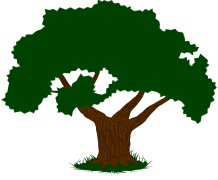


# DOGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



*The Dogwood Tree*

## Welcome Back Letter

August 21, 2023

Dear Dogwood Elementary Families,

I hope you are enjoying a wonderful summer. I also hope you are relaxed, recharged and ready to start the school year. We are eager to have our students back with us! We are delighted that you are a part of our amazing learning community and welcome and value your positive energy, input and dedication to excellence in education. We look forward to working with you and your children.

**First Day of School: Wednesday, September 6, 2023**

**School Day for K-5: 9:30-3:35 School Day for UPK: 10am-2:45pm**

Class assignments will be available to you on the Parent Portal on Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at 10 am after you update your emergency contact information online. New Families should have received a letter from the District Office providing you with directions on how to set up a Parent Portal account for your child or children. Directions can also be found on the [District website](#).

We invite you and your **K-5** Dogwood student to a self-directed tour of the school to visit your child's classroom, meet the teacher and to drop off school supplies on **Tuesday, September 5th from 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** If your child will need to take medication during our school day, please drop off the medication on this day and meet with the school nurse. We ask that you arrive no earlier than 11:00 am and leave by 12:00 pm because our teachers will need to attend a 12:30 p.m. faculty meeting immediately following the Supply Drop Off/Meet and Greet. Building maps and a Teacher Roster will be available.

Please note, if you have a child attending UPK at Dogwood, they will have their supply drop off on August 31 at 10-11 am. Information about this event will be sent via SCOPE and/or your child's UPK teacher.

I would like to share some of the procedures in place in our school to ensure the safety of the students. You may also find this information and more on the [Dogwood website](#).

I look forward to a productive and promising year for your children and our students. I will be on the lookout for their smiling faces as they start the new school year! Enjoy these last days of summer and I will see you soon!

Sincerely,

*Renee Carpenter*

Renee Carpenter  
Principal

## Dogwood Elementary School Back to School Information

**First Day of School:** Wednesday, September 6, 2023

**K-5 Student Day:** 9:30am- 3:35pm

**UPK-5 Student Day:** 10:00am- 2:45pm

[The Smithtown One-Page Calendar](#) may be found on both the district and Dogwood website.

**Student placement:** Students/Teacher assignments for grades K-5 will be provided through the Parent Portal on Monday, August 28th at 10:00 a.m. The link to the [Parent Portal](#) may be found on the Smithtown Central School District website <http://www.smithtown.k12.ny.us/>. To ensure we have the most updated emergency contact information for your child, please verify and/or update all information on our Parent Portal. This must be completed in order for your child's teacher assignment to be available online. Please understand that much time and consideration went into developing class assignments in order to have classrooms that are balanced and conducive to learning. Therefore, there will be no changes to student/teacher assignments or groups at this time.

**Supply lists:** [Click here](#) for the current supply list. Supply lists may also be found on our Dogwood Elementary website, [click here](#). Students will not be sharing supplies. If you can not get everything on the list, please don't worry. We will make sure students have what they need.

**Chromebooks:** All new students including kindergarten students will be receiving a District provided chromebook. Distribution will take place during the first weeks of school. Returning students should have their chromebooks from the last school year. Kindergarten through second graders will have their chromebooks stored at school in a charging cart to be readily available for use. Students in 3rd through 5th grade will keep their chromebooks at home. Teachers will share with you and your child more specific information pertaining to chromebooks and when they will be needed for either classwork or home assignments.

**Smithtown Code of Conduct:** We are committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and district personnel may deliver quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other district personnel, parents and other visitors is essential to achieving this goal. Everyone is expected to adhere to the [Smithtown Code of Conduct](#). This can be reviewed on the District website.

**Student Monthly Calendar and Parent-Student Handbook:** At the beginning of each month, we will be sharing via School Messenger, a student calendar listing important events for Dogwood Elementary. All dates are subject to change. Over the first weeks of school, we will share with you a copy of Dogwood's Parent-Student Handbook which is a good resource. Please read it with your child and review expectations for behavior in our cafeteria, classrooms, playground and on our bus.

**School Lunch:** The cost for a school lunch this year will be \$3.00. While school lunch is available for all students, we recommend that kindergarten children be sent to school with a bagged lunch for the first few weeks of school to help them adjust to our school/cafeteria routine. If you would like your child to purchase a school snack or lunch from our cafeteria, please establish an online account. An online prepaid lunch program called *School Cafe* is available for your convenience. You can pay for your child's lunch ahead of time on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. To pay ahead of time, you can either send your child to school with a check made out to "Child Nutrition" or you can use the online [School Cafe Payment System](#). The menu for the first day of school will be posted on the [Child Nutrition website](#) which can be found on the District website.

### **Arrival/Dismissal Information:**

**Bus/Name Tags:** Kindergarten students should wear bus/name tags for the first two weeks of school. This tag was provided at Kindergarten Orientation in the folder provided at that time or you may [click here](#) for a copy of the bus tag. Please write your child's name, grade, teacher's name, room and bus route numbers and bus stop location on their tags. The plastic case for the bus tag was in the folder given to you at kindergarten screening. If you can't find it, we will give your child another one, simply pin the bus tag on your child for the first day. We suggest that parents of new entrants and

grades 1 and 2 also make labels including this information for their child. This will help any staff member to readily assist children to class and to their buses.

The school day ends at 3:35. Understandably, it takes us a week or so to get students familiar with dismissal procedures but once we do, it runs smoothly. If your child is going to be a walker on a given day, please send a note to the teacher in the morning. You may then meet your child at 3:25 pm at the gate to the left of our main entrance near the turf if you are walking up to the school.

If you are driving to school to pick up your child for dismissal, **do not arrive at the school or line up on Dogwood Drive prior to 3:20.** We have a UPK program consisting of 3 classes this year at Dogwood. These 54 or so children will need to be picked up by parents BEFORE grades K-5 are dismissed. The UPK school day ends at 2:45 p.m. UPK parents will need to drive up Dogwood Drive and pull up to the front circle to have their child brought to their car. If K-5 parents are blocking Dogwood Drive, waiting to enter the gates of the school this will be a safety hazard and delay dismissal for all students. It also poses a concern for our neighbors on Dogwood Drive as cars tend to idle in front of their homes and block driveways. Please help us safely dismiss students in a timely manner and keep our neighbors happy. If you are picking up your child (K-5) for dismissal via car, do not drive up to the school until 3:20. We will start calling these students to their cars at 3:25pm.

Pull into the circle in front of the school and school personnel will bring your child to you. Please have your ID ready if asked. If you need to remove your child early from school, please try to do this prior to 2:30 pm. Children being signed out early will be done so at the Greeter's Desk unless they are ill. If this is the case, you may be directed to the Health Office.

Because of our concern for the safety of Dogwood students: No cars may enter the bus circle during arrival or dismissal. The bus circle is the area that is to your left when you enter our main entrance to the school. Parents will also not be permitted on the front walkway areas or where students load/unload buses during morning arrival and dismissal in order to ensure the safety of our students. Thank you for understanding that safety is of our utmost concern.

When dropping off students in the morning or picking them up in the afternoon, please pull up along the curb in front of our school. In order to keep traffic moving and to avoid congestion on Dogwood drive, we ask parents to stay in their cars during drop off and pick up times. We have staff outside on bus duty to assist children in getting out of cars in the morning and into cars in the afternoon. They will help students with putting on their backpacks and closing car doors. Students should exit via the door closest to the sidewalk/curb and faculty members will make sure they enter the building safely. Please do not pull around the car in front of you but wait to be waved on by school personnel.

All students should take the bus to which they have been assigned. No child's bus route or stop should be changed without first contacting Mrs. Headrick (631-382-4252) in our Main Office. This will avoid inadvertent overcrowding of the buses. Due to limited space on school buses, we will not be able to have students take different buses to accommodate play dates.

While on the bus we have students sit in grade order (K-5) from the front to the back of the bus. Kindergarten students must sit in the front seats on the bus. The purpose of the bus ride is to provide your child with transportation to and from school in as safe a manner as possible. Therefore, the driver, teacher or principal may assign seats if he/she feels it is necessary in order to safely transport all students.

**Cell Phones/Electronics:** Please be aware that children are not permitted to have cell phones in school. Other electronic games/equipment should also be left at home with the exception of the school issued chromebook. This will avoid unnecessary tears when these items are lost or broken. We cannot be responsible for missing or damaged items of this nature.

**Visitors to the Building:** For the safety of our students, all parents and visitors who enter the building should report to the Greeter's desk. We work hard to maintain the integrity of our student's educational day; visitors are not permitted in classrooms during the school day without prior arrangement with the teacher. Please be prepared to show photo ID, if my staff does not recognize you. Many meetings can be held via Google Meet and can be arranged directly with the teacher.

**PTA:** We encourage you to become involved with the school and become active members of the PTA. Our parent group is very supportive and involved. New parents are warmly welcomed! The PTA will hold its first meeting of the school year on September 12th at 7:00 p.m. This will be an in person meeting. We try to alternate a.m. and p.m. PTA meetings

each month to give more people an opportunity to attend. Some PTA meetings will be virtual. A link to join any virtual PTA meeting will be provided by the PTA.

**Meet the Teacher Night:** This will be held on Tuesday, September 19th (Grades K-2 at 6:00-6:45 p.m. and Grades 3-5 at 7:00- 7:45 p.m.) This is a time for you to meet your child's teachers and learn more about the curriculum and grade level expectations. Times, date and format information will be sent home after the start of the school year.

**Important Contact Information:**

Principal: Mrs. Renee Carpenter

Principal's Secretary: Mrs. Maureen Hunstein

Main Office: 631-382-4255

Nurse: Mrs. Kathleen Siciliano

Attendance Clerk: Mrs. Barbara Richardson

Health /Attendance Office: 631- 382-4260

Transportation Department: 631-382-4100 (8:00 am - 4:00 pm)

Transportation Director: Mary Augugliaro 631-382-4105

\*Town Bus Company (St. James): Big Bus issues: 631-862-2019 (open until 7:00 pm)

\*Suffolk Transportation (Ronkonkoma): Mini Bus issues: 631-737-0695 x16 or x17 (open until 7:00 pm)

Use these numbers for any transportation issues after 4pm. DEL Main Office closes at 4pm.