

Smithtown Elementary School

Family Information Handbook
2023-2024



Dr. Mary-Ellen Kakalos Ed.D.
Principal

Smithtown Central School District
Smithtown Elementary School
51 Lawrence Avenue
Smithtown, NY 11787
631-382-4505; (Fax) 631-382-4507
(Health Office) 631-382-4510

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Smithtown Elementary School.

This handbook has been designed with the goal of clear communication regarding school procedures and guidelines.

It is an honor to work with your children, and I thank you for your partnership!

As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary-Ellen Kakalos
Principal

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DATES AND HOURS/ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

- * All pupils in Grades K through 5 will report on Tuesday, September 6th, for their regular sessions.
- * All elementary schools will be on the same schedule. The official hours for the school day are 9:30am - 3:35pm. Children may begin to enter the building at 9:20am. Students who are not in their classrooms by 9:30am will be marked late. If you are bringing your child to school, please make every effort to have your child enter the building between 9:20—9:30am. Dismissal begins at 3:35pm and the buses will depart by 3:48pm.
- * To ensure the safety of all children, please do not arrive at school prior to 9:10 a.m. We do not have supervision prior to 9:20am. Parents in need of before school childcare may call (631) 360-7517 to make arrangements for on-site childcare provided by the Town of Smithtown. Your cooperation in helping us provide a safe and supervised environment is greatly appreciated.
- * Instructional time is of paramount importance. We strongly suggest that all students remain in school until dismissal time. Signing a child out early, particularly during the last period of instruction, between 2:50 and 3:20pm interferes with the dismissal procedures outlined under TRANSPORTATION in this handbook. If it is absolutely imperative to sign out your child before the usual dismissal time, please send a note to your child's teacher. The teacher will then forward the note to the office.
- * If there are changes that need to be made to alter plans for your child's dismissal, please contact the main office. A message will be left with the child's teacher to notify them of the change in their dismissal plan. Please try to have dismissal plans in place before the school day begins, and a note can be sent to the child's teacher with any change in the dismissal plan for the day.
- * Children are encouraged to use bus transportation to and from school. Only staff and mini buses will be permitted in our parking lot during arrival/dismissal times. Parents/guardians who choose to transport students to school may drop off/pick up children via one of the options as follows:

Student Drop-off

- * Should you choose to transport your child to school, please drop him/her off at the curbside of the parent "loop" driveway. Staff will be on duty to supervise at 9:20am. Parents are to remain in their cars.
- * Should you be visiting the school, please park in our North lot, or near the walks along Lawrence Avenue. Park in authorized spots and refrain from parking on the sidewalks.
- * Do not block driveways or the bus circle.
- * Do not pull into the bus circle at arrival or dismissal.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES (Non-bus)

- * If your child is going elsewhere other than home after school, a note must be sent to his/her teacher on that day. Most buses are full. Bus passes can not be accommodated unless approved for regular childcare purposes. All students must be picked up by an adult if not riding the bus. ID is required!
- * Early Release - If you are planning to take your child from school on a given afternoon, please send a note to the classroom teacher indicating the time of pickup and the name of the authorized adult who will be coming to the school.
- * Walker: If you prefer that your child be dismissed as a "walker," your child will meet you outside of the school building each day. Please communicate with the school by sending a note with your child to be given to their classroom teacher about the change in the dismissal plan. Please be prepared to show proof of your identity when signing out your child. All "walkers" will be escorted to parent/guardians. Doors will open at 3:35pm.

AUTHORIZATION FOR STUDENT RELEASE

Under New York State law, a student can be released only to parents, legal guardians, or persons who have been authorized by the parent or legal guardian to assume responsibility for the student. A student will not be released to anyone who does not have a government-issued photo ID. Schools must maintain a list of persons who are authorized, and we ask for your help in updating your child's contact information as needed.

Students will be released to either parent unless a court order or decree indicates otherwise. The school must be given a copy of any such court order or decree. All persons whose names appear on the Student Release Authorization Form must also present written permission from the parent to request the student's release. Your child will not be released to anyone whose name does not appear on the authorization list, nor will your child be released unless that person has written permission from you to assume responsibility for your child. The written permission should be delivered to the school with the student.

Note to School



Classroom Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Student's Name: _____ From: _____

- Is late due to: _____
- Will be picked up by: _____ at _____
- Will be going home with: _____
- Is returning to school after an absence of _____ days due to _____
- Other: _____

Please Note: If your child is scheduled to attend aftercare and will not be attending, please indicate above.

Note to School



Classroom Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Student's Name: _____ From: _____

- Is late due to: _____
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WHO TO CALL?

<u>Concern/Question</u>	<u>Person to Call</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
Questions about child's progress/ classroom situation	Classroom Teacher	631-382-4505
Overall serious concerns (speak with teacher first)	Principal	631-382-4505
To report an absence	Health Office	631-382-4510
Transportation Questions	Transportation Office	631-382-4100
Dismissal Questions	Mrs. McVeety	631-382-4505
School Psychologist	Mrs. Meltzer Ms. Zito	631-382-4514 631-382-4521

Social Worker	Ms. Dennis	631-382-4522
Reading Specialists	Ms. Boughal Mrs. Albano	631-382-4523 631-382-4519
Math Teacher	Ms. Reilly	631-382-4530
ENL Teachers	Mrs. Giangrasso/Mrs. Pelosi Ms. Sweeney/Mrs. Bernier	631-382-4524
Speech/Language Services	Mrs. Mangino/ Mrs. Castoro Ms. Kenah	631-382-4505
Lunch Charges (prepaid, free/reduced lunch)	Lina Herrera Perez	631-382-4520
Smithtown Parent Resource Center (School-Aged Childcare)	Ms. Fiorello	631-360-7517
PTA President	Mrs. Zgoda	631-807-2314
All other questions	Main Office Fax Number	631-382-4505 631-382-4507

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION LAW

New York State Education Law, Section 409-H, effective July 1, 2001, requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to you, regarding actual use or potential use of pesticides throughout the school year. In addition, the Smithtown School District is required to maintain a list of persons in parental relation, or any of its faculty and staff members, who wish to receive a 48-hour prior written notification of specific pesticide applications which will occur in the School District. In addition, we must also provide notification of any pesticide applications made during the school year using a specific schedule: within 2 days of the end of the Spring recess, within 2 days of the end of the Winter recess, and within 10 days of the end of the school year. This written summary must include the date and location of pesticide applications and the names of the products used, the name and phone number of a school representative to contact for additional information, and a reminder that we offer any individual an opportunity to register to receive written notification 48 hours prior to pesticide applications.

The Smithtown School District, since 1992, has utilized an integrated pest management program (IPM). The very purpose of an IPM program is to restrict or eliminate entirely the use of pesticides in or around its facilities.

The School District's IPM program includes the use of a contracted firm, expert in integrated pest management itself. This firm conducts monthly inspections of all District facilities and takes appropriate remedial measures to eliminate or reduce the presence of insects or other pests.

The first step in any successful IPM program is that the District's facilities be kept clean of material which attracts insects or other pests. If the presence of pests is noticed, the District uses anti-microbial products, nonvolatile rodenticides in tamper resistant bait stations, or other non-hazardous substances. In addition, glue traps are utilized to detect the presence of pests to determine which areas may need additional cleaning or sealant along edges or small spaces in rooms. This is only done in areas inaccessible to children. These applications or procedures are not subject to prior notification requirements.

In the event an emergency application of a regulated pesticide application is required, the District would not apply such chemicals unless the school was to remain unoccupied for a continuous 72 hours following the application. Here again, no 48-hour notification would be required.

While the District does not anticipate any situation where there will be a need to provide notification of a pesticide application 48 hours in advance, if you would like to receive such notification if one were required, please send a postcard or brief letter to Mr. Daniel Leddy, Smithtown Central School District, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787 or telephone Mr. Leddy at (631) 382-4136, requesting pesticide application notification. Please include the school building that you would like to be notified about, and your name and address.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION LAW (cont)

In summary, the District has utilized an integrated pest management program since 1992 and spends from eighteen to twenty-five thousand dollars annually for this program. The District does not maintain (certified) employees for the purpose of applying pesticides of any kind and will not do so. The IPM program is designed first to keep areas clean so that pests are not attracted within the building, and secondly to utilize means of control that do not use pesticides for which any prior notification would be required. If such a pesticide were to be utilized, the use would occur only when the building would remain unoccupied for 72 continuous hours. Nevertheless, the District is required to remind parents, guardians, and staff that they may request to be placed on a 48-hour prior notification list by contacting Mr. Daniel Leddy in written form, or by calling the above-listed telephone number.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS RIDERS

The following directions are being offered here so that every child and parent knows precisely what is expected in the way of proper student conduct related to the use of school buses. All parents are asked to periodically review the directions to help us ensure safe and pleasant school bus experiences for their children. This is reinforced at school on a regular basis.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE DIRECTIONS CAN AND WILL RESULT IN THE SUSPENSION OF A CHILD'S BUS PRIVILEGES.

A: All students on a school bus are under the authority of its driver and are required to follow the driver's instructions.

B: Order must be maintained within the bus at all times. We want our drivers focused on the road and safely operating the bus.

C: All students are to use their regular bus and established stop location, unless they have a written request by their parent and permission of the building principal or his designee to do otherwise. Permission for a bus pass will not be given if the additional child would create overcrowding. It will only be permitted for child care purposes, only.

D: Students approaching the bus from the opposite side of the road are not to cross the street until the bus has come to a complete stop and the driver signals them, at which time they are to immediately cross in front of the bus.

E: Once on the bus, students are to seat themselves quickly, buckle up and remain in that seat until the bus has come to a complete stop and it is time to get off.

F: Students are expected to be reasonably quiet, polite, and courteous in their speech and behavior on the bus and at the bus stop. The code of conduct can be found on the district website.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCHOOL BUS RIDERS (cont.)

G: Unacceptable behavior includes: shouting and screaming, name calling, pushing and shoving, poking, hitting, fighting, spitting, abusive language, and any other behavior generally deemed to be disruptive, impolite, or discourteous.

H: Students are to help keep the bus clean and free of any damage.

I: Children should not throw objects on, from, or at the bus.

J: No part of the student's body or belongings are ever to be extended out the bus window.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

A: Problems or questions concerning school busing should be directed to the main office at 631-382-4505 or directly to the Transportation Office at 631-382-4100.

B: Bus passes will be issued for emergency purposes or childcare purposes ONLY. In the event an emergency exists, and a bus pass is requested, please be certain to send in all pertinent information including the full names of all children involved. The bus number and bus stop requested are also appreciated. If a change in bus is due to a childcare issue, please contact Transportation for a "Babysitter Stop Request" form. If a seat exists for the child in need of a regularly scheduled change in bus service due to child care, this request will likely be granted.

IDENTIFICATION TAGS - KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADE ONLY

A: Identification tags have been previously sent home to be worn by youngsters who are entering Kindergarten and First Grade. Please continue to have this tag pinned to your child's outer clothing for the first week or two of school.

B: Parents are to print either their child's bus number and bus stop location, or "walker," on the tags.

EMERGENCY CLOSING, LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DISMISSAL

It is important that all parents understand our school's procedures for advising of school closing and/or early dismissal due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency conditions. The Smithtown School District will enact an automated message (email, text, and/or phone call) for all families with students in the district informing parents of any school closings, delayed openings or early dismissals. The automated calling system will call the numbers listed on the emergency contact information provided by the parent. Please be certain that this information is accurate and up to date. Additionally, the District posts emergency closings on its website, www.smithtown.k12.ny.us. It is suggested that each family have a detailed emergency plan that the children thoroughly understand which provides for their protection and care if they were to arrive home earlier than usual and find themselves locked out of the house. This plan might be as simple as having them go to a neighbor who has previously agreed to the emergency plan. A second alternate back-up plan is also advised. Parents are advised to review this on the mornings when inclement weather is predicted and an early dismissal might occur. Any anticipated change in the usual dismissal procedure should be sent to the teacher in writing. This is particularly

important if a child is to go home with another parent or in a way other than in his/her usual manner. Please call the office for last minute changes in emergency situations.

PARTY INVITATIONS

Party invitations should be distributed outside of school. Friendship Lists are created at the start of each year for this purpose. Each child should receive a copy of the Class Friendship List that is created by the Class Parents at the beginning of each year.

PERFORMANCES/FIFTH GRADE MOVING UP CEREMONY

Due to the Fire Code regulations at Smithtown Elementary School, we must limit audiences during indoor events. For special performances, a suggested number of guests will be invited. Tickets may be included. So that every parent may have an equal opportunity to view their child, we ask that you please respect our seating restrictions. Also, siblings will not be able to attend daytime events, such as Fifth Grade Moving Up Ceremony. We will always do our best to plan events in a space that will allow for maximum attendance.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students should be dressed appropriately to play and exercise. Choose non-platform, non-heeled sneakers that are laced on top, velcroed, zippered or slip-on with a back. Students should not wear jewelry on physical education days. Please remember to send in a medical note if your child is unable to participate in physical education class.

STUDENT BELONGINGS:

In the interest of minimizing distractions and conflicts, as well as the chance of exposure to disturbing internet content, please do not send phones to school. Expensive toys, remote control vehicles, radios, cell phones, video cameras, iPods, smart watches and headsets are to remain at home. Please do not send any toys to school without prior agreement with the classroom teacher. Trading cards stay at home. Cell phones are absolutely NOT permitted without a conversation between the principal and parent in advance.

INSURANCE

If the need should arise, information about student accident insurance will be addressed through the Asst. Supt. for Finance and Operations office. Please be advised that the District does not maintain

separate insurance coverage for personal (student or staff) property. The School District is not responsible for the loss, damage, or theft of personal property.

CELEBRATIONS

For the health and safety of our students, we are a "shared food" -free school. Students do not share food with one another. This includes parties and celebrations at school.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

In order to accommodate the increasing health and wellness needs of our student population, birthdays will continue to be celebrated as follows in grades K–5:

- Families may send in a "special snack" for their child on his/her birthday.
- Please do not send in birthday treats (food or trinkets) for the other students in the class.
- Principal announces birthdays during morning announcements
- Classroom teachers plan something special in class for a child's birthday.

In the interest of health, wellness and fairness, if class snacks or trinkets are sent into school, they will not be distributed. We appreciate your cooperation and thank you for helping us to keep all of our students safe and healthy.

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES

Classroom teachers, in collaboration with the school principal, will determine class celebrations. Classroom celebrations will focus on playing games and/or making crafts. Due to the increasing concern of allergies and other health-related issues, celebrations will not usually include shared food. Any food that is distributed will need to be approved by the classroom teacher/class parents and the school nurse ahead of time.

Also, please do not send in any "extra" treats or trinkets into school. We realize that families enjoy giving and sharing. If you would like to send in a little something extra during a time of celebration, please contact our social worker to make a donation.

ATTENDANCE

A: Parents are asked to call the Health Office at 631-382-4510 before the start of school to report an absence. If a call is not received, the attendance clerk will call the home to verify the absence. This is done for the safety of each child. You can help in this procedure by calling the Health Office early to report your child's absence.

B: A child returning to school after an absence must bring a written note signed by the parent stating the dates of and reason for the absence. Tardiness should be handled in the same manner. Please be aware that written notes are required regardless if the absence was verbally reported.

C: A child arriving after the official school day begins must report to the Greeter's Desk for a late pass. Students arriving after 9:30am will be marked late/tardy.

EMERGENCY/HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents are to log on to the Parent Portal on the District website in order to update emergency information. You should have received a letter from the District with a username, password and directions regarding how to update your child's emergency contact information. Please log on to be certain that all information is updated. If you have not received this information from the District, please contact the District IT Department at 631-382-2045. The information listed on the sheets is used to contact parents in the event of an emergency. If the information listed changes during the year, please log on to enter updated changes. This information will also be used for Student Release Authorization.

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

We would like to remind parents that NO medication is to be taken by children in school on their own. New York State Education Law has very specific regulations which MUST be followed in the event that a child is required to take medication in school. The law states:

- A: All medicine is to be labeled in an original bottle or container.
- B: A doctor's note specifying the name of the medicine, amount of dosage, and time of dosage is to be written to the school.
- C: A parent's note authorizing the school nurse to administer the medicine must be written.
- D: Medication is to be transported to and from school by the parent.

This law applies to all medication, including over the counter medication. It is important that parents recognize the necessity for us to strictly enforce the law. Please do not ask us to violate the spirit nor intent of this law.

If you have any questions regarding medication or any other health related issue, please call the school nurse, Mrs. Duffy, 631-382-4510.

**FROM THE DESK OF MARIANNE DUFFY R.N
631-382-4510**

ALLERGIES AND ILLNESS: Please inform the health office of any allergies or chronic illnesses your child has. All health information must be communicated to the health office by the parent.

ATTENDANCE: If your child is going to be absent from school, please inform the Health Office by 9:00 a.m. In addition, please send your child with a note as to the reason why he/she was absent upon his/her return to school. Please notify the Health Office if your child has a significant illness or a communicable disease.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS: are mandated for children entering grades Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, 5th and all new students.

INJURIES: If your child cannot participate in gym, this restriction must also include recess. A doctor's note is required for specific dates to stop and then resume gym. A parent's note is not an acceptable excuse to sit out of gym or recess. If your child is in a cast or using crutches, a doctor's note is required with an explanation of the injury or condition. To request Special Transportation a doctor's note with your child's diagnosis, the request for special transportation (a mini bus) and the length of time it will be needed must be received by the Health Office before the request can be processed.

MEDICATION: If medication is to be taken during school hours, there are specific forms available in the Health Office that must be filled out by the physician and the parent. This includes "as needed" medications such as Benadryl, Epi-pens and inhalers. Medication must be in a labeled prescription bottle and locked in the Health Office. This policy also extends to over-the-counter medications such as lozenges, Tylenol, nasal sprays, etc.
No student will be permitted to carry medication on their person. All medication must be taken home in June. If it is not picked up, it will be discarded. Only adults may bring in or take home medicine. This is a safety measure.

KINDERGARTEN & FIRST GRADES: Please send a complete change of clothing including underwear, in a ziplock bag to be kept in your child's cubby.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS: Please update contacts in the Parent Portal. In addition to parents, please be certain to have at least two additional emergency contacts that are available to pick your child up in a timely matter if they are sick. In the event of an injury, I will evaluate your child and give you my opinion as the school nurse. I will not diagnose your child so I ask that you please pick up your child and have them evaluated by a medical doctor.

ALLERGIES: If your child has a nut allergy, please notify the health office if you would like them to be seated at the nut-free table in the cafeteria.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST

A: School breakfast is available each day of school at a cost of \$2.25.*

SCHOOL LUNCH (*prices subject to change*)

A: School lunch is available each full day of school at a cost of \$3.00.* If you would like your child to purchase drinks or snacks, an online payment system is available for depositing money to your child's lunch account. Please see our website at www.smithtown.k12.ny.us for further instructions. Cash/checks for snacks and lunch payments are also acceptable. Please send payment in a labeled envelope with your child. (Checks should be made payable to Child Nutrition)

B: According to the USDA and the National School Lunch Program. A complete lunch meal includes meal components from grains, protein, milk, fruit, and vegetables. Students are asked to take at least three of the five components, one of those components being a fruit or vegetable. Second entrees or other snack items can be purchased in addition to the meal if funds on the student accounts are available or cash is offered.

C. Further questions about the Child Nutrition Program can be directed to Jeannette Frabizio, Child Nutrition Director at 631-382-5500.

PERSONAL SAFETY

Parents are asked to instruct their children on how to handle situations regarding personal safety and strangers. Precautionary measures should be discussed openly and honestly.

Your child should have an understanding of the topics of strangers, traffic, and alternate safe houses, giving him/her the necessary skills and information to deal with possible dangerous situations.

Children are expected to dress appropriately. "Heely" sneakers are not permitted in school. Any child wearing flip flops or other footwear that is not safe for outdoor play will not be permitted to run or to play on the playground equipment. Also, "wheelie" type backpacks tend to cause injuries and should not be brought to school. Children are expected to wear outerwear according to the season. As long as there are dry conditions and the temperature (with windchill) is at or above 32 degrees Fahrenheit, classes will have outdoor recess. Please ensure that items that are not appropriate or safe for active learning and play stay home.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY

All visitors must stop at the Greeter's Desk at the front office to sign in through our Raptor System and obtain a visitor's pass sticker. The sticker must be worn when visiting school. After obtaining a visitor's sticker, report directly to the designated classroom and only to that classroom.

SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY (cont.)

Our school shall conduct standard operations and procedures of all required drills. Fire Drills (also called Evacuation Drills) and Lockdown Drills are required by Education Law and the Fire Code. Such drills must be conducted without exceptions. Additional safety drills include Shelter-in, Hold-in-place, and Early Evacuation/Dismissal Drill.

NYSED School Bus Drills

Three bus drills must be completed this school year: during the first seven days of school, between November 1 and December 31, and between March 1 and April 30.

VISITORS

All visitors must produce a driver's license or other picture identification in order to enter the building or sign out a child. Please be sure to bring a photo ID to the building each time you visit. We appreciate your cooperation with this safety policy.

DISCIPLINE

Your child benefits when he/she hears consistent messages from the school and home. A sound educational climate, one in which children feel comfortable and supported, is the goal for all of our students.

REQUESTS FOR WORK

Frequent requests are made to prepare work for absent students. Classroom teachers are generally happy to comply with such requests. If a child is ill, it is important to determine if he/she is able to concentrate on school assignments before requesting work. The following are guidelines for requesting work:

A: Children are required by New York State law to be present on days when school is in session. Work should not be requested for single day absences or for vacations. The school will not provide work for students on vacation.

Attempting to "make up" missed school work does not have the same effect as being in the class and participating in the discussions and learning environment. The staff works hard to meet each child's needs, and children must be present in school to benefit. Please avoid illegal absences. Your cooperation is very much appreciated.

REQUESTS FOR WORK (cont.)

B: For absences of two days or more, a parent must call the school prior to 10:00 a.m. and request work at that time. Such calls should be directed to the nurse's office. (631-382-4510) Work will be available in the main office after 2:00 p.m. This will give the teacher sufficient time to prepare the work.

C: Work is to be picked up by the parent at the Greeter's Desk. The parent requesting work is to pick up the work at the Greeter's Desk or inform the school of the name of the student transporting work. If a classmate is bringing homework for your child, please make sure the child and his/her parents are aware of the request.

D: Please do not email teachers with important dismissal information, as all dismissal requests or changes should go through the main office. (631-382-4505)

**Smithtown Elementary School
Family Information Handbook
2023-2024**

Please detach this page, sign, and return to your child's teacher by Friday, September 8, 2023.

I have received and reviewed the 2023-2024 Family Information Handbook.

Student Name

Grade

Parent Signature

Classroom Teacher

Date