6. Stealing
7. Intolerance of Others

When disciplinary action is necessary, any of the following procedures may be implemented:

1. Teacher and child will resolve issue.
2. Parents and teachers may meet to discuss the situation.
3. Child may be restricted from participation in school activities.
4. Principal intervenes.
5. Child may be suspended from school for a period of time.

Parental input and support are essential and invaluable to the successful resolution of any disciplinary problems

LUNCH INFORMATION



Children have the opportunity to eat a well-balanced and delicious hot/cold lunch at school. They are also welcome to bring a cold lunch from home. Our District participates in government-funded programs and provides free or reduced priced food services to qualifying students. A monthly menu is posted on the district website:

<https://www.commack.k12.ny.us/LunchMenu.aspx>

Please see the link below for lunch payment information:

<https://www.commack.k12.ny.us/InstructionsforFoodServicePortalOnlinePayment.aspx>

Please review your child's cafeteria selections each morning. This will reduce anxiety and eliminate confusion.

LUNCH/RECREATION PROGRAM

North Ridge Lunch/Recreation Program is designed to provide our students with an opportunity for socialization and physical activity.

Please be sure your child wears the *proper rubber soled footwear or sneakers each day.* Inappropriate footwear, such as backless shoes, clogs, crocs, flip flops, sandals, work boots, or heeled shoes will prevent your child from participating in important physical activities and, most importantly, could cause an injury. **For safety reasons during recess, no student will be permitted to wear flip flops.**

The safety of our students is our primary concern.

Playground Rules

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Stay in assigned area. If you need to leave, speak to an adult.
- C. Always be respectful to other children and adults.
- D. Use playground and equipment safely.
- E. Avoid muddy areas.

Infractions of these safety rules during recess will result in time out. Serious violations will be handled by the Principal.

Rules for Cafeteria

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Raise your hand to seek permission to leave your seat or leave the cafeteria.
- C. Always be respectful to other children and adults.
- D. When waiting in line to be served, keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
- E. Follow appropriate eating behaviors that are considerate to others, such as avoiding negative comments or touching other students' food.
- F. Be responsible for cleaning your own space.

Hallway Rules

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Walk quietly in the halls especially when classes are in session.

EMERGENCY CONTACT AND EARLY DISMISSAL CARDS

At the beginning of the school year, a **Yellow Early Dismissal Card** is sent home and Information Sheets are needed to be filled out on the parentportal. If you do not have an ID number, you may contact parentportal@commack.k12.ny.us. It is important that this information be filled out and yellow cards be returned speedily and kept up to date. Please notify the school nurse and the teacher of any changes to this information as soon as possible to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. Cell phone numbers, in particular, must be updated whenever changes are made.

Student Health

If your child's health status changes, please notify his/her school nurse so that we may accommodate any health needs that your child may have. If your child is having surgery, or is diagnosed with any health condition, please contact the nurse's office at your earliest convenience.

Absences

If your child will be absent you must call the nurse's office at (631) 912 – 2196 and report the absence.

Medical Examinations

The New York State Department of Education requires all pre-kindergarten or kindergarten and first grade students, as well as new entrants to have a physical examination.

Physicals can be performed by your personal physician; however, they must be on the New York State Health Examination Form, dated after September 4 of the previous year and signed/stamped by the physician.

In addition, the 'Health Appraisal Form' needs to be completed by the parent/guardian.

Click here for the physical and Health Appraisal form

<https://www.commackschools.org/Downloads/HealthAppraisal6.pdf>

If we do not have your private physician's physical examination form on file when the school physician's assistant starts the school examinations, your child will have a physical done on at that time by the school physician's assistant.

Medication in School

No medication, prescription or over the counter (to include cough drops, eye drops or skin lotions) may be used or dispensed at school without the following:

1. Written directions from the doctor including the name and dosage of medication, the time to be administered, the reason for the medication as well as any side effects of the medication.
2. Written request and permission from the parent/guardian.
3. Containment of medication in a properly labeled bottle from the pharmacy.

Click here for the medication form.

<https://www.commarkschools.org/Downloads/medicationform22.pdf>

The parent may come to the health office with the medication and give it to the child at any time.

Parents must pick up all unused medication before the last day of school or it will be discarded.

Immunizations

New York State public health law section 2164 requires any student entering or attending school to show proof of immunization.

Click here for the 2019-20 School Year NYS Immunization Requirements

https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370_2019.pdf

UNEXPECTED LATE DEPARTURES FROM SCHOOL DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

From time to time snow or heavy storms may cause afternoon buses to arrive late to North Ridge resulting in a later than usual departure. When those situations occur, due to the volume of incoming calls by concerned parents, and our need to stay in close contact with our Transportation Department, we are unable to call home to report these unfortunate delays. Parents should expect that on days when weather conditions are extreme, buses will arrive home late.

CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Upon arrival at school, children go straight to their classrooms. Once inside the classroom, the teacher takes attendance, the lunch count, and collects absence notes, bus notes and other correspondence. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited and a patriotic song is sung as a school community. When all necessary “housekeeping chores” are completed, the instructional day begins.

At Open House, which is early in the year, specific routines unique to each classroom are discussed. Also, at Open House, teachers will inform parents of curriculum and grade-level expectations. Each teacher will present his/her goals for the year and let you know how you can become involved in your child's education.

CONFERENCES

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled at the end of the **first and second marking periods**. These conferences are offered during the day and on one evening. Students are dismissed for the half-day conferences. Please refer to the District Calendar for specific dates. These formal conferences are scheduled twenty-minute intervals. If additional time is needed, please advise the teacher prior to the conference. Appointments will be scheduled by the individual teachers. Please note that evening conferences are reserved for working parents.

Informal conferences between parent and teacher may be scheduled at any mutually convenient time.

A parent/guardian who wishes to communicate with the classroom teacher is asked to send a note to school, e-mail the teacher or phone the Main Office (912-2190).

We request that you do not bypass these procedures in order to see a teacher. Please make an appointment or call.

EXTRA HELP

Commack School District has established an "Extra Help" period at the elementary level. Teachers will select students for the "Extra Help" and notify parents, in writing, prior to the actual meeting period. "Extra Help" begins at 8:55am, at this time students will report to their classes.

HOMEWORK

Please refer to the District Website and click on the Homework link:

<https://www.comackschools.org/Downloads/ElementaryHWReport.pdf>

When a child is absent for more than one consecutive day, due to illness, homework assignments may be obtained after 24 hours by requesting that work be available for pick up at the reception desk in the main lobby, or it may be sent home with another child. Please provide the teacher with adequate time for preparation by making this request as early in the day as possible.

When a child is absent due to a family vacation, all missed assignments and class work can be completed in a reasonable and timely manner. While away, please read to your child daily and review recent math concepts. You may also wish to have your child keep a journal of the trip. Homework assignments may not be given in advance of a child's absence.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found items are kept in the Health Office next to the Main Office. Parents and students are encouraged to check these items frequently. To ensure that your child's belongings never reach this room, please label all personal items including lunch boxes and backpacks.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Please follow the links below for the Curriculum Guides K-2:

<https://www.commackschools.org/Downloads/KindergartenGuide3.pdf>

<https://www.commackschools.org/Downloads/FirstGrade2.pdf>

<https://www.commackschools.org/Downloads/SecondGradeGuide2.pdf>

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM/SUPPORT SERVICES

The Instructional Support Team, (IST), formerly known as the Child Study Team consists of the Principal, Psychologist, Special Education Teacher, Reading Teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Classroom Teacher and School Nurse (when appropriate).

The Team meets on a regular basis to discuss ways to meet the needs of children who require individualized, psychological, social, physical, behavioral or academic programs.

If the Instructional Support Team believes that evaluation is warranted, parents will be notified. Written permission is required for psychological, speech/language, or a full-scale evaluation. The District Committee on Special Education (CSE) may recommend additional services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or may recommend psychiatric or neurological evaluations. The purpose of testing is to assess progress or diagnose a problem and recommend services if needed. Test results may be used to develop a behavior plan or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for the child. If no handicapping condition is suspected, individual Instructional Support Team members may, with parental permission, administer informal tests to assess strengths and weaknesses in a given area.

EXTENDED EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

North Ridge provides small-group educational support services designed to meet the individual needs of those students who require additional support which includes:

- Academic Intervention for Kindergarten, (Language Arts and Math).
- Academic Intervention Services, (AIS), for Reading/Language Arts in Grade 1.
- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for Math and Reading/Language Arts in Gr. 2.
- Speech and Language.
- School-Based Counseling.

GENERAL INFORMATION

CLUBS

The PTA offers a wide variety of enjoyable activities during our School Club program. There are 3 sessions, fall, winter and spring. Clubs meet once a week for 6 weeks.

Prior to registration you will receive an information packet with club listings and registration information.

Please note that school clubs are available to students in grades 1 and 2 for the first session only and all grades for the last session.

ARTS-IN-EDUCATION

Theatrical groups, dance companies, musicians, authors and artists educate and entertain our children through our Arts-in-Education program. These presentations supplement and enrich the school's curriculum. These events are listed in the Principal's and PTA Newsletter.

BACKPACKS/UMBRELLAS

Traditional backpacks are used by most students to aid them in carrying their supplies to and from school each day. At the primary level, backpacks on wheels are not appropriate and are not permitted as they are cumbersome and have the potential to cause accidents. Umbrellas, as well, pose a safety risk for primary students. Therefore, we ask that you not send your child to school with an umbrella.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

A monitor will display the birthdays of all students and staff on a monthly basis.

Children may celebrate birthdays in their classrooms. Please refer to district website page 5 of the policy entitled *Managing Allergies in the Learning Environment*.

<https://www.comackschools.org/Downloads/ElementaryAllergyLetter.pdf>

Party favors and goody bags should be reserved for out-of-school celebrations. Please note that elaborate classroom birthday celebrations are not permitted as they compromise classroom instructional time. Please save candles for the home celebration for the safety of all North Ridge students and staff.

Should your child wish to have a party outside of school, invitations may be given out in school **only** if everyone in the class is invited. If a child misses a “home party,” goodies or favors must be delivered privately.

In honor of your child’s birthday or any special occasion, you may donate a hardcover book to the school Library. A book plate will be placed in the book indicating the honoree, the occasion and the date. Please contact the school Library/Media Specialist for additional information.

CLASS CONTACTS

RESPONSIBILITIES :

Under the direction of the classroom teacher:

1. Acts as a liaison between the PTA and parents. Class contacts are asked to attend PTA meetings to keep apprised of school happenings,
2. Provides reminder emails,
3. Collects class funds at the beginning of the school year,
4. May arrange for chaperones to go on class trips.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Our most effective tool in providing our young students with an optimal learning environment is the establishment of an effective and ongoing communication system between parent and teacher. Please remember to check our back-pack mail. North Ridge is proud to boast that its staff maintains a strong and effective bond between school and home. Should any concerns or questions arise regarding academic or behavioral needs and/or practices within the classroom, please contact the teacher first. If the concerns are not satisfactorily resolved, the parent may then contact the building Principal.

PIR (Partners In Reading Program)

Reading aloud to children from meaningful literature is considered by experts to be the most effective way to foster in children a life-long love of books and learning. Reading instruction alone will not suffice. To help achieve this goal, the North Ridge PTA, in conjunction with the school, sponsors a Partners In Reading Program during each school year. Each year our theme is established and is continually updated through collaboration. The “PIR” program is designed to encourage parents and children to become parents in reading, to experience the joy of reading books and to improve reading skills. For the past several years, more than 98% of our families have participated. We continue to strive for 100%. Please help us to reach our goal.

PTA

The PTA is your forum for sharing and gathering ideas. Please join and participate in the process. PTA meetings are held on the second or third Monday of each month in the Cafeteria at 7:30 p.m., or 9:45 a.m. Be sure to refer to the dates listed on the school calendar, the *PTA Website* and the Principal’s bi-monthly Newsletter.

At the first meeting of the school year, a PTA Executive Board Member list is distributed with the names of all Grade Level Liaisons, Committee Chairpersons and their phone numbers. Please contact the Chairpersons with any questions or interest in donating any time you can. Volunteers are always welcome and are needed to make PTA functions successful. If you are interested in chairing or participating in a committee, please contact the PTA Presidents. The PTA mailbox is located in the Main Office.

NORTH RIDGE SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT TEAM

The SBMT serves as a collaborative body whose function is to enhance the school environment for all students. The North Ridge School-Based Management Team (SBMT) includes the following members:

- 1– Principal
- 1 – Commack Teachers’ Association Chief Union Representative
- 1 – Support Staff Representative
- 4 - Teacher Representatives
- 3 - Parent Representatives

Selection/election of the School-Based Management Team members is made by the constituent groups they represent. Meetings are usually held once a month and minutes are posted on the North Ridge WebSite. Concerns, questions and suggestions are always welcomed and should be brought to one of your SBMT parent representatives.

SCOUTING

Scouts have meet and greet at NR during Open House, Kindergarten Registration and School Visitation day. For further scouting information, please click on the links below:

<https://www.scouting.org/>

<https://www.girlscouts.org/>

SCHOOL STORE

The School Store, is open when there is a PTA Meeting. It offers students the opportunity to purchase school supplies and various novelty items. Please send no more than \$5.00 with your child in an envelope labeled, "school store". It is run by PTA volunteers students are escorted by their lunch aides to and from the store during their lunch time.

WEB EMAIL NOTIFICATION

As indicated in the August issue of the Commack Courier, a service for the parents of students in the Commack Schools has been put in place for community residents on the Commack Website (www.commack.k12.ny.us). Subscribing for email notification will facilitate increased communications between home and school and will provide parents with all flyers, memos, and newsletters from the schools of their choosing, as well as provide the option to receive District news such as the Commack Courier and emergency closing announcements by email.

Parents who sign up will be able to receive this information in their email when available, and the new system will assist the District in saving postage, paper and printing costs as well as cut down the time devoted by staff and teachers in disseminating the multitude of paperwork that comes home (or doesn't) in students backpacks each day. We also encourage you to check out the North Ridge Backpack mail for current updates of School Happenings.

To sign up, go to the Commack Website and click on the link for Parent Resources. The direct website is:

<http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/DO/maillist/signup.htm>

Signing up is entirely voluntary, and parents may choose to opt out of the service at any time.

WEBSITE

The Commack School District website provides the residents of our community with a wealth of information regarding District policies and procedures, important telephone numbers, technology information, a calendar of events and the District newsletter, the *Commack Courier*. Additionally, the website contains web pages for each of its schools within the district. Be sure to visit the web page which is replete with information regarding our school's programs and events.

The North Ridge webpage has been redesigned and is replete with current up-to-date information about our school and its enriching program. Be sure to visit the "Backpack News" page which will be updated monthly throughout the school year.

Additionally, our PTA link provided a wealth of information and reflects the many activities and events that support our programs as well as the home-to-school connection. We welcome your feedback. Visit us often. **The Commack School District website is:** www.commack.k12.ny.us

Commack Union Free School District
Commack, New York

District Administration

Dr. Donald James, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Laura Newman, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations
Ms. Amy Ryan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction,
Assessment & Student Support Services
Dr. Michael Inforna, Executive Director of Educational Resources
& Special Projects

Board of Education

Steven Hartman, President
Jarrett Behar, Vice President
William Hender, Trustee
Susan Hermer, Trustee
Justin Varughese, Trustee

Building Administration

Mrs. Katherine M. Rihm

North Ridge Site-Based Management Team 2019/2020

Katherine Rihm/Principal
Sue Licata/Lianne Conroy – Support Staff Rep.
Donna Sandak – Kindergarten Teacher Rep.
Cyndi Nichols – 1st Grade Teacher Rep.
Michelle Serxner – 2nd Grade Teacher Rep.
Jody Mazur/Christine Schultz – CTA Rep
Eden Weisberg – Parent Rep.
Megan Evans – Parent Rep.
Kimberly Vigier – Parent Rep.