

Dodge Elementary School Parent Handbook



Be Safe. Be Kind. Work Hard!

Principal Mr. Charles A. Smilinich
Administrative Assistant.....Mrs. Melanie Myers

Secretaries: Mrs. Pfund and Mrs. Hrynczak

**Important reference information that may assist
you throughout the school year! ***

*For additional information about the district and its policies, go to our website
www.williamsville12.org and completely review the District Calendar.

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Mission Statements



Our District's Mission:

The mission of the Williamsville Central School District, a community characterized by diversity, high expectations and support for learning, is to empower all students

- ~ to develop their unique potential and character,
- ~ to assume responsibility of citizenship and leadership,
- ~ and to thrive in a challenging and rapidly changing global community,

through the commitment of our quality staff, working in partnership with the students, parents and community and utilizing visionary programs in a nurturing environment of mutual respect and dignity.

Our School's Mission Statement

Although we truly address the needs of the "whole child," our mission is to be certain all students are reading on grade level or beyond before going on to middle school.



General Information

Dodge Elementary School
1900 Dodge Rd.
East Amherst, NY 14051

Dodge is one of six elementary schools in the Williamsville Central School District. The district also has four middle schools and three high schools. Our student population across the district is about 10,500 while Dodge typically houses approximately between 500-525 students.

Dodge was first known as North Elementary when built in 1952. It was the fourth school built in the district. Being an older school, it has exceptional charm, including large trees on a vast campus. The area used to be farmland. So although Dodge was originally a rural school, it is now considered a suburban school. We have two playgrounds on our campus. The first is known as the Fitness Center. It builds upper body strength with its mini climbing walls and horizontal ladder. The other has been dubbed by the students as the Dodge Tree House. It is a more typical playground with slides, swings and climbing elements. Another special feature of Dodge is our beautiful auditorium. It can seat about 400. Students enjoy performing concerts and, occasionally plays on the stage. We have added an art gallery in the transition space that leads to the first grade wing and art room. Mr. Knab has named it BRAG (Brick Room Art Gallery). All Dodgers take pride in our old and stately school, which will keep it beautiful for the next 50 years!

Office Hours: 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM

(Summer hours are 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM, yet we encourage you to please call first to be sure someone is available.)

School Day Hours: 8:05 AM to 2:20 PM

Morning announcements begin at 8:15 AM sharp, officially beginning the instructional part of our day. Any student arriving to the classroom after 8:15 AM requires a late pass from the attendance office. Buses leave our lot at 2:20 PM.



Office phone number: 716-626-9820

Main Office Fax: 716-626-9849

Nurse's Office Fax: 716-626-9848

Extension Directory:

1. Attendance Office Mrs. Debbie Kenyon
2. Health Office Mrs. Linda Markarian
3. Social Worker Mrs. Stephanie Wood
4. School Psychologist Ms. Rebecca Norton
5. Main Office Secretaries: Mrs. Pfund, Mrs. Hrynczak

Mascot: Roadrunner **School Colors:** Green & Gold **Grades:** K- 4

INTERPRETER SERVICES AVAILABILITY

Dodge has a great deal of diversity. To be sure all parents have access to their child's educational program, we are committed to provide many memos, letters and documents in a family's first language. In addition, we may use translators for various educational purposes.

- ✓ Face-to Face Interpreters...The school can arrange to have a translator present for parent teacher conferences, Open House, and other meetings and school events.



- ✓ Phone Conference Interpreter Services...For a more brief phone conversation or a quick meeting (i.e. 15-20 minutes), an interpreter may be accessed by conference call. This is also a live translation service.
- ✓ American Sign Language interpreters may also be accessed though the school is not equipped for text telephone.

Please inform the school office, teacher or English as a Second Language teacher well in advance of the meeting or event.

VISITOR PARKING AND SCHOOL ACCESS

On a typical day, our staff uses the rear parking lot, accessed via North French Rd. School visitors are asked to use the Dodge Rd. access, our front entrance. Please park in designated spots only. Parking along Dodge Rd. is another option on busy days. The Dodge entrance loop is for dropping off passengers only. Because the loop is our emergency vehicle access, there is never any parking or standing allowed there, even after hours and on busy evening events. Please also reserve the Handicapped Accessible parking spots for their intended purpose.

For large-scale evening events, the rear parking lot is also available and the cafeteria and bus loop doors would be unlocked.

The front door, our school's main entrance, is locked and monitored during the school day. To enter, press the buzzer on the left side of the doors. You will be greeted, asked your purpose, and advised where to report.

- ✓ Be prepared to show picture ID until staff recognize you
- ✓ Walk directly to the main, health, or attendance office as directed by the greeter
- ✓ If reporting to the main office, sign in on our visitor's log
- ✓ Take a visitor sticker
- ✓ Go directly to where your business is
- ✓ Sign out before you leave

Staff will know you are authorized to be here when they see you wearing your sticker.

LATE ARRIVAL

Being on time for school is the best way to start a child's day. They have time to settle in, hear morning announcements, order lunch, hear the plan for the day, etc. No one likes to start the day feeling rushed, late and stressed; however, we know that sometimes emergencies happen. We encourage families to schedule doctor appointments beyond the school day to ensure your child's full access to the program.

If you know your child won't be able to make it into homeroom by 8:15 AM sharp, the adult delivering the child should park the car in our parking lot and walk the child in. The office staff will direct the adult to the attendance office. (Students need to be in their

homeroom and ready to start their day by 8:15.) A note is needed for our files explaining the reason for the lateness. The attendance office staff will offer the adult the opportunity to walk their kindergartner to class and then the adult exits the building. Older students will walk to their classroom independently.

EARLY PICK-UP

On the rare occasion that a pre-planned, early pick-up is needed, a note must be sent to school that morning indicating the person who will be picking up your child, as well as the time of the pick-up. The parent/guardian or designee reports to the **main office** to wait for the child to be sent down. Without a note, only custodial parents may pick up their child, unless you have a signed letter on file indicating those designated to pick up your child (this letter must be updated each year).

Commented [PCH1]:

Commented [A2R1]:

A student may be released to either parent unless a certified copy of a court order or divorce decree, provided by custodial parent indicates otherwise.

When a child is going home early due to illness, the child is released to the parent/guardian or designee directly from the **health office**.

PICK-UP AT DISMISSAL

Parents who wish to pick up their children at dismissal are required to send a note to school that morning, unless this is your daily routine. If so, one note for the year is fine. If an emergency occurs and it's necessary to contact the office during the day to make pick-up arrangements, it is strongly recommended that parents call the school (626-9820) before 1:30 PM as it is often difficult to locate classroom teachers beyond that time. (They may be outside on nice days, in the library, computer lab or getting their students from specials.) Once students are on the bus to go home, parents cannot remove them.

SCHOOL ABSENCES/TARDIES

Students at Dodge typically have excellent attendance. It is not unusual for many students to have perfect attendance for the year and the average student misses only 2-3 days a year. When students are here, they can access the curriculum and feel like a valued member of our school. Education Law also mandates caregivers send their school-aged students every day.

Keep your child home only if he or she....

- ✓ Has had a fever in the last 24 hours*
- ✓ Has vomited in the last 24 hours
- ✓ Has any other communicable illness (until past the contagious stage)

*Note: Your child needs to have been fever free without medication for 24 hours to return to school.

If your child is staying at home, please...

- ✓ Alert the **attendance office** for any absence. If it is a planned absence, alert us in advance. If an unplanned absence, a call may be made at any hour, leaving a voice mail message during non-school hours. If you do not alert us, we will call you to verify the reason for the absence and ensure we don't have a "Missing Child."
- ✓ Follow-up upon the child's return, within 3 days, with a written excuse (for our records) to make it an excused absence. Absences without such explanation will be considered unexcused after three days.
- ✓ If a student is absent from school, he or she may not participate in afterschool activities on that day.

*Note: You may request a copy of your child's attendance record at any time.

Excused absence/tardy (legitimate in the eyes of the Law) include:

- ✓ Personal Illness
- ✓ Serious Illness or death in the family
- ✓ Impassable roads due to weather
- ✓ Religious observance
- ✓ Medical appointments
- ✓ Required court appearances
- ✓ Late bus
- ✓ Participation in "Take Your Child" to Work Day



Unexcused absence/tardy include:

- ✓ Family vacation
- ✓ Babysitting
- ✓ Oversleeping
- ✓ Missed bus
- ✓ Non-school related instruction or competition
- ✓ Any reason other than those noted *Excused* above

MISSED WORK

It is almost impossible to make up for time lost in the classroom. Our instruction is not textbook reading followed by worksheets (something that would be easy to assign). Although family vacations should be scheduled during student vacation periods, we know that sometimes families can't make that happen. Our expectation is that students bring a book(s) to read on the trip, write in a journal daily about their experiences, and practice their math facts. Upon the child's return, any paper activities that were distributed during the time out of class may be available. We do not prepare materials in advance for planned family vacations. For students who are home sick for several days, a parent may call the school to arrange a time to pick up those materials put aside by the teacher (if the child is well enough to concentrate on the work).

ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE

Dodge has an attendance committee which includes the administrators, the nurse and school social worker. Together they monitor student tardies/absence patterns and frequency. They work with families to find the root cause for the unnecessary,

inappropriate (and unlawful) absenteeism. If no resolution to the problem results, the committee has no option but to involve District Office staff and possibly Child Protective Services or Family Court to help resolve the attendance issue.

➤ **21 DAYS OF ABSENCE...** School attendance is mandatory for school-aged children in this state. Parents and schools work hand-in-hand to ensure attendance is good. Students who are in school benefit from the instruction...it's as simple as that!

Parents/Guardians, who know they will have their school-aged children out of our school for 21 consecutive days or more, must formally withdraw their child from our register. If the parent does not, our school district automatically will. It is presumed that if gone for this length of time, your child will be enrolled in the school district you are visiting. Upon your return to Dodge, you must contact our Central Registrar at 626-8001 to re-register.

HEALTH RECORDS
NYS IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

The New York State Health Department issued new immunization requirements for school entrance/attendance for the 2016-2017 school year, please visit <http://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf> for a complete list of immunization requirements with vaccine specific footnotes. Please work with your child's health care provider and school nurse to determine what immunizations are needed to comply with the new vaccine requirements.

| Vaccines | Kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 | Grades 3, 4 and 5 |
|--|--|--|
| Diphtheria and Tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine and Pertussis vaccine (DTaP/DTP/Tdap) | 5 doses <u>or</u> 4 doses if the 4 th dose was received at 4 years of age or older | 5 doses <u>or</u> 4 doses if the 4 th dose was received at 4 years of age or older |
| Polio Vaccine (IPV/OPV) | 4 doses <u>or</u> 3 doses if the 3 rd dose was received at 4 years of age or older | 3 doses |
| Measles, Mumps and Rubella vaccine (MMR) | 2 doses | 2 doses |
| Hepatitis B vaccine | 3 doses | 3 doses |
| Varicella (Chickenpox) | 2 doses | 1 dose |

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS are also required under New York State Education Law for all new entrants (including Universal Pre-Kindergarteners and Kindergarteners) as well as for all students in second, fourth, seventh and tenth grades. As a new requirement, the physical examination must include the child's BMI (body mass index) and BMI percentile (weight status category) which your medical provider should include on the physical examination form. A copy of the recommended physical examination form can be obtained from your child's provider, the school nurse or by downloading from the District's website.

*If there is any change in the health status of your child, the school nurse should be notified so the information can be added to the child's health record.

DENTAL EXAMINATION certificates are required to be requested, under New York State Education Law, 2008, for all children upon entering the District and in grades kindergarten, second, fourth, seventh and tenth grade indicating that a comprehensive dental examination was completed. Certificates can be obtained from your Dentist, the District's website or the school nurse.

ILLNESS

Children are most vulnerable to contracting an illness while in school because of the close contact they maintain. While we cannot prevent this from occurring, with your help we can implement some simple guidelines to help promote a healthy environment.

- Teach your child the importance of correct handwashing as a means of preventing the spread of germs.
- Proper disposal of tissues and covering one's mouth when coughing or sneezing also prevents germs from circulating. Remind your child not to share personal items and to keep their hands away from their face.
- If your child is coughing excessively, keep him/her home to prevent exposing others.
- A child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Fever may indicate the onset of an illness.
- If your child is diagnosed as having a contagious disease, please inform the school nurse. This information is kept confidential. When necessary, letters will be sent home informing you of cases of a contagious illness in your child's classroom or grade.
- Children who show symptoms of illness in the morning should NOT be sent to school. Any child with an undiagnosed rash, temperature 100.4 degrees and higher, vomiting, diarrhea or any contagious disease will be excluded from school until diagnosed and/or treated.
- If a student must leave school during school hours due to illness or injury, the parent or designated guardian will be contacted by the health office. The parent or designated guardian should report directly to the health office to sign out and pick up their child. Children must be fever free, vomiting free and diarrhea free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Anytime there is an illness or injury that prevents your child from participating in physical education, a note is required. A parent's note is sufficient for restrictions of one week or less. If your child needs a longer restriction, a Doctor's note is required. When your child is excluded from physical education class, he/she is also excluded from any

recreational playground activity as well. A Doctor's order is also required for a student who needs to use crutches or a wheelchair in school.

MEDICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

All medication, including non-prescription drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status. The school nurse must have a written request from the student's physician or licensed prescriber that indicates the medical condition being treated and the length of time the medication is to be administered. In addition, the name of the drug, the dosage, the frequency and time to be administered, the route and potential side effects must be specified. The school nurse must have a written request from the parent to administer medication as specified by the medical provider. All medication must be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent or guardian. **NO STUDENT MAY DELIVER MEDICATION TO THE HEALTH OFFICE. NO STUDENT IS PERMITTED TO CARRY NON-EMERGENCY MEDICATION ON THE BUS.** Students who self-carry, or self-carry and self-administer their medication must have written permission from the prescribing physician, parent, and school nurse. Medication orders must be renewed annually and whenever there is any change. Any unused medication not picked up within a reasonable amount of time will be disposed of at the end of the school year.

SUNSCREEN

A parent or guardian can authorize the application of sunscreen, no medical provider order needs to be completed. Parent authorization forms for the application of sunscreen are available from the District's website or from the school nurse. The school nurse does not stock sunscreen for students to use. The parent/guardian must provide the sunscreen to the school nurse. All sunscreen will be safely stored in the health office. Parent authorization for the application of sunscreen will need to be completed each school year.

SEVERE LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

The prevalence of chronic medical conditions including diabetes, obesity and life threatening food allergies has increased steadily over the last 10 years. Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 13 children, roughly 2 children in each classroom. Eight foods account for 90% of all allergic reactions: peanut, tree nut, wheat, soy, egg, milk, fish, and shellfish. Peanut and tree nut allergies tend to be life-long, may worsen over time, and often produce some of the most severe reactions. Avoidance of food allergens is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.

You will notice that some of our classrooms are designated as allergen restricted. We ask that all members of the school community work collaboratively to safeguard children with life-threatening food allergies. Protocols exist in the allergen restricted classrooms and are designed to facilitate safe and inclusive participation for all students. Expectations for these classrooms include washing hands before and after eating, no food sharing or trading, no home baked goods or bulk items due to the potential of unknown ingredients and/or cross contaminated ingredients, and signage posted outside the classroom as a reminder that allergens are prohibited. Additionally, in these classrooms, snacks must consist of one of the following options: 1) fresh fruits or vegetables, 2) pre-packaged food items containing an

ingredient label. Please consult with your child's teacher for more information regarding the celebratory practices for his/her classroom.

HEALTHY SNACKS

Please make every effort to send a healthy snack for your child should your child's teacher set aside time for snack. Please do not send in cookies, potato chips, or other forms of junk food. Fruits and vegetables, whole grain crackers, pretzels, etc. are good substitutes. Children may also have water (not juice) with their snack.

To facilitate healthy eating in school, a list of nutritious and safe food options has been provided for your consideration when choosing snacks for your child.

Fresh/Frozen Fruit & Vegetable Suggestions

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bananas | Cantaloupe |
| Apples | Honeydew |
| Blueberries | Carrots (sticks & baby carrots) |
| Strawberries | Cucumbers |
| Raspberries | Pepper slices (green/yellow/red) |
| Oranges | Broccoli |
| Peaches | Cauliflower |
| Grapes (red/green) | Cherry tomatoes |
| Watermelon | Celery sticks |

Peanut/Tree Nut Restricted Classrooms: Additional Safe Snack Suggestions

Please reference the following website to help guide your selection of "safe" snack items if you are not sending in fresh/frozen fruits and vegetable snacks. This guide is frequently updated and should be referenced when making your food selections.

<http://snacksafely.com/snackguide>

Disclaimer: Please be aware that this snack list is intended to be used as a guide and use of any product contained on this list does not guarantee that said product is actually peanut/tree nut free. The Williamsville Central School District does not accept any liability from reliance on the snack suggestions contained in this guide. It is also important to recognize that potential changes in manufacturing procedures and ingredients may also render items listed as no longer appropriate.

Please carefully look at product and ingredient labels and do not send in items that state any of the following:

- "Contains: peanuts, tree nuts"
- "May contain peanuts, tree nuts"
- "Manufactured in a facility...with peanuts, tree nuts"
- "Manufactured on shared equipment...with peanuts, tree nuts"

The above statements may be found throughout the ingredient list or at the end of the ingredient list as a separate statement. Manufacturers also list a contact number that you can call to verify the safety of a product.

*Please note that due to safe health practices all food brought in for allergen restricted classrooms must be store bought. **Homemade food and food items from the bulk section are no longer allowed to be shared. Thank you.***

CELEBRATIONS

Birthday Celebrations:

We will be honoring and celebrating each child's birthday **without** food treats. There are many alternatives which can be considered such as:

- choosing a game for the class to play,
- providing a small party favor for each child (stickers, pencils, notepads, erasers, etc.),
- donating a favorite book to the classroom library, etc.

Your child's classroom teachers will provide specific details regarding nonfood birthday celebration activities.

Please make arrangements with your child's teacher at least three days prior to the event to assist in planning for the special day.

Other School Initiated Celebrations or Events:

The following may be chosen:

- fresh fruit or vegetables,
- prepackaged food items that contain an ingredient label (please reference the information under "healthy snacks" to better guide your selection),
- food items from the Healthy Celebration order form,
- non-food items or activities

If you are choosing to order food items from the Healthy Celebration order form, please pre-order one week in advance through the child nutrition manager at your child's school. Questions can be directed to Child Nutrition at 626-8870.

Your child's classroom teachers will provide specific details regarding celebration activities.



STUDENT WELLNESS AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

THE 40 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS...the cornerstone of our Wellness Plan

Dodge partners with the WCSSD in a proactive approach to every aspect of our learning environment. Academics and character development are the vital players. The foundation for this implementation is the Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets. Simply put, these are asset building activities that can be done with your children easily and frequently to provide encouragement, support, boundaries and celebration for their growth. We have chosen the 40 developmental assets because they are research-based. Over decades of research, it has been found that the students who are most resilient and able to be strong in their decision making have more assets than those who struggle under peer pressure, become isolated, or choose an unhealthy path. Therefore, we encourage parents and teachers to know the assets and purposely work to building the number of assets each child. The Assets follow:

The Search Institutes 40 Developmental Assets
The foundation of the Williamsville Central Schools District’s Wellness initiatives...

| Asset Category | Asset Name | Asset Definition |
|------------------------|---|--|
| EXTERNAL ASSETS | | |
| Support | 1. Family support | Family life provides high levels of love and support. |
| | 2. Positive family communication | Parent(s) and child communicate positively. Child feels comfortable seeking advice and counsel from parent(s). |
| | 3. Other adult relationships | Child receives support from adults other than her or his parent(s). |
| | 4. Caring neighborhood | Child experiences caring neighbors. |
| | 5. Caring school climate | Relationships with teachers and peers provide a caring, encouraging school environment. |
| | 6. Parent involvement in schooling | Parent(s) are actively involved in helping the child succeed in school. |
| Empowerment | 7. Community values children | Child feels valued and appreciated by adults in the community. |
| | 8. Children as resources | Child is included in decisions at home and in the community. |
| | 9. Service to others | Child has opportunities to help others in the community. |
| Boundaries and | 10. Safety | Child feels safe at home, at school, and in her or his neighborhood. |
| | 11. Family boundaries | Family has clear and consistent rules and consequences and |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Expectations | | monitors the child's whereabouts. |
| | 12. School boundaries | School provides clear rules and consequences. |
| | 13. Neighborhood boundaries | Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring the child's behavior. |
| | 14. Adult role models | Parent(s) and other adults in the child's family, as well as non-family adults, model positive, responsible behavior. |
| | 15. Positive peer influence | Child's closest friends model positive, responsible behavior. |
| | 16. High expectations | Parent(s) and teachers expect the child to do her or his best at school and in other activities. |
| Constructive Use of Time | 17. Creative activities | Child participates in music, art, drama, or creative writing two or more times per week. |
| | 18. Child programs | Child participates two or more times per week in co curricular school activities or structured community programs for children. |
| | 19. Religious community | Child attends religious programs or services one or more times per week. |
| | 20. Time at home | Child spends some time most days both in high-quality interaction with parents and doing things at home other than watching TV or playing video games. |
| INTERNAL ASSETS | | |
| Commitment to Learning | 21. Achievement motivation | Child is motivated and strives to do well in school. |
| | 22. Learning engagement | Child is responsive, attentive, and actively engaged in learning at school and enjoys participating in learning activities outside of school. |
| | 23. Homework | Child usually hands in homework on time. |
| | 24. Bonding to adults at school | Child cares about teachers and other adults at school. |
| | 25. Reading for pleasure | Child enjoys and engages in reading for fun most days of the week. |
| Positive Values | 26. Caring | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to help other people. |
| | 27. Equality and social justice | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to speak up for equal rights for all people. |
| | 28. Integrity | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to stand up for one's beliefs. |
| | 29. Honesty | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to tell the truth. |
| | 30. Responsibility | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to accept personal responsibility for behavior. |
| | 31. Healthy lifestyle | Parent(s) tell the child it is important to have good health habits and an understanding of healthy sexuality. |
| Social Competencies | 32. Planning and decision making | Child thinks about decisions and is usually happy with results of her or his decisions. |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| | 33. Interpersonal competence | Child cares about and is affected by other people's feelings, enjoys making friends, and, when frustrated or angry, tries to calm her- or himself. |
| | 34. Cultural competence | Child knows and is comfortable with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and with her or his own cultural identity. |
| | 35. Resistance skills | Child can stay away from people who are likely to get her or him in trouble and is able to say no to doing wrong or dangerous things. |
| | 36. Peaceful conflict resolution | Child attempts to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| Positive Identity | 37. Personal power | Child feels he or she has some influence over things that happen in her or his life. |
| | 38. Self-esteem | Child likes and is proud to be the person he or she is. |
| | 39. Sense of purpose | Child sometimes thinks about what life means and whether there is a purpose for her or his life. |
| | 40. Positive view of personal future | Child is optimistic about her or his personal future. |

PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports)



Dodge is a PBIS school. This entails the creation of three basic overarching school rules. They are: BE SAFE! BE KIND! WORK HARD! Students are then explicitly taught what this looks like in a variety of school settings. See the matrix below for a sense of what this entails. Once students clearly know the expectations/routines, they know how to behave, in theory! ☺ We help them along by randomly but frequently catching students doing what is expected. They are acknowledged by a staff member with a ticket. The students put their name on the ticket and place it in the class PBIS cylinder. Each week a name from each grade level collection is drawn and recognized on the morning announcement and given a small set of the kinds of little “Stuff” children love. Additionally the classroom that earned the most tickets that week is recognized via a school-wide parade on Friday morning. Their class also keeps a banner posted in their area that says ROADRUNNER RULES! This is a very proud moment for most students.



To promote positive interactions and behaviors in our cafeteria, we will continue our acknowledgement effort. Students can earn tickets in the cafeteria. We hope this will encourage students to use their best manners, a level 2 voice (not a shouting level 2) and kindly include others in their conversations.

Additionally each homeroom teacher appoints one student a month to be honored at our BUG parade. B.U.G. stands for Being Unusually Good!

Reinforcement, over time, is lessened (moving from tangibles to positive feedback to a smile to nothing noted) to internalize the expected behaviors. Our ultimate goal is to have Dodgers do the right thing “just because.” Feel free to adopt and adapt this structure at home. In what ways is your child being safe at home? Being kind at home? Working hard at home?

Directly below are our school wide behavior rules in detail for the hallway, bathroom, cafeteria, auditorium, bus, playground and the classroom:




1. To **Be Safe** Dodgers....
 - a. Walk in the halls
 - b. Go around corners like a car drives on a street
 - c. Use the stop signs to slow down at intersections
 - d. Wear safe walking shoes like sneakers and flat-heeled shoes. Leave roller skates at home.
 - e. Sit on the bus, face forward, AND use a quiet voice
 - f. Never bring pretend or real weapons or even talk about threats of hurting others. Not even on Halloween!
 - g. Leave toys that can harm others at home (for example, shocking toys)
 - h. Keep hands and all other body parts to themselves

2. To **BE KIND** Dodgers....
 - a. Quietly walk and work
 - b. Follow all adult directions/expectations
 - c. Remember, one person speaks at a time
 - d. Treat property with respect
 - e. Use polite language
 - f. Use good manners



- g. Celebrate our diversity...we never tease someone about how smart they are or not, being a boy or a girl, for being thin or heavy, believing in one religion or another, the color of their skin, having a disability and so on!
- h. Leave objects at home that can distract you or others
- i. Wear clothes that do not distract others
 - ✓ Skirts and shorts long enough to sit and bend in
 - ✓ Cover the chest, midriff, back modestly
 - ✓ Kind message shirts rather than ones with put downs or advertisement of inappropriate products (tobacco and alcohol for example)
- j. Remember the Golden Rule...
Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.
 In other words, *treat others the way you want to be treated...with kindness and respect!*

3. To WORK HARD Dodgers....

- a. Come to school on time! 
- b. Get a good night's rest
- c. Eat a healthy breakfast
- d. Are prepared for class every day
- e. Do all their homework
 - ✓ Reading for pleasure every night
 - ✓ Practicing math facts until they become automatic
 - ✓ Whatever is assigned by the teacher
- f. Are active learners.
 - ✓ Listen
 - ✓ Ask questions when something is confusing
 - ✓ Volunteer answers
- g. Challenge themselves to create their own learning goals
- h. Dig deeper into topics that interest them
- i. Leave toys and other distraction at home (Webkins, cell phones, Ipods, electronic games, etc.)

Consequences for poor choices (not in a particular order, dependent upon discipline warranted, though discipline is progressive):

- Verbal Warning
- Phone call/ Written notice to parents (Accountability Plan or other notice)
- Natural Consequences
- Assigned seat
- Time away from the other students
- Parent Conference with the Teacher
- Parent Conference with the Administrative Assistant
- Parent Conferences with the Principal
- Suspension from the bus
- Suspension from after school events/activities
- In –school suspension
- Out of school suspension, short term (less than 5 days)
- Long term suspension (more than 5 days)
- Permanent suspension



Good
 Choices
 will take
 students
 down the
 right path!

Actions likely to lead to immediate suspension (and may even involve the police):

1. Fighting
2. Stealing (student lockers and cubbies are not locked. We must trust one another to do the right thing; respect each other's property. Please leave home items expensive to replace, just in case.)
3. Sexual harassment which meets the following criteria:
 - ✓ Unwanted attention
 - ✓ Consistent/repeated/severe
 - ✓ Sexual or gender related
 - ✓ May be in the form of comments, gestures, actions
4. Bullying which meets the following criteria:
 - ✓ An imbalance of power
 - ✓ Verbal, physical, emotional
 - ✓ Repeated, consistent, severe
5. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco products (including over the counter medications)
6. Possession of a weapon or other dangerous item, real or not.

Bottom line: Be Safe. Be Kind. Work Hard.

The “Dignity Act”

The Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) was signed into law on September 8, 2010 and took effect on July 1, 2012. The Act prohibits harassment and discrimination of students by peers and by school personnel. It covers all public elementary and secondary aged students and applies to behaviors on school property, in school buildings, on a school bus, as well as school-sponsored events or activities. The District has identified at least one employee at every school to serve as the DASA coordinator. The law requires these individuals to be trained to “handle human relations” in the protected areas and sets the expectation that all administrative staff have also been apprised of the intent, purpose and requirements of the Act. An overview of DASA is to be provided on an annual basis to faculty, staff and students. Such training for staff and students is intended to raise awareness, provide strategies for prevention, and offer methods of responding to acts of discrimination and/or harassment.

The DASA legislation also resulted in several amendments to New York State Education Law. By creating a new Article 2 and revising Sections 801(a) and Section 2801, school districts are now required to expand instruction in civility, citizenship and character education to include “an awareness and sensitivity in the relations of people, including but not limited to: different races, weights, national origins, ethnic groups, religions, religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexual orientations, gender identity or expression, and sexes.” Finally, the latter amendments require Boards of Education to include language addressing DASA in their codes of conduct.

DASA COORDINATORS AT DODGE:
Mrs. Myers and Mr. Smilnich

Use of Personally Owned Devices by Students

All schools adhere to Board of Education policy and allow students to use personally owned devices under specific conditions and/or under the direction of the teacher for an instructional activity. Generally, the following guidelines apply:

- No access to the District network is provided
- Use of Kindle/Nook or other device is allowable for reading purposes or other teacher –initiated instructional purpose in the classroom (as directed by the teacher). Personal use in the cafeteria, dining hall or study hall will be allowed at the elementary and middle school levels only, while use in the library will be allowed at all levels.
- Access to electronic games, built-in cameras, tape recording etc. are prohibited (please reference Board policies #7315 and #8271)
- The Code of Conduct must be followed at all times.

Increasingly, our students own Nooks, Kindles, and other e-readers. Naturally, students would like to bring these to school. While we certainly promote reading for all students through any means and, therefore, are not prohibiting e-readers, bringing them to school does present some risk. Please be aware that we cannot be responsible for the safety and security of electronic equipment brought from home.

If a student opts to bring personally owned technology devices to school and the device is accidentally broken or lost, the District can neither be held responsible nor cover replacement via insurance. Please have a conversation with your child regarding these concerns and help him or her understand the risks.

Despite the existence of District policy, regulations and guidelines, it is virtually impossible to completely prevent access to content or material that may be considered inappropriate for students. Since the student is able to access (either via District-owned equipment or the student's personally-owned device with 3G or 4G functionality) external computer networks not controlled by the School District, it is not possible to screen or review all of the available content or materials on these external computer networks. Thus some of the available content or materials on these external networks may be deemed unsuitable for student use or access by parents/guardians. Students may have the ability to access such content or material from their home, other locations off school premises and/or with a student's own personal technology or electronic device on school grounds or at school events. Parents and guardians must be willing to establish boundaries and standards for the appropriate and acceptable use of technology and communicate these boundaries and standards to their children. The appropriate/acceptable use standards apply to student use of technology via the District computer system or any other electronic media or communications, including by means of a student's own personal technology or electronic device on school grounds or at school events. The District Code of Conduct, similarly, applies to use of any and all technology on District premises. Known violations will result in appropriate disciplinary responses.

TRANSPORTATION-Related Issues

All Dodge attendance area students are eligible for bus transportation to and from school. The school bus is the safest and most efficient way to get students to school on time.

Parents with kindergarten students receive written notice (late in August, directly from the Transportation Department) detailing bus numbers and approximate pick up times. A second letter (late in August, directly from Dodge) will include the room assignment and information tag for parents to complete. Please have your kindergartner wear it the first week of school to assist staff in getting your child to the appropriate classroom in the morning and bus in the afternoon.



For all students (grades 1-4), please do NOT expect a letter to come home. Instead, you will access your child's bus information via WITS. There you will find the most specific busing information for your child. For parents who have not yet established a WITS account, there is general bus route information on our district webpage. It can be accessed at www.williamsvillek12.org. A direct link to this information from our home page is the flashing school bus alert. The link takes you to the Transportation section of our website where you can find bus information by school and by AM or PM routes. You may navigate through this information to find a range for the pick-up times for the

bus assigned to your child or children. This information is by school and bus number. Under each bus number are the streets the bus services. Therefore you will need to scroll through this information until you find your specific street. Once the street is located, you will see the appropriate bus number and the time range for pick-up or drop-off. Usually the nearest corner is the pick-up/drop off point. Students are asked to be there several minutes prior to the bus arrival (regardless of weather.) This is to avoid delaying traffic while the bus waits for students to get to the bus and to keep students from dangerously chasing the bus. The drivers are instructed to not stop for someone chasing the bus. For our youngest Dodgers, we ask that an adult be present at drop off and pick up. Arrangements can be made to take children to after school care facilities within our attendance area.

It may take almost two weeks to initiate any change in transportation plans, so don't delay the request! If a child needs to change the bus stop or bus number due to childcare needs for that **short-term emergency situation**, the principal may issue a bus pass for **single day use only**. Otherwise, children must take the bus assigned. Our goal is to get students to and from school in the safest possible manner.

Riding a school bus is a privilege that may be denied to students who disregard the rules of good conduct and safety regulations. Here are the bus safety rules!

1. Students should be at the bus stop five minutes before the scheduled bus arrival time; it will not wait for latecomers.
2. While waiting at the bus stop, there should be no horseplay, punching or shoving; form a single line to board the bus.
3. When crossing in front of the bus, walk far enough away from the bus so that you can see the driver's face. Only the driver should signal students to cross. Never return to the bus for dropped or forgotten items.
4. Take a seat and remain seated at all times until you reach your stop.
5. Never place your head, hands or arms out of a window.
6. Smoking, eating, drinking, shouting, use of bad language and fighting are prohibited.
7. Live animals, plants, skateboards, roller blades, balloons, glass containers, hockey sticks or lacrosse sticks may not be brought aboard the bus. Hockey skates may be brought aboard only if the runners are covered. Musical instruments are allowed only if the instrument can be held on the student's lap.
8. Help keep the bus clean by not throwing papers or other trash on the floor or seats. Do not make any marks on seats, sides or windows of the bus.

9. Permission for a change of bus or stop may only be obtained from the Transportation Department. Emergency situations will be handled through the school building's office.
10. Common courtesy toward the driver and other students is expected. The driver has full authority in the operation of the bus and discipline of the passengers. Drivers are due the same respect as teachers.

TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
(626-8390)

WALKERS/BIKE RIDERS:

Students who live in the adjacent neighborhood sometimes choose to walk or ride their bikes to school. We do not allow walkers or riders who need to cross a major road on the way. Walkers/riders gather with the dismissal monitor and all leave together **after** the buses have left the circle. Helmets may be brought in to school for safe keeping while bikes should be locked on the bike rack in the bus circle area. In the case of severe weather or other hazard upon dismissal, the school staff may send the child home on the bus or hold the student until the parent can be reached for pick-up...which ever is deemed safer at the time.



Transporting by Car: Drop off

The bus continues to be the safest way to get children to school. So, we strongly encourage all students to take the bus. However, sometimes families have a special need, which requires driving the student in the car.

Our parent drop off loop is located in the front (Dodge Rd side) of the school. We ask that parents use the full circle to drop students off to the sidewalk and to do so quickly. The first car should drive all the way around the circle to where the sidewalk ends. Multiple cars can unload simultaneously. Students quickly exit their cars and move to the nearest sidewalk. They take the sidewalk to the front entrance. This keeps the traffic moving and prevents huge back-ups. If your child needs assistance in getting safely out of the car, we ask that you pull into the parking lot to assist him or her. **DO NOT PARK IN THE DROP OFF LOOP. DO NOT PASS ANOTHER CAR.**



Parents are asked to allow their children to walk independently to class, regardless of grade level, at normal arrival time. Parents may say goodbye in our front foyer/lobby. If a student needs to be walked to class, we can arrange for a staff member to do so. This separation may be difficult at first for some but ultimately builds needed independence.

Transporting by Car: Pick up/Note for Club Participation

Whether during the day for an appointment or at the end of the day, family pick-ups require a responsible adult to park the car, enter the building and sign the child out. A

note is required to establish regular pickup plans and again each time the plan changes. If your child is attending an afterschool club, once you have signed the permission slip, he/she will be kept afterschool for each of the club dates. If you do **not** want your child to attend on a particular day, please send a note to the teacher indicating the change.


626-9820
Press "5" for the
Main office

PLAN AHEAD for DISMISSAL/TRANSPORTATION CHANGES:

We respectfully ask that notification regarding pick ups come to us in the form of a note each morning. Teachers collect notes from their students, make a note of the special transportation arrangement for the day, and send the note to the main office. The office creates a list of pick-ups for the day each morning to give to the monitors supervising dismissal. It is very challenging to make last minute changes to our dismissal arrangements and keep everyone informed. Therefore, we ask that parents/guardians make every effort to avoid last minute transportation changes during the day by calling the office before 1:30 PM.

Special Note: Never use email to send this information to the teacher. He or she may not see the email in time for action. Also, substitute teachers do not have access to the teacher's email. Sending a written notice about a change in dismissal routine is the safest route.

CANCELLATION OF AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES:

 There have been a few occasions in the past when inclement weather or power failure resulted in the cancellation of after school and evening school activities. Such a decision is not made lightly and is often made by about 1:00PM. This time frame provides the school staff the opportunity to contact the families of students who had planned to stay late for AIS, intramurals or a co-curricular club and make alternate end-of-day plans. It is critical that the school have several methods to reach parents/guardians as well as other emergency contacts for such a situation.

Just for Kids***, an afterschool program that rents space from the district at Dodge, would also be closed when the district cancels afterschool activities. The program, as well as our staff will hold students here until a family member can pick them up, which may be much earlier than the usual pick up. However, we will do everything in our power to communicate as early as possible with families when this needs to happen. So, again, be sure we have multiple ways we can reach you in such an emergency.

Just For Kids is an independently operated afterschool/before school program that is not affiliated with the Williamsville Central School District

EMERGENCY EARLY RELEASE PLAN

Each year on the first Friday in October, the district holds an Early Release Emergency Drill. Students are dismissed 15 minutes earlier than usual. The intended purpose is to simulate an unexpected need to release students during the day. Although this is unlikely to happen, it is a great opportunity to practice your family's back-up plan. Discuss in

advance with your child where he or she would go if they were released from the bus and the usual responsible adult was not there. Be sure to identify the neighbors your child has your permission to go to and communicate the plan with the neighbor. You are encouraged to practice this on the day of the emergency early release drill.

For students who remain at school or are driven to another after school care program, that plan continues on the emergency release drill. Please alert your childcare provider to expect the student at that time which will be approximately 15 minutes earlier than usual.



EMERGENCY SHELTERING PLAN: The school has in its Emergency Plan, procedures and expectations for staff in the case of extreme weather or other emergency that keeps us from bussing students home. Our first obligation is to your children, our students. We will remain at school to provide safe shelter, food and drink to the best of our ability. Students would be released to parents who were able to get safely to the school using slightly modified family pick-up protocols.

PARENTS MAY REGISTER TO RECEIVE EMERGENCY CLOSURE ALERTS AS A TEXT MESSAGE OR EMAIL AT www.williamsvillek12.org

Snacks: Teachers in Kindergarten through grade 3 encourage students to bring a nutritious snack (low in sugar and fat) and a water bottle to school daily. Teachers determine the most appropriate snack time based on how early or late lunch is scheduled in the day. It is helpful if the student can easily open the container independently. We do not have refrigeration available, so send non--perishable foods. Additional information regarding safe snacks for your child's specific classroom is sent home in letter form.

Birthday Celebrations:

We know that birthdays are very special to children and that they enjoy celebrating with their friends at school. Therefore, on our morning announcements we do our best to include everyone's birthday announcement across the year. We announce it on the same day whenever possible. For weekend birthdays, we announce them on the Friday before. For summer birthdays, we announce them during our last week of classes in June.



Parents may arrange to share a special time for the class on the day of the school birthday celebration. To be as safe as possible and minimally disruptive to instruction, we ask that:

- All celebration plans be cleared with the teacher at least one week in advance of the celebration
- As a parent you could read a story to the class, share a family game, provide a small trinket to the class, donate a book (in your child's name) to the library, etc.
- Visit length is pre-determined with the teacher who knows the needs of the day
- Again, communicate your plan with your child's teacher at least one week prior to the celebration date to avoid disappointment.

Materials Distribution at School:

May my child pass out valentines in class? May she distribute birthday party invitations? May he pass out flyers that contain his opinion on politics or religion? These are great questions!

We ask that everyone respect the following Dodge guidelines:

1. Foods will not be shared in class due to the many allergy concerns prevalent today.
2. We ask that in the cafeteria no food be shared because the teacher is not there to monitor.
3. Birthday party invitations and valentine cards may be shared as long as everyone receives one in the class. Distribution to all girls or all boys is also acceptable.
4. Students may distribute any other materials subject to the following conditions:
 - a. These other materials are not disruptive (i.e. obscene, promote illegal actions or substance for minors, step on the rights of others, appear libelous or are disruptive to the school program) AND approved by the principal in advance.
 - b. These other materials are distributed by the student him/herself with no assistance from adults.
 - c. These other materials are distributed in non-instructional areas (hallway/ lobby) during non-instructional times (before 8:15 AM or after dismissal.)
 - d. The student must understand that fellow students are not obligated to accept the materials. They have the right to say “No thank you.”



School Visitation/Parent Participation



Open House: Very early in the school year we hold grade level-specific Open House events. The purpose is to provide an overview of the program/ curriculum for the year, daily routines, communication procedures, class management approach, homework expectations and to have you generally get to know your child’s teacher. It is not intended to be student-specific. We save that for the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Open House dates are noted on the district and school level calendars. This is for adults only.

Parent Teacher Conferences: In November and, then again in March, formal parent teacher conferences occur. At this time, the fall and winter report cards are shared, as well as student work examples. This joint review of the report card allows parents/guardians a chance to both share and gather information. The teacher will inform you about setting up an appointment. There are evening as well as daytime appointments available because on two days at this time, the students have an early dismissal. These conferences are meant for parents and teachers only

unless otherwise specified by your child's teacher. Be sure to make the needed child care arrangements.


School Tours: The administrator is always happy to provide a building tour/program overview to new families anytime during the year. Just call the office to make an appointment!

Classroom Visitations: Parents are our teaching partners, so it is important to have them in-the-know! The website, student work, report cards and other written forms of communication from the school or teacher, in addition to Open House and parent teacher conferences, should provide parents with loads of information on your child's program, progress and how you can help at home. If you would like to visit the classroom for a 30-minute observation, contact the teacher. Please provide 24 hours notice.

Parent Volunteers: Most volunteer positions at Dodge are available through our wonderful PTA. Parents help with everything from the kindergarten orientation to fourth grade commencement activities. They help in the cafeteria during the first weeks of school, transitioning and supporting our youngest Dodgers. Please consider volunteering for the PTA's Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) activities or orientation events. Contact the PTA to get involved during the school day or evening! See the PTA section of the website for more details specific to this school year. Also watch for their email blasts!

Guest Presenters: Parents/community members may also offer to share lessons to teach about a religious faith, country's culture, career, etc. if it ties to the curriculum and is thoroughly reviewed with the teacher well in advance. We love to use our resources! However, we are also protective of our students and our time, so the teacher must give the final approval of the proposed lesson.

CLASS PLACEMENT/ PARENT REQUESTS


Dodge has an incredible staff! Any placement is a great placement as a result. Mr.  Smilinich does not, therefore, accept specific teacher placement requests from families. We ask that parents not attend to hearsay in the community about teachers but form their own opinion, based on personal experience. Therefore, the only requests accepted to opt out of a teacher's class is when the request was based on the experience of another child in the family.

If two students need to be separated from one another so that each may better focus on learning, those requests are also given consideration. Be sure to remind the office **annually** of such requests before May 15th. Requests received after this deadline may be difficult to honor.

Class Placement Notice:

Placements are determined at the end of the school year by the receiving team with input from all involved... the special education teacher, gifted programming specialist, social worker, reading teacher, administration, etc. Our goal is to create heterogeneous classrooms for whom the teachers can fully support and differentiate appropriately. We often cluster certain groups to maximize our ability to support those groups, and build our well-mixed groups around them.

During the last week of August, families are notified by mail of the class placement for the upcoming school year. Please do not call the school office to ask for this information, as we will not share it before the mailing.

Dress for Success: Although the school year often starts with our warmest days, remember to encourage your child to make school appropriate dressing selections. 

- ✓ Layering of clothing is always a good option so layers may be added or removed as the day warms up or as needs change throughout the building.
- ✓ Sneakers and flat-heeled shoes will be the only footwear allowable on the playgrounds or for other outdoor activities. Please be sure your child always brings sneakers if she chooses to wear flip-flops, high-heeled shoes/sandals, and platform shoes/sandals.
- ✓ “Heelies” (sneakers with built in skates) are strictly prohibited.
- ✓ Sneakers are needed at all times for recess, playground and classroom activities.
- ✓ Beachwear such as mesh/ see-through shirts, “spaghetti” straps, and shirts that show the midriff or the back are discouraged. Tank tops are more modest and appropriate at school.
- ✓ Pants should fit in the waist so that underwear is not visible and students are not tripping over their own pants.
- ✓ Skirts and shorts should be proportioned to allow the student to feel modest while sitting and reaching.



Field Trips:

We believe that learning can happen anywhere! Therefore, field trips are an important curricular activity. ALL field trips require parental permission to attend. The permission slip, sent home well in advance, is accompanied by important program information. Feel free to call the teacher if more information is needed before signing your name. Teachers will often recruit a few parent volunteers to attend the field trip and assist in chaperoning. Let us know if you are interested!

We do not charge students for field trip admission or transportation. The school district budget plan for our bussing costs and our wonderful PTA provides each grade level a generous sum to cover co-curricular learning events such as admission to a play, concert, etc. This donation is a sometimes used to bring special programs to Dodge as well.

OPEN ENROLLMENT

Open enrollment provides an opportunity for our students to attend schools within the Williamsville Central School District yet outside his or her residential attendance area. The Board of Education determines annually, which schools will be available for open enrollment during the following school year, based primarily upon anticipated enrollments. If a school is expected to be near or at capacity, the school may be “closed” to any students who reside outside its designated attendance area. If parents apply for Open Enrollment and receive approval to change their child’s school, they do give up the privilege of bus transportation.

The Office of Students Services must receive **written requests** for open enrollment for the following school year by **February 1**. It is not enough to just let your child's teacher, or even the Dodge office, know of your desire to openly enroll, as we have no authority to approve open enrollment requests. Please contact the Office of Student Services at **(716) 626-8007** for more information.

HOMEWORK

Although at times in the past, schools' or teachers' effectiveness may have been partially based on how rigorous and extensive the assigned homework was, educational research has mixed reviews on homework. Our school and all of its teachers pledge to:

- ✓ Use class time efficiently and effectively
- ✓ Provide homework only when needed.
- ✓ Provide homework child can do independently in grades 2-4
- ✓ Create HW assignments that are meaningful to each child.

Homework will not be given for the sole purpose of building responsibility. There are many other more effective ways to achieve this goal.

The independent practice that homework provides will give the teacher great feedback on what the student can and cannot do. This determines the teacher's next instructional steps. If a great deal of adult assistance or coaching is needed to support the child's effort, please let the teacher know with a note attached to the homework. Because homework is independent practice and an informal assessment combined, homework will not be given a grade. Specific feedback will be given (i.e. what was done well, suggestions for improvement) or a determination of satisfactory or completeness, but not a grade per se.

Our goal is to have students learning without unnecessary frustration or boredom. Homework should not hamper family, religious, social, physical and creative opportunities for our Dodgers. We don't believe in *No Homework*; we believe in being selective about homework.

You can expect all students to be asked to:

- ✓ **Read for pleasure daily**...how long they read may vary day to day based on time, interest, other assignments, etc.
- ✓ **Practice the skills that should be memorized** at their grade level. Kindergartners and first graders must know their alphabet, recognize numbers, letter sounds and many sight words. Sight words are those words that should be read in a snap, without sounding out or decoding. Knowing this increases the rate and fluency of reading, which ultimately aid comprehension! On the other hand, second, third and fourth graders work to have all the math facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) committed to memory, too. Standardized assessments do not allow the use of calculators at this level and having fluency and confidence in the math facts aid in the accuracy of calculation and allow the student to focus on higher-level thinking and problem solving.
- ✓ **Complete additional assignments** based on the criteria noted above.


At Open House, the teacher or team will share the grade level expectations regarding homework more specifically.

CURRICULUM EXTENSION TEAM*

- See the CET Open House handout for information in addition to the following:




Although the children often refer to Physical Education, Art, Music, PE, and Library as the “Specials,” in addition to being a *special* part of the day, they truly are **curriculum extension** classes. They often build on the key ideas from classroom curricula as the context to teach students the skills and concepts of their own disciplines. CE report cards are posted in WITS in January and June. CE teachers are also available at the Kindergarten Open House and Parent Teacher conference times unless otherwise noted.


Physical Education: At this level, our focus is on the good sportsmanship, cooperation, strength/ fitness, and skill building that leads up to sports/ games played later in school and for lifetime recreation. Students are asked to wear sneakers and clothing appropriate for PE on PE days. Our grade 3 and 4 students are asked to change into PE clothes in our supervised locker rooms. 




Art: Our art program is as much about the process as the product. From Kindergarten through grade 4, students are exposed to a variety of art forms, processes, artists, and even a bit of art history. Some products are sent home thorough out the year while a few key pieces are saved each year in a portfolio that students take home at the end of fourth grade. The portfolio is used with students to monitor progress.

Music: The Dodge general music program is five-fold. All K-4 students receive weekly instruction in singing, movement, listening, composition and the playing of rhythm and melody instruments. All fourth grade students participate in Chorus as part of their Curriculum Extension rotation. They perform concerts in both the winter and spring. Third graders have one performance in May.

Library: Our library is not only a great place to enjoy and select a good book, it is well poised for research using conventional reference books, a strong non-fiction collection and a computer lab with internet access as well as a classroom instructional area. 

Gifted Programming: Some students may require learning opportunities with our other Gifted Programming Specialist. Supports move from Level 2 (many students given occasional opportunities) to Level 4 (very few students given very regular opportunities). Teachers, parents and students may nominate a student for such services. An informal inventory and discussion then occurs before placement is possible. 

Instrumental Music: Each year Dodge Elementary offers the chance for every 4th grader to participate in either Beginning Band or Orchestra. Students participate in weekly group lessons and rehearsals with the entire band or orchestra. All Dodge musicians perform two evening concerts per year. In order to have outstanding concerts, all band & orchestra members are asked to commit to home practicing. This allows young musicians to perfect what they have learned in school. 

Being a musician requires responsibility and a commitment to excellence. Students who learn to play an instrument learn discipline and cooperation with others. Current research confirms that the study and participation in performing musical groups improves students' learning in all academic areas.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES from the Diverse Resources Team*

** See the DRT Open House handout for information in addition to the following:*

Math Support: Math support is mandated for those students who are at risk for not meeting the New York State standards in math at each grade level. In our district, students are eligible for math support when they demonstrate proficiency on fewer than 50% of the state standards at that grade level. Students who have not yet met proficiency on the NYS grade 3 and/or grade 4 Math Assessments automatically qualify as well. Such support is sometimes given in the form of classroom teacher monitoring with minor in-class intervention, class-size reduction (by placing a second teacher in the math class), student pull out in small groups with our math specialist or a teacher, and finally, before and after school Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

Literacy Support: Reading support comes in a variety of forms during the school day from classroom teacher monitoring with minor intervention to pull-aside or pull-out small group instruction with our reading specialists as well as before or after school AIS. This intervention is for students who have not yet met the district criteria, a given AIMSweb benchmark, a DRA benchmark, or have not yet shown proficiency on the New York State English Language Arts Assessment. Parent notification is required to provide the support, not parent permission. We are mandated to provide this intervention for those who qualify.

- **Phonological Awareness Intervention:** Our K team and reading specialists have been trained by the 95% Group to systematically teach the discrete prerequisite skills kindergarten (and some older) students need to be ready for the phonetic or decoding aspect of reading. PA instruction teaches students to develop their auditory skills including auditory memory, discrimination, rhyming, onset and rhyme, syllable and word knowledge, and finally the ability to manipulate those sounds and syllables by adding, deleting or substituting.
- **System 44:** An instructional approach that blends direct instruction from a teacher with individualized practice using an adaptive computer program to help students crack the code for reading. The focus is on decoding skills, appropriate for students in grades 3 and 4.
- **Reading Recovery:** Reading Recovery is an intense reading and writing program for some first graders. Each school that is fully implemented in Reading Recovery can address 20% of the grade level before the year is out! Reading Recovery teachers specially trained in Reading Recovery work 1:1 with 4 individual students for a maximum of 20 weeks. Then they work with an additional 4 students for the remainder of the school year, typically around 15 weeks. Any student



who does not discontinue the second round may have an opportunity to finish their Reading Recovery Program in the summer.

- **Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI):** consists of planned lessons designed to provide additional help to kindergarten, first and/or second grade children who are finding it difficult to read and write. After using systematic assessment to determine the appropriate level for instruction, teachers create homogeneous groups of three children who are reading at the same level. The LLI teacher implements planned daily lessons that incorporate a range of approaches, each supported by research. The daily lessons are provided as a guide. The LLI teacher adjusts lessons according to the needs of the students in each group.

The ten design features are as follows. (1) LLI lessons are matched to children's reading ability so that they are reading at independent and instructional levels (with teacher support) daily. (2) LLI lessons provide systematic instruction in phonemic awareness.

(3) They also provide systematic instruction in phonics.

(4) LLI lessons provide daily opportunities for oral rereading of texts. (5) They provide daily opportunities to read novel texts with teacher support. (6) They provide explicit instruction on comprehension. (7) LLI lessons provide opportunities for writing. (8) The lessons also provide opportunities to learn a core of high frequency words. (9) They are designed to expand vocabulary and develop oral language. (10) They are highly motivating for children and teachers.

- **Other types of literacy intervention:** For some students, the aforementioned specific and intensive programs are not the most appropriate or efficient intervention paths to meet their unique needs. For such students the reading specialists or classroom teachers mold a different kind of individualized plan. It may be an eclectic approach to reading and or writing that borrows best practices from these and other approaches. Intervention for some students is lasered in a particular area, such as fluency or vocabulary building. For others time is spent completing activities that parallel the tasks often included on the state assessment. Getting comfortable with the test as a genre is necessary for some students beyond the experiences embedded into classroom instruction that directly or indirectly parallel the NYS assessment.

Counseling, evaluation and guidance: We are thrilled to have both social work and school psychological services available at Dodge. Both professionals provide ongoing and short term counseling with our students. Our **social worker** may also help connect families with community resources. Our **school psychologist**, through his/her leadership on the Child Support Team (CST), may also be available to lead this multi-disciplinary team in academic related reviews, planning and evaluation, when a student is having difficulty reaching academic success.

English as A New Language (ENL): Our ENL program is for students who have a dominant or native language at home that is not English. Once qualified to participate, students may only exit by achieving a proficient score on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) assessment administered annually in the spring. Students that are ENL may receive 18, 36 or 72 minutes of their English/ Language Arts program from the certified TESOL teacher. The amount of time depends upon the level of proficiency of each student. Building background knowledge, vocabulary, comprehension and expression of social as well as academic-related concepts is the focus.

Special Education Programs: The Committee on Special Education (CSE) has a range of services to select from in order to meet each student's unique needs. The goal is to effectively educate children in the least restrictive environment that is with their non-disabled peers as much as possible and appropriate. Students identified as having an educationally related disability (i.e. learning disability, speech impairment, health impaired) may receive only related service (i.e. Speech, OT, PT) and spend all the rest of their day in the regular or general education classroom with no additional support. Some students don't need direct support as long as their classroom teacher receives assistance in planning and making modifications with the special educator. A 30-minute resource room period working in a small group with a special education teacher on areas of need is another option. Direct content area instruction may be needed for ELA or Math, for example. This can take place within the general education classroom with the special education teacher and classroom teacher team teaching. At times it may be necessary to have the small group of special education students pulled out of the large class for the direct content instruction with only the special education teacher.

Speech Language Support: Our **speech language pathologists** meet the needs of the speech and language impaired students. They build speech (i.e. articulation, voice, fluency) and receptive and expressive language (i.e. vocabulary, syntax, pragmatic) skills. The majority of the caseload is students who have been determined as having an educationally related disability via the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Students who are not classified may be seen if time permits. However, our SLPs are always willing to help families connect with community resources or create a home therapy plan for families to implement

Occupational Therapy: Occupational Therapy in the school system is an educationally related service that children may receive if determined eligible by the Committee on Special Education. Occupational Therapy (OT) focuses on developing and improving sensory-motor, fine motor, visual perceptual skills, handwriting, and self-care skills to access and succeed in the academic setting. Services may be provided in the classroom or in a separate therapy room, wherever most appropriate and least restrictive.



Physical Therapy: Physical Therapy (PT) focuses on gross motor skills such as strength, balance and coordination, mobility, and participation in physical activities with peers within the school environment. Team collaboration is an integral process in developing programs to help each child to reach their individual goals. Again, this is a service available only if recommended as a needed educationally related service by the CSE.

CURRICULUM: The district curriculum in each content area is accessible to some degree on the district website www.williamsville12.org. Open the menu under *Departments & Services* and click on *Curriculum and Instruction*. Each subject is listed with a description of our program. Parents of students enrolled in district schools can access additional curricular details by opening the menu under *STAFF* and clicking on *WITS (Williamsville Information Tracking System)*. Parents then log onto WITS using their own user name and password*. Once opened to the WITS homepage, open the menu under Curriculum to find ELA, Math, Science, etc listed individually. Additional questions about the curriculum should be addressed at Open House. However, the principal is always happy to address questions parent have about curriculum and instruction at Dodge Elementary School.

* *Special Note: The district is happy to provide each parent their own password to WITS. Call 626-8058 for more information.*




Co-curricular Clubs:

Each year our school determines which co-curricular clubs to offer. We know that the elementary years are the perfect time to explore diverse interests. These experiences build background knowledge in new arenas or further develop specific areas of interest or talent. Therefore, we do our best to offer a set of activities that meet a broad range of student interests. Intramurals are described below. Other clubs vary so much year to year that they are not listed here. In the fall, teachers submit proposals for before or after school clubs that allow them to extend the curriculum. Past examples include: Book Club, Chess Club, Games around the World Club, Country Line Dancing, Kids Care, Drama, Multi-cultural Storytelling, Math Club, etc.

Once the slate is determined, the clubs description announcements are sent home to the entire grade level in student backpacks just prior to the start of the club. Parents fill out a permission slip if their child is interested in attending the club. Students are then enrolled into clubs by random selection of permission slips returned. Students are informed whether his/her name was drawn or not. We would love to have everyone interested attend but may not have enough supervision, materials, or opportunities for all. Remember, once you have given your permission to generally participate, your child will be kept after school on each of the scheduled days UNLESS you send a note indicating you have changed the plan for that particular day.

Intramurals: Students in grade 4 are afforded the opportunity to participate in intramurals. Intramurals is an after school elective which is offered at numerous times during the school year. The activity is usually an extension of the current PE unit. Notices and permission slips for intramurals will be sent home with students. Remember, once you have given your permission to generally participate, your child will be kept after school on each of the scheduled days UNLESS you send a note indicating you have changed the plan for that particular day. A ride home is needed promptly at the end of each session.

RECESS:

Recess this year will occur daily for 20 minutes. Physical activity reduces mental fatigue, increases oxygen flow, and sometimes, builds fitness. These recess breaks may include some Dodge favorites such as “Brain Gym”, movement to a song or poem, a walk around the campus, a visit to the playground, a kickball game with another class, or sledding on our little hill. Teachers may do this at anytime in the day that best fits their schedule and student needs. 

PLAYGROUND ACCESS:


Our PE staff and teachers often use the Fitness Center and The Dodge Tree House throughout the day and across the year. Therefore, the playgrounds are only open to the community when not in use by Dodge students and staff during the school day. We apologize for any inconvenience; however, our primary interest is safety. A young child could be injured as the older children play in large groups.

ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

On occasion a teacher will invite students to bring an item from home for an educational experience (show and tell, for example). We ask that the following guidelines be respected to ensure the safety of the item and to minimize disruptions to learning.


- **Items of monetary or sentimental value** are to be left at home. If it is important that the item come to school, we ask that the parent bring the item personally and take it home. This ensures the parent is in control of the item. Examples include electronic devices, family treasures, etc.
- Items that will distract your child or others from learning, even if of little monetary or sentimental value, should also be left at home. Good examples are trading cards and stuffed animals.
- Although the district policy on **cell phones** states that they may be present in school but not used during instructional times, we encourage families to leave cell phones at home. Lockers / cubbies are easily accessible making the cell phone vulnerable to theft. Our office is happy to assist in parent–student communication.
- Students are not to carry glass or other easily broken/ sharp materials. Please use non-breakable containers in lunch boxes, such as water bottles, etc.
- Weapons are never allowed in school, not even toy versions or as part of a costume.
- Please leave pets at home.

LOST AND FOUND:

Items found in the classroom are kept with the teacher until after checking with his or her students. Items are then taken to the Lost and Found Closet, which is near the auditorium entrance. Items are sorted into a few key categories. Students and parents may look for their lost items at any time. We just ask that you leave in neatly organized for the next family. To encourage families to examine the found items, we often set up the lost and found table during Parent-Teacher Conferences and at the end of June. Anything left after the school year ends is given to charity. 

Items lost on the bus are handled differently. The drivers are encouraged to place lost items in their lost and found immediately. Families may call the transportation office to clarify whether the bus used is a district or contracted bus. The parent/ guardian may then drive to the appropriate bus garage to locate the lost item.

Communicate with us!

The research is clear...home-school communication and partnership has a positive effect on student achievement. This relationship is built via phone calls, notes, conferences and e-mail. Our website has a listing of each teacher's email and WITS will connect you directly with your child's teachers. We ask that you be respectful of your use of our email addresses and **use it for educational purposes only**. Do not use it for mass emails, business or "junk mail" purposes. Please do not forward it to others. 

Feel free to use it use it to:

- ✓ Ask about school events
- ✓ Inquire about your child's progress
- ✓ Provide a suggestion to improve our procedures
- ✓ Tell us about something at home that may impact school life for your child, etc.

All staff are asked to check their email at least once a day...it may be morning or afternoon. So, for timely information, please call the main office directly. Office staff can ask the teacher to call you as soon he or she is available, or a message can be left in their mailbox. You can Access any staff member through WITS.

Principal: [Mr. Charles Smilnich](mailto:cmilnich@williamsvillek12.org) at cmilnich@williamsvillek12.org
Administrative Assistant: [Mrs. Myers](mailto:mmyers@williamsvillek12.org) at mmyers@williamsvillek12.org.

PTA:

Parent Teacher Associations have been around since 1897 when mothers (with some father, **PTA** teachers, and legislators) banded together to lobby for the safety/well-being of our nation's children. Their efforts have spurred changes in the education, legal, labor and transportation areas. Most will agree that the children of today are very protected from public's harm.

This was necessary work. Today's PTAs still lobby for important issues as needed but because students are so safe in the educational realm; many of the PTAs actions now are in support of school and school programming. The partnership between the school and PTA has allowed us to extend our program. Membership fees and fundraising activities (fall wrapping paper/ gift sale and Country Fair) provide the school with field trips, or programs here that we could not have otherwise paid for. Occasionally, the PTA donates large items the school community can benefit from as well. PTA meetings offer parents a chance to meet other parents but also to hear what is happening at the school and district level through extensive Board of Education updates and building news. Membership flyers are sent home annually and additional copies are always available in the school office. Please JOIN THE PTA TODAY

Dodge Elementary School



Be Safe. Be Kind. Work Hard!

Civil Rights Policy:

Williamsville Central Schools is an equal opportunity employer in compliance with all applicable laws including NYS Human Rights Law, Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any member of the Williamsville Central School District staff or any WCSD pupil or parent believing himself or herself aggrieved because of discrimination based on age, race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, military/ veteran status or disability should address questions and complaints to:

District Title IX Compliance Officer
Larry Militello, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
716-626-8051

Or
District 504 Compliance Officer
Dr. Anna Cieri, Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Education and Student Services
716-626-8061