

APALACHIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK



WELCOME TO APALACHIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Welcome to our returning students and families and to those who are joining Apalachin Elementary School family for the first time. Apalachin Elementary has classes from UPK through fifth grade, and specialists to meet a full range of academic capabilities.

Apalachin Elementary School has a quality staff that is dedicated to helping students grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which students will grow and learn. Parents, we feel, are our partners in the important job of educating the children of this community. We welcome your suggestions and participation in the education of your child.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information on school programs, policies, and procedures. Please read it, discuss the information with your child and save it for future reference.

We are looking forward to your support in making this a successful school year for your child and all children who help make up our school family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I. General Information

Websites	6
School Addresses/Phone Numbers	6
Emergency School Closing and Delays	7
Student Daily Schedule	7
Six Day Cycle	7
Playground/Recess	8
Attendance/Absences	8
Sample Excuse	9
Tardiness	10
Release from School for an Appointment	10
Arrival and Dismissal Information	10
Sign in System for Visitors and Volunteers	10
School Food Service Program	11/12

Section II. Procedures

Owego Rules and Behavioral Guidelines	13
Owego Cafeteria Guidelines	14
Owego Discipline Policy	15/16
Bus Information	17
Crossing the Road Safely	18
Emergency Numbers	18
Safety Drills	19
Lost and Found	19
Telephone Use	19
Birthday Invitations at School	20
Selling of Candy, Cookies, etc. at School	20
Smoking	20
Clothing	20
Prohibited Items	20
Opening Exercises and Announcements	20

<u>Section III. Parent and Community Activities</u>	
Meet the Teacher/Curriculum Night	21
Field Trips	21
<u>Section IV. Curriculum</u>	
Core Curriculum	21
Personal Development and Decision Making	22
Instructional Technology	22
Art	22
Music	23
Library	23
Physical Education	23/24
<u>Section V. Special Programs</u>	
Instrumental Music	25
NYSSMA	25
<u>Section VI. Kindergarten</u>	
Registration	26
Orientation	26
Screening	27
<u>Section VIII. Reporting to Parents</u>	
Report Cards	28
Parent – Teacher Conferences	28
Class Lists	29
How to Best Communicate with the School	29
<u>Section IX. Homework</u>	
Homework Hints – How Parents Can Help	30
<u>Section X . School Health Program</u>	
Statement of Philosophy	31
Legal Absences	31
Illness during the School Day	32

First Aid and Illness	32
Ten Second Hand Washing	32
Medication	33
Excuse from P.E.	33
Immunizations	34
Health Exams	34
Hearing Test	35
Vision Screening	35
Dental Health	35

Section XI. Services/Assistance Programs

Psychologists	36
Home School Coordinator/Homeless Liaison	36

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION

WEBSITES

There are two websites that you can access information:

The O-A District website is at www.oacsd.org

It provides information on:

- The Superintendent and Board of Education
- District Calendar (see for school closings, school events)
- Faculty directory (find/email a teacher)
- Food Services (see lunch menus and put money on account)
- Athletic schedules (modified, JV & Varsity Sports w/ directions)
- Photos (various school functions and classroom work)

The Apalachin Elementary Parent Group can be found on Facebook.
Like the page for information.

You can find:

- Officer and Chairperson Contacts
- Meeting dates
- Upcoming events
- Volunteer Opportunities

SCHOOL MAILING ADDRESSES/PHONE NUMBER

Owego Apalachin School District Offices
5 Sheldon Guile Blvd.
Owego NY 13827
607-687-6224

Apalachin Elementary School
405 Pennsylvania Ave
Apalachin, NY 13732
607-687-7304

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

School closings, delays in opening or early dismissals due to inclement weather or other emergencies will be announced by local radio and television stations, as well as posted on the Owego-Apalachin Website.

** If school is delayed 1 hour a cold breakfast will still be served. If school is delayed 2 hours, no breakfast will be served.

If an emergency arises while school is in session (inclement weather, breakdown in facilities, etc.), and school must be dismissed early, the students will be transported home. If a situation such as this arises, the radio and television stations will be given the information. You may also get a call from our automated calling system.

STUDENT DAILY SCHEDULE

Grades K – 5

Buses arrive	8:45 – 8:55
Instructional day begins	9:05
End of instruction day	3:20
Bus dismissal	3:25
Parent pick up in lobby	3:20

Please, **do not** allow your child to be dropped off at school before 8:45 as there is no supervision for them.

If your child does not come home on the bus, always call the school first. We can call the bus garage and they can communicate with the buses.

SIX DAY CYCLE

Apalachin Elementary School operates on a six day cycle. Days are numbered one through six. Your child will be scheduled for Specials (Art, Music, Library/STEM and Physical Education) on certain days within that cycle. For Example your child may have Art on Day One and Physical Education on Days Two, Four and Six. If there is a holiday or a day is canceled, the next day back to school takes the number of the day missed. This system avoids students missing the same class several times. Parents may find it helpful to mark each day on the school lunch calendar.

PLAYGROUND/RECESS

Children spend a short time outside each day. Therefore it is important to have your child dress for the weather. In the winter it is necessary that your child have a warm coat and snow pants, or snowsuit, boots, hat and mittens.

Weather conditions can prevent outside recess (i.e. rain and any combination of temperature and wind chill that is considered dangerous).

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES

Regular attendance at school is essential for good learning. Please work with us to instill in the children the importance of attending school every day (health permitting) and on time. You can show your child how important you think good attendance is by scheduling doctor's appointments, haircuts, shopping and family vacations *after* school hours. Remind your child that going to school is his/her number one job!

1. If your child is absent:

Please call the main office at **687-7304** if your child is going to be absent. **Do not call the school nurse**, as attendance is done in the main office. After attendance is taken at the start of the school day, parents who did not call to say their child would be absent will receive a call from our automated calling system. Your child's safety is our first concern, so please assist us by calling as soon as possible.

2. Upon return to school after an absence:

Within five (5) days, the student must bring a note written and signed by the parent or guardian including the following information: child's name, date of absence, reason for absence (please be specific).

Examples of legal absences include sickness, death in the family and religious observances. Illegal absences include missed bus, overslept, shopping, vacation, etc.

A packet of excuse slips is sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year for your convenience.

SAMPLE EXCUSE

Presented to the Parents of Owego-Apalachin
Students with the compliments of the:



Owego Apalachin
Teachers Association

A note to O-A SCHOOLS:

Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

From: _____

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

was absent is late

(Dates)

Because: _____

Will be riding bus # _____ to: _____
Will be off regular bus # _____

Will be leaving school today at _____
(Time)
Will be off regular bus # _____

(Other) _____

TARDINESS

If your child is tardy:

If you expect your child to be tardy (due to appointments), it is helpful to notify the teacher in advance with a note. If your child is tardy due to unexpected circumstances please escort your child in to the main lobby and sign him/her in. **Do not** take your child directly to the class or drop him/her off at the front door.

RELEASE FROM SCHOOL FOR AN APPOINTMENT

If your child needs to be dismissed for an appointment:

If your child needs to be dismissed during the school day for an appointment, please send a note with your child in the morning. When you come to pick up your child, you **MUST** come to the main office and sign your child out. We will call the classroom to have him or her sent to the office.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL INFORMATION

Student Classroom Hours: 9:05 am – 3:25 pm.

Student Drop off by Parent: 8:45 – 8:55 am. Students must enter the building through the Main Entrance. Students are considered tardy after 9:05.

Parent Pick-up of Student at dismissal time: 3:20 pm. Parents wishing to pick students up at dismissal time can enter the lobby starting at 3:15 pm and students will be called to the lobby for dismissal at 3:20 pm. Instruction is going on in classrooms until 3:20.

Parent pick up student during classroom hours: Please park come to Main Entrance. The office personnel will call your student to the office.

*Thank you for your cooperation with this process. **Truly the best option is to have your child ride the bus**, but we know this is not always possible. We will continue to work to make the process safe and efficient.*

SIGN IN SYSTEM FOR VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

If you need to go to a classroom for any reason (help child carry things, eat lunch with child, meeting with staff, PTO activity, homeroom helper, PAL, etc.) YOU MUST STOP AT THE OFFICE FIRST AND SIGN IN. There are tags for visitors to wear which are a pass into the school. This tag shows staff that you have checked in. If you do not have a tag, you may be stopped and asked to go to the office for one. When you leave you must also sign out in the office. This system is set up for the safety of the children. Your cooperation is appreciated.

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

Each day the food service staff prepares healthy and nutritious breakfasts and lunches that are made available to your child/children. We currently take part in **Rock on Café**. This program allows all elementary schools within our BOCES to have a common lunch menu. All recipes have been retooled to lower fat and sodium and increase whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

For your convenience we can send you an application for free or reduced price meals. If your family is eligible, you will receive a letter in the mail telling you how you proceed. You may always contact the head of our food service department, Tom Nunn, if you have any questions at 687-6284.

Menus are available on our website and sent home monthly. There are sometimes changes made to the menu due to weather or scheduling changes. Salads are available as our second option of choice.

This year, all children will receive a free breakfast in their classroom when they come to school each morning.

We ask that you pay any charges as quickly as possible to keep student accounts current. Students will not be able to charge breakfast or snacks. There are a number of ways for you to pay for your child's meals. You may send cash or check, or go online to pay by bank or credit card. Access the district website www.oacsd.org and click on food services/menus. There are instructions to set up a credit card account and enter funds under the MyNutrikids link.

If your child has a food allergy we must have a note from your doctor on a prescription pad with what the allergy is and what modifications are needed for your child's diet. This note only needs to be sent in once - we will keep it on

file. A registered dietician is available to answer any other allergy related questions at 766-3937.

We look forward to serving your child/children.

The children and staff at Owego Elementary School would be pleased to have parents as lunchroom guests. Please sign in at the office and receive a visitor badge.

SECTION II. PROCEDURES

APALACHIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RULES AND BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

GENERAL RULES

- Children should dress properly as stated in the code of conduct
- Children should walk in the school halls
- Children should walk to the right as they pass through the halls
- Children should walk quietly and should always be courteous and polite
- Children should not wear hats
- Children should not chew gum
- Children should NOT bring weapon-like toys to school
- Children should NOT bring any electronic games or equipment to school
- Children should NOT bring cell phones to school

PLAYGROUND RULES

- Sit down on the slides
- No standing on or jumping off equipment
- No baseballs or skateboards
- Play several feet from the classroom windows, but within boundaries
- Keep hands off others
- Trees, soccer nets and bleachers are off limits
- Only students with safe shoes will be allowed on playground equipment

BUS DISMISSAL RULES

- Children must walk to the buses
- Children must go quietly and do not stop anywhere on the way to the bus

ON THE BUS

- Children must sit on the bus
- Children must keep their feet out of the aisle
- Children must talk quietly
- Children must keep their hands to themselves

PARTY RULES

- Birthday snacks should be shared within the classroom only
- Snacks that will be shared must be store bought
- No party invitations can be brought to school or distributed at school

LEARNING RULES

- Watch – we learn most of what we know with our eyes
- Listen – use your ears. It will help you learn and keep you out of trouble
- Speak softly
- Be nice – and all other rules will be easy

APALACHIN ELEMENTARY CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

DUTIES OF CAFETERIA AIDES

1. Constantly monitor students for safety and to see if they need assistance
2. Younger children have to be given direction to go and dump trays as a group
3. Get disinfectant and paper towels
4. Bathroom
 - Kindergarten students may need to be assisted
 - Only 2 girls / 2 boys out at same time
 - Friends sitting together should not go at the same time; wait for the other to come back

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

1. Use inside voices
2. Get snack or ice cream when buying lunch instead of going back
3. Raise your hand if you need something or need to let someone know about a spill, etc
4. Students may play quiet games only after lunch is finished, trays dumped and table and floor are clean. Class leader and a friend will get games from the shelf.
5. Each class is required to clean around table before leaving cafeteria

APALACHIN ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Apalachin Elementary School has both general building behavior rules and individual classroom behavior rules. Additionally, the Owego Apalachin Central School District has a discipline policy as prescribed by law. There is an Owego Apalachin Elementary Discipline Philosophy that reads as follows:

OWEGO APALACHIN ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

The Discipline Philosophy of the Owego Apalachin Elementary Schools embraces the concept that all students are capable of making appropriate choices and are responsible for their own behavior.

The rules of conduct are clearly stated, have a clear purpose, are consistent with the Mission of the District and buildings and are enforced to provide a safe, respectful and dignified learning environment for all students and staff. The underlying tenets of the disciplinary philosophy are:

- That students treat each other with respect
- That students demonstrate that they are responsible for their own behavior and will be directed by the adults, as much as possible, in making appropriate choices
- That students understand the rules and that they exist to ensure a safe learning environment
- That students understand the consequences of the choices that they make
- That students are responsible for developing and implementing a plan to change inappropriate behavior

Each classroom has rules and consequences established for the safety and well-being of the class. If you are not aware of the rules and consequences for your child's particular learning environment, please contact the teacher.

If a child is sent to see the principal it is usually for one of these reasons:

1. physical aggression
2. consistent disruption
3. temper tantrum
4. continued insubordination
5. emotional outburst

6. extreme passive resistance

If students come to the office, parents are generally notified by mail via a misconduct form indicating behavior and attempts made to correct the behavior. The teacher and the principal also keep a copy of this misconduct report.

BUS INFORMATION

Bus schedules are mailed to the student's home in August informing families of bus numbers, pick up and return times. Students must ride their assigned bus to and from school. Any student needing to ride another bus or needing to get off from his or her bus at another location **MUST** have a note signed by a parent. The student must present this note to his/her teacher and then to the Main Office.

Students must obey the requests of the driver. The driver is in charge of the students and the bus. Good behavior is essential for a safe trip. Parents can assist by supporting and reinforcing the safety and behavior guidelines.

All buses are equipped with a radio and phone system. This allows the driver to be in contact with school and bus garage personnel quickly. If your child does not come home on the bus, call the school first. They will find out your child's whereabouts.

A few reminders to help make your child's ride the safest possible:

1. Be out waiting for the bus about five minutes ahead of time. The most a child should have to wait is ten minutes.
2. Wait back from the roadway about 15 feet and wait for the driver's signal before moving towards the road.
3. Be sure students have a bag or backpack to keep their papers and school supplies in.
4. When departing the bus, children need to walk directly away from the bus and to home; if they are crossing the road, they need to wait for the driver's signal.

If your child encounters a problem or you find you have questions, call the bus garage at **687-7305**.

CROSSING THE ROAD SAFELY

Crossing the road is the most dangerous part of the bus trip. Traffic should stop – BUT don't depend on it! **Be extra careful.** Rules to remember:

1. Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop
2. Get off promptly as soon as the bus is at complete stop
3. Walk at least 10 feet ahead of bus alongside of road
4. Wait until driver signals you to start across
5. Stop at outside edge of bus to check traffic
6. Come back quickly if traffic approaches
7. If road is clear, walk directly across and keep checking traffic both ways
8. Upon reaching the other side of the road, stay there. Never try to return to the bus.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY NUMBERS CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH. It is essential that we have a way to contact you in case an emergency arises. Please provide us with your home, work and cell phone numbers, as well as numbers of local relatives and friends we can contact in the event you cannot be reached. Situations (such as an illness, missed bus, etc.) do arise and it is important we have a way to reach you. **We cannot authorize the release of a student to someone who is not listed as an emergency contact.**

It is important that the office and teacher be notified as soon as possible of ANY changes in phone number and/or address. It is also important to notify the school of an emergency number or emergency contact change.

SAFETY DRILLS

FIRE & LOCKDOWN DRILLS

New York State requires that 12 emergency drills be held during each school year. Eight (8) of these drills must be held between September 1 and December 1. Eight of these drills are required to be fire drills and four are required to be lock-down drills. When the fire alarm sounds, children are instructed to immediately proceed to the nearest marked exit with their teacher. The teacher brings the attendance roster so that an accurate check of all students can be made once the building has been safely evacuated. Doors must be closed when the last student leaves the room. This information is discussed with the students throughout the year.

BUS DRILLS

Three bus drills are held throughout the year. One is held the first full week of school, the second between November 1 and December 31 and the third between March 1 and April 30. It is important that parents stress the importance of these drills, and the need to be quiet and orderly.

OTHER DRILLS

Storm drills may also be practiced.

LOST AND FOUND

If your child has lost an item, check with the office. Placing your child's name on items will help you and the school.

TELEPHONE USE

Often during the day, students request to use the telephone in the office. Student use of the telephone is discouraged. A child will be able to use the telephone in **EMERGENCY** situations only. We are trying to develop student responsibility and hope you will assist us with this. Students may not use their cell phones during the school day. **If any electronics from home come to school, they are the student's responsibility and are to be kept in backpacks during the school day.**

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

The school asks parents not to request the addresses and telephone numbers of their child's classmates from the teacher. The school is not at liberty to give this information. If the whole class is invited, invitations are allowed to be delivered at school when the teacher feels it is an appropriate time.

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please contact your child's teacher about the best way to go about this.

SELLING OF CANDY, COOKIES, ETC. AT SCHOOL

Students may not sell any items at school whether it be for a fund raiser or personal profit.

SMOKING

No one may smoke in the school or on school grounds.

CLOTHING

Clothing that is considered unsafe or unduly distracting is not allowed. Footwear must be securely fastened to the foot. Closed toe shoes are required for recess and sneakers are required for PE class. Refer to the Code of Conduct.

PROHIBITED ITEMS

Possession or use of firearms, knives (all kinds including jack knives), weapons, alcohol, tobacco, or any controlled substance (drug), and laser lights are not allowed in the building, on the grounds or on the bus. Electronics from home are not allowed.

OPENING EXERCISES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flag of the United States is on display in each classroom. Time is set aside each morning for the "Pledge of Allegiance". Students must not interfere with the participation of others in this exercise.

Morning Announcements are made each day. These announcements provide information to the students and staff about upcoming events and important information. Children's birthdays are also announced.

SECTION III. PARENT & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

MEET THE TEACHER/CURRICULUM NIGHT

A "Meet the Teacher/Curriculum" night is held in late September. This gives parents an opportunity to meet their child's teacher and gives your child a chance to show off his/her room and school. This is not a conference time, but an opportunity to become familiar with your child's teacher, curriculum and school. In the spring, there is an Open House.

FIELD TRIPS

Information concerning field trips will be sent home by your child's teacher approximately one week prior to the trip. If you plan to volunteer on a trip, please note that siblings cannot attend. If you do not want your child to attend, please notify the teacher.

SECTION IV. CURRICULUM

CORE CURRICULUM

Our core curriculum in the elementary school is comprised of English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Our teaching is based on New York State Standards and the belief that every child can learn. Teachers implement a variety of strategies and use materials and resources appropriate to the grade level to meet the needs of each child. Our teaching continuously changes to incorporate best practices that drive our instruction.

We have a school wide approach to literacy instruction. This provides us with a research based model with teaching that is student-centered, language based, and provides best practices. New York State tests are administered every year in the core subject areas. To find out detailed information go to <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/>.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DECISION MAKING

The classes are taught by the Physical Education Teachers to our 4th and 5th grade students in conjunction with the classroom teacher. The units in the curriculum focus on areas related to self-esteem, relationships with family and friends, peer pressure, decision making, growth and development, HIV/AIDS and sexual abuse.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Apalachin Elementary is equipped with the latest innovations in technology. All classrooms have iPads for student use. In grades Pre-K to 2nd grade, there are 10 iPads per classroom for students to use for learning projects and independent work. Applications are chosen by the teachers for students to use that will enhance our curriculum. In grades 3-5, each student is assigned iPad for classroom use. Teachers use the iPads to enhance the curriculum and build collaboration in learning. Applications are chosen by the teacher to meet the needs of their classroom instruction.

Each classroom is equipped with a high definition projector and Apple TV device. These are used in conjunction with the iPads to display work and help facilitate learning in the classroom.

In addition to the classroom technology, we have a computer lab available to students that allows teachers to integrate computer skills into their curriculum with the whole class.

ART

Children entering the Art program in kindergarten are taught how to use the tools and materials of the art room in a safe and cooperative way in the classroom group setting. They learn about color, shapes, lines, texture and form and how these visual items can be made to depict objects more and more accurately.

The visual arts program is interconnected to other disciplines so not only is art taught during the art lesson but children learn about other academic areas. Through the arts, the students are required to practice in order to improve their hand-eye-mind coordination. Lessons are crafted to continue to develop student's artistically visual skills and natural curiosity, especially for those students whose learning style is perceptual or kinesthetic.

As children continue to develop their skills, increase the difficulty of the learning and build on what they have already learned, we practice problem solving, thinking skills and develop team work through creative challenges.

MUSIC

All students receive vocal music instruction once on a six day cycle. In these classes, each child is encouraged to participate in "hands on" musical activities which vary from music for singing and listening to moving, playing and creating. These experiences help to provide the child with a broad fundamental basis of music education, reinforcing conceptual and skill development at each grade level. The musical activities may compliment classroom or school wide projects.

The music department offers instruction in band instruments to interested 4th and 5th grade students. Students can choose one of the following instruments: flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, baritone horn, trombone, or percussion. Owego Elementary School has a winter and spring concert with instrumental and vocal students performing.

LIBRARY/STEM

Students may take out and return books any day from 8:45– 9:00 and 3:00 – 3:30, with their teacher’s permission. The library is also open any time there is not a scheduled class. All books circulate for two weeks. **REMINDER:** To get a new book, students must return the previously borrowed book. Students are allowed to borrow 2 books per library session. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) activities will also be incorporated with our library time.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

At the primary level, our P.E. program provides experience which gives our children the opportunity to:

- Achieve physical fitness and understand the meaning of fair play and sportsmanship through participation in gross motor activities
- Develop fundamental motor skills involving skills such as running, jumping, skipping, hopping, galloping and leaping
- Develop social awareness, responsibility, citizenship and cooperation with others
- Develop confidence and a positive sense of self worth

At the intermediate level, students are introduced to team sports through skill drills and lead up activities. Children are given the opportunity to:

- Learn about games and their rules
- Build more advanced motor skills such as throwing, catching, kicking, batting, etc.
- Further develop skills involving sportsmanship, team work, cooperation and citizenship
- Further develop their own positive self-image through sports and cooperative activities

At every grade level, there is an emphasis on developing and maintaining lifetime fitness skills. Students in grades 2 – 5 have fitness testing to evaluate their skills in muscular strength and endurance, cardio-respiratory function, and flexibility. A pre-test is given in the fall, and a post-test is administered in the

spring. It is anticipated that the students will improve their scores from the fall test due to their involvement in P.E. and activities outside school.

Clothing for P.E. Class

Students in grades Kindergarten through 5th are asked to wear appropriate, comfortable clothing on P.E. days. Slacks, shirts, socks, and sneakers will be more suitable for play than dress up attire. This is a district policy and one which has been successful in promoting good hygiene and safety in the gym. Everyone is asked to have a t-shirt, “roomy” shorts, socks and sneakers. A hooded sweatshirt and sweat pants will be necessary for chilly days.

Excuse from P.E. Class

A written note must be sent to the P.E. teachers if your child is to be excused from P.E. due to illness or injury. This excuse is good for 1 day only. In cases of extended illness or injury, a written excuse is required from your doctor as well as a written release when the child may re-enter class.

The P.E. department would like to emphasize that their door is always open to parents and children. Please feel free to contact your child’s P.E. teacher with any questions about the program. They invite parents to encourage physical activity at home as well as in school. Healthy habits developed at a young age will hopefully remain healthy habits into adolescence and adulthood.

SECTION V. SPECIAL PROGRAMS

4th & 5th GRADE CHORUS

These groups are open to any student in grades 4 and 5 who wish to further their singing experience. Emphasis is placed on learning basic singing and music reading skills. Each group practices once per cycle at the end of the day. There are no auditions required.

4th & 5th GRADE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental lessons and band ensembles are available to interested students.

NYSSMA

New York State School Music Association holds a festival every spring at one of the local schools in Broome and Tioga County. Talented students may perform a solo before a judge who rates their performance. This is not a competition but rather a way for students and teachers to assess their strengths and weaknesses. Private piano and other music teachers arrange for their students to attend if the instrument is not taught at school. Members must provide their own transportation.

SECTION VI. KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION

REGISTRATION

Kindergarten Registration is held during three days in February each year. Parents come to the school to fill out paper work and to present a birth certificate, immunization records and proof of residence.

ORIENTATION

Kindergarten Orientation is held in August for those children entering school in the fall. Orientation provides an opportunity for parents to bring their soon-to-be Kindergartner to school for a hands-on introduction to the kindergarten program. Children spend an hour in a kindergarten classroom (along with current kindergartners) while parents participate in a discussion presented by various school personnel on what to expect during their child's first year of school. Parents and children then take a bus ride and have lunch at the school.

The goals of the orientation are to help the child transition from home to school and to provide information regarding important programs and procedures so that school is a successful experience for all. Children are randomly put in a classroom on orientation day. The actual teacher for the year is selected at a later date.

SCREENING

Kindergarten Screening is generally in May or June for the new Kindergartners. The purpose of the screening is not to see if the child is prepared for Kindergarten. Rather it is to screen for any potential problem areas. If you have questions about your child's readiness for school, please phone the school prior to registration to discuss readiness factors.

New York State requires that all children be screened in the following areas:

Speech and Language

Fine motor skills (paper and pencil tasks)

Gross motor skills (running and play type tasks)

Vision

Hearing

Cognitive abilities (a summary of overall performance)

The School and District staff complete the screening with your child. The screening takes at least 30 minutes. The children move to different stations in the gymnasium as they proceed through screening.

While the children are participating in the screening, the parents are asked to complete a questionnaire. This provides additional information such as preschool programs attended, medical information, likes and dislikes, and other information you feel should be known about your child.

To help make an easier transition, your kindergarten child should know the following:

1. Full name, address, phone number and bus number. Tags with bus information are mailed home in August. It is important the children wear these tags for at least the first week of school.
2. How to take care of bathroom needs, including hand washing.
3. How to use a tissue.
4. How to dress themselves.

SECTION VIII. REPORTING TO PARENTS

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are sent home every ten weeks. Report cards reflect the student's strengths and weaknesses in a subject. The report card comes in an envelope which a parent or guardian is to sign and return (keep the report card). If you have questions or concerns, indicate you would like a conference with the teacher. Report cards are distributed as follows:

End of 10 weeks – November

End of 20 weeks – February

End of 30 weeks – April

End of 40 weeks – June

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences for all grade levels will be scheduled early in the year. First quarter report cards are handed out during this conference. The school schedules these conferences but if you have major restrictions on times or dates please contact the school as soon as possible before the conference date. Additional conferences may be scheduled as needed and may be requested by the home or school.

In planning for your parent-teacher conference, talk to your child about any concerns he/she may have and take time to make a list of questions to ask. Share with the classroom teacher the strengths, concerns and needs you see in your child. Ask the teacher about your child's strengths and weaknesses, both academically and socially. Following the conference, talk with your child about what was discussed.

Conferences last about fifteen (15) minutes. Both parents are encouraged to attend if possible. During conference days children attend half day. The conference is intended for parents only – unless the teacher requests the child be there.

CLASS LISTS

Class lists are developed by building staff along with parental input. Parents are encouraged to identify their children's placement related needs by completed a parental input letter which is sent home in April.

A letter is also sent to all students prior to the start of the school year with their new teacher assignment.

HOW TO BEST COMMUNICATE WITH THE SCHOOL

Good communication between home and school is essential for a successful school year. We continually strive to provide the parents and community with information.

The best way to keep up with what is happening is to take a few minutes each day to review the day with your child(ren). Most children will come home with a folder or planner. Also, building newsletters come home many times during the school year with your students. The Owego Apalachin District newsletters come out on a regular basis. The first issue is mailed to you in August.

If you have any questions or concerns you may call the teacher, send a note or e-mail. E-mail addresses are available on the district website. You can also call the main office at **687-7304** and the teacher or appropriate staff will get back with you. You can contact the school at any time.

SECTION IX. HOMEWORK

HOMEWORK HINTS – HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

1. **Check with your child on a daily basis to see if homework has been assigned.** Remember that reading every day at home is beneficial to your child's academic success. Most students will have a folder or planner for you to look at.
2. **Provide a suitable place for your child to study without distractions.** Do not have the student working near a TV or radio. Ensure a quiet, well lit study area.
3. **Select a regular time each day for homework.**
4. **Keep homework time reasonable.** Students in K – 2 (Primary students) should have no more than 20 minutes of homework a night. Students in 3 – 5 (Intermediate students) should spend no more than 30 - 60 minutes per night. If you find your child is spending significantly more time than this to complete assignments, you may consider speaking to his/her teacher.
5. **Provide help when requested.** Do not do the work for your child, but help when necessary.
6. **Check the work.** When the student finishes, take a few minutes to look over the work. Check for neatness and obvious errors. Review the teacher's comments on completed assignments that are sent home.

SECTION X. SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAM

APALACHIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NURSE'S OFFICE

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the Owego Apalachin Central School District school health program is to help students achieve the maximum benefits from their educational experiences. It is through the maintenance or improvement of health that students can function to their capacity and become productive adults. It is believed that students have the right, not only to optimal health, but also to education in ways to maintain their own optimum health. The school setting has a unique advantage in the promotion of health education and the development of positive healthful attitudes as well as the initiation of preventative health measures. To achieve this, members of the health staff work cooperatively with the teaching staff, parents, organized groups, and individuals in the community to maintain and improve the health of our children.

Please do not send your child to school if he/she has any of the following:

Severe Cough or Cold	Rash
Sore Throat	Earache
Inflamed Eyes	Headache
Fever – over 100.4 orally	Upset Stomach
Head Lice	Scabies

A child should be fever free for **24 hours** before returning to school.

Remember – Call the main office at **687-7304** if your child is going to miss school. Upon return to school make sure you send an excuse including child's name, date of absence, reason for absence (be specific) and parent's signature.

LEGAL ABSENCES

Legal absences include:

Sickness

Sickness or death in the family

Quarantine

Religious Observance

Music Lessons

Attendance at an Organized Clinic

Remedial Health Treatment

ILLNESS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Any student who becomes ill or is in need of medical attention during school hours will be referred to the health office. The person in charge is a certified school nurse. The nurse will determine the appropriate action to take. Many times a student may return to the classroom after a short rest. If a student cannot return to class, the parents will be contacted to take the student home. If both parents are working or unavailable, they should arrange for a relative, neighbor or friend (**your emergency contacts**) to handle the situation.

FIRST AID AND ILLNESS

Treatment in the health office is limited to first aid treatment only. The nurse will notify parents in case of an accident or illness which requires medical treatment. Boards of Education are not authorized to provide medical or dental care beyond first aid. Therefore, the school nurse may not go beyond her legal duties to apply second dressings or care for injuries which were incurred at home or elsewhere.

TEN SECOND HAND WASHING

The importance of hand washing is the single most important way you can prevent the spread of infection. Ten seconds is the length of time you should wash your hands each time you wash. You should wash:

- Before eating and drinking
- After going to the bathroom
- After blowing your nose, touching your mouth or nose
- After sneezing or coughing into your hands
- After playing outside
- After touching cuts or scratches
- Before cooking
- After handling meat

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication during the school day, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The school nurse must have on file a written request from the parent to give the medicine as prescribed by the doctor.
2. The school nurse must have on file a written request from a physician stating:
 - a. Name of medication
 - b. Dosage
 - c. Time to be given
 - d. Possible negative side effects of medication
 - e. Diagnosis
3. All medication must be in pharmacy containers and labeled by the pharmacy with the name of the medication and directions for administration.
4. The medication must be brought to the school by the parent or guardian.
NO MEDICATION SHOULD BE SENT WITH THE CHILD.
5. The parent or guardian must contact the school nurse regarding any change in condition, treatment or medication. Any change should be accompanied by written request for same by both parent and physician.

EXCUSE FROM P.E.

For your child to be excused from Physical Education due to illness or injury, a written note must be sent to the Physical Education teachers. They can only accept an excuse for one day. After that, your child must have a written excuse from a doctor to remain out of class. In the case of an extended illness or injury, a written release to re-enter class must also come from the doctor.

IMMUNIZATIONS

According to New York State law any child entering or attending school is mandated to show proof of immunization from a doctor or the Health Department for the following:

New York State Law regarding immunizations for school age children has changed. You can view the requirements at www.health.ny.gov/immunizations. Click on recommended vaccines in the box in the upper left hand corner, then choose vaccinations for school entrance.

Written and signed proof of immunization from your healthcare provider, including dates, must be presented to the school nurse in order for your child to be considered in compliance with New York State Law.

If your child has not had the required immunizations, New York State Public Health Law prohibits them from attending school until they have received the immunizations.

Immunization clinics are held by the Tioga County Public Health Nursing Office. For dates and times call 687-8600.

HEALTH EXAMS

All students in grades Kindergarten, Second and Fourth Grades are required to have physicals. All new students must also show proof of a recent physical exam. Ideally, your family physician should perform the medical exam. Forms are provided by the school and the forms should be sent to the school by fifteen

days after the start of the school year. In the event the student does not have a record of a recent exam by the family physician, he/she will be scheduled for a health evaluation by the school physician during regular school hours. Starting in the 2008 school year a BMI is required.

HEARING TEST

A hearing test is done each school year for students in Kindergarten, First, Third and Fifth Grade. This is a screening test and not diagnostic. If a child does not pass the screening test, the parent will be notified in writing.

VISION SCREENING

An annual (except for fourth grade) screening test for distance visual acuity is used to identify students who require a professional eye examination. The test helps to determine whether a child has an eye problem severe enough to prevent him/her from functioning effectively in the classroom. Any child whose visual acuity is 20/40 or less should have a complete eye exam. Parents are notified of the need for such an exam.

A color perception test is given in Kindergarten. Parents are notified if any color vision difficulty exists.

DENTAL HEALTH

The County Dental Van will be at Apalachin Elementary School once a year. Watch for information to be sent home. Sealants are done by the Dental Van. Students in second grade can have their molars sealed at school by Department of Health dental personnel. By sealing permanent teeth, further cavities can be prevented. Participation is voluntary and free.

Effective September 1, 2008, all public schools must request a dental health certificate from each student at the same times that health certificates are required. Providing of a dental health certificate for a student is not a required condition to attend school.

Each student should submit a dental health certificate within 30 days of entrance into the school district and within 30 days after the entry into grades 2, 4, 7, and 10. (A dental health certificate should not be requested of a student having an accommodation based on religious beliefs.)

Each dental certificate must be signed by a licensed dentist and:

- Describe dental health condition of the student when the examination was conducted.
- Be made no more than 12 months prior to the beginning of the school year in which the examination is requested.
- State whether the student is in fit condition of dental health for attendance at public school.

SECTION XI. SERVICES/ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

PSYCHOLOGIST

The Psychologist works to support the mental health and educational needs of children through direct contact with children, consultation with parents and teachers, and district wide involvement.

Apalachin Elementary School uses a team approach to determine student needs. The Apalachin Elementary S-BIT (Student Based Intervention Team) meets weekly to discuss individual student cases, providing a forum for discussion, referral, and follow up. The team makes recommendations for each student discussed and is usually the first step toward initiating direct psychological services for students.

The school psychologist completes assessments with children referred for learning, behavioral, or emotional concerns. Counseling is provided to children identified with counseling needs through the Committee on Special Education. The psychologist also sees students for short term counseling, provides crisis intervention, and makes referrals to appropriate specialists when necessary.

The School Psychologist participates with committees and programs such as:

- The Safety Team
- The Committee on Special Education
- Kindergarten Screening
- The Special Education department

HOME SCHOOL COORDINATOR/HOMELESS LIAISON

The Home School Coordinator Program is designed to improve communication between the home, the school and community agencies for the benefit of students in grades UPK–12. Referrals come from school personnel, parents and agencies. Some of the areas where assistance is given are: attendance; basic needs such as food, clothing and eye glasses; facilitating parent/teacher conferences, referring parents to community agencies, assisting

with parenting skills, health and hygiene; other related school issues and obtaining a child a scholarship for camp or youth activities.

The Homeless Liaison works with families that due to unforeseen circumstances may have to move from their current home in to a motel, campsite or double up with another family for a period of time. Assistance may be received to help facilitate transportation and to obtain free school meals, school supplies and other items a child may need to attend school, with no stigma to the child.

