

Owego Elementary School Parent Handbook



Welcome to Owego Elementary School

Welcome to our returning students and families and to those who are joining Owego Elementary School (OES) for the first time. OES has classes ranging from UPK through fifth grade, and specialists to meet a full range of academic capabilities. We have quality staff who are dedicated to helping students grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which students will thrive and learn. Cohesive partnerships with parents/guardians are essential for the successful educational experience of students. We welcome suggestions and participation from you.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information regarding 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 community.

Table of Contents

Section I. General Information

Website/Social Media	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
Tardiness	8
Appointments during School Hours	9
Arrival/Dismissal Information	9
Visitors/Volunteers	9
Food Service Program	9

Section II. Procedures

Rules/Behavioral Guidelines	10
Cafeteria Guidelines	12
Discipline Policy	12
Bus Information	13
Crossing the Road Safely	14
Emergency Numbers	15
Safety Drills	15
Lost and Found	16
Telephone Use	16
Birthdays	16

Solicitation	16
Smoking	16
Clothing	16
Prohibited Items	17
Opening Exercises and Announcements	17
Section III. Parent and Community Activities	
Meet the Teacher/Curriculum Night	17
Field Trips	17
Section IV. Curriculum	
Core Curriculum	18
Personal Development and Decision Making	18
Instructional Technology	18
Art	19
Music	19
Library	19
STEAM	20
Physical Education	20
Section V. Special Programs	
Chorus	21
Instrumental Music	22
NYSSMA	22
Section VI. Kindergarten	
Registration	22
Orientation	22
Screening	23

Section VIII. Reporting to Parents

Report Cards	24
Parent/Teacher Conferences	24
Class Lists	24
Communication with school	25

Section IX. Homework

Homework Hints – How Parents Can Help	25
---------------------------------------	----

Section X. School Health Program

Statement of Philosophy	26
Legal Absences	27
Illness during the School Day	27
First Aid and Illness	27
Ten Second Hand Washing	27
Medication	28
Excuse from P.E.	28
Immunizations	28
Health Exams	29
Hearing Test	29
Vision Screening	29
Dental Health	30

Section XI. Services/Assistance Programs

School Psychologist	30
Home School Coordinator/Homeless Liaison	31

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Website/Social Media

OACSD can be found on Facebook and Twitter as well as the following:

The OACSD website is at **www.oacsd.org**

- 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)

OES PTO (parent group) can be found on **Facebook**

Like the page for information.

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

School Mailing Addresses/Phone Numbers

Owego Elementary School	Owego Apalachin Central School District
2 Sheldon Guile Blvd.	5 Sheldon Guile Blvd.
Owego, NY 13827	Owego NY 13827
607-687-7303	607-687-7307

Emergency School Closings and Delays

Notifications will be made to TV, local radio stations, social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and the district automated calling system may also be utilized, should the district require a delay or emergency closing.

1 Hour Delay: breakfast will be served

2 Hour Delay: 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.

Student Daily Schedule (Kindergarten – 5th Grade)

8:45 AM – 8:55AM	Buses arrive
9:05 AM	School Begins
3:17 PM	Permanent Pick-Up Dismissal
3:20 PM	Walkers & Club Positive Dismissal
3:20 PM	End of instruction day
3:25 PM	Bus Rider Dismissal

We do **NOT** allow children to be dropped off to school **before 8:45** as there is NO supervision for them.

Six Day Cycle

Owego Elementary School operates on a six day cycle. Days are numbered 1- 6. 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 1 and Physical Education on Days 2, 4 and 6. 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. The first day of school is Day 1.

Playground/Recess

Students go outside every day (*weather permitting*). Therefore, it is important to have appropriate clothing for the weather. In the winter, it is necessary that your child have a warm coat, snow pants, boots, hat and mittens.

Attendance/Absences

Regular attendance at school is essential for successful education. Please work with us to instill the importance of attending school every day (*health permitting*), and to arrive on time. You can facilitate a good work ethic by scheduling doctor 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 going to be absent:

Please call the Main Office at 687-7303. Do NOT call the school nurse, as attendance is done in the main office. After attendance is taken the automated calling system will notify parents/guardians who did not call the school regarding an absence.

2. Returning to school after an absence:

Within five (5) days, OES must receive an email or written note, signed by the parent/guardian, explaining the reason for the absence.

Excused absences include: sickness, family member death and religious observances.

Unexcused absences include: missed bus, overslept, shopping, vacation, etc.

Tardiness

If you expect your child to be tardy (due to appointments), it is helpful to notify the teacher in advance via email or with a note.

If your child is tardy due to unexpected circumstances, you **MUST** sign your child in at the Main Office. **DO NOT DROP YOUR CHILD OFF AT THE FRONT DOOR**, and do NOT take them directly to the classroom.

Appointments during School Hours

If your child needs to be dismissed during the school day for an appointment, please email or send in a note. When you come to pick up your child, you **MUST** come to the Main Office and sign your child out. Your child will not be released from the building without parent/guardian escort.

Arrival/Dismissal Information

9:05 AM – 3:25 PM	School Hours (<i>classroom instruction ends at 3:20 PM</i>)
8:45 AM – 9:00 AM	Main Entrance entry only. Tardy after 9:05 AM.
3:20 PM	Parent/Guardian Pick-Up. Parents may enter lobby at 3:15 AM.

Parent pick up student during classroom hours: Sign your child out at the Main Office.

Visitors/Volunteers

ALL visitors **MUST** sign in at the Main Office and will be given a Visitor tag.

Food Service Program

Breakfast/Lunch: Rock on Café is the BOCES program which allows all elementary schools within our region to have a common lunch menu, consisting of lower fat and sodium, and an increase in whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

Free & Reduced: Applications for Free & Reduced meals may be obtained at the OES Main Office or contact Food Services at 607-687-7301.

Menus: Available on our website (oacsd.org) and sent home monthly. Meals may be subject to change.

Free breakfasts are served to students every morning, in their classrooms.

Please pay charges to keep your child's account current. Students will not be able to charge breakfast or snacks. Payments may be made with cash or check, or online

by bank or credit card. Cash should come directly to the Main Office so we can ensure it is applied to your child's account.

Lunch Account Online Payments: WWW.oacsd.org. Click on Food Services/Menus for instructions for setting up online payment of your child's lunch account. You will need your child's student ID (also known as the lunch ID) for this process. Please contact OES for this information.

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, unless there are changes. A registered dietician is available to answer any other allergy related questions at 766-3937.

OES allows parents/guardians to have lunch with their child. Please sign in at the Main Office to receive a Visitor tag.

SECTION II. PROCEDURES

Rules and Behavior Guidelines for Students

- DRESS properly as stated in the Code of Conduct
- WALK in the school halls
- WALK to the right as they pass through the halls
- WALK quietly and should always be courteous and polite
- Should NOT wear hats
- Should NOT chew gum
- Should NOT bring weapon-like toys to school
- Should NOT bring any electronic games or equipment to school
- Should NOT bring cell phones to school

Playground Rules for Students

- 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 for Students

- WALK to the buses
- Go quietly and do not stop anywhere on the way to the bus

Bus Rules for Students

- SIT on the bus
- Keep feet out of the aisle
- Talk quietly
- KEEP HANDS OFF OTHERS

Party Rules for Students

- 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 and distributed

Learning Rules for Students

- 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

Cafeteria Guidelines for 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. Disinfect/clean cafeteria tables and chairs
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 return

Cafeteria 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 tables and floors are clean.
5. Class leader and a friend will get games from the shelf.
6. Each class is required to clean around table before leaving cafeteria

Discipline Policy

The Owego 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 are sent to the Main Office, parents are generally notified by the principal and via mail utilizing a disciplinary referral form indicating behavior and attempts made to correct the behavior.

Bus Information

Bus schedules are mailed home by the Transportation Department 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/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 bus driver. The bus 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.

Bus Safety:

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 school papers and 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 Transportation Department 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 it is safe to cross

Emergency Numbers

Emergency contact phone numbers are essential. We must have a way to contact you in case of an emergency concerning your child.

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.

Changes in phone numbers, addresses or contact information must go through the Main Office and must be in writing or via email. Contact information, phone numbers, and address changes will NOT be made based upon phone calls.

Safety Drills

Fire and 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 1st and December 1st. Eight of these drills are required to be fire drills and four are required to be lockdown drills.

When the fire alarm sounds, children are instructed to immediately proceed to the nearest marked exit with their teacher. Attendance of all students is taken 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 1st and December 31st and the third between March 1st and April 30th. It is important that parents stress the importance of these drills, and the need to be quiet and orderly.

Other Drills

Weather related storm drills may also be practiced.

Lost and Found

Put your child's name on all personal items. If your child has lost an item, check with the Main Office, or the Lost and Found table located near the cafeteria.

Telephone Use

Student use of the telephone is discouraged. Phone calls home must be made at the Main Office. 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

Addresses and phone numbers of classmates will not be released to parents by the school personnel. If the whole class is invited, birthday party invitations are allowed to be delivered at school with teacher approval. Please contact the teacher with any birthday party requests.

Solicitation

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 and student birthdays are made each day. These announcements provide information to the students and staff about upcoming events and important information.

SECTION III. PARENT & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Meet the Teacher/Curriculum Night

Meet the Teacher/Curriculum Night is held in late September. This gives parents an opportunity to meet their child’s teacher and to see the classroom. 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

Owego 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 to enhance the curriculum. In grades 3-5, each student is assigned iPad for classroom use. 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 entire 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 a classroom group setting. They learn about color, shapes, lines, texture and form and how these visual items can be made to depict objects 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, students are required to practice in order to improve their hand-eye-mind coordination. Lessons are crafted to develop student's artistic 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 children 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

Students may take out and return books any day from 8:45 AM – 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM – 3:30 PM, 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.

STEAM

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) is an educational approach to learning that uses Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics as access points for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. The end results are students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders, and learners of the 21st century!

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. Pants, 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 is required 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

Chorus is open to any student in grades 4 and 5 who wishes to further 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.

New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA)

NYSSMA 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 for three days in February each year. For filling out registration paperwork, parents should bring their child's birth certificate, immunization records and 2 proofs of residence (*driver's license, bank statement, or utility bill, etc.*), showing proof that you reside within the OES district boundaries.

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 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, but rather 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 as they proceed through screening.

While the children are participating in the screening, the parents 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 kindergartener 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. A letter is sent to all students prior to the start of the school year with their new teacher assignment.

Communication

Good communication between home and school is essential for a successful educational experience. 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 children. Most children will come home with a folder or planner.

If you have any questions or concerns you may call the teacher, send a note or email. Email addresses are available on the district website (www.oacsd.org). You can also call the Main Office at 687-7303.

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. 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

Owego 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 687-7303 if your child is going to be absent. Upon returning to school, make sure you send an excuse including child's name, date of absence, reason for absence and parent/guardian signature.

Excused Absences

Excused 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/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 PE

A written note is required 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.

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. NYS will no longer accept religious exemptions for immunizations. Requirements can be viewed 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 UPK, Kindergarten, First, Third and Fifth 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. Effective 2008 a BMI is required.

Hearing Test

A hearing test is done each school year for students in UPK, 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 screening test for distance visual acuity is used to identify students who require a professional eye examination. This is done in UPK, Kindergarten, First, Third and Fifth grades. 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 comes to Owego 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. Dental Health forms are requested for UPK, Kindergarten, First, Third and Fifth grades.

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

School Psychologist

The School 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.

Owego Elementary School uses a team approach to determine student needs. The OES Student Based Intervention Team (SBIT) 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. Students may also see the School Psychologist for short term counseling, crisis intervention, and for 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 into a motel, campsite or stay 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.