

# *McKinley Parent Handbook*



Abington School District  
**McKinley**  
Elementary School

370 Cedar Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027  
215-663-0430

# McKinley Elementary School Parent Handbook

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# **Abington Township School District Administrative Offices**

**970 Highland Avenue  
Abington, PA 19001  
Phone: (215) 884-4700**

Dr. Amy F. Sichel, Superintendent  
Dr. Jeffrey Fecher, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Christopher Lionetti, Business Manager  
Ms. Susanne Alfonso, Director of Human Resources  
Mr. Lawrence Goldberg, Director of Technology  
Dr. Ann Bacon, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction  
Ms. Kelly Lambert, Assistant Director of Special Education  
Ms. Judy Bomze, Director of Pupil Services  
Dr. James Melchor, Assistant Supervisor of Curriculum and Inst.  
Ms. Denise Mendez, Coordinator of K-12 Mathematics  
Ms. Kelly Doyle, Supervisor of Communication Arts and Reading  
Mr. Howard Baxter, Coordinator of Music and Art  
Mr. Byron Goldstein, Community Relations Specialist  
Mr. Stephen Saile, Director of Facilities  
Mr. Wesley Foster, Director of Transportation  
Ms. Christine Madigan, Director of Food Services  
Ms. Brooke Jacobs, School Social Worker

## **McKinley Elementary School 370 Cedar Road Elkins Park, PA 19027**

**Phone: (215) 663-0430**

**Fax: (215) 663-0593**

**Attendance Program: (215) 663-0430 Press # 2**

Dr. Charles William Lentz, Principal  
Ms. Regina Rausch, Asst. Principal/Supervisor Special Education  
TBA, Curriculum Specialist  
Dr. Andrea Koban-Payne, Psychologist  
Mrs. Dawn Green, Secretary to the Principal  
Ms. Lynne Todd, Office Secretary  
Ms. Bonnie Heinz, Receptionist



# Welcome to McKinley Elementary School!

Welcome to McKinley Elementary School located on approximately six acres of semi-wooded hillside in the beautiful town of Elkins Park. With approximately 670 students in kindergarten through sixth grades, the average class size at McKinley is twenty-two students per class with priority given to smaller classes in the primary grades. McKinley offers a full-day kindergarten program. Family Support Services coordinated by the Abington Y.M.C.A. provides a before-school and after-school program which begins at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. to accommodate working parents.

Our primary goal at McKinley is to meet each child's needs and provide consistent opportunities for student success through our diversified and exciting instructional program. We also work diligently towards making McKinley a pleasant and safe environment for all children and staff. It is very important to us that the children have fun at school and develop a love for learning.

McKinley provides a strong foundation in the basic skills, with an integrated language arts approach to reading, writing, spelling, listening and speaking. Sequential development of number concepts and computation is strengthened with an emphasis on problem solving and hands-on learning in mathematics. Thematic units exist at each level to support the incorporation of science, health and social studies content in a meaningful and activity-oriented context. Students also have the opportunity to expand their talents and skills through specialized classes in art, music, library, physical education and computers. Stringed instrument instruction begins in fourth grade. Band instrument lessons begin in fifth grade. All students at McKinley benefit from participation in a variety of activities including musical performances, dramatic productions, author and artist-in-residence programs, school spirit days and community service programs. After-school sports, a school play, and Odyssey of the Mind are some of the programs offered outside of the school day.

Although the main building is over forty years old, this award-winning architectural design provides a modern structure well suited to the education needs of today's youngsters. The main building includes a full-sized gymnasium, art room, music room, cafeteria and full size auditorium. McKinley boasts of a wonderful outdoor garden complete with a wide array of plants, trees and sculpture which is an integral part of the learning environment for students throughout the course of the school year. A variety of playground equipment and athletic fields are spread across the lawns. A special primary playground is



located to the left of the building. Basketball courts, a soccer field and baseball field complement the school setting.

Parent participation is encouraged and welcomed at McKinley. In fact, many parents volunteer in a variety of ways every single day of school. The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) provides resources for field trips, assemblies, and after-school programs. Parents are actively involved in the school reading program by working with children needing added assistance in developing their reading skills and proficiency. They make a significant contribution to the total school experience of McKinley's children.

The entire McKinley staff welcomes you to our wonderful school. We know that you and your child will have fantastic experience learning, laughing and developing a love for life-long learning at McKinley!

## Arrival and Departure:

Each school day begins and ends according to the following schedule:

### **Kindergarten through Sixth Grades:**

- 1 8:30-8:50 a.m. Students arrive at school  
(No supervision prior to 8:30 a.m.)
- 2 8:50 a.m. Classes begin/Morning Announcements
- 3 9:00 a.m. Instruction begins
- 4 3:20 p.m. Dismissal



Buses arrive at school each morning between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. Students being transported by parents should arrive no earlier than 8:30 a.m. Prior to that time, no one is on duty to supervise children outside. For morning drop-off, parents are asked to use our drop-off area located on the southern side of the building along Cedar Glen Road. Drivers may not park and leave cars in the

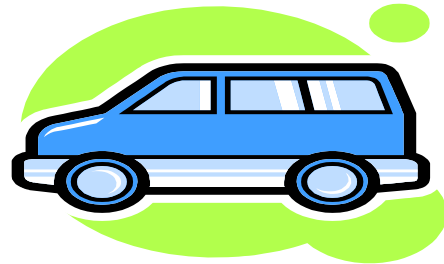
drop-off area. Parents who need to enter the school for any reason must park in a legitimate space in the parking lot or along the Cedar or Cedar Glen Road.

All students are dismissed at 3:20 p.m. Students who are being picked up in cars are called at 3:20 p.m. to report to the pick-up area. Students who are being picked up by parents or guardians are to be picked up via our Parent-Pick-Up Area on the south side of the building along Cedar Glen Road. Kindergarten students being picked up by parents will be dismissed five minutes prior to the regular school dismissal via the exterior classroom door to room 107 to facilitate a safe and orderly dismissal for these younger students. Students riding buses are scheduled to arrive home between 3:50 and 4:10 p.m. ***Parents must send a note to their child's teacher if they are planning to pick up their children at the end of the school day. Without a note, children will be expected to board the bus.***

Buses depart at the end of school day by 3:35 p.m. so that students should arrive home between 3:50 and 4:10 p.m. If a child does not arrive home within a few minutes of the expected time, parents should contact the transportation department directly at (215) 884-0421 until 5 p.m. A representative from that office can call the bus driver on the walkie-talkie system installed in each bus to determine the reason for the delay. If a student is not on the bus as expected, parents can contact the school office to assist in locating the child. Occasionally a student misses his/her bus because s/he takes too much time in getting to the bus loading area. When that happens, we contact parents to either pick up the

child at school or arrange for a friend or relative to provide transportation. Occasionally, students come to the office and try to arrange “play dates” near dismissal time. We cannot allow these last minute changes in after-school plans. A quick review of the day’s plans and activities before leaving home in the morning will ease many concerns later.

Parents must notify the school in writing if someone other than the custodial parent or guardian will be picking up their child. Permission will be denied to anyone attempting to pick up the child without parent consent. For security reasons, we are very careful about authorizing a student pick-up based on a phone call to the school. We urge parents to make plans in the morning so the required note can be sent with the child. However, we recognize that emergencies will occur and plans will change. In these rare instances, we will make every effort to verify with the parent that the designated adult is authorized to pick up and transport a child.



For parents requiring extended day care before 8:50 a.m. and after 3:30 p.m., please refer to the section under EXTENDED DAY. It is essential for students to arrive to school on time to maintain the continuity of their instructional program. Supervision is not available after 3:30 p.m. so it is necessary for all children to be picked up on time.

### **Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals**



The first few minutes of the school day are an important time in our classrooms. This time is designated for “Morning Meeting,” and it sets the tone for the rest of the school day. Important announcements are made at this time and homework is collected. It is crucial for students to be here promptly when the school day begins. Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. are considered tardy. This is recorded on the student attendance sheet and entered into the record. Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. must report to the receptionist with their parent or for a late sign-in. Students who report to the classrooms after 9:00 a.m. without first signing in at the office will be asked to return to the receptionist for a “late slip.”

If it is necessary for a child to leave school early, please send a note to the teacher stating the requested dismissal time and reason. We appreciate parents’ efforts to schedule appointments outside the school day, although we recognize there are times when this may not always be possible. *At the requested dismissal time, a parent, guardian, or authorized adult must report to the office to meet the child. Please do not arrange with your child to have him/her meet you*

*outside the school during the school day.* All children must be signed out with the receptionist if they must leave school before the regular dismissal time for security reasons.

## **Assemblies and Concerts**

We are delighted to offer several presentations and performances throughout the school year. Many of these are sponsored by the McKinley PTO. In the past our students have been thrilled by the antics of exotic animals, marveled at the stories of visiting authors, raised their voices in song at a musical concert, or been held spellbound by a humorous storyteller. We never know what each year's assemblies will be, but we always know that they will entertain and enthrall. In addition to these PTO-sponsored assemblies, McKinley students entertain parents and students in other classes in musical concerts. In order to offer a quality experience, we ask our student audiences at concerts to show respect for the performers by observing the following rules:



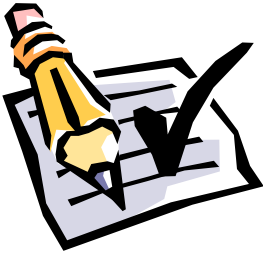
- ☐ Enter the area quietly and sit in designated seating areas.
- ☐ Remain quiet and seated during the performance.
- ☐ Sit cross-legged rather than kneeling.
- ☐ Show appreciation with applause.
- ☐ Wait for a signal to depart before standing and leaving.

Due to space limitations in our auditorium, we are unable to invite families to attend daytime assemblies and programs unless specifically indicated. Of course, families and friends attend the evening concerts presented by students. We ask audiences to observe the following important guidelines:



- Do not enter or leave during a selection.
  - Please refrain from chatting during a selection with those seated near you.
  - Be polite in recording or photographing so as not to obstruct anyone's view.
  - Younger siblings are invited to any student concert held in the evening. However, they must remain with parents, seated and quiet during the performance.
  - Food and drink are not allowed in the auditorium during a performance.
- 
- All cellular phones and pagers must be turned off or switched to a vibrating signal during a performance. Out of respect to the performers and the audience, individuals must go outside the auditorium to conduct a conversation on a cellular phone.

# Attendance Regulations



The Board of School Directors has passed the following district policy regarding student attendance.

## **District Absence Policy**

**Excused Absence** – includes the absence of a student for any one of the following reasons: illness, quarantine, recovery from accident, required court attendance, death in the immediate family, impassable roads, school-sponsored educational trips and tours, approved religious holidays, and medical appointments *that cannot be scheduled outside the school day*.

**Partial-day absences may not be taken, and will not be excused, on a regular basis. If such an absence requires that a student will arrive late to, or leave early from school, s/he must provide a written excuse from the parent(s), guardian(s), or person(s) in parental relation.**

Upon written parental request, students may be excused from school for religious holidays. The Board shall, upon written request of the parents or guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program acknowledged by the Board. The district shall not provide transportation to religious instruction.



A detailed written explanation of the absence, whether for a partial or a full day, must be received by the school **within three days** after the return of the student to school.

If a student is absent three consecutive days or more than ten school days throughout the course of the school year, school authorities may require written verification from a physician that the absence is justifiable. The statement from a medical doctor must state date of treatment, expected return of the student to school and limitations, if any. The attendance of students with ten days or more absence will be subject to administrative review.

**Family trips are considered illegal absences by school district policy. The school administration is required to send a notice to parents/guardians informing them that their child's absence is illegal and could result in referral to the school district attendance officer. The interactive nature of**

teaching and learning cannot be duplicated when missed in a classroom. When possible, prior written work may be provided by teachers upon advanced request by parents. Written work may be made up upon return to school. Students are responsible for the completion of any work missed during their absence.



**Unexcused absence** is the absence of a student for reasons not listed above. Examples include, but are not limited to, illness of another family member, helping the family to move, babysitting/childcare, missing the bus, oversleeping, leaving school without authorization, truancy, etc.

If written verification of the reason for absence is not received within three days of the return to school, the absence will automatically be recorded as unexcused. The mere fact that a parent has written an excuse does not mean the absence is excused. Reasons for absence of a doubtful nature are subject to administrative review. Excuses must contain a detailed explanation of the reason for the absence by state education code.

After ten consecutive days of unexcused absences, students will be dropped from the active membership roll and parents will need to apply for re-admission if they wish to have their children return to school.

The state law and school district policy now require that **after three days** of illegal absence, the school team convene a Truancy Elimination Plan (T.E.P.) Meeting. Parents/Guardians will receive notification from the school district attendance officer that they have reached three days of illegal absence and are required to meet with the school officials for the Truancy Elimination Plan Meeting. Any further illegal absences from that point forward will result in a referral to the district justice for truancy. The school makes every effort to work with families to avoid such referrals and resolve the issues leading to a student's absence from school.

### **Make-up Schoolwork Resulting From Student Absence**

Parents often expect our teachers to provide schoolwork during travel periods and to assist students in making up any missed work. However, instruction and learning are very different today than when parents were in elementary school. It is often impossible to replicate a missed classroom discussion, a science lab, a play or story, a math investigation, or a reading skills lesson that occurred while the student was absent. Teachers will gather work when travel plans result in absence from school when possible and notified in advance. They cannot repeat the lessons for an individual student. Copies of written work will be assembled and distributed to the student upon his/her return to school.

We urge students to keep daily journals of their activities to help them see that education occurs both in and out of school. Parents might use this travel time to have students complete some learning activities that they design. Perhaps a child can trace and calculate the mileage of the travel route. Students can collect brochures from tourist sites, estimate the food bill at a fast food stop, calculate the waiter's tip, record significant dates and people from history, sketch famous buildings or landmarks, and more. The opportunities are limited only by the imagination. However, please recognize that while important, these experiences cannot replace the school curriculum.

Students will be held accountable for the skills that were presented in the classroom during the absence. This may result in a lower test score or a reduced grade if there are gaps in skills caused by the absence. We urge parents to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of these experiences when making travel plans that may result in an absence from school.



### Safe Arrival Program

Please let us know each day your child will be absent by calling (215) 663-0430 then press number 2. This number is available 24 hours a day. Please leave a voice-mail message explaining the absence. This includes absences due to illness as well as vacations, appointments, and other plans. **Please make certain to submit to your child's teacher a written note documenting the absence upon your child's return to school.** State laws require that the school maintain

written documentation from parents of the reason for a child's absence. The note should be specific regarding the reason for absence.

This system supports our safe arrival program. The safety and security of your children are very important to us. The Safe Arrival Program enables our office staff to confirm that students who are reported absent by their classroom teachers are legitimately absent. Please help us in this effort by leaving a recorded message at any time, day or night. The phone line is connected to a voice mailbox. You will be asked to give the following information:

- Your name
- The date and time you are calling
- Your child's name, grade, and teacher
- The date or dates s/he will be absent
- The reason for the absence (*illness, travel, etc.*)

Your message will be transcribed and compared with the official school absence form sent to the office by your child's teacher. Parents who do not call to report an absence will be contacted at home or their place of work before 10:00 a.m. to



verify the child's absence from school. A quick phone call can save some anxiety later as we try to locate each child.



### **Medical Appointments and Emergencies**

Children will be granted permission to leave school for medical appointments or for emergency reasons. Parents/ guardians should notify the school in writing, giving the date and time of the child's release. The parent/guardian must report to the school office to pick up the child and sign him/her out.



## **Bicycles**

A student must be in the third grade before being allowed to ride a bike to school. **Upon arrival to the school property, children must dismount their bike and walk the bike to the rack on the blacktop. All children are required to wear a helmet. This is a state law! Bike riders should bring a lock to secure their bikes on the rack.**

## **Birthday Celebrations for Students**

Birthdays are an important part of a child's life. Children look forward to birthdays and like to celebrate them. Birthday celebrations in the classroom are permissible. Each teacher designates a time during the day for this recognition as it best fits into the daily schedule. Individual treats, such as fruit, soft pretzels, or pretzel sticks that do not need refrigeration or freezing work best. McKinley has been encouraging parents to avoid food in recognition of children's birthdays due to the significant number of various food allergies present in our building. Therefore, we would encourage a non-food treat such as a pencil or sticker as opposed to food to commemorate your child's birthday. Federal law now requires that the snacks provided to children in the school environment include healthy snacks not including sugar or other unhealthy substances. Careful attention should be paid to sending snacks that are "Peanut/Nut free" and processed in a peanut free environment since a number of students at McKinley suffer from life threatening allergies to nuts and nut products. Parents are asked to carefully read the ingredients of the snack they are providing to ensure that no nuts or nut products are used in the creation of



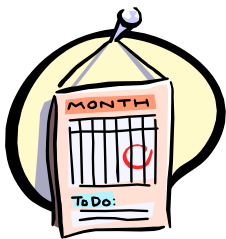


the snack. The ingredients for ALL items sent into school for whole class distribution must be attached to the item being distributed. One treat should be provided for each child in the classroom—no party favors, balloons, or array of treats, please.

## **Bullying Policy**

McKinley Elementary School strives to create a learning environment in which all children feel safe to come to school and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The school district has established a zero tolerance policy on bullying and each allegation of bullying is investigated by the assistant principal. Bullying is defined as when a student or a group of students intentionally and repeatedly uses hurtful or intimidating words or other behaviors against another student. Students who are found to be engaged in bullying behaviors will receive consequences up to and including suspension from school and potentially police involvement. Each year the school reviews the bullying policy with its students and the consequences for engaging in these behaviors. The school also provides sessions sponsored by Aldersgate through which the students are educated about bullying behaviors and how to react to these actions. Our school also implements the internationally acclaimed Olweus Bullying Prevention Program which teaches children to recognize bullying and stand up to bullying activities by reporting such incidents to adults.

## **Calendar of School Days, PTO, and School Activities**



A calendar of schooldays, PTO activities, and school events is included in the McKinley School Directory.

The McKinley PTO will also provide a monthly calendar to all parents and students of important dates for the month. In the monthly newsletter a calendar of events is provided to forecast forthcoming events.

## **Cell Phones**

Students are not permitted to have cell phones in use at school or at school events. All cell phones must be stowed in lockers or book bags during the course of the school day and may not be utilized during school events.

## **Character Education**

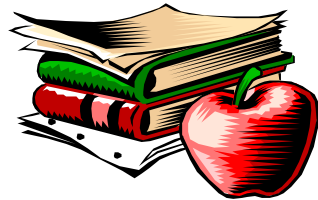
McKinley Elementary School in conjunction with Abington School District seeks to instill in its students character traits which make them successful and contributing members of society. Every month the school focuses on one character trait and engages the students in a series of lessons related to this skill. These lessons include classroom based activities as well as some home based extensions of these skills. Parents receive a newsletter regarding the

character trait being instructed and ways that these concepts can be extended at home. The traits instructed are listed below:

September:	Citizenship	February:	Courage
October:	Responsibility	March:	Respect
November:	Cooperation	April:	Honesty
December:	Tolerance	May:	Perseverance
January:	Compassion		

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

To ensure the safety and well-being of every child, whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, teachers, administrators, and nurses are required BY LAW to notify the appropriate county and/or local authorities.



## **Childcare Programs — Before & After School**

For parents requiring childcare before 8:50 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m., an extended day program is offered. This program is operated by the Abington Y.M.C.A. and offers childcare for students in kindergarten through sixth grades before and after the school day. Transportation is the responsibility of parents. This program opens at 7:00 a.m. and extends to 6:00 p.m. after the close of the regular school day. Fees are charged for this childcare program, which includes both part-time and full-time arrangements to meet the needs of the families served. Call (215) 884-9622 for details, fee information and enrollment forms.



## **Child Check**

McKinley has a child check program to ensure that all children who have left for school arrive safely. If your child will be absent from or late for school, you must call the Child Check number EACH DAY. Call (215) 663-0430, and then press 2, between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. Leave a clear message on the answering machine stating the following information:

- Child's name (spell last name)
- Grade and room number
- Teacher's name
- Date of absence or lateness and the reason.

The school office will check the message with the absentee list. If you have not called, you will be notified to establish the whereabouts of your child. **All children are required to have written documentation for the reason of their absence upon their return to school by state law. The note should explain the specific reason for their absence and signed by their parent or guardian. According to Pennsylvania School Code, the only reason for excused absence is illness or death in the family.**

## **Communication From the School**

Throughout the course of the school year the school will be sending information home to parents in an attempt to keep you informed of events, activities and information relative to the school and your child's education. Several of the forms of communication that you can expect to see throughout the year are:

### **THURSDAY FOLDER:**

Each week every student will receive their "Thursday Folder" which is an email that contains important information and all of the PTO flyers to go home electronically to each family every week. Please be aware that, to conserve paper, some notices will be sent only to one child in a family, so please be sure to check every child's envelope. By designating one day of the week to send home all school correspondence it is felt it might be easier for families to look for important notices from McKinley School. It will be necessary to have a current email address on file to receive this information electronically. The PTO will be distributing the electronic Thursday folder on Thursday afternoons. The electronic mailing provides links to important hand-outs and brochures. If you should require a paper copy of the Thursday folder, please inform your child's teacher so that one can be provided. The school district also posts community event flyers on the district webpage under the "Resources" tab and subtab "Community Resources" subtab "Community E-Fliers".

### **NEWS AND EVENTS:**

The McKinley School Calendar is sent home each month and provides dates and times of important upcoming events for the McKinley School Community. This is accompanied by the McKinley School Newsletter which contains important information about events at each grade level and upcoming events at the school.

### **WEDNESDAY MORNING:**

The *Wednesday Morning* is a summary distributed to the community and staff of Abington School District to highlight actions taken at School Board Meetings.

### **CURRICULUM INFORMATION:**

**"Family Letters":** These are the communication tools of our Everyday Mathematics program. Teachers send these correspondences at the beginning of each new unit of study. The letters include the skills and algorithms introduced in the math unit and the answers to the Home/Study Links (homework sheets) for

the unit. Another helpful resource for parents is the Student Reference book which is available in grades 2-6. Students may take them home regularly to assist with homework.

**“Family Newsletters”:** At the core of the school district’s Communication Arts Program is the Houghton Mifflin anthologies which are divided into 6-10 themes per year. Prior to the beginning of each theme, your child’s teacher will send home Houghton Mifflin’s “Family Newsletter.” This correspondence provides parents with theme-related activities and books to enjoy with their children. Parents/Guardians of first grade children also receive a letter prior to each theme which provides information on the content and skills introduced in the new theme.

**Grade level Newsletters:** Many teachers at each grade level have created their own newsletter or communication missive for parents describing the units of study in our social studies and science curricula. Look for these correspondences coming home in your child’s folder or book bag at the beginning of each unit of study. In addition, many teachers at McKinley maintain their own websites and Listservs as a means to disseminate information to parents on a regular basis.

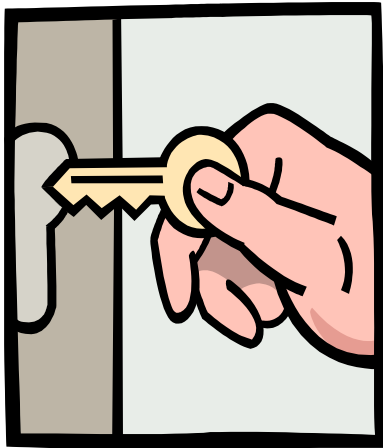
## **Concerns or Questions**

Parents often wonder where to turn with a question or concern regarding their child or other school issues. Starting with the principal or administration often requires information backtracking and can leave valuable allies out of the loop. When you are not happy with a particular situation, there are some handy guidelines listed below you should follow in addressing the issue.

1. If it is a classroom problem, start with your child’s teacher. He/she is in the best position to address classroom related issues. If the problem is outside the teacher’s area of expertise or control, the teacher will refer you to the right person in the building who can be of assistance.

2. If you have not been able to resolve your problem with the teacher, you can go next to the principal or assistant principal who will usually be able to resolve your problem or refer you to the right person.

3. The Superintendent of Schools and the Abington Board of School Directors address policy matters for the school district. They are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the school. The Superintendent and School Board will consider issues only after they have already been reviewed and documented by school officials.



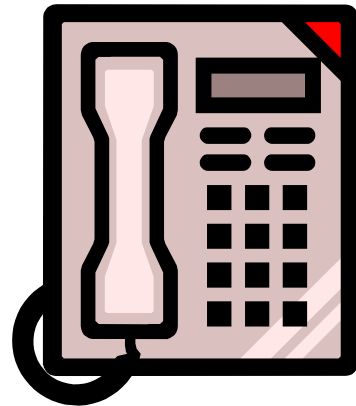
## **Confidentiality**

No information concerning any student can be released to any other agency or individual until an authorized release form is signed by the parent/guardian. No information can be released to parents or guardians about a child other than their own. Parents can access their child's school records by arranging an appointment to view the record with the principal or his designee. For additional information regarding the policy on student records contact the principal's office.

## **Contacting Classroom Teachers**

**NOTES:** Sending in a brief note is the best way to communicate with your child's teacher. Teachers usually ask the children at the beginning of the day for any "notes to the teacher." Having your note early in the day will assure prompt action or response.

**E-MAIL:** Teachers check their e-mail usually once a day (before or after school). Please recognize that teachers have been directed to never check or respond to e-mail during instructional time! If you need a response or action within a school day, do not rely upon e-mail. Teachers should respond within 24 hours to e-mail.



**PHONE CALLS TO THE OFFICE:** The secretaries at McKinley Elementary will be happy to take a message for your child's teacher. Please note: Secretaries will not interrupt a teacher during instructional time. Your child's teacher will return a phone call within 24 hours (providing he/she is in school). If your message to the teacher requests a call back prior to the end of the school day, please inform the secretary of the urgency. If you have not heard from the

teacher after 24 hours, please call the office and ask the secretary to alert the principal.

**VOICE MAIL:** All teachers have voice mailboxes so that parents can leave messages for the teacher before 9 a.m. or after 4 p.m. During the school day, teachers are unable to receive calls due to the teaching schedule. However, teachers will return messages at their earliest convenience. It is always a good idea for parents to leave cell phone numbers, work numbers, etc. and an indication of when and where you will be available. If a parent is calling about last-minute changes in pick-up plans, the call must go to the office so that the message can be personally relayed to the child prior to dismissal.

## **Contacting the Psychologist**



Our psychologist works with students in all grades. Parents who wish to speak with the psychologist regarding any issues relating to their child can call the office and ask to be connected to the psychologist, Dr. Koban-Payne. Messages can be left on the voice mail system. The psychologist is specially trained to deal with issues relating to a child's adjustment to school. She can also address social and emotional questions and concerns. She is particularly helpful if there has been a significant change in a family—perhaps a move, the loss of someone dear, or a change in the family dynamics. She is also trained to work with students on relational and social skills issues.

## **Contacting the Principal**

Parents are welcome to contact the principal with questions or issues pertaining to children or the school program. If the principal is not available to take the call, a telephone or written message may be left. Parents are encouraged to first contact the teacher if the question or issue relates to the classroom.



# **Curriculum and Instructional Program**

What follows is a description of what we teach and how we teach it in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. “Specials,” which include art, library, music, physical education, and computers, are also an important part of the total program.

McKinley Elementary School is one of seven elementary schools in the Abington School District. All curricula, textbooks, instructional programs, computer software, assessments are selected for use in all seven schools and are approved by the Board of School Directors. These practices ensure consistency across the schools and a smooth transition of all students into the Junior High School. In addition, we offer a brief overview of our system of reporting student progress to parents. If you have additional questions regarding materials, strategies, and other curricular issues, please contact the Curriculum Specialist at (215) 663-0430.



## **Integrated Language Arts**

Integrated Language Arts simply means that all areas of communication—reading, writing, listening, speaking, spelling, and handwriting—focus on themes that children read about in their books and literature selections. In our reading program children participate in a variety of activities related to a theme such as animals, heroes, the environment, folk tales and fables, overcoming adversity, natural disasters, etc.

Our reading program combines elements of phonics and specific skills instruction with a literature-based approach. It is based on what we know about children and how children learn to read from the research on reading instruction. There is no single strategy that will work for all children all the time. Reading is a complex task, and children need a variety of approaches to tackle printed material. Sometimes they will “sound out” an unfamiliar word; other times they may skip over it and come back later once they understand the sense of the sentence. They might refer to pictures to give clues to words and meaning, or they might ask a parent, teacher, or another student for help. The goal is to make meaning from what they read...and that process is as individual as each child. Our tools are the many books in our





classrooms as well as the rich experiences of our students. We teach specific skills in phonics, word structure, comprehension, etc. when they are needed. We encourage, support, prod, and remediate as necessary based on each child's needs.

The Treasures Reading Program is used in grades kindergarten through six. Reading and writing skills are developed as part of an integrated approach to the Communication Arts. The phonics program, Open Court, is used in grades K-2. The Zaner Bloser Handwriting Program is implemented in grades K-3 with small group instruction provided for children needing the extra practice in grades 4-6. McKinley Elementary School enjoys the services of a reading specialist who works with students and teachers to promote student success in reading and writing.

**Guided Reading** is the most important instructional approach for teaching reading. The teacher forms a small group of six to eight children with similar abilities and needs through an approach called flexible grouping. Each child has his or her own copy of the text. As the children are encouraged to read the text themselves, the teacher supports their efforts to create meaning from the text by questions and comments. The teacher also leads students to discover the life-long strategies that good readers use when reading unfamiliar text such as reading ahead, re-reading, getting clues from the context and illustrations, and looking at the structure of the word for sounds, letters, and syllables.

**Writing Process** is our program that involves even the youngest children in recording their ideas on paper. Our goal is to get pencils into young hands as soon as possible so children can begin to write about the events in their lives. Although the first attempts can be somewhat primitive, we begin our writing program in kindergarten so children can become comfortable at expressing themselves in writing. Our successful writing program recognizes that writing is a process comprised of the following steps:



- **PREWRITING** – gathering ideas; thinking about what you will write; developing an outline; making a list, etc.
- **FIRST DRAFT** – writing the paper by focusing on ideas rather than on spelling and punctuation.
- **REVISING** – reviewing your paper carefully, perhaps with another person to check for organization, sequence, vocabulary, topic development, and sentence structure.
- **EDITING** – carefully checking for spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization, etc.
- **PUBLISHING** – sharing the finished, corrected piece with an audience of one or many.





During the first draft stage, children may use inventive spelling in order to record complex ideas. This simply means that they use their “best guess” to write the words they select to explain an idea or describe an event. Later during the revising and editing stages, students check over their work carefully, often with the teacher’s help so that most words are spelled correctly. Our formal spelling program begins in first grade when students are assigned spelling word lists to study. We know that learning to spell correctly takes time; it is

a process that occurs over a period of several years. However, there are some frequently used words that we expect children to spell correctly in their writing on a consistent basis. For lists of the “Most Frequently Used Words in Writing,” see your child’s teacher or ask your child about them.

### Mathematics

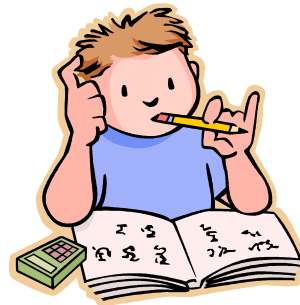


The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, Everyday Mathematics 4 is used for mathematics instruction in grades kindergarten through grade six. This program is among the best of the new generation of mathematics programs developed to address the mathematics standards and the curriculum guidelines established by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Our school district’s math curriculum is based on the

standards and benchmarks established in the *New Standards Project*. This project endorses the *Principles and Standards for Teaching Mathematics* prepared by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), the state standards for the teaching of mathematics and the *Common Core*. Our mathematics program for the district has the following goals. We expect that the student will:

- produce evidence that demonstrates understanding of arithmetic and number concepts/number and operation concepts.
- produce evidence that demonstrates understanding of geometry and measurement concepts.

- produce evidence that demonstrates understanding of function and algebra concepts.
- provide evidence that demonstrates understanding of statistics and probability concepts.
- demonstrate problem solving by using mathematical concepts and skills to solve non-routine problems; solve problems that make demands on all three aspects of the solution process: formulation, implementation, and conclusion.
- demonstrate fluency with basic and important skills by using these skills accurately and automatically, and demonstrate practical competence and persistence with other skills by using them effectively to accomplish a task, perhaps referring to notes, books, or other students, perhaps working to reconstruct a method.
- use the language of mathematics, its symbols, notation, graphs, and expressions, to communicate through reading, writing, speaking and listening; and communicate about mathematics by describing mathematical ideas and concepts and explaining reasoning and results.
- conduct at least one large scale investigation or project each year, beginning in fourth grade, drawn from data study, science study, mathematical model of physical phenomenon, science study, design of a physical structure, management and planning, pure mathematics investigation, and/or history of a mathematical idea. Over the course of elementary school, the student will conduct projects of at least two kinds from the above list.



During our mathematics investigations, students use manipulatives such as cubes, plastic counters, fraction bars, balance scales, weights, and decimal squares in our hands-on math program. These concrete materials are used to demonstrate and explain mathematical ideas. The object of our math program is to have students make sense of numbers, space, and logic.

The majority of our mathematics instruction time is spent on thinking skills and using computation to solve problems. We believe that in order for students to have real mathematics understanding, they must memorize basic arithmetic facts. Each year, students complete a four to five week, basic skills unit involving memorization, computation, and basic mathematical rules. These skills are practiced and used throughout all units of the program. Once students have been introduced to math facts, they must continue to practice these facts in order to increase their

speed, accuracy, and proficiency. Home and in-class skill practices are also provided. We expect that our students will display speed and accuracy with addition facts through 9+9 and subtraction facts through 18-9 by the end of third grade. Likewise, we look for mastery of multiplication facts through 9x9 and division facts through 81÷9 by the end of fourth grade. If we find that students are not meeting this expectation, we will notify parents and ask them to supplement class work with additional practice at home through flash cards, computer software, or other math activities.



### Science

We believe that science is not just something children LEARN...it is something they DO! Our students learn and do science through a wonderful, nationally-recognized program titled *Science and Technology for Children*, which was designed under a grant from the National Science Foundation and developed by the National Science Resource Center at the Smithsonian. Our students conduct experiments and investigations to test a theory or explore a phenomenon. They record observations, share information, replicate their results, and draw conclusions. These activities begin in kindergarten and continue through grade six. This hands-on science program is articulated with national

science standards and Project 2061 standards.

The following investigations are included for each grade level:

- ☐ Kindergarten—Insects, Animals, Five Senses, Colors, Magnets, Magnification Glasses and Microscopes
- ☐ First Grade—Weather, Life Cycle of Butterflies
- ☐ Second Grade—Balancing & Weighing, Organisms
- ☐ Third Grade—Plant Growth & Development, Rocks & Minerals
- ☐ Fourth Grade—Animal Studies, Land & Water
- ☐ Fifth Grade—Motion & Design, Microworlds, Experiments with Plants, Floating & Sinking

Sixth grade has a program which is textbook and computer based entitled *Science Fusion*. This program is grounded largely in the areas of physical science, biology and chemistry and challenges students in the sciences to prepare them for transition to junior high school.

## **Social Studies**

Our expanding world means that we need to increase our focus to include a global perspective. While history and geography remain the core components of our social studies curriculum, we also include other social sciences such as economics and political science. Our social studies program is a textbook based program that offers instruction in civics, economics, geography, and history and focuses on the people and places of the Western Hemisphere. A special unit on Pennsylvania is offered to students in grade four.

Teaching materials include children's literature selections, reference materials, and maps and globes. We also use source documents, field trip experiences, current events, and other media including computer software programs, CD-ROM, and videotapes. Students have access to current reference sources via the Internet and are learning how to find answers to their questions and information related to their research topics. In the intermediate grades students also complete units on African American history and the Holocaust.



## **Health**

Health education is taught in all elementary grades and includes age appropriate instruction on the consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol abuse. The D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program and A.I.D.S. instruction is offered in grade six.

## **Computers**

Our school utilizes mobile computer carts at each grade level which offer each student individual access to a laptop computer. A library of software augments our math, science, language arts, and social studies programs. Classes utilize computers throughout the school year at either regularly scheduled times or during "open lab" times when teachers schedule special computer sessions. Kindergarten classes begin their computer experience during the second half of the year.

Computer instruction is provided through fully equipped, networked laptop computers in our classrooms. Computer instruction focuses on basic software programs and their integration into classroom related projects as well as keyboarding skills.



### **Art/General Music/Library/Physical Education**

Instruction in art, general music, library and physical education is provided on a weekly basis through instructional specialists. A choral music program is offered to students in grades five and six. A developmental program of instrumental music instruction is offered to elementary students. Instruction on string instruments begins in grade three and instruction on brass, percussion, and woodwind instruments begins in grade four.

**Art** - Our students enjoy 45 minutes of art classes each week with a certified art educator. The focus of our visual arts curriculum is three-fold:



- ☐ ***Viewing and talking about art***—Students view reproductions and original art work of artists as inspiration for their own work.
- ☐ ***Creating art***—Students develop skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, clay, and other media techniques.
- ☐ ***Evaluating and reflecting upon art***—Students learn how to judge art and assess their own work.

Children's art always graces our halls and display areas. Art shows are held periodically throughout the year, at the administration building, at public locations throughout the community, and at McKinley Elementary. Each year several students' art work is chosen for presentation at a designated school board meeting for their special achievement in the area of art. McKinley Elementary School has also partnered with local businesses to display our student artwork.

**Music** - Children expand their talents and skills in music through singing, rhythm activities, listening, and movement. Each child enjoys 45 minutes of music instruction every week. From the earliest grades, students are exposed to simple musical notation in preparation for more sophisticated levels of music reading in the upper grades.



The highlight of the music program for many fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students is the opportunity to participate in two musical presentations that are scheduled



each year. At other grade levels our music department supports the efforts of classroom teachers to integrate music into the curriculum. For example, our first grade students entertain their families and friends during our annual concerts in the winter and spring. Other special performances are scheduled throughout the year for students in other grades. Watch the calendar for dates and times.

Stringed instrument instruction is an elective available to fourth, fifth and sixth graders. Students have weekly lessons in small groups taught by a certified strings instructor. The strings ensemble performs in the spring. Fifth and sixth grade students also have the opportunity to take small group lessons in brass, woodwinds, and percussion and to participate in a fifth and sixth grade band ensemble.



**Library** - Our school library houses over 20,000 volumes which include reference materials, fiction and non-fiction selections, periodicals, videotapes, audio cassettes, CD-ROM disks, a professional library, a parents' collection, and more. This massive collection is managed through an electronic card catalog system. The entire building is networked so that students can access the card catalog system from their classrooms and home. Through our computerized circulation system, each McKinley student is assigned a code number for circulating materials. This number remains the same throughout his/her years at McKinley Elementary.

Classes visit the library weekly for book talks presented by the school librarian; to return and check out books; to learn important research and locational skills; and to examine all of the rich resources available. With teacher permission, students may also come to the library to conduct independent research. Library services are available at other times by teacher requests to supplement the curriculum. The school librarians have also integrated into their instructional programming opportunities for our students to work with technological databases and resources that will assist them in the development of research and other language arts skills. Parents serve countless volunteer hours at the circulation desk to assist students and to reshelve and organize our collection. Questions relating to the library may be directed to our elementary school librarians.



**Physical Education** - Our physical education program stresses skills in running, jumping, stretching, tumbling, and group sports, with an emphasis on cooperation rather than competition. Classes meet for forty-five minutes once each week for our organized physical education program in addition to regularly scheduled times throughout the day for recess and outdoor play. Our after school sports program and our annual “Field Day” in the spring enrich our physical education program

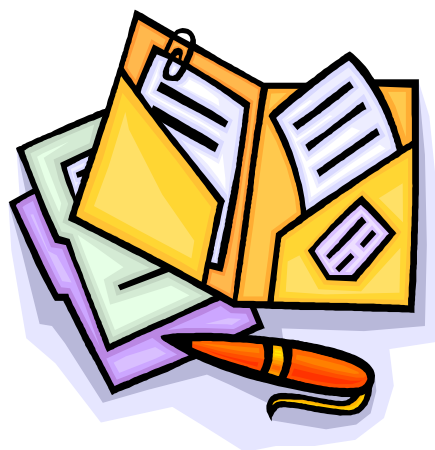


### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are held in December and March each year in conjunction with student progress summaries. These scheduled conference dates appear on the school calendar. Please note that school is in session for half days for students during these conference days. In addition to conferences with the regular classroom teacher, families may request a conference with a specialist (*i.e. art, music, physical education, learning support, gifted support, etc.*).

Parents will be contacted prior to the scheduled conference days indicating the date and time for the conference. Many teachers ask parents to indicate preferred conference times during the annual open house in the fall. Our teachers will make every effort to schedule conferences at a time convenient for parents/guardians. A few early morning or late afternoon times are made available, but these time slots are limited. We urge families to make arrangements with their employers to have some time during the workday for these important meetings held twice each year.

The conference is an opportunity for the teacher and parents/guardians to discuss a child's academic progress and personal and social development. At the conference, parents will have the opportunity to review samples of their child's work. These samples are housed in the student's portfolio. Requests for conferences with the child's teacher or other specialist teachers (*i.e. art, music, physical education, etc.*) at times during the year other than December and March should be made directly with the teacher.



### **Portfolio Assessment System**

We use a system of portfolio assessment to measure and document student progress in our integrated language arts program. Just as an artist maintains a portfolio of representative samples of his/her work, so will a student and teacher keep a collection of work that represents growth over time. The assessments emerge from the products of the students themselves in their daily work rather than solely from tests.

The process of learning rather than the product is emphasized. Portfolio assessment both supports and enhances the delivery of the various components that comprise an integrated language arts program. It is authentic, continuous, multi-dimensional, and allows for self-reflection. Teachers also maintain portfolios to document how understanding of math concepts develops over the school year.







### Student Progress Reports

Students are evaluated by teachers in various subject areas. The teachers establish their expectations for the lessons taught and determine the evaluation that students receive for their work. Students are usually graded on competency, productivity and demonstrated performance of newly acquired skills.

The State of Pennsylvania reports progress in mastery of the standards using the descriptors: Advanced, Proficient, Basic and Below Basic. Improving academic performance for all children is an essential part of Pennsylvania's educational system. In keeping with this vision, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Abington School District have established academic standards that define what students should know and be able to demonstrate at specific grade levels. The four performance levels illustrate students' achievement of the Academic Standards. The state descriptors are defined as follows:

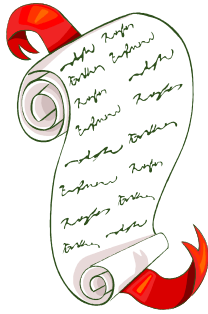
<u>Level</u>	<u>Description of Academic Performance for this Level</u>
<b>Advanced</b>	The Advanced Level reflects superior academic performance. Advanced work indicates an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. Students working at the advanced level are functioning above the expectations for the grade level (93-100% mastery on assessment items).
<b>Proficient</b>	The Proficient Level reflects satisfactory academic performance. Proficient work indicates a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. Students working at the proficient level are functioning at the expectations for grade level (80-92% mastery on assessment items). The instructional goal for ALL students is Proficiency!

<b>Basic</b>	Basic work indicates a partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. This work is approaching satisfactory performance, but has not been reached. There is a need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. Students working at a basic level have made some progress, but have not yet met the expectations for grade level (60-70% mastery on assessment items).
<b>Below Basic</b>	Below Basic work indicates little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. There is a major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. Students working at a below basic level are working significantly below expectations for the grade level (less than 60% mastery on assessment items).
<b>N/A</b>	Not assessed during the present marking period. Not all modes of writing will be assessed during each marking period.

Report cards are issued three times a year. The dates are in December, March, and June.

Our music, art, and physical education teachers issue special area progress reports that rate student performance on a number scale utilizing the letters O, S, and N. A rating of "O" indicates that the student is outstanding in that area. A rating of "S" indicates that the student is satisfactory in that area. A rating of "N" indicates that the student needs improvement in that area. Other behaviors such as cooperation, responsibility, and respect are also indicated on this report.

# **Custody Issues**



## **Children of Divorced Parents/Guardians with Custody Decree**

At the time of registration, the parent/guardian must present a copy of the custody agreement to the school principal or designee. The school district will follow the terms of the custody agreement. A copy of the document will be maintained in the child's school file.

## **Children of Single, Separated, or Divorced Parents/Guardians with no Custody Decree**

Both parents/guardians will be allowed access to the child as well as to all data pertaining to the child. This includes progress summaries, educational and health records, the right to attend conferences and school activities, and all regular and routine correspondence distributed through the U.S. postal service. We will not routinely send copies to the non-resident parent of flyers, school newsletters, calendars of events, etc. that are given to the children to take home. The person with whom the child is living will routinely receive the information which is distributed to families via the students. The non-resident parent/guardian may request in writing the same information. This request should be addressed to the building principal. It is the responsibility of the non-resident parent to keep the school informed of current addresses and phone numbers. We will make reasonable efforts to comply with these requests. Parents/guardians will be notified by the classroom teacher and urged to attend



meetings pertaining to special education placement, discussions relating to promotion or retention, suspensions, expulsions, or other serious disciplinary matters. Again, the non-resident parent will be responsible for updating addresses and phone numbers in the event of relocation.

The parent/guardian with whom the child is living will be the primary contact and will be notified in the event of serious accidents at school requiring medical attention. The non-resident parent/guardian may request in writing that he/she be notified in the event of a serious accident at school. We will make every reasonable effort to comply with such requests.

# **Discipline Policy**

McKinley Elementary School holds the safety and security of its students as its primary mission. You have entrusted us with your children and we take that responsibility very seriously. As a result, McKinley has established a code of conduct which is strongly enforced and encourages students to learn and grow developmentally. This code is reinforced throughout the entire school and sets the tone for creating a safe and orderly learning environment.

Sometimes, however, it is necessary for appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken to help children to learn and grow in their maturation and to assist them in developing lifelong social skills which will aide them as they grow into young adults. There are times when children's behavioral choices need to be examined and consequences need to be given. Some consequences that the school may utilize to assist children in making proper behavioral choices may include; time out to reflect upon poor choices in behavior, time with the teacher to reflect upon their choice of behavior, parental contact, removal from recess or a particular privilege, exclusion from a special event or time in the school office.

There are however, times when a child's behavior requires more severe exclusion from the school setting for a period of time. This is unfortunate and every attempt is made to find alternative means to remedy the child's behavior wherever possible by other means, however, certain behaviors are mandated by the school board for student exclusion from school. These behaviors as outlined in school board policy include:

- Buying, selling, giving, receiving, transferring, possessing, using, or being under the influence of unauthorized drugs or other substances and/or the possession of drug paraphernalia in school, on school property, or at any other school sponsored activity.
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage in school, on school property, or at any school sponsored activity.
- Bullying: For purposes of this Board Policy, "bullying" shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts:
  - Directed at another student or students
  - Which occurs in a school setting;
  - That is severe, persistent, or pervasive; and
  - That has the effect of doing any of the following:
    - Substantially interfering with a student's education;
    - Creating a threatening environment; or
    - Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and "school setting" shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school.

- Possession of a weapon in school, on school property, or any school sponsored activity or a public conveyance providing transportation to and from a school or school-sponsored activity.
- Fighting
- Stealing
- Disrespectful speech or actions
- Obscene conduct or language
- Excessive unexcused tardiness to school
- Truancy
- Forgery
- Vandalism of any nature, including defacing, damaging or destroying school property of any school employee, student or visitor on school grounds.
- Unauthorized entry into a school building or other school district property.
- Leaving school or school property without permission.
- Refusal to leave school property upon direction.
- Possession of tobacco by a student is prohibited in school buildings, on school buses and on school property owned by, leased by, or under the control of Abington School District.
- Setting off a false alarm. Students will also be referred to the fire marshal's office.
- Possession of laser pointers, cellular phones, or telephone pagers in school or on school grounds.
- The use of any racial or ethnic, religious, sexual and/or sexual orientation slurs.
- Any action which is deemed to have been a threat, or to be a threat, to the health, safety, or welfare of other students or school employees or a violation of other Board Policies or school rules.

If a situation exists where a child is suspected of being engaged in any one of these actions, the incident will be investigated by an administrator in the building, a decision made and the parent contacted and asked to come and pick up their child from school. The safety of the entire school community is the primary concern of school officials and if it becomes necessary to exclude a child from school it is done with the best interest of the entire school community in mind and only in the most severe of circumstances.

# Dress Code and Guidelines



There is no specific dress code for students at McKinley Elementary, but we reserve the right to determine if clothing is appropriate for an educational setting. We only ask that good taste be exercised at all times. We also ask that parents monitor the pictures and messages on T-shirts worn by students. Hats and caps for both boys and girls are not to be worn indoors since they can distract from instruction.

Students are expected to attend school dressed for the purpose of learning. We expect students to dress appropriately considering their age, the weather, and the need for safety. Please note that children should not wear the following to school:

- ☐ Clothing that makes reference to alcohol, drugs, violent behavior, or offensive language;
- ☐ Clothing that does not cover all undergarments;
- ☐ Halter tops or clothing exposing midribs or chests;
- ☐ Shoes that can cause imbalance or an inability to maneuver quickly and safely such as flip flops or open toed shoes.

## **Dress for Physical Education**

Please observe the following when your child is dressing for physical education (gym) classes:



- ☐ Children should wear clothing that allows them to move freely and safely.
- ☐ Dresses and skirts are not appropriate without shorts or tights underneath.
- ☐ Jewelry, valuables, and money should be left with the classroom teacher or at home.
- ☐ All students should wear sneakers in good repair. Preferably, sneakers should have non-marking soles. Sandals, flip-flops, clogs, or open-toed shoes are not appropriate for physical education classes.

## **Guidelines for Dress for Outside Play**

We encourage all children who are well enough to attend school to spend some time outdoors during scheduled recesses. Even when the playground is covered with snow, we will try to have some outdoor activity. In addition, all students should have a change of clothes if conditions are wet or muddy. However, students are not given the option of



remaining indoors while the class goes outside for recess. Therefore, all students must bring warm jackets, mittens or gloves, and a head covering, and be prepared to go outdoors. In severe weather conditions when wind chill factors or excessive heat present a hazard to the health and safety of our students, we will conduct a supervised indoor recess period.



We know that weather conditions can change frequently. A balmy day in January might be followed by a blast of cold weather. Unseasonably warm weather brings out the shorts and light jackets that are not appropriate for the brutal days that follow. Please make sure that children are appropriately dressed for winter weather. Help your child monitor daily weather forecasts and conditions to make sure s/he is adequately dressed for the day's activities.

Students should plan on spending some time outdoors every day during the school year and should come dressed appropriately. Even when severe weather conditions prohibit us from enjoying a scheduled outdoor recess break, students may still travel around the McKinley campus by going outside. It is imperative that students have warm jackets, head coverings, and mittens or gloves for chilly winter days. Boots are necessary on snowy days, even for travel to and from school.

## **Electronic Devices**

Students are not permitted to have electronic devices in school. All cell phones and electronic devices need to be stored in their locker or book bag throughout the course of the school day. Electronic devices are also not permitted at school events. Students are strongly encouraged not to bring electronic devices to school to prevent any concerns about loss or damage.

## **Emergency School Closings and Delayed Openings**

### **District Closing Due to Emergency Conditions Developing During the Night**



Heavy snowfall, icing, hurricane warnings, or other serious conditions (*i.e., electrical system failure, heating system failures, etc.*) may make it necessary to close school or to delay the opening. These decisions are made by the superintendent in consultation with the transportation department, and are based on the health and safety needs of our students. Announcements regarding school cancellations or delayed openings are made on the

KYW-AM radio station (1060 on the AM dial) beginning as early as 6:00 a.m. All area schools are assigned a numerical code for the rapid transmission of school schedule information. **The Abington Township School District school schedule announcement number is #301.** Other stations often broadcast this information as well, but the primary responsibility for these announcements rests with KYW-AM. This same station has also established a website, allowing listeners to access the information without listening to a long recitation of school code numbers. From your home computer you can simply go to [www.kyw1060.com](http://www.kyw1060.com). Once you have connected to the website, there will be a flashing button labeled *School Closing Information*. Click on that button and the numerical listing, arranged by counties, will appear. We are located in Montgomery County. If you look for #301, you will see whether schools are closed or if there is a delayed opening. If you do not see the Abington school code number, assume that school is in session and operating on the regular schedule.

Alternatively, KYW-AM news radio has also established a toll-charge call-in phone service. For a \$.95 charge, you can dial 1-900-737-1060. Then simply punch in the school code 301 followed by the pound (#) sign. A voice recording will indicate any school closing or delayed start information.



A “hot line” for school closing information operated by the school district will play a recorded voice message regarding school closing announcements or delayed openings. The school district will implement the Skyward Communication System which will deliver a message to the phone number provided to the school district by the parent. This phone system calls all students’ homes for any delay or closure. It is therefore imperative that all contact information be current in order for parents to receive these emergency messages from the district office. Whenever possible, school closing announcements will be displayed on the local cable television bulletin board on Channel 61.

**We urge parents to make contingency plans for childcare on days when openings are delayed or school is cancelled.**

#### **Delayed Start Openings Due to Conditions Developing Overnight**

There may be days during the year, usually as a result of weather and road conditions, when the opening of school is delayed for two hours if it is determined that school can proceed as usual with a delayed opening. Announcements for delayed openings will be made on the KYW-AM news radio station. Please refer to the section above that provides detailed information on where and how parents can access this information in the event of a delayed opening or school cancellation.





These late start days result in some schedule modifications. These are outlined below:

- **BUS SCHEDULE:** Since the regular arrival time under normal conditions is 8:50 a.m., on these late start days, students will report at 10:50 a.m.
- **PARENT DROP-OFF SCHEDULE:** Students must not arrive at school prior to 10:30 a.m. on these late start days. **There is no one on duty to supervise students prior to 10:30 a.m.**
- **EXTENDED DAY SCHEDULE:** The extended day program will also operate on a two-hour delay schedule. Since it usually opens at 7:30 a.m. on the regular schedule, it will be open to receive students at 9:30 a.m. on delayed opening days.
- **BEFORE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:** Any before school activities will be cancelled on late start days.

## Emergency School Closings Due to Conditions Developing During the School Day



There may be days when school buildings must be closed early due to weather or mechanical problems. Announcements are broadcast on KYW-AM news radio (1060 on the AM dial), via the school district Skyward Communication phone system to report school incidents or closings to a phone number provided by parents, or the local cable television bulletin board. Parents will also be contacted by phone via the Skyward Communication Automated Telephone System.

Families must complete an emergency card listing all phone numbers (*i.e. home, work, car phone, cell phone, pager, etc.*) where they can be reached during the day as well as the phone numbers of a trusted neighbor, friend, or relative who can be contacted if we are unable to reach the parents. Although every effort will be made to notify you, we cannot guarantee that families will receive this information in every instance. Families are urged to anticipate such actions and to have an emergency plan in place beforehand.

It is imperative that your children know what to do and where to go should such an emergency occur. In cases where no one will be home to greet the children, provision should be made with neighbors or another responsible person to take care of children upon their arrival at home. If a child is customarily met by a parent/guardian when exiting the bus, families must make adequate provisions for the child in cases of bad weather or other emergencies. Families are strongly urged to pick up their children from their assigned bus stop. Additional traffic around the school in weather emergencies may be hazardous and should be avoided.

### Individual School Closing Due to Emergency Conditions Developing During the School Day

If emergency conditions warrant, a decision to close an individual school will be made during the normal school day. Because the safety of the children is paramount, students may be transported to a safe area, which will be one of the other district schools or a building located near the school site. McKinley staff members will initiate the Skyward Communication System and ask families to pick up their children or arrange for transportation with a neighbor or friend.



Students will be released to a “designated adult” in these rare instances when we are confident that it is in the best interest of the student. Otherwise, students will remain in the safe area and be dismissed at the normal time with regular bus transportation provided.

## **Emergency Information Forms**



It is imperative that each family fill out an emergency information card at the beginning of each school year. This card tells us where parents or guardians can be reached in the event of an emergency. Families must also indicate a trusted neighbor or friend we can contact in the event that we cannot reach the parent or guardian. Please make sure you update the information should there be any changes during the school year. All cards are kept in the school office. Classroom teachers keep an additional copy of this information. Information should also be updated in the Skyward data communication system.

## **Facility Use by PTO and Community Groups**

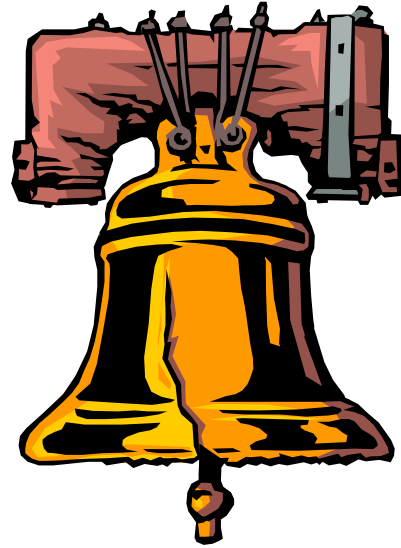


Applications for the use of the school facilities are made in accordance with policies established by the Board of School Directors. Anyone or any group wishing to use a part of the school building or school grounds must complete an application for a permit and submit it to the principal for review and then to the Director of Facilities at the school district administration building. Applicants will be notified of the district’s response in writing. Anyone granted permission to use the facilities must remove all litter and debris at the conclusion of the activity and must restrict activities to the designated

area cited in the application.

## **Field Trips**

Throughout the school year, McKinley students take a variety of field trips. These trips are coordinated by teachers and team leaders by grade level. Field trips relate to our curriculum by taking students to places that they have learned about in the classroom. We recognize that learning can occur both in and out of school. Sometimes the best way to make classroom learning “come alive” is through a trip to the actual site—whether it’s Franklin Court to learn about the life of Benjamin Franklin, to the zoo to investigate an endangered species, or to the art museum to see the works of the Impressionists. Teachers spend a great deal of time in planning and coordinating a quality experience for the class. Students who choose not to participate in field trips must still attend school. During the time of the field trip, they will be placed in another classroom with appropriate class work. Unless the student is ill, staying home during a field trip does not constitute an excused absence.



Prior to each trip, parents must sign permission slips. Fees are collected to offset the cost of transportation and admission charges. Parents often accompany their children’s classes on field trips at the request of the classroom teacher. Parents are responsible for their own admission charges. At times, the number of parents who wish to participate is more than we can accommodate on our

buses or at the field trip site. When that situation occurs, teachers will choose from among the volunteers in order to limit the size of the group. We reserve the right to determine who and how many will accompany the class. Classroom parents are often invited because they know most of the children in the class and have worked closely with the classroom teacher. Many teachers ask for volunteers and then select from that pool. Other times there is no limit to the number of parents who can participate. We make the best educational decision we can given the nature and purpose of the activity.

The role of parents during these outings is vital to the success of the field trip. Parents serve as chaperones



and must supervise a small group of children throughout the day. The responsibilities of chaperones include accompanying children to restrooms, assisting with activities, pointing out information, maintaining discipline, and other duties as requested by the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher is in charge of coordinating details such as schedules, organization of groups, observing rules and regulations, and directing parent volunteers. The safety and security of children is our utmost concern, and we value the support of parent volunteers who will assist us in this mission. All chaperones for school trips must complete the required child abuse and police clearances as outlined in the school volunteer handbook.

Planning and coordinating these field trip experiences is a huge responsibility for teachers. A kind word from parents or a simple thank-you goes a long way toward making this a fulfilling experience for all.

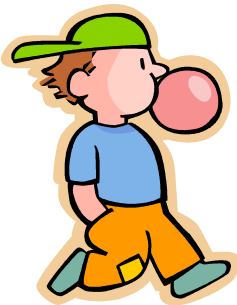
## **Fire Drills**



Fire escape routes are posted near the door of every classroom throughout the building. Check these maps to determine the fastest and safest escape route. One monthly fire drill for students and staff is conducted as required by state law. When an alarm is sounded, students must listen for teacher instructions, follow directions, and quietly leave the building in orderly lines. Any visitors present in the school at the time of a fire drill must exit the building quickly and quietly and maintain a position at a safe distance from the building until the all-clear signal is issued, indicating that it is safe to re-enter the school.

## **Forgotten Items**

Students will not be permitted to return to their classrooms after school has been dismissed to retrieve forgotten items without the supervision of a parent or guardian. You must check in at the school office to obtain permission to go to the classroom. The custodians and the night cleaning crew have been instructed NOT to admit children or parents to the classrooms during the evening hours to retrieve forgotten items, school books, or homework assignments. Please do not place them in an awkward position by asking them to go against this school policy. They have a busy schedule during the evening and cannot accommodate numerous visits to school to retrieve forgotten items.

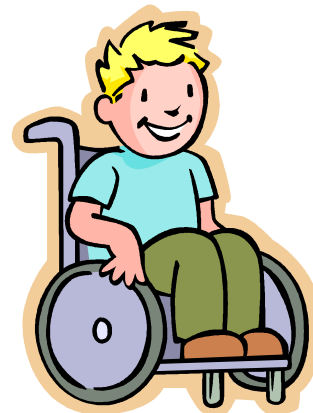


## **Gum Chewing**

Gum chewing is not allowed in school or on the school grounds.

## **Handicapped Access**

Students, friends, and visitors who use wheelchairs can access the building near the office. There is a curb cut-out permitting handicapped access. Ramps in the courtyard make it possible to access any classroom via a wheelchair. Designated parking for the handicapped is located in the parking lot closest to the main entrance. Please contact the office before your arrival for assistance or if you have questions.



# **Holiday Observances**



The study of holidays is a significant way in which children learn about the importance of culture. Traditions are highlighted and the similarities and differences in cultural practices are recognized. The observance of historical, cultural, religious, and patriotic events with ceremonies or festivals is common across many cultures. Therefore, it is natural for teachers to recognize and teach about these events as part of the planned curriculum or as a result of the expressed interest of students.

Our goal is to help children look beyond the celebration to its historic, patriotic, or cultural context.

Holidays may also be explored in relation to the food, customs, landforms, and resources of the region.

We observe holidays as members of families or citizens of local communities. We also celebrate holidays as a nation or along with others around the world. Listed below are some activities in which students may participate while studying holidays:

- researching holidays in order to tell specific information about events and origins;
- organizing information about different types of holidays and the reasons for celebrations;
- constructing timelines indicating when during the year that holidays around the world are observed;
- constructing creative arts projects relating to specific holidays;
- listening to or talking with guest speakers who have a strong knowledge base for a particular holiday.

These activities are listed as examples only and may serve as springboards for a more extensive study of specific holidays.

## **School Attendance During Holidays**

Excused absences are granted for recognized religious holidays and for services regularly observed by a person practicing their faith. This policy applies only to the day of the holiday and does not include absences for travel prior to or after the holiday. We will make every effort to avoid scheduling tests and major school events on religious holidays. Students will be given the opportunity to make up missed assignments for excused absences on religious holidays.



### **Student Exclusion During Classroom Celebrations**

Some families for religious or personal reasons request that their child not be a part of holiday recognitions that occur in classrooms. McKinley Elementary School respects each parent's personal choice in regards to their children's upbringing and will honor these requests. We respectfully request that parents submit this request in writing to their child's classroom teacher. The child will be asked to report to a designated location in the building.

## **Homeroom Parents**



Every year many parents volunteer to serve as homeroom parents for their child's classroom. Responsibilities generally include such things as organizing classroom parties, contacting other parents with important messages, lending a hand at special events, and more. Parents with flexible work schedules may want to consider serving in this important role to support our classroom activities. Contact the PTO Homeroom Parent Coordinator if you are interested. It will be necessary for room parents to obtain police and child abuse clearances prior to serving in this role.

## **Classroom Placement**

Students are assigned to classrooms in order to achieve a heterogeneous balance. Student placement is a critical educational process based on set criteria serving educational purposes. The professionals involved in the school setting, out of concern for the total school program, maintain the right and the responsibility for placement. *If parents have additional pertinent information about their child, they may submit it in writing to the principal for placement consideration prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>.*

Please know that the best judgment of the professionals involved will be the primary consideration in student placement. Special requests for individual teachers cannot be honored, however every attempt will be made to match students and teachers based upon instructional and learning styles.



## **Homework Policy**



Homework enhances our instructional program and is assigned by each classroom teacher. The purpose of homework is to extend and reinforce lessons taught during the school day. Generally speaking, multiply the grade level times ten to arrive at a reasonable amount of homework time each evening. This means that a first-grader may have only ten minutes of homework per night, while a fifth-grader may be assigned fifty minutes of homework each evening. Remember, these guidelines are very general, and they

represent an average. Therefore, several days may pass with little homework. This may be balanced by more lengthy assignments on other evenings.

Even when homework is not assigned by the classroom teacher, it is always a good idea for students to read independently 15-20 minutes each evening. Parents have a special role in helping their children practice reading skills by reading aloud to them also. Should you have questions or concerns regarding student homework, contact the teacher directly. For a copy of the Abington Township School District's policy on homework, please contact the principal's office.

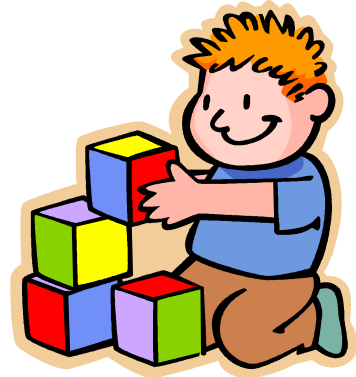


## **Internet**

While the district's intent is to make Internet and telecommunications access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to use the Internet inappropriately in school. The district believes that the advantages to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Parents and students are asked to complete the Acceptable Use Policy Form prior to a child being permitted to make use of the school district internet system. Inappropriate use of the system cannot be tolerated and could result in disciplinary action or denial of a child's internet access.

# **Kindergarten**

We receive so many questions about our kindergarten program that we've prepared a special section just to answer those questions. We trust this will provide you with the information you seek. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call the school office.



## **Age of Entrance for Kindergarten**

Students entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1st, and are required to present proof of age for admission.

## **Kindergarten Registration**

Kindergarten registration begins on the first regularly-scheduled school day in February. Watch the local papers for information. Registration packets and letters are sent home to all prospective kindergarten families based upon the school district census reports. The packets provide families with information needed for registration and scheduled times are established for parents to register their children for kindergarten in the Spring.



To enroll at McKinley Elementary School, please gather the following information: 1) current immunization record; 2) proof of age such as a birth certificate or passport; 3) proof of residence in the township such as a deed or mortgage statement, agreement of sale for your home, tax bills, rental lease or agreement. All documents must be the original forms; we will make copies for our files. All students are required to present a signed physical statement from their pediatrician or family doctor. Since this physical must be completed within six months of school entrance, most families schedule this exam during the summer months immediately preceding entrance to kindergarten.

If a child is living in Abington School District, but is residing with a relative who does not have legal guardianship but is a resident of Abington Township, it will be necessary to have the Abington resident complete an affidavit proving the prospective student's residency in Abington Township. Only Abington residents may attend Abington schools. An affidavit proving residency can be completed at the district administration building.

### **Kindergarten Orientation**

We invite all registered incoming kindergarten parents to visit in the spring prior to their school entrance. During their visit, they will participate in the routine activities of a typical kindergarten day. Parents will be involved in a presentation about the kindergarten program led by kindergarten teachers and key school officials, but they do not accompany their children to the classroom. This provides a wonderful opportunity for children to enjoy their independence at school in a closely-supervised setting without their parents. Information about this orientation program with dates and times for the scheduled visits will be mailed to all registered kindergarten students' parents early in the spring. The school also hosts a brief kindergarten orientation in the Fall before school begins. Dates and times for this event can be obtained from the school office.

### **Kindergarten Curriculum and Program**

During their day, the students are involved in language arts activities including emergent reading and writing experiences. We truly believe that children learn through exploration and discovery of the world around them. By the time they



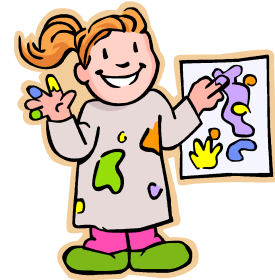
arrive at our door, most students have spent two or more years in a preschool program. They are now ready to begin a more formal approach to the basic subjects and are poised to begin a period of incredible cognitive, social, and emotional growth. Parents are often surprised to learn that most children learn to write before they learn to read. Our goal is to get pencils into young hands as quickly as possible so your children can begin to make sense of our written language. Students will

write simple stories beginning early in the school year. The first attempts can be quite primitive and may consist of random words or a simple picture with a dictated caption. Stories become more complex and sophisticated as the year progresses. By the end of the school year, many students will write a simple story consisting of a sentence or two. Given a blank piece of paper, a child is limited only by his/her imagination and determination.



The first organized reading activities will consist of shared reading experiences in which children will enjoy a big book, a story read aloud to them, or an easy book with a repetitive pattern. Research tells us that phonemic awareness is a vital first step in learning to read. This is the stage in which students become aware of the various sounds that make up the words they say and hear. They learn how to isolate and identify the first sounds in the words (*i.e. This word begins with the 'b' sound.*) Eventually, they can discriminate between the sounds of the letters (*i.e. Do you hear a 't' sound or a 'd' sound in that word?*). Soon children will be identifying words they see in the world around them (*i.e. McDonald's, pizza, stop, etc*), reading easy sight words (*i.e. go, the, to, and, me, I*), and using picture cues to retell a favorite story. While it is not unusual for a few kindergarten students to be reading by the end of the year, this is not the goal for every child. Time and patience are the keys to future reading success.

In math, children will use manipulative materials such as cubes, colored circles, teddy bear counters, geometric shapes, etc. in order to grasp and demonstrate understanding of a math concept. Once children possess the conceptual underpinnings, they are ready to begin paper and pencil activities and to deal with the more abstract nature of our number system. Children can understand simple addition stories, can count by tens, identify basic geometric shapes, create a simple pattern, and identify two-digit numbers.



### Kindergarten Specials

Our kindergarten students receive instruction in music, art, physical education, and library skills in addition to the basic subjects. These classes are scheduled for 45 minutes per week and are taught by certified teachers in those special areas.

### **Bus Transportation For Kindergarten**

Students in kindergarten will ride the regular school buses with other McKinley students in first through sixth grades. They will board buses at the designated bus stops.

It is our policy that our kindergarten students will not be allowed to disembark from buses at home until our drivers are assured that a parent is visible or the door to the house is open so students can enter. If no one is at home to receive kindergarten children, students will remain on the bus and return to school where they will wait until parents can be contacted to pick them up. We know that this change in routine can cause anxiety for young children. If an emergency occurs and parents cannot be at home to receive children, they must contact the school office at (215) 663-0430. If necessary, the transportation office will inform parents if the practice is repeated or the policy abused.



Students in kindergarten classes return home at the end of the day on the regular school buses with other students in first through sixth grades.

## **K-Kids**

K-Kids is a national service club sponsored by the Kiwanis Club International for sixth graders. The goals of K-Kids are to provide opportunities for service to school and community, develop leadership potential, foster the development of moral character, and encourage loyalty to the school, community, and nation. The McKinley K-Kids Chapter is the second chapter in Pennsylvania



## **Lockdown Drills**

Periodically it is necessary for the school to conduct lockdown drills. During these drills teachers will direct students to remain in the classroom and secure the classroom, asking the students to be quiet and wait for further direction from the administrator conducting the drill. When an alarm is sounded, students must listen for teacher instructions, follow directions, and wait quietly for further information. Any students outside of the building



for recess will be directed by the aides and staff to return to the building and report to their regular classroom. Any visitors present in the school at the time of a lockdown drill must report to the office of the building quickly and quietly and await further direction from the building administrator until the all-clear signal is issued, indicating that it is safe to resume the normal school routine. During the drill period, the school building will be completely secured and entry to the building will be prohibited. Unfortunately, unforeseen circumstances sometimes require that the school building become secured from any external threat and it is necessary therefore for the staff and students to practice this drill so they are prepared and not frightened in the case of an actual emergency.

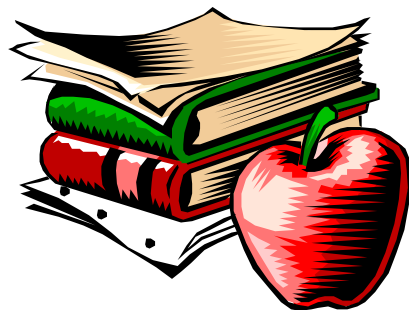
## **Lost but not Found**



As the school year progresses, we accumulate a significant number of lost articles. It is always a good idea to label all jackets, book bags, sweaters, sweatshirts, hats, boots, mittens, etc. Lost items can be claimed in our lost and found hallway, which is located on the coat racks on the left as you enter the cafeteria doors. Periodically, items in good condition which are not claimed will be donated to a local charity or homeless shelter.

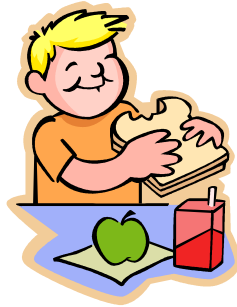
## **Lost and Damaged Book Policy**

The school furnishes books to all students for instruction. Students are expected to take care of these books. Lost or damaged books must be paid for before the final progress summary is issued. This also applies to library books.





# Lunch Program



## **Schedule of Lunch Periods**

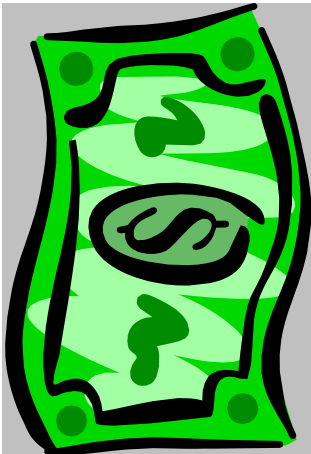
Students eat with their homeroom classes in the cafeteria. Each grade level is scheduled for approximately 30 minutes of recess before reporting to the school cafeteria for a period of 30 minutes for lunch. Two grade levels eat during each scheduled period. The lunch and recess schedule varies every year according to the building schedule and our scheduled special classes.

## **Menus**



Our school cafeteria provides a multitude of choices for a healthy lunch. Under the guidance of the district's registered dietician, well-balanced, nutritional weekly menus are developed by students wishing to purchase hot meals. Pizza days are always a favorite! Lunch menus are printed and distributed to students monthly. As an alternative to the complete platter that is offered, students may choose soup and sandwich. Alternate lunch choices are also available on a daily basis. Students also have the option of bringing lunch from home and supplementing their meal with milk (*regular, skim, strawberry, or chocolate*) or juice drinks. Snacks such as pretzels and ice cream treats can also be purchased at the end of the meal.

## **Lunch Prices and Purchase**



Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, the Chartwell's Cafeteria Service introduced a new method of payment for lunches. This is a convenient, easy and secure online prepayment service to deposit money into your child's school meal account at any time. This service also provides parents with the ability to view their child's account balance through a web site called [Myschoolbucks.com](http://Myschoolbucks.com)

By having money in each child's account prior to entering the cafeteria, we find the lunch lines move along much faster so

each child has more time to eat and be with friends. Also parents have the ability to print out a copy of their child's eating history report. This history report will show you all of the dates and times that your child has purchased a lunch along with any snack items within the past thirty days.

**To access these services:**

1. Simply go to the district web site at [www.abington.k12.pa.us](http://www.abington.k12.pa.us)
2. Click on the Myschoolbucks.com link. From this site you will create your account and add money to your child's school meal account. All you need is your child's name, student ID number and school ZIP code. The instructions listed below will help to guide you through the easy online account set up process.

**Things to know:**

1. If you have more than one child in the District you can handle all online prepayments from the same online account.
2. Payments may be made through an existing PayPal account or with a major credit or debit card.
3. In order to use the online prepayment service, a small convenience fee for each transaction will be assessed to cover the bank fees. The convenience fee is \$1.75 per deposit transaction. Parents placing money into multiple meal accounts will only be assessed the \$1.75 fee once per deposit transaction. Abington School District will not profit from the use of this site.

**Registering for MyNurtikids.com**

1. You will first need your child's student ID number
2. Go to the district website at [www.abington.k12.pa.us](http://www.abington.k12.pa.us) then click on "About ASD," go to the Lunch Program information Tab, and click on the link to MyNutrikids.com OR go to [www.Myschoolbucks.com](http://www.Myschoolbucks.com)
3. Click Sign Up and enter the required information
4. Click Finish to complete the initial registration process

**How to Add Students to Your Family Account**

1. When you log in you will be taken to the homepage.
2. Click MyKids from the main menu OR from the blue navigation bar above.
3. This is a listing of the students in your account. It will be empty on your first visit to the site.
4. Click Add Child and enter the required information.
5. Click Add (next to your child's name) to continue
6. Click Add Child to repeat the process for additional children
7. NOTE: Your child's transaction history report will not display information during the initial account set up process.

**How to Make a Deposit**

1. Click Deposit Money located next to Add Student
2. Enter amount in the Deposit column by your child's name
  - a. If you have more than one child, enter the amount you wish to deposit into the column next to each child's name. DO NOT

deposit money for your entire family into ONE child's account.

3. Click Calculate
4. Click Make Deposit
5. You will be directed to the PayPal website to enter your payment information
  - a. You have the option to use your existing PayPal account or a major credit card to make your payment.
  - b. If you are using your PayPal account, enter your email address and PayPal password to continue
  - c. If you are using a credit card, enter the required information. For your protection, Myschoolbucks.com will not store your financial information.
6. Click Pay Now when finished
7. Click Pay once again to finish the process

We are excited to be able to offer these services and are confident that this system will be a benefit to you, your child and the District. However, if you choose not to take advantage of the online prepayment service you may continue to make advance payments via cash or check, which should be made payable to the Abington School District Food Services. Please write your child's full name on the check.

If you have any questions about these new services, please feel free to contact the food service office 215-884-4700 EXT 2355.

Single day lunch price	\$2.65
Milk/juice	\$0.55
Ice cream treats & snacks	\$1.00

(Prices are subject to change each year)

We participate in the federally subsidized school lunch program that allows families on a limited income to receive lunch at a reduced price or for no cost. Applications are sent home with all students in the August mailing to all homes. Families who complete the application and are approved for this program will receive notification from the food services office.

### **Bag Lunches**

Many children choose to bring a bag lunch from home. Please remember that beverages in glass containers are prohibited. Classroom teachers have large laundry baskets or carts in which students deposit their lunch bags upon arriving at school. At lunchtime, students retrieve their lunches from the basket or cart when they enter the cafeteria following recess.



### **Peanut Allergies**

Several students in our school have life-threatening allergies to peanuts and peanut products. Therefore,

we have implemented several measures to ensure the safety of these students in our school. We have established a peanut free zone in our cafeteria where students can eat ONLY if they have food which does not include peanuts, is not made from peanut products, or is not manufactured in a peanut environment. We would respectfully ask all parents to monitor the food that their children bring to school for products containing peanuts, particularly if one of these students is in their class. Due to the severity of these allergies some of these students can have life-threatening reactions to other students who have consumed peanut products recently or carry residue of peanuts on their hands. It is necessary as well that parents who provide snacks to the school be vigilant about making sure that the snacks they provide do not have any form of peanut product in them in or used in their creation. ALL ingredients in the snack need to be provided to the school to ensure the safety of these items for all students. Failure to provide this information will prevent the snack from being distributed to the students.

## **McMail**



McMail is an internal mail system implemented to encourage reading and writing. Students in third grade apply for positions and then run the post office. Parents are invited to send letters to their children at the following street address.

Dragon Drive – 5<sup>th</sup> grade wing (rooms 131-140)

64<sup>th</sup> Street – 6<sup>th</sup> grade wing (rooms 121-130)

Primary Place – Kindergarten Hall (rooms 104-108, and music room 1)

Long Lane – Back Hall (rooms 109-120, and room 5 (reading))

First Street- 1<sup>st</sup> grade hall (rooms 101-103, and the main lobby)

Main Street – Front Hall (Office area, gym, library, and 8 C reading)

Brain Lane – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade hall (Rooms 150-152, plus 9, 9B, and 118 A)

## **Media Release Forms**

We require a signed release form indicating that your child's image may not be photographed or videotaped when involved in educational activities as part of the school program. The signed form remains in force each year unless revoked in writing by the parent or guardian. We respectfully ask that parents who have denied permission for their children to be photographed or videotaped to please discuss with their children the basis for this decision so that children understand and are prepared during



photo or video sessions. Please know that children for whom we do not have signed media release forms may be asked to sit in designated areas or be excused from activities when photographs are taken or videotapes are recorded.

## **Medical Appointments and Emergencies**

Children will be granted permission to leave school for medical appointments or for emergency reasons. Parents/guardians should notify the school in writing, giving the date and time of the child's release. The parent/guardian must report to the school office to pick up the child and sign him/her out. Students are not permitted to leave the school building without a parent or guardian or authorized person by the parent or guardian.

## **Money and Valuables—Toys and Games**



The school will not be responsible for any money or valuables lost, stolen, or damaged at school or on the school buses. Please know that portable electronic devices such as iPods, computer games, cell phones, kindles etc. should not be brought to school. With teacher permission, students may bring cameras or portable electronic devices on field trips or other outings.

Nevertheless, responsibility for these items rests solely with the student and his/her family. Students need to be aware that they may not use these items throughout the course of the school day and that the penalty for making use of these items is confiscation of the item until the end of the day. If the use of the item becomes a habitual problem, the teacher will call the parent and ask them to come to school to pick it up.

## **Newsletters**

The principal's newsletter, as well as newsletters from the McKinley PTO, are issued periodically throughout the school year. The McKinley P.T.O. sends home calendar of activities in and around the school each month. Post these calendars in a handy place to keep abreast of the many activities at McKinley.



## **Non-discrimination Policy**

Abington School District is committed to complying fully with all federal and state

laws banning discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identification or expression and/or mental or physical handicap or disability in instructional programs, extracurricular activities, and employment practices. If you believe that you or your child is a victim of discrimination by the school district, you should refer the matter to the attention of the building principal or area supervisor. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, it should be brought to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools. Questions or concerns may be directed to Ms. Judy Bomze, Director of Pupil Services (215) 881-2505.

## **Open House Nights**

Every fall, we hold two Open House Events during the evening. These programs are designed for parents only. The evenings begin with an opportunity to meet informally with the specialists such as the art teacher, music teacher, physical education teacher, psychologist, reading specialist, curriculum specialist, and more. Then the principal welcomes parents during a brief introduction and overview in the school auditorium. Parents proceed to their children's classrooms where they have an opportunity to meet the teacher.



The teacher usually presents a brief program about classroom procedures and policies. He/she will review homework expectations and offer an overview of the curriculum for the school year. This evening is not intended for discussions, either formally or informally, about student progress. That information is better shared during a phone conference or a school conference at another time. Homeroom parents are also on hand to discuss PTO events or to enlist parent volunteers for school activities. Many teachers also ask parents to indicate a preferred time for the parent-teacher conferences at the Open House event.

## **Out-of-School Activities**

The school has no authority or responsibility for activities scheduled by families outside the school day. Consistent with this policy, we ask that invitations for private parties NOT be distributed at school.



## **Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)**



Every parent and teacher at McKinley Elementary is automatically a member of the PTO. Meetings are held on alternating mornings and evenings during the school year in the McKinley cafeteria on or about the first Thursday

of every month. That is when all business is conducted, all committee reports are presented, and information is given about programs and events. Guest speakers are often present to discuss current school and district issues. The PTO works throughout the year to raise funds to support many of our special programs at McKinley. Each classroom teacher receives a special fund to purchase classroom materials and supplies every year.

## **Peer Mediation/Conflict Busters Program**

The skills presented in this program will enable students to reduce the tensions and hostilities associated with conflict. At the same time, they will learn how to acknowledge one another and how to come to an understanding based on the real needs of both people involved in the dispute. In short, this program is about developing new life skills that students can use to deal effectively with everyday conflict and to improve the quality of their own lives. Each year older students are selected to be members of the McKinley Peer Mediation team. These students work with younger students and peers to resolve conflict issues that present themselves using a prescribed set of questions to allow the students to work through their respective concerns and issues.

## **Pets**



Pets are not permitted on the school playground at any time. Bringing pets to school as part of a classroom activity must have prior approval of the building principal. This policy is necessary for both safety and health related reasons. If the presence of the pet becomes disruptive to classroom activities, we will ask the responsible party to remove the pet immediately.



## **Pictures**

Individual photographs will be taken in all grades, kindergarten through grade six in October. Classroom pictures will also be taken in the spring. Please advise your children of proper attire on these special days, as pictures have always been popular with parents. Your cooperation on these days is greatly appreciated. Parents will have the opportunity to purchase their child's photograph through the independent contractor who photographs our students. Information about the packages available and the cost will be provided prior to photographs being taken.

## **Procedure for Addressing Concerns**

Whenever parents have a concern or questions regarding any educational matter, they should address that concern first with the teacher closest to the situation. Most questions can be answered simply by contacting the teacher for clarification if handled immediately. If parents wish to pursue the matter after first discussing it with the teacher, they may contact the principal.

## **Programs and Services**

We offer a variety of programs to help every child gain the most from his/her educational program. What follows is a brief discussion of these programs and services.

### **Autistic Support Program**

Our autistic support program offers support to students in the regular classroom and/or an alternative learning environment when students' needs cannot be met in the general education classroom. Services are related to the basic instructional areas—reading, writing, and math. As a result of the core team process, additional testing might be recommended. Once the data is compiled, the team meets with parents to determine if the student requires autistic support. Parents serve as integral members of the team to determine the need for intervention as well as to help design the individual education plan (IEP). The IEP lists broad and short-term goals and is reviewed periodically to determine the child's progress toward the goals. Meetings are scheduled to monitor progress and determine the need for continued services and the most appropriate placement.



### **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

Abington School District provides English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. Students whose dominant language is not English are assessed upon entry into the district and, if warranted, are provided ESL support instruction. The program's major goal is to help students develop competencies in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing English. The ESL teacher meets with students in small groups several times each week. All ESL students who have been in the country for one or more years, regardless of their ESL level, are to receive regular classroom grades on the Abington School District Report of Student Progress. Students exit the ESL program when they meet the following criteria:



- 1 A score of Basic on the PSSA (or comparable district-wide assessment for students in grades K-2
- 2 A score of 5 or higher on the Tier C WIDA language proficiency exam given annually by the state
- 3 A score of 70% or higher in all four core subject areas

### **A.P.E.X. (Gifted) Program**



On the recommendation of a professional team, including classroom teachers, support staff, the building principal, and a school psychologist, students may be referred for psychological testing. Parents may request a gifted evaluation in writing and are limited to one per school year. Once data are compiled, decisions are based on demonstrated student performance and documented student needs. If services are required, an individual education planning (IEP) conference is held with the parents to

determine placement and programming, which is based on individual student needs. These services can be provided both in the general education classroom or the seminar classroom.

### **Definition of Mentally Gifted**

Mentally gifted is defined as outstanding intellectual or creative ability, the development of which requires special services and programs not ordinarily provided in the regular education program. The term includes a person who has an IQ of 130 or higher and when multiple criteria, as set forth in the Department of Education guidelines, indicate gifted ability. Determination of gifted ability shall not be based on IQ scores alone.

### **Gifted Screening Process**

All kindergarten and second grade students are given the Cognitive Abilities Test, a group administered test of aptitude. Students who perform in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile rank or higher are referred to the gifted screening process. Students can also be referred at the request of their teacher or parents.

Screening consists of the following components:

- 1 Review of academic record (report cards, district or state administered standardized assessment, other information that may be available)
- 2 Teacher input – Teacher Recommendation Form and rates of acquisition and retention.
- 3 Curriculum based assessments in reading and mathematics

If a student meets the criteria at the screening level, a formal evaluation is requested. Once parent permission is obtained, the evaluation consists of the following components:

- 1 All the data that was gathered in the screening process
- 2 Parent input – Parent Information and Parent Recommendation forms and any other input the parent (s) wish to provide.
- 3 Standardized assessment of cognitive functioning administered by the school psychologist.
- 4 Standardized assessment of academic achievement administered by the school psychologist.
- 5 Any other data submitted for consideration

A Gifted Written Report (GWR) is prepared which includes the Information and findings from the evaluation concerning the student's educational needs and strengths. The report makes recommendations as to whether the student is gifted and in need of specially designed instruction.

If the student is found to meet the criteria based on the GWR, a Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP) is developed. A GIEP is a written plan describing the education to be provided a gifted student. Abington School District's gifted program for the elementary level consists of APEX (Abington Program for Excellence) in which gifted students are pulled out of the regular classroom for 2.5 hours per week. The program's focus is the development of critical thinking, self-expression, respect for the opinion and ideas of others, listening skills and logic. Students' individual gifted needs are addressed through this program.

### **Core Team**

Our core team assists classroom teachers, students, and parents in providing appropriate interventions in the classroom. The team meets weekly to review and analyze all curriculum-based assessments in reading and



mathematics. Classroom teachers also keep the team abreast of behavioral concerns, attendance/tardiness issues and parent requests. Using all available data, the core team determines the students in need of remediation, enrichment and/or acceleration. Core team members include the principal, assistant principal, curriculum specialist, school psychologist and reading specialist. The team assesses specific needs and develops and implements an action plan by providing instructional strategies that capitalize on the child's strengths while developing his/her areas of specific need—all for the purpose of intervening to support the child in regular education when academic or behavioral difficulties occur.

Services provided by the team members include coordinating materials and human resources to meet the student's needs, consulting with the classroom teacher, conducting assessments, observing student behavior, and participating in the referral process as necessary for special education placement. At the core of the process is the belief that *all students can learn and that all students deserve support*. For additional information regarding the core team process, contact the school psychologist.

### Health Services

Our health department is staffed by a certified school nurse or licensed practical nurse to provide student health services. The nurse is available to treat minor cuts and abrasions, maintain physical and immunization records, dispense medication, conduct health checks, and respond to health emergencies. Every school year the nurse checks and records height, weight, and vision status for every child. Hearing is checked and recorded in kindergarten, first, second, and third grades. Periodically, the nurse will check for head lice if the need arises. Any concerns will be reported to parents promptly.



In consideration of other families, please abide by the following requests concerning the health of your child:

- While we can address emergencies, we do not have adequate facilities to keep a sick child all day long.
- Children who wake in the morning feeling ill should remain at home where they will receive



proper care. Families of children who arrive at school ill will be contacted to come to the school and take their children home.

- Please notify the school if there are restrictions caused by a recent illness or other physical condition. A signed note from the physician must be presented if the child is to be excused from physical education activities. The child will still attend physical education classes and be excused from participation in activities as indicated by the physician.
- Please notify the school if your child has an allergy to foods, medicines, or insect bites. Give us directions to follow in case of an incident.
- To protect the safety and well-being of others, families are required by state law and Pennsylvania Department of Health regulations to have students fully immunized before they are permitted to attend school. Students who are not fully immunized will be prevented from entering school or will be required to obtain any necessary immunizations before returning to school after sufficient notice. The only exceptions to these regulations are those students for whom immunization is not medically advisable or those for whom immunization is contrary to religious or moral convictions.
- To protect the safety and well-being of others, families must notify the school as soon as possible if a child has a communicable disease. Students will only be permitted to return to school when they present a signed note from the physician indicating that the contagious period has passed. The list below indicates the time period which students should remain home from school when having contracted any of the following communicable diseases:
  - Chickenpox – Six days from appearance of rash.
  - Impetigo – Until judged noninfective by the school nurse or the child's physician.
  - Pediculosis (Lice) – Until judged noninfective by the school nurse or the child's physician.
  - Acute Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – Twenty-four hours from the start of appropriate therapy.
  - Respiratory Streptococcal Infections (Including scarlet fever and tonsillitis) – Not less than seven days from the onset or 24 hours from the start of appropriate therapy.
  - Ringworm (all types) – Until judged non-infective by the school nurse or child's physician.
  - Scabies – Until judged non-infective by the school nurse or child's physician.

Students returning to school after recovery from any of the above diseases should present a note from the attending physician. Students excluded because of suspicion of a disease requiring isolation may be readmitted if a physician certifies that they are not suffering from the disease.

- In the event of injuries occurring at school, school personnel will administer only simple first aid. If, in the judgment of the school

personnel, an injury requires more than simple treatment, we will follow these procedures:



1. Contact the parent or guardian to inform them of the nature of the situation.

2. In emergency situations where immediate attention is deemed necessary, the school will call 911 to provide immediate care at the school site before transporting the child to the nearest hospital for treatment. The parents will be contacted as soon as possible but we will not delay treatment in a life-threatening emergency until a family member can be reached.

If these procedures do not meet with your approval and you prefer another action taken, please notify the school in writing of the alternate plans so we can have them on file.



Drugs, including analgesics, can be administered by the nurse or a designee only upon written order of the family physician. The written order needs to include the name of the medication, the dosage, the time interval for administration and the reason the medication is being given. The medication must also be labeled with the child's name. Prescription medications **MUST** be in their original containers and include all of the following information before we can administer the medication.

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Physician \_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Office Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Order \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Medication \_\_\_\_\_  
Time for Medication to be Dispensed \_\_\_\_\_  
Dosage \_\_\_\_\_  
Doctor's Order in Written Form \_\_\_\_\_

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion is the practice of educating students with disabilities with their typical peers in general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools. Inclusion simply means that a climate of acceptance is created. We focus on everyone's abilities and possibilities rather than disabilities and limitations. The recent Gaskins Supreme Court Decision requires schools to educate all children in the least restrictive educational environment which means that children should be included in regular education environments to the maximum extent possible.



The decision to include a student and the degree of inclusion is made on a case-by-case basis. It is a decision that is made as part of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process involving parents, teachers, specialists, and administrators. At the IEP planning meeting, the people involved will discuss the continuum of options available to meet the varying needs of students. This process is required by law and is designed to protect all students. For additional information on inclusion, please contact the principal, the supervisor of special education, the director of pupil services, or our special education teachers.

### **Learning Support Program**

Our learning support program offers support to students in the regular classroom and/or an alternative learning environment when students' needs cannot be met in the general education classroom. Services are related to the basic instructional areas—reading, writing, and math. As a result of the core team process, additional testing might be recommended. Once data are compiled, the team meets with parents to determine if the student requires learning support.



Parents serve as integral members of the team to determine the need for intervention as well as to help design the individual education plan (IEP). The IEP lists broad and short-term goals and is reviewed periodically to determine the child's progress toward the goals. Meetings are scheduled to monitor progress and determine the need for continued services and the most appropriate placement.

### **Math Assistance Specialists**

The primary responsibility of the math specialists and curriculum specialist is the implementation and delivery of the math program. The math specialists teach small groups of students or conduct classroom lessons. They also work closely with classroom teachers to monitor students' math progress, administer and interpret individual math tests, assist with curriculum development, and procure instructional reading materials for classroom teachers. The math specialists also maintain all students' cumulative math records and manage our mathematics assessment system. In addition to these responsibilities, the math/curriculum specialist is a vital member of the Core Team.



### **Physical and Occupational Therapy**

Our physical and occupational therapists help children with physical limitations access and adapt to their school environment so they can get the most benefit from their educational experiences. Therapists also consult with teachers regarding modifications in the classroom to accommodate the physical needs of students. This related service is provided through the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. For additional information, please contact the school office.



### **Psychological Services**

School psychologists are available to observe student behavior, administer individual evaluations to students, make recommendations to teachers and the principal, and meet with parents to discuss the findings. Our psychologist can assist students, families, or staff on either an appointment or drop-in basis. The psychologist serves as an advocate for students in responding to and coping with the challenges that occur both in and out of school. It could be helping with a friendship problem, assisting with a family's basic needs, easing the adjustment to a new school, facilitating resolutions of problems, or dealing with changes in families.

With parent permission, one of our psychologists will administer appropriate tests to gather additional data in planning educational programs for students of all abilities.

Requests for psychological testing and other services are often submitted by teachers, the principal, or the core team, and must be arranged through the Director of Pupil Services. Parents may also request a multi-disciplinary evaluation for their child.

### **Reading Specialists**

The primary responsibility of the reading specialists is the implementation and delivery of the reading program. The reading specialists teach small groups of students or conduct classroom lessons. They also work closely with classroom teachers to monitor students' reading progress, administer and interpret individual reading tests, assist with curriculum development, and procure instructional reading materials for classroom teachers. The reading specialists also maintain all students' cumulative reading records and manage our language arts portfolio assessment system. In addition to these responsibilities, the reading specialist is a vital member of the Core Team.



### **Social Work Services**

Our school social worker creates a link between the home and school environments by mobilizing the resources of the community and local education agencies to meet the needs of children and families. After determining the needs of the family, the school social worker works with other school personnel to help design and implement a plan of intervention to create a positive educational experience. For additional information, please contact the Director of Pupil Services at (215) 884-4700 x2505 or the school social worker, Ms. Brooke Jacobs at (215) 884-4700 x2178.



### **Speech and Language Clinician**

Children with speech and language needs may be referred for evaluation of communication skills. An evaluation needs to be completed by McKinley's speech therapist to determine if a child qualifies for speech and language services. Various assessments are administered to establish a child's needs. Students who qualify for specially designed instruction are seen individual or in small groups by the speech therapist to correct disorders of articulation, fluency, auditory tasks, and language skills. Parents are welcomed partners in the development of the special designed instruction for their child.



### **Recess**



Recess is a special time of the school day. All classes have a supervised outdoor play period before (or after for kindergarten) their scheduled lunch. This recess is approximately 30 minutes. At other times during the school day, teachers may elect to take their classes outside for a short break. These optional recess periods are generally 15 minutes in length.

During these play periods, students can play on the playground equipment, organize a group game, visit with their friends, jump rope, or even sit quietly. We believe it is important for students to enjoy these breaks in the school routine. They also have an opportunity to develop social skills during these unstructured moments.

When severe weather conditions and harsh wind chill factors prevent us from enjoying a brief outside recess, an indoor recess period is scheduled. Students play group games, visit quietly, read books, or enjoy playing board games or assembling puzzles during these indoor recesses. Classes are supervised in their classrooms by teachers' assistants during the recess period following school lunch.

# **Registration**



## **New Student Registration**

To enroll in the Abington Township School District, students must reside within the geographical boundaries of the district. Proof of residence is required. Families must come to the school office to pick up and complete registration forms before students can enroll. Once the school year is underway, we ask for at least one school day in order to process the registration forms, arrange transportation, assemble materials, and inform the classroom teacher that a new student is arriving. The best

time to register is between 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Please schedule an appointment to register your student with the office. While the school office is open during the school year, it is closed on most national holidays and during the summer months. It is always a good idea to call ahead to make sure someone is here to accommodate you.

## **Required Documents**

To enroll your child in the Abington Township School District, please gather the following information:

- 1 Immunization record
- 2 Proof of age (birth certificate or passport)
- 3 Proof of residence in the township such as a copy of a deed, agreement of sale for your home, tax bill, copy of a rental lease or agreement.
- 4 In cases of divorce, the custodial parent must reside in the township.
- 5 Students entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September first.
- 6 New families moving into the district may register at any time during the year at the school office, however an appointment is required.



Students new to Pennsylvania schools must have a physical examination regardless of grade. Parents are urged to take their children to their own physician. Special forms are available in the school office for use by the family physician, but many local doctors elect to use their own forms, which we are

happy to accept. Any physical examination completed within six months prior to the opening of school will be acceptable, provided the results are recorded on the proper form.

### **Tours of McKinley Elementary School**



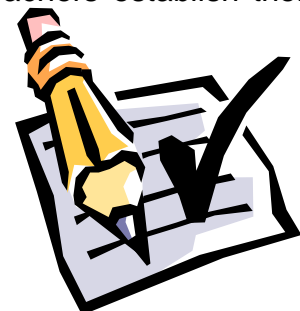
Every year we receive numerous requests from new and prospective residents to visit our school. Contact our school office to schedule an appointment. After signing in at our school office, visitors will have the opportunity to see the classrooms in session, tour areas such as the library, cafeteria, art room, playgrounds, etc. All visitors on the tour must be accompanied by a member of the staff during their visit. Entry into classrooms is not permitted during the visit due to the disruption that this would cause to the daily instructional program. At the conclusion of the tour, an administrator is usually available to answer any questions about programs, procedures, policies, or our educational philosophy.

## **Request for Records**

Throughout the school year parents request their children's records for a variety of reasons. The school is happy to assist you in obtaining copies of your child's educational records. We respectfully request that you write a note indicating specifically what records you are seeking copies of so that our secretarial staff can copy the appropriate records and that you allow a few days for our staff to complete this request. School board policy requires that we charge \$0.35 per copy for any records requested to be copied.

## **Report Cards/Student Progress Reports**

Student progress reports are distributed in December and March in conjunction with Parent-Teacher Conferences. Our report cards reflect the teacher's assessment of students in various subject areas. The teachers establish their expectations for lessons taught and determine the evaluation that students receive for their completed work. Students are usually graded on competency, productivity



and demonstrated performance of newly acquired skills. The Abington School District has aligned its assessment of students' performance in meeting the state standards for all curricular areas by using the same criteria as the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These criteria include levels of achievement reflected by the terms advanced, proficient, basic and below basic.

The report card summaries include information about the curriculum, the student's attendance record, as well as teachers' comments. Our goal is not to rank and sort children at this tender age, but to provide essential information to parents so that they can be informed about how their child is progressing toward developmental goals and benchmarks.

## **Room Parents**

A flyer is sent home at the beginning of the school year asking for two volunteer parents for each classroom. Some of the responsibilities of the room parent are:

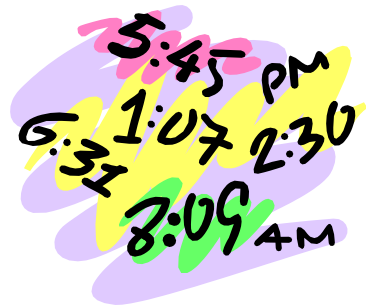
- 1 To assist in the planning and carrying out of holiday celebrations
- 2 To accompany the class on field trips
- 3 To pass on information to other parents
- 4 Completion of the police and child abuse clearances

## **Safety Patrol**

The McKinley Safety Patrol was established to help ensure every child's safety at McKinley School. Students, along with a teacher sponsor and parent representative, follow the AAA format for establishing and developing a school-wide safety patrol. Our patrol is assigned to McKinley property only, and duties include assisting children as they arrive and exit the school bus safely, traffic control before and after school in hallways and during lunch, monitoring the main lobby and looking for strangers in the back hallway and lobby.

## Schedule

During the school day, students in first through fifth grade are involved in a variety of activities—including academic, physical, and social. Generally speaking, although modifications are made for various grade levels, the following occurs during the school day:



Instruction in Integrated Language Arts (includes reading, writing, speaking, listening, spelling, & handwriting)	120 minutes
Mathematics	75 minutes
Science or Social Studies	60 minutes
Specials (includes art, music, physical education health, and library)	60 minutes
Class Meetings	20 minutes
Recess/Break	15 minutes
Lunch and Lunchtime Recess	60 minutes

You can see that we have a very busy school day. We try to keep minimize interruptions so that our students can be engaged in meaningful and substantive endeavors throughout the day. Special events and activities such as assemblies, concerts and Field Day help to enhance the total instructional program.

## School Board Directors

Public meetings of the Board of School Directors are held regularly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of every month. These meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and conclude when all agenda items have been addressed. The meetings are held in the Abington Administration Building at 900 Highland Avenue Abington, PA. Meetings are televised live on the local Comcast cable Channel 850 and Verizon Fios 34 and Comcast analog 43 and Delayed broadcasts are also aired throughout the week following the meeting. Members of the Abington Township Board of School Directors are elected to serve a four-year term of office.





## **School Calendar**



The school calendar is prepared in the spring prior to the beginning of the school year. The calendar is subject to approval by the Board of School Directors at a regularly scheduled public meeting. The calendar includes the dates for the beginning and end of the school year, as well as scheduled holidays, vacation periods, staff development days, and parent conferences. Although we seek input from staff and parents, the ultimate responsibility for determining the school calendar rests with

the Board of School Directors. Do plan ahead for your childcare arrangements on scheduled days when school is not in session for students. The school calendar, which lists all days when school is not in session, is distributed in August. Monthly calendars are distributed throughout the school year.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

All students should enjoy a school environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. No students should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures, either verbal or physical from another student or from a district employee. Reported violations of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. For additional information on this policy, contact the school principal or the superintendent's office.

# **Social Skills Policy**

## **TRAVELING ON CAMPUS**

- Walk at all times.
- Stay on pathways.
- Use soft voices.
- Observe quiet zones.



## **GOOD CHOICES FOR THE CAFETERIA**

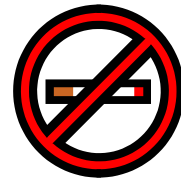
- Walk at all times.
- Raise hand.
- Use conversational voices.
- Clean up your area.
- Line up quietly.

## **GOOD CHOICES FOR THE PLAYGROUND**

- 1 Play safely.
- 2 Use equipment properly.
- 3 Stay within the boundaries.
- 4 Come when the whistle is blown.
- 5 Respect personal space.
- 6 Line up quietly.

## **(No) Smoking Policy for Adults**

Smoking and the use of any tobacco product is strictly prohibited by state law and local ordinances in any of the school buildings or anywhere on school property. Adults in violation of this policy will be subject to fines as well as be asked to extinguish all smoking materials and leave the school property if they wish to smoke.



## **Standardized Testing Program**



Each year kindergarten and second grade students take standardized tests of ability and achievement prepared by Riverside Publishing. These tests are called the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT). The results of the Cognitive Abilities Tests are mailed to parents approximately two months after the tests are administered. The CogAT tests include a challenging battery of assessments designed to measure the performance of students in the

highest-achieving districts around the country.



Our fourth grade students are also administered the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Science Test. In this exercise, they complete a battery of questions about the science curriculum they have studied over the elementary career to date. These tests are sent away to the state department of education for grading and the scores are returned to the school to ascertain the school's performance

relative to other schools in the state of Pennsylvania.

**Our third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade students participate in the mandatory state testing program known as the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) or the Pennsylvania Alternative State Assessment (PASA). This consists of proficiency exams that are used to assess the strength of our curriculum and our educational programs in ELA and mathematics. Every child is required to take these state-mandated tests, which involve approximately twelve hours to administer over a seven-day period. The dates for the PSSA testing are included on the school calendar printed in the McKinley PTO Directory. It is critical that families avoid scheduling appointments or making travel plans which would result in an unexcused absence during the testing administration period.**

## **Staff Members**

For a complete list of the entire McKinley Elementary Staff, please refer to the chart at the beginning of this handbook. Also listed there are central office administrative personnel for the school district.



### **Principal**

McKinley Elementary School is led by a full-time PRINCIPAL responsible for the day-to-day operation of the building, as well as the smooth implementation of policies and programs. The principal oversees a varied staff of over eighty people including teachers, support staff, clerical personnel, and building maintenance workers. Our principal works year-round to plan and implement instructional programs, manage the budget, maintain the physical plant, interview and hire new staff members, and meet with parents and other community members.

The principal is ultimately responsible for the smooth operation of the entire building and our educational program. Maintaining appropriate student conduct is also an important role of the principal. Parents who have questions about the school's policies, programs, and procedures, and want to discuss those questions with the principal must schedule an appointment in advance and indicate the nature of the request for a meeting. If we feel that another person closer to the issue can best respond to the question, we may direct the caller to that individual.

### **Assistant Principal**

McKinley Elementary School also has an assistant principal who assists the principal in managing the everyday operations of the building and aides in overseeing the staff and personnel in the building. The assistant principal is often involved in disciplinary matters involving students and can be available to assist parents and students on a daily basis.



### **Curriculum Specialist**

Our curriculum specialist helps teachers design and implement the curriculum that we teach and the way we teach it to your child. The supervisor helps locate materials, prepares curriculum outlines and documents, makes presentations at school meetings and events during the year, organizes parent groups, supervises and evaluates the professional staff, assists with the standardized testing program, conducts demonstration lessons,

and assists with teacher training activities.

The specialist is available by appointment to meet with parents to discuss aspects of the curriculum, the books and teaching materials, and the strategies we use to help children learn in kindergarten through sixth grades. Watch for announcements about informational programs regarding our curriculum, which are offered for families throughout the school year. For additional information about the curriculum, our educational philosophy, teaching strategies, etc. contact the supervisor of instruction.



### **Classroom Teachers**

Each student at McKinley is assigned to a homeroom class. The homeroom teacher is primarily responsible for the basic subjects of math, language arts, science, and social studies. The average class size is approximately twenty students per homeroom, with priority given to smaller classes in the primary grades. The typical McKinley teacher holds an advanced degree or its equivalent and is an experienced teacher. Annual staff development activities provide a variety of opportunities for on-going professional development and training in new teaching methods and the use of new materials. Our teachers regularly attend conferences and seminars, design and develop new curricula, and spend a great deal of their time outside of school enhancing the instructional experiences of our students.



### **Specialists**

Special subject areas such as music, library, art, and physical education are taught by certified teachers in these disciplines. Students attend these special classes, which meet from 45 minutes per week, with their homeroom group.

### **Student Services**

We employ a cadre of professional staff to support our academic programs. These include learning support teachers, teachers of the gifted, English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, reading specialists, psychologist, school nurse, occupational and physical therapy, and a speech and language clinician. Refer to the section titled *Programs and Services* for descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of these integral members of our professional staff.



### **Teachers' Aides**

Our teachers' aides are valuable members of our classroom support staff. These aides are qualified professionals who assist teachers with working with students in the classroom and frequently will assist students in their learning needs in the classroom. Our teachers' aides also support classroom teachers with tasks such as duplicating, typing, and other clerical duties. Sometimes they help by putting up bulletin board displays, preparing snacks, correcting papers, or assisting in the classroom when that extra pair of hands is needed.

### **Office Personnel**

The office at McKinley is staffed by a team of helpful people who will strive to answer your questions and help you feel welcome and part of the McKinley school community. The school receptionist is the first person you encounter as you enter McKinley and she will be helpful in assisting you upon your arrival at McKinley. She will answer questions and direct you to your destination if you are in school for a specific purpose. She will also ask you to sign our registry and issue you a security badge that must be worn the entire time you are on campus.



The secretary to the principal is seated in the main office. This person is directly

responsible for maintaining student records and for assisting the principal with the many details involved in managing a school this size.

Any of these individuals will answer phones, take messages, direct calls, locate information, assist students and families, and help out in a thousand and one different ways to keep everything running smoothly throughout the day. If they can't help you, they will find someone who can.

### **Janitorial and Building Maintenance**

McKinley Elementary is fortunate to have a full-time custodian on staff every day. The custodian helps to maintain the physical plant. He raises and lowers the flag daily; keeps sidewalks and paths free of ice and snow during the winter months; sets up the auditorium for assembly programs, concerts; handles minor plumbing problems; empties the trash; delivers boxes and materials throughout the building; cleans and clears the lunchroom daily; and performs minor maintenance as needed. If you are involved in a school event or activity, please come to the office to request any needed assistance such as setting up, moving furniture, etc. Do not ask the custodian directly since he has many regular, routine duties that must be balanced against special requests.



### **Food Service**

Imagine preparing a hot meal for over 600 young people! That's what the food service workers at McKinley do every day during the school year! They arrive early in the morning to begin the task of thawing, chopping, assembling, and baking the food that will sustain our students through the school day. They do a wonderful job in making sure that students have a nutritious, complete lunch...and they do it with a smile!







### **Bus Drivers**

Our fleet of school buses is operated by a group of caring, capable drivers who have received their state Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) to transport students on a school bus. Our drivers complete a probationary period during which they are closely monitored before they achieve permanent status. Drivers are required to conduct a visual inspection of their vehicles at the completion of each route upon arrival at school and then later at the school bus garage. Their primary responsibility is the safe transport of your children—a mission we take very seriously. If you have questions or concerns about the bus drivers, bus routes, or other transportation issues, please contact the Director of Transportation at (215) 884-0421 from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. daily.

## **Student Council**

Each classroom at McKinley has a representative in the McKinley Student Council. The Student Council is sponsored by teacher supervisors, and is active in many of the decisions made regarding student activities and projects.



## **Student Expectations**

### **Care of Books**

McKinley Elementary School provides every student with all of their textbooks. If you lose or damage a book, you will be expected to pay for it. Please be sure to take good care of all of your school books to ensure that they are in good condition when they are returned at the end of the school year.

## Student Dress

Student Dress is the responsibility of the student and his/her parents. The school reserves the right; however, to require any student wearing clothes that are disruptive because of the attention they attract or are in any way immodest to change to more appropriate school dress.



In general, students are expected:

- To wear appropriate clothing conducive to learning and study. Students who wear clothing considered to be disruptive—bare midriffs, muscle shirts, clothing with inappropriate language or pictures (drugs or alcohol), will be asked by school personnel to change their clothing.
- To place all outerwear, including coats, jackets, hats, and bandannas, in lockers/cubbies upon arrival to school. These items are not to be worn in school, and students who disregard this rule will be asked by school personnel to comply.
- Head coverings, hats and headphones are to be removed upon entry to the building. Failure to do so may lead to a reminder of this rule and or disciplinary action/confiscation following repeated infractions.

## School Property

McKinley is proud of its excellent school building provided for your education. But, our building and equipment need your care in order to remain attractive and functional for you, your classmates, and the students who follow you through McKinley elementary School.

You are expected to treat well all school property, pick up any paper or waste material you see in classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, or cafeteria (even if you were not responsible for it being there), and report immediately to a teacher or custodian any damage or destruction of property which you may observe any place in and around our building.

## Student Obligations

Students should complete each school year free of all obligations. This includes returning library books and all books and educational materials to your teacher. Failure to do so may result in the withholding of your report card and yearbook.

## Student Information Changes

We must keep any student information current for the school records. In the event of a move, a change in work or home phone numbers, a change in a custody arrangement, etc., please inform the school office. Parents are responsible for reporting these changes to the school office. This is critical so that the Skyward Communication System can reach parents or guardians in an emergency.



## **Tardiness**

Children arriving after 9:00 a.m. are tardy unless their school bus is late. A tardy student interrupts the class and often misses important work. Tardy students must report to the office and be signed in by a parent. Action may be taken if lateness becomes chronic.

## **Telephone Use**

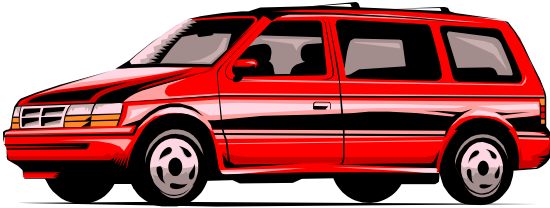
Each classroom is equipped with a telephone with an outside line. These phones are available for teachers and may not be used by students without expressed permission of the teacher. To help students develop responsibility, we discourage them from calling home for forgotten lunches, musical instruments, or homework. In addition, students may not call home at the end of the school to make arrangements for after-school activities or visits to friends. Certainly, if parents bring forgotten items to school for their children, then students may come to the office to see if the items have arrived. We respectfully request that parents limit messages to students during the school day. We recognize that emergencies will occur and plans will change, but we ask your cooperation in limiting these messages. Teachers are unable to receive phone calls during the school day. Parents who wish to speak to a teacher will be directed to the voice mail system where they can leave a message or ask the teacher to return the call at his/her convenience. Plans to pick up students should be made before school and followed-up with a note sent to your child's teacher. *Parents must not leave messages on the voice mail system regarding a change in pick-up plans. These calls must be directed to the office staff, who will forward the message to the teacher.*



## **Threats - School Policy**

Any statement issued by a student that constitutes a threat to another person or to property will be taken seriously and will be investigated. Parents will be contacted and appropriate agencies may necessarily become involved if the threat poses an imminent danger to people or property. Students and families must understand that even though a student may have issued a comment in jest or in a joking manner, we must still investigate these statements until we are convinced that no malice was intended. Because it is extremely difficult for us to determine intent on the part of the speaker, we are required to treat such comments as threats.

# **Traffic and Parking Guidelines/Traffic Safety**



Arrival and dismissal times are busy periods at McKinley Elementary School! Twice each day we accommodate fourteen school buses and over 120 cars, all within a 15-20 minute period. The speed limit on McKinley School property is 15 mph. All cars must stay in their own lane when coming up or going down the driveway. **No cars may drive up the wrong side of the driveway**, against traffic, in order to park in the lot. Please wait until you reach the entrance to the parking lot before entering it. Because of the number of cars on the school property, we have established the following procedures in order to maintain appropriate safety measures.

## **MORNING ARRIVAL:**

- Drop off in the morning takes along our Cedar Glen Road drop-off area located on the southern side of the building.
- Staff members are in the drop-off area to keep traffic moving and to assist students in getting out of cars.
- Students arriving in cars must exit on the vehicle's passenger side. Exiting on the driver's side is extremely dangerous given the volume of traffic in the arrival area.
- Drivers may not leave their cars in the student arrival areas.
- Cars should form a single lane while waiting to drop off students.
- Watch for signals from staff on duty to reach the appropriate stopping point. Leave minimal space between cars by advancing as far as possible in the drop-off area.
- Please do not exit cars to assist students with belongings or to exchange a farewell. This impedes the smooth flow of traffic in the arrival area.
- In inclement weather, the children will directly enter the building and go to assigned areas. Kindergarteners through third graders go to the gym and fourth through sixth grades gather in the cafeteria.

## **AFTERNOON PICK-UP:**

- Students being picked up are dismissed at 3:20 p.m. Parents must form a line in their cars at our pick-up area located on the southern side of the building along Cedar Glen Road.
- Cars should form a single lane in the pick-up line on the southern side of the building along Cedar Glen Road.
- Cars should advance as far as possible, leaving minimal space between cars. Watch for signals from staff on duty to reach the appropriate stopping point.
- Drivers may not leave cars unattended in the pick-up area. Please do not exit cars to assist students with belongings. Staff on duty will try to assist by opening and closing car doors, when possible. Please help

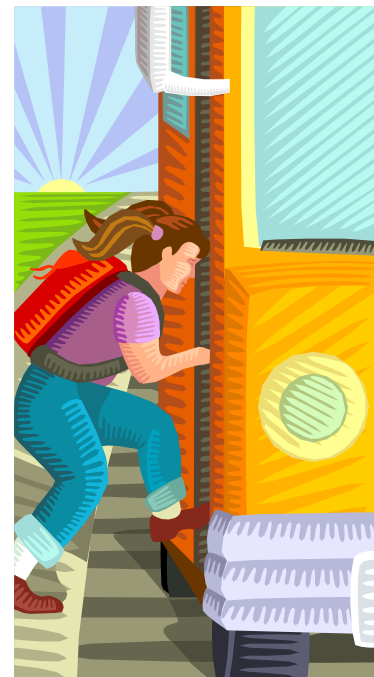
them by disengaging door locks in the pick-up area.

- Students must NEVER cross between buses to meet a car in front of the school. They must wait for assistance from our staff or other adult.
- All students being picked up must be picked up on Cedar Glen Rd. unless previous arrangements have been made with the principal.
- Do not attempt to circumvent the pick-up procedures by asking your child to meet you at a location other than the designated pick-up area.
- We urge drivers to refrain from talking on cellular phone while in the arrival and pick-up areas. This distraction compromises the safety of our students and staff.

## **Transportation**

### **District Guidelines**

Abington Township School District provides bus transportation to and from school daily for all elementary students who reside within the district's boundaries and more than a mile from their neighborhood elementary school or in a location that is unsafe for students to walk to and from school. Students are picked up at designated stops prior to 8:50 a.m. and returned to the same stops after 3:20 p.m. Bus pick up and drop off times are published on the school district website and in the local newspapers prior to the beginning of school in August. Students should arrive at their assigned bus stop 10 minutes prior to the posted pick-up time. Should you have any problems with or concerns regarding transportation, please direct all inquiries to the transportation office at (215) 884-0421 or by calling the district receptionist at (215) 884-4700 and asking for the Director of Transportation between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.



Resident elementary students attend the elementary school designated for their area of residence. Requests of parents/guardians for a child to attend an elementary school in the district outside the attendance area must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of Schools. If the request is granted, it will be with the understanding that the parent/guardian provide transportation to and from school.

To ensure the student safety, Students should observe the following rules while waiting for buses, traveling on vehicles and arriving at McKinley:

- ☐ Be seated at ALL TIMES when the bus is in motion
- ☐ Keep the aisles clear at all times

- ☐ ☐ Observe good manners while waiting for, boarding, riding, and leaving the bus.
- ☐ Keep all parts of the body inside the bus windows at all times.
- ☐ Obey all instructions or directions issued by the driver.
- ☐ ☐ Wait for the bus in a safe place well off the roadway.
- ☐ ☐ Form lines to board the bus.
- ☐ ☐ Be alert to traffic, particularly when leaving the bus.

Any reported infractions regarding bus conduct and behavior will be investigated by the Director of Transportation or school administrators. Repeated violations may result in loss of bus transportation services. *Bus Conduct Reports* will be issued to any student involved in an incident on the bus or at the bus stop requiring disciplinary action. These reports are forwarded to school administrators, who meet with the students involved. Parents are asked to sign the report and return it to school indicating that they have received the report and discussed it with their child.

Many of our school buses are equipped with video cameras to document student behavior on the bus. Walkie-talkies are also on each school bus for immediate communication.



Please note that students are not permitted to board or disembark from their assigned buses at any place other than the designated stop. Students are not permitted to ride buses other than their own. The only exception is made for childcare that is daily and for an extended period. This change must be

requested in writing to the principal. For a copy of the district's transportation policy, contact the school office or the transportation department.

Parents must send a note to their child's teacher if they are planning to pick up their children at the end of the school day or if there is any change in dismissal, a scheduled after-school activity, or a change in pick-up plans. Without a note, all children will board the school bus.

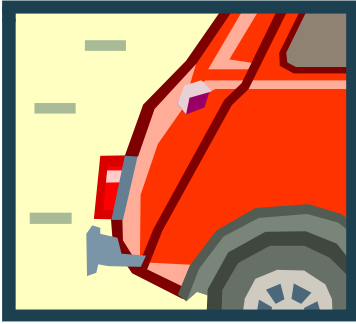
### **Bus Buddies**

At the beginning of each school year, our sixth graders act as "bus buddies" for our kindergarten students. The older students assist their younger buddies in locating their bus at the end of the school day. They also help provide reassurance to younger students during the bus trip to and from school.



## **Visitors and Volunteers**

There are many opportunities during the school year for parents to visit and/or volunteer in our school programs. Please read the following guidelines if you want to get involved.



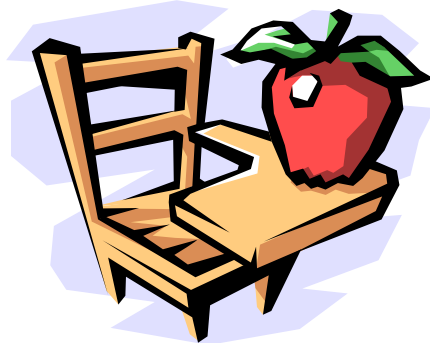
### **Parking**

Visitors to McKinley are invited to park in any of the designated parking lots if space is available. **DO NOT** park in the designated handicapped parking spaces. Cars not bearing the official handicapped designation that are parking in these special handicapped spaces will be ticketed and will face a minimum \$50.00 fine.

Cars are not permitted in the bus loop in front of the building except for quick drop-offs or pick-ups.

### **Scheduled Visitations**

Every year, in conjunction with American Education Week, we invite families to observe their children in the classroom. Dates and times for these special visits are announced in advance. These visits enable parents to see their children in a classroom setting and to learn more about what and how we teach. Visitors must understand that since the purpose of the visit is simply to observe, they must refrain from interacting with the teacher, their child, or the other students in any way that would detract from the instructional program or interrupt the classroom activities. In the event that there are two or more visitors in the classroom at one time, we respectfully ask that visitors not chat with each other. Visits at times other than these scheduled visitation periods must be arranged in advance with the classroom teacher. We ask for a 24-hour notice in order to arrange these visitations.





### **Signing In**

When school is in session, all visitors must enter the main doors and sign in at the office before proceeding to a classroom, the playground, or any other area of the building or campus. This policy applies to all families, friends, volunteers, student teachers, and all other visitors. The intent of this policy is to ensure the safety of all students and staff at McKinley Elementary School. Anyone attending a meeting while school is in session or participating in volunteer work must report to the office first before proceeding to the meeting or classroom area. This policy does not apply to scheduled performances such as musical concerts or grade level presentations to a large audience. For those special events and presentations, parents may proceed directly to the auditorium.



### **Visitor Badges**

All visitors to McKinley Elementary must wear a Visitor Badge while on campus. Any visitor not bearing this special badge will be asked to return to the office in order to complete the sign-in procedure and get the visitor badge.

### **Volunteers**



We rely on the kindness, energy, and talents of so many able volunteers to support our instructional programs. Volunteer helpers can always be seen around McKinley. Contact individual teachers to see if they can use an extra pair of hands in the classroom. And, you don't have to be a parent at McKinley to help out. We welcome community members, retired citizens, student teachers, unemployed teachers, grandparents, or anyone who feels he/she can make a difference and lend a hand. The circulation desk in the school library is staffed solely by volunteers. See the

librarians to schedule a half day every other week.

There are many ways to volunteer at McKinley. Check the McKinley Student Directory published by the PTO for committees that could use your help. Get involved! We have many tasks that will fit the schedule of parents working outside the home. You will get a lot out of the experience and so will the children. We must ask that all volunteers sign in at the office and note the purpose of their visit. That way we'll know if you're in the building in case anyone calls or tries to locate you.

Volunteers in our classrooms are always under the supervision and direction of a staff member. All volunteers must obtain a police and child abuse clearance and background check and tuberculosis clearance.

### **Younger Siblings**

In order to maintain an instructional atmosphere, we ask that parents who are visiting or volunteering in classrooms not bring younger siblings, infants, or preschoolers. Please make appropriate child care arrangements.

## **Walkers**

Discuss with your child the route taken to and from school. Know whom they walk with and how long it should take them to arrive. Plan to have your child arrive at school between 8:30 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. Supervision begins at 8:30 a.m. **Walkers may not ride the school bus for any reason due to school district insurance requirements. Remind your child to proceed directly home at dismissal unless someone is meeting them and this has been prearranged.**

## **Weapons Policy**

Students may not bring any weapon onto school property, school transportation, or to a school sponsored activity. For the purpose of this policy, weapons include but are not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, inflicting serious bodily injury. Violation of this policy may result in expulsion for a period of up to one year.

## **Weather Emergency Drills**



Weather emergency routes are posted near the door of every classroom throughout the building. Check these maps to determine the fastest and safest escape route and destination in the event of a weather emergency. Annual weather emergency drills for students and staff are conducted as required by state law. When an alarm is sounded, students must listen for teacher instructions, follow directions, and quietly leave proceed to their weather emergency location in orderly lines. Any visitors present in the school at the time of a weather emergency drill should proceed to the weather emergency location for their location in the building and assist in organizing and supervising students until the all-clear signal is issued, indicating that it is safe to resume the daily school routine.

## **Website**

The Abington School District maintains a website for the quick and expedient posting of information for students and their families. The school district website can be found by going to <http://www.abington.k12.pa.us>. McKinley has a home page on this website as well which can be found by going to the tab "Our Schools" and picking McKinley Elementary from the pull down menu. This website is maintained frequently and it posts valuable information about McKinley for students and their families throughout the school year.

To access the McKinley web site go to the following URL: [www.abington.k12.pa.us/mckinley](http://www.abington.k12.pa.us/mckinley). You will find staff lists and school calendars, as well as individual class web sites listing homework or projects due. The class web sites and the PTO pages are password protected. At the prompt enter the following information (all lowercase, no spaces)

User Name: mckinley/(your child's student ID number)  
Password: (your child's password)



## **Withdrawals and Transfers**

Parents of students withdrawing from McKinley Elementary or transferring to another school must come to the office to complete the necessary forms. Records will be mailed upon receipt of a request from the new school. No records will be released without a parent's/guardian's signature of consent.

## **Writing and Publishing Center**

The purpose of the McKinley Writing and Publishing Center is to enhance the school's literature-based reading program by encouraging students to write their own original stories and have them published into books. Established in 1992-1993, the center is located in the parent center (room 117) and is staffed by parent volunteers.



## **Yearbooks**

Our school-wide yearbook is published in June. Every student is included. You may send in your own candid photos of school events for possible inclusion. Personal ads help to defray our costs. Parent volunteers staff the yearbook.

## **Closing Thoughts**

By working together to follow the policies and guidelines outlined in this handbook we will be able to ensure a safe and orderly school for all of our students. At McKinley Elementary School we strive to provide the optimal learning environment for all of our students and challenge them to achieve to their maximum potential. These policies and procedures have been designed to ensure that this goal is possible. Thank you in advance for sharing in your child's education and for assisting us in achieving this goal.