

Quakertown Community School District



Elementary Parent Handbook

2014 - 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Directory, Quakertown Community Elementary Schools	1
District Mission Statement and Focus Areas.....	2
School Hours	3
Emergency Closing of School.....	3
Attendance.....	4
Early Dismissals.....	4
Cafeteria and Lunches.....	4
Health Services.....	5
Use of Medication in School.....	5-6
Homework Policy.....	6
Registration	7
Pupil Progress	7
School Discipline.....	7-8
Endangering Others in School Setting	9-12
Use/Possession of Tobacco Products.....	12
Moving/Transfers	12
Teacher-Parent Organizations	12
Assembly Programs and Field Trips.....	13
Class Grouping	13
Instrumental Music	13
Testing.....	13
Volunteers.....	14
Bus Safety Guidelines.....	14
Bus Suspensions.....	15
Visiting Schools.....	15
Recess Policy	16
Guidance.....	16
Educational Trip Requests.....	17
Instructional Support Team.....	17
Use of Telephone	17

Dear Parent:

We look forward to an exciting school year as we work together with you in the education of your child(ren). We sincerely value your involvement in our schools. We have developed this handbook as one way to keep you informed about and involved in our schools.

Please feel free to contact us if we can be of help in any way.

JOSEPH S. NEIDIG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

201 Penrose Street
Quakertown, PA 18951-1394
Principal: Adam Schmucker
Secretary: Linda Clymer

215-529-2360

LOUIS F. PFAFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1600 Sleepy Hollow Road
Quakertown, PA 18951
Principal: K. Eric Thompson
Secretary: Barbara Chadwick

215-529-2850

QUAKERTOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

123 S. Seventh Street
Quakertown, PA 18951-1599
Principal: Anita Serge
Secretary: Jan Detweiler

215-529-2410

RICHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

500 Fairview Avenue
Quakertown, PA 18951-2899
Principal: Kathleen Winters, Ed.D.
Secretary: Lori Moyer

215-529-2450

TOHICKON VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2360 Old Bethlehem Pike, North
Quakertown, PA 18951-2198
Principal: Scott D. Godshalk
Secretary: Marycarol Swanson

215-529-2500

TRUMBAUERSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

101 Woodview Drive
Quakertown, PA 18951-2290
Principal: James Moczydlowski
Secretary: Marilyn Heffentrager

215-529-2550

ATTENDANCE

The School Laws of Pennsylvania classify the following absences as excused or legal: illness, death in immediate family, quarantine, impassable roads or religious holidays. All other absences are recorded as illegal, thus making them unlawful.

When your child is absent from school, we ask that you call the school office by 9 a.m. each day and give the reason for absence. If you do not notify the office by 9 a.m., we will call to verify the absence.

A child who arrives after the scheduled beginning time for the school session will be considered tardy.

An excuse slip must be signed and returned to the school after each absence/tardy. These slips should be returned within three days or the absence is unexcused.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Early dismissals are discouraged, except for medical and dental appointments, if no other arrangements can be made. Written requests for early dismissal must be sent by the parent in order to have a child excused. If a child arrives after 10:41 a.m., or is excused before 2:15 p.m., it is considered a half-day absence.

CAFETERIA AND LUNCHES

All schools participate in the National School Lunch Program, providing meals meeting the Recommended Dietary Requirements for school-age children. Menus can be requested by the parent; also they are posted on the district website (www.qcsd.org).



Students use a point-of-sale (POS) cash account system to purchase meals. Personal accounts are established for each student. Students may deposit as much money as desired and access their account to purchase lunch using a personal identification number (PIN).

HEALTH SERVICES

Pennsylvania health regulations require students to have a physical examination upon original entry to a Pennsylvania school and in grades six and eleven. Dental exams are required upon original entry and in grades three and seven. Forms for private physical and dental exams are available from the school nurse, or they can be downloaded from the Quakertown School District website (www.qcsd.org). Families are encouraged to obtain these examinations from their own physician or dentist. However, they can be provided in school, with parental permission. Parents are welcome to be present for their child's exams.

No student will be admitted to school without proper immunizations. Kindergarten immunization requirements are:

- 3 or more doses of polio vaccine
- 4 or more doses of tetanus-diphtheria vaccine, one of which must be given on or after the fourth birthday
- 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine
- 2 doses of measles, mumps
- 1 dose of rubella (German measles)
- 2 doses of varicella (chicken pox), or proof of disease

Follow-up boosters, as prescribed by the family physician, are very important. Students can be exempt from immunizations for religious or medical reasons only.

USE OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Medication will be administered to students in school under the following guidelines:

- Medicine will be given in school when failure to do so would jeopardize the health of the student, or the student would be unable to attend school if medicine were not available during school hours.
- Medicine brought to school must be in the original, labeled container. All medicine sent to school must include a signed note from the parent stating the purpose, dosage and time to be administered. The appropriate form for prescription medications can be obtained from the school nurse or downloaded from the Quakertown School District website (www.qcsd.org).
- Medicine to be administered in school will be kept in the school health office. A parent or guardian should instruct the student how to take the medication and the time it should be taken.

- Students may carry certain medications, such as asthma rescue inhalers and EpiPens, during the school day, with the signed permission of the parent and the physician. The school nurse must review the appropriate administration of this medication with the student.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a continuation of a learning process developed in the classroom and carried on by the pupil independently.

Purposes:

- To reinforce and practice the concepts taught in the classroom
- To preview upcoming concepts and material
- To extend and enhance the concepts taught in the classroom
- To support the concept of lifelong learning

Guidelines:

Taking into account the developmental characteristics of children, the suggested average time for daily homework assignments should be:

Grades 1 and 2	10 - 20 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	30 - 45 minutes
Grade 5	50 minutes

Homework should not be assigned for punishment or as "busy work".

Role of Student:

The student has the responsibility to understand and complete the assigned task.

Role of Parent:

The parent/guardian should work in conjunction with the teacher to ensure that homework is being completed.

Role of Teacher:

The teacher should plan, assign, and monitor the completion of meaningful activities.

Role of Administrator:

The administrator should work in conjunction with the student, parent, and teacher to ensure that homework is being completed.

REGISTRATION

When children are registered as new students to the district, parents must present a birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or hospital form as proof of age. Children entering school must be immunized for mumps, diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, German measles (rubella), and hepatitis B. (See page 5 for specific doses.) Parents must present a certificate of immunization at the time of registration. Medical or religious reasons are the only exceptions.

Publicity for kindergarten registration will be released through local newspapers and the QCSD website. Parents who wish to register students are encouraged to make an appointment with the Central Registrar at 215-529-2000. Students who transfer into the district from other schools must have a transfer card from the previous school, proof of immunizations, original birth certificate, and two forms of proof of residency (utility bill, tax bill, etc.) within the Quakertown Community School District boundaries.

PUPIL PROGRESS

1. **Conferences** - Parent/teacher conferences are held in grades kindergarten through five after the first marking period. Conferences are also available during the second semester. A parent may request a conference with a teacher at any time.
2. **Progress Letters** - If your child's progress is unsatisfactory, or has shown marked improvement, you will receive a Notice of Progress in the middle of the marking period.
3. **Report Cards** - Report cards are one way of reporting your child's progress. These report cards are issued four times a year in grades kindergarten through five. The report card folder is to be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school promptly. You are encouraged to contact the teacher about your child's report card if you have any questions.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

The Board of School Directors recognizes an inherent need to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to the learning process. It is the desire of the Board to have a well-disciplined attitude prevail throughout the buildings, on all playing fields, at all events in which students of this district participate, and on school buses and other vehicles used in

student transport.



Disciplinary methods should be logical, reasonable, and related to the misbehavior. It is not the policy of the Quakertown Community School District to administer corporal punishment.

It is the belief of the Board of School Directors that a healthy learning environment is established and maintained through the cooperative efforts of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. The Board has directed the administration to develop regulations which will implement this policy and embody the spirit of it.

Since uniform handling of discipline problems is essential if a positive learning atmosphere is to be maintained, the following regulations have been developed:

1. Each teacher is responsible for handling his/her own discipline problems which are of a common or minor nature. Punishment for such offenses shall be responsibly administered by the teacher.
2. If the discipline problem is of a serious nature, it is the responsibility of the teacher to inform an administrator of all the details of the incident. It is the responsibility of the administrator to oversee the punishment for such offenses. The building principal shall advise the parent or guardian of the nature of the problem.
 - a. No pupil is to be punished in such a manner as to cause bodily injury. Corporal punishment will not be used as a corrective measure.
 - b. However, reasonable force may be used by school authorities:
 - to quell a disturbance, or
 - to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, or
 - for the purpose of self-defense, or
 - for the protection of person or property.

ENDANGERING OTHERS IN SCHOOL SETTING

Weapons

Students are prohibited from possessing and/**or** bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any school district buildings, onto school property, to any school-sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a school-sponsored activity.

Weapon – including but not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Possessing – a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student’s locker; under the student’s control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

The school district shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Terroristic Threats/Acts

Any terroristic threat or terroristic act directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or school building by any student is strictly prohibited.

Terroristic threat – a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building; or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

Terroristic act – an offense against property or involving danger to another person.

When an administrator has evidence that a student has made a terroristic threat or committed a terroristic act, the following guidelines shall be applied:

1. The building principal may immediately suspend the student.
2. The building principal shall promptly report the incident to the Superintendent.
3. Based on further investigation, the building principal may report the student to law enforcement officials.
4. The building principal may inform any person directly referenced or affected by a terroristic threat.
5. The Superintendent may recommend expulsion of the student to the Board.

Anti-Bullying

The school district will not tolerate known acts of bullying, including cyber-bullying, occurring on school district property, at school sponsored activities scheduled on or off school grounds including bus stops and bus routes.

A student is being bullied or victimized when s/he is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students (Olweus 1986 and 1991). It is a negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict, injury or discomfort upon another.

Direct bullying - a negative action when somebody hits, pushes, kicks, pinches or restrains another by physical contact. Direct bullying can also be carried out by words (verbally), by threatening, taunting, teasing, and calling names when such behavior compromises a safe and civil environment.

Cyber-bullying - using electronic device mediums such as but not limited to computers, cell phones and pagers to bully (bullying defined above) others through methods such as posting comments or pictures on blogs or websites, text messaging, instant messaging and email. This cyber-bullying behavior is not to be confused with terroristic threats, which can be communicated through similar methods.

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parent/guardian conference, detention,

suspension, expulsion, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities as defined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities or Code of Conduct.

Unlawful Harassment

All forms of unlawful harassment of students and third parties by all district students and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the schools are prohibited.

Harassment - verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion when such conduct:

1. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance.
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

Sexual harassment - unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct deprives a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment.
4. Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include but are not limited to sexual flirtations, advances, touching or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading words to describe an individual; jokes; pin-ups; calendars;

objects; graffiti; vulgar statements; abusive language; innuendoes; references to sexual activities; overt sexual conduct; or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's ability to work or learn or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

The building principal or designee shall be responsible to complete the following duties when receiving a complaint of unlawful harassment:

1. Inform the student or third party of the right to file a complaint and the complaint procedure.
2. Inform the complainant that s/he may be accompanied by a parent/guardian during all steps of the complaint procedure.
3. Notify the complainant and the accused of the progress at appropriate stages of the procedure.
4. Refer the complainant to the Compliance Officer if the building principal is the subject of the complaint.

For more specific information pertaining to endangering others in the school setting, including detailed policies and procedures, please refer to the district publication entitled "Elementary Student Rights and Responsibilities."

USE/POSSESSION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Students who possess or use tobacco products on district property or school buses shall be punished according to Board policy, including citation for committing a summary offense under the law.

MOVING/TRANSFERRING

If you are moving within the school district, please notify your child's school of the new address as soon as possible. If you are moving out of the district, please notify the school office at least two weeks before the move. This will give the school time to prepare a transfer card and complete the necessary paperwork.

TEACHER-PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Each school has its own teacher-parent organization. We cordially invite all parents to become active members. This is one way to become better acquainted with your child(ren)'s school and his/her teacher(s).

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

Assembly programs and field trips are two ways to enrich our district curriculum. These types of activities are intended to provide meaningful learning experiences for our students.

All field trips are related to the curriculum.

Before field trips, the children are prepared by the teachers for the experience. Subsequent activities are developed which relate directly or indirectly to the field trip. Every student who leaves school for a field trip must have a signed permission slip from the parent or guardian.

Parents often enjoy chaperoning field trips to help supervise the children. Parent volunteers must have obtained necessary clearances all required obtaining Act 34 and Act 151 clearances. Regulations require that no more than five adults (including teacher) may ride the school bus with the children.



CLASS GROUPING

For each classroom, we attempt to maintain a balance of abilities, as equal a distribution as possible of boys and girls, and groupings that we feel help to promote positive peer and teacher relationships.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental music instruction is available to children in grades four and five. Lessons are offered on a cycle basis during the school day. All children with an aptitude for music are encouraged to play an instrument. A demonstration of the instrument, as well as an explanation of the program, is held in the fall.

TESTING

Standardized achievement tests are given as part of the elementary assessment program. All students are screened for speech, vision, and hearing. If other testing might prove beneficial, the parents would be contacted for permission.

VOLUNTEERS

We appreciate the many hours of help given by our volunteers. Please contact the school for more information if you are interested in helping in this way. We welcome all members of the community to serve as volunteers. Necessary clearances may be required.

BUS SAFETY GUIDELINES



The School Laws of Pennsylvania state that the Board of School Directors may provide free transportation for resident students. Our intent is to comply with the law, but note that conduct on the bus, or while waiting for the bus, will determine whether this privilege of riding the bus will continue. It is our hope that all parents or guardians will cooperate with us in controlling the behavior of their child or children. This is very important if all children are to enjoy a safe trip to and from school.

As most students come and go on buses, it is expected that they:

1. Are on time at the appointed place to meet the bus.
2. Obey the bus driver.
3. Sit before the bus starts and stay seated until the bus stops.
4. Keep head and hands in the bus, away from open windows.
5. Stand in line waiting to get on and off the bus.
6. Do not run toward a moving bus for loading purposes. All students must walk in an orderly fashion to the bus loading area.
7. Keep the aisle of the bus clear while the bus is in motion.
8. Show due courtesy to others riding the bus.
9. Show proper regard for lawn, shrubbery, and other property, whether it be at school or at the bus loading point.
10. Refrain from conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion.
11. Return directly home (using proper safety procedures) at the end of the day from the bus.
12. Participate in bus safety drills (according to state law) held twice a year.
13. Sit in an assigned seat when requested to do so by an authorized person (bus driver, principal, etc.).

To promote safety on buses, students may be monitored by video and audio surveillance systems.

BUS SUSPENSIONS

Student misconduct on a school bus could lead to suspension from the privilege of riding the bus by means of the following procedure:

1. For misconduct of an extremely serious nature, parents shall be notified by phone immediately and advised of the fact that suspension of bus privileges is taking place, the length of time of the suspension, and the date(s) on which suspension will take effect and end.
2. For misconduct that is not extremely serious, the following steps shall be taken:
 - The bus driver shall give written reports (pink slips) to the principal.
 - The school shall keep a list of all reported incidents.
 - Parents shall be notified of each incident of their child's misconduct and told of disciplinary action.
 - Parents and child shall be encouraged to meet with the principal to seek understanding and cooperation among all those involved.
3. Upon receiving a report of a student's second offense, the principal shall notify the parents by letter warning that repeated action of this kind might result in suspension from bus privileges. Parents shall be informed of discipline measures taken.
4. After receiving a third report of a student's misbehavior on the bus, the principal may suspend the student's bus privileges.

VISITING SCHOOLS

Many parents visit their children's classrooms during American Education Week each fall. Parents are also welcome to visit schools at other times during the school year after reporting to the school office. However, teachers will not have time to answer visitors' questions while teaching class. It is best to leave small children with a babysitter while you are visiting. If there is a particular part of the school program that you are interested in, please contact the building principal ahead of time.

RECESS POLICY

We expect all children to have outdoor recess daily, as scheduled, in all elementary grades. Therefore, it is necessary that your child be dressed appropriately for the weather, including warm outer clothing and boots. If the weather is severe, we will have an indoor recess period.

If there is a need for your child to remain indoors at school while recovering from an illness or a chronic condition, you must secure a note from a doctor. Children who are excused from recess or physical education by a doctor will be assigned to the office for that time period.

GUIDANCE

Our school district believes that guidance and counseling should be available for all elementary students. Students are encouraged to seek out the counselors to discuss academic problems, peer difficulties, or other concerns. Teachers and parents may also suggest that a counselor speak with a student or group of students about a specific issue.



The counseling program is designed to be preventative in nature. Sometime during the school year, your child may be meeting with the counselor, whether through classroom guidance, small groups, or individually.

In classroom guidance, counselors deal with a wide variety of pertinent topics such as conflict resolution, friendship skills, decision-making, peer pressure, college and career skills, etc. Small groups are often formed around a specific goal (such as improved social skills) or issue (such as divorce or death). Individual short-term counseling is provided as needed or requested.

Classroom guidance is provided throughout the year on an ongoing basis, and small groups usually meet for several sessions. Parents are contacted after the initial session so that home and school may work together as a team for the benefit of the child. Counselors also contact parents whenever important issues arise.

Please do not hesitate to call your child's school counselor with questions or concerns at any time.

EDUCATIONAL TRIP REQUEST

If you wish to have your child excused for an educational trip, please secure a form from your child's teacher, school office or the from the school websites. These forms are to be submitted to the principal at least ten school days prior to the trip. Trips will not be approved during standardized testing windows.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

The Instructional Support Team (IST) is a process which brings together teachers, staff, and parents to provide support in meeting the individual needs of students. The team consists of the building principal, guidance counselor, reading specialist, instructional support specialist, volunteer classroom teachers, and the parents. Depending on the needs of the student, other support staff may be invited.

The purpose of the team is to develop a plan at school and home to help students experiencing academic, behavioral, and social/emotional difficulties be more successful. The team gathers information about the presenting issue, and then implements various strategies. The student's progress is closely monitored for about 30 school days. At the end of the process, the team, including the parents, meets to discuss the student's progress and make decisions about the future needs of the student.

The Instructional Support Specialist is also available to consult with teachers and parents on an informal basis about concerns that may arise in the classroom.



USE OF TELEPHONE

During school hours, children are not to be called to the telephone, nor are they permitted to make calls from the school unless it is an emergency. The use of cell phones during school hours is also prohibited. Each teacher can be reached via voice mail during school hours; however will not be able to return calls during the instructional hours. If the message is of an urgent nature, please call the school's main office.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

DR. WILLIAM HARNER
Superintendent of Schools

MS. NANCIANNE EDWARDS
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

MR. ROBERT RIEGEL
Business Administrator

MR. ZACHARY SCHOCH
Director of Human Resources

MRS. LISA HOFFMAN
Supervisor of Curriculum and Professional Development -

MR. JOSEPH KUZO
Director of Technology, Assessment and Data Analysis

DR. RACHEL HOLLER
Director for Secondary Programs 9-12

DR. SUZANNE LAVERICK-STONE
Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, &
Assessment - Programs K-8

MRS. SHIRLEY MOYER
Director of Pupil Services

MRS. JANET PELONE
Supervisor of Special Education

The Quakertown Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, or the presence of non-job-related medical conditions or handicaps in the educational programs and activities it operates, and in its admission policies.