



Stafford Township School District

2018-2019

Parent/Student Handbook

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Welcome

With this copy of the Stafford Township School District Handbook/Calendar, we hope to make the 2018-2019 school year a most pleasant and productive one for both you and your child. Included are program descriptions, policies, procedures, and other materials with which we hope you will become familiar.

This is your school district. We recommend that you learn as much as you can about the curriculum, programs, and school activities. We encourage you to become familiar with the various channels of communication in place to keep you informed about your child's school. These include the district website (www.staffordschools.org), the Blackboard Connect Messaging System (phone and text), and Building and District Committees, Twitter and the Parent Portal. In addition, we encourage you to be an active member of the PTO and Producers.

Best wishes for a safe and rewarding school year for you and your family.

Administrative Offices

250 North Main Street
Manahawkin, NJ 08050
609-978-5700

www.staffordschools.org

Mr. George J. Chidiac
Superintendent

Administrative Staff

Daniel Smith	School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Barbara D'Apuzzo	Director of Personnel
Dawn Reo	Director of Enrichment, Extended Day, Nurses & State Reports
David Ytreboe	Director of Pupil Services (Affirmative Action Officer)
Jenny Graf	Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction
Sean Reilly	Supervisor of Elementary Education
Hope Scherlin	Supervisor of Special Services
Stephanie Bush	Principal, Intermediate School
Margaret Hoffman	Principal, McKinley Avenue Elementary School
Susan D'Alessandro	Principal, Ocean Acres Elementary School
Lori Coyne	Principal, Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center
William Wilkinson	Director of Preschool, Oxycocus School

Stafford Township School District

Mission Statement

The mission of the Stafford Township School District, a partnership of schools, parents, and community, shall provide a secure, nurturing environment that fosters a positive self-image through educational achievement and promotes mastery of New Jersey Student Learning Standards while encouraging students to become life-long learners in a global society.

Adopted: July 18, 2016

School Information

Oxycocus Elementary School
Preschool
"A Great Place to Begin"

<p>William Wilkinson, Director of Preschool</p> <p>250 N. Main Street Manahawkin, NJ 08050</p> <p>609-978-5700</p> <p>Main Office: x1270</p> <p>Nurse: X1073</p> <p>Child Study Team: x1077</p> <p>Fax: 609-978-5739</p>	<p>School Hours: 8:55AM-3:35PM</p> <p>Late Arrival: 9:05AM</p> <p>Delayed Opening: 10:55AM-3:35PM</p> <p>Early Dismissal: 12:55PM</p> <p>Extended Day Program: 6:30AM-8:55AM 3:30PM-6PM</p> <p>Drop off/pick up at door 26</p>
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School Information Continued

Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center Kindergarten

“Imagine, Explore, & Discover”

<p>Lori Coyne, Principal</p> <p>1000 McKinley Avenue Manahawkin, NJ 08050</p> <p>609-978-5700</p> <p>Main Office: x1350</p> <p>Nurse: x1276</p> <p>Child Study Team: x1077</p> <p>Fax: 609-978-8393</p>	<p>School Hours: 8:55AM-3:35PM</p> <p>Late Arrival: 9:05AM</p> <p>Delayed Opening: 10:55AM-3:35PM</p> <p>Early Dismissal: 12:55PM</p> <p>Extended Day Program: 6:30AM - 8:55AM 3:30PM - 6:00 PM</p> <p>Drop off/pick up at main entrance</p>
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School Information Continued

Ocean Acres Elementary School
Grades 1 - 2
“Growing by Leaps and Bounds”

Susan D'Alessandro, Principal

489 Nautilus Drive
Manahawkin, NJ 08050

609-978-5700

Main Office: x1198

Nurse: x1113

Child Study Team: x1077

Guidance Office: x1081

Fax: 609-607-1983

School Hours:
8:45AM - 3:25PM

Late Arrival:
8:55AM

Delayed Opening:
10:45AM-3:25PM

Early Dismissal:
12:45PM

Extended Day Program:
6:30AM - 8:45AM
3:20PM - 6:00PM

AM drop off at PLC main entrance

PM Pick up at OA door 9

School Information Continued

McKinley Avenue Elementary School
Grades 3 - 4
"Believe and Succeed"

Margaret Hoffman, Principal
Sean Reilly, Supervisor

1000 McKinley Avenue
Manahawkin, NJ 08050

609-978-5700

Main Office: x1134

Nurse: x1140

Child Study Team: x1143

Guidance Office: x1317

Fax: 609-978-5737

School Hours:
7:52AM - 2:35PM

Late Arrival:
7:57AM

Delayed Opening:
9:52AM - 2:35PM

Early Dismissal:
11:52AM

Extended Day Program:
6:30AM - 7:52AM
2:30PM - 6:00PM

AM drop off at PLC main entrance

PM Pick up at McKinley door 23

School Information Continued

Stafford Intermediate School
Grades 5 - 6
"Where Great Things Happen"

<p>Stephanie Bush, Principal Sean Reilly, Supervisor</p> <p>1000 McKinley Avenue Manahawkin, NJ 08050</p> <p>609-978-5700</p> <p>Main Office: x1066</p> <p>Nurse: x1074</p> <p>Child Study Team: x1143</p> <p>Guidance Office: x1127</p> <p>Fax: 609-978-5738</p>	<p>School Hours: 7:47AM - 2:30PM</p> <p>Late Arrival: 7:57AM</p> <p>Delayed Opening: 9:47AM-2:30PM</p> <p>Early Dismissal: 11:47AM</p> <p>Extended Day Program: 6:30AM - 7:47AM 2:25PM - 6:00PM</p> <p>AM drop off at PLC main entrance</p> <p>PM Pick up at McKinley door 23</p>
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Board of Education

Michael Hemenway, President
Richard Czajkowski, Vice President
Patricia Formica, Member
Walter Jauch, Member
Deborah Lyons, Member
Tammy Nicolini, Member
Joe Mangino, Member
Beth Sicoli, Member
Gerald Simonelli, Member

Overview

The nine member Board of Education is an elected body comprised of residents of Stafford Township. As board members, they establish policies and oversight for the Stafford Township School District and make important decisions that affect the educational offerings to the district's children. Board members fulfill three-year terms and serve the residents and children of Stafford Township without pay. A listing of Board of Education members, meeting dates, agendas, meeting minutes, policies, and regulations are posted on the district website: www.staffordschools.org

Elections

Board of Education candidate elections are held on the same day as the November General Election date. For 2018, that date is Tuesday, November 6th. To be eligible to vote, residents must be at least 18 years of age on the date of the election, a citizen of the United States, a county resident for 30 days before the election, and register at least 30 days before the election.

Registration forms and vote by mail applications may be obtained from the Office of the County Clerk, 118 Washington Street, Toms River, NJ. These forms are also available in the lobby of each school and on the district website: www.staffordschools.org.

Meeting Dates

The Board of Education welcomes and encourages the public to take an active role in the educational process. Members of the community are invited to attend Board meetings to ask questions and express opinions. Board meetings will begin at 7:30 PM on September 19th, October 18th, November 15th, and December 13th. After the election, the Board of Education will schedule a reorganization meeting in January. At the January meeting, the Board of Education will approve a schedule of meeting dates for the remainder of 2018. It is anticipated that the Board will continue to meet on the third Thursday of every month. The dates will be posted on the district website, when they become available.

Curriculum and Instruction

Academically Gifted Program

Many of our district students have exceptional academic abilities that may require additional motivation and challenge. Students in grades Kindergarten through second grade receive this additional enrichment in the classroom. The classroom teacher identifies the student's exceptional abilities and enriches the student with activities and instruction that help the student grow academically. Our academically gifted program in grades three through six allows students with exceptional academic potential to work on project based activities designed to align with grade level curriculum and promote critical thinking. Students will work on project-based activities that will benefit their classrooms, their school or the community. A combination of teacher recommendations, report cards, standardized test scores, and DRA/Lexile levels will be used to identify students who qualify for the program.

District Testing and Assessment

Student evaluation and assessment is the process of using tests, observations, and work samples to assess student progress and the effectiveness of implemented programs. School improvement at all levels is, and must be, assessment driven. The Stafford Township School District is committed to utilizing a variety of assessment instruments providing valid and reliable information that will promote the enhancement of district programs and the successful monitoring of student achievement. Assessment data is continually collected and analyzed.

Assessments

Assessment Instruments

Formative assessment is used to identify needed instruction. Summative assessment is used to evaluate learning.

State Mandated Assessments

PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) is an online assessment administered in grades 3-6 to compare student performance to a set standard of proficiency. The testing dates are determined by the State. Actual test dates take place within that testing window. More information will be provided throughout the year. The NJDOE is in the process of developing a new science assessment. Information regarding this assessment and testing dates will be provided as it becomes available.

Standardized Progress Assessments

Administered throughout the year to inform instruction throughout the year and evaluate individual student progress.

In View

An ability test that is given to all grade 2 students to identify a learning index for all students and to compare ability levels with achievement.

Health Curriculum

The Stafford Township School District provides students with a comprehensive health program that is aligned to State curriculum requirements. The Health curriculum is designed to promote health and wellness. Health activities are designed to be multi-disciplinary, cross-curricular and kinesthetically based. Each component is grade appropriate and builds on previous lessons. At grades 5 and 6 a discussion on growth and development is part of the curriculum. Notification of the "Family Life" program and its content will be made available for parents and guardians to review and permission forms will go home for approval. Drug and Alcohol Resistance Education, DARE, is a curriculum presented to our 5th grade students. The DARE program, sponsored by the Stafford Township Police Department, teaches students how to make appropriate decisions, how to deal with peer pressure, how to develop self-esteem and confidence and an awareness of the social, physical and legal issues pertaining to drugs and alcohol. Additionally, they are able to interact with local officers in a positive and informative environment.

Homework

Homework assignments are given for review and practice of skills and reinforcement of lessons, which are explained in school and should not exceed 10 minutes per grade level. (10 minutes of homework for grades K-1, 20 minutes for 2nd grade, 30 minutes for 3rd grade, 40 minutes for 4th grade, 50 minutes for 5th grade, and 60 minutes for 6th grade). In addition, specific time should be set aside each day for independent reading at every grade level. The more you read the better reader you become. Parents/guardians should make an effort to provide a quiet work place for compliance in

the completion of homework assignments. Requests for homework must be called in by 10AM for pick-up the same afternoon. Requests received after this time may not be ready until the following day. Whenever a student is absent, he/she will have the amount of days he/she was absent to make up the work. For example, if he/she was out one day, he/she will have one full day to make up the work.

Student Progress Communication

Parent / Guardian Teacher Conferences

Conferences provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian and teacher to discuss a child's progress. Conferences will be scheduled in November for all grade levels (including preschool). In the event of a disciplinary issue, parents/guardians may be required to attend a conference to address the circumstances. Parents and guardians should feel free to contact the teacher/school to arrange a conference if questions arise concerning their child.

Progress Reports

Each teacher shall issue progress reports on an individual basis as needed for improvement. These reports, which will be in narrative form, shall serve to notify parents/guardians if the student is not meeting appropriate standards.

Report Cards

On a quarterly basis, parents/guardians will be provided with information regarding their child's academic progress, strengths, and weaknesses. Preschool and kindergarten will use a variety of developmentally appropriate reporting systems. Grades one through six will use traditional report cards purposely designed to address the developmental abilities of specific grade levels. Additional information can be found at the district's website: www.staffordschools.org.

Specials

Art

Art instruction is provided to all students and emphasizes the teaching of basic art skills by using different art media. The artwork of pupils is usually displayed throughout the school and at times used for school assemblies. Community members may also utilize the work for displays.

Music

The instrumental music program is conducted during and after school hours for pupils in grades 4-6. The program includes a brass ensemble and a marching band that

performs at various parades, town, and general school functions. The program is taught by fully certified teachers.

The vocal music program is taught one day per week by a certified music teacher. The program is required for all pupils in grades K-6. Open chorus for any students interested will be available for grades 2, 4, 5 and 6. An auditioned chorus will also be available in grade 6.

Physical Education

The physical education program is a carefully planned sequence of learning activities designed to build physical strength and refine basic motor skills. Additionally, these learning activities help promote lifelong physical fitness, health, and wellness. All students receive physical education instruction every week. Students should wear shorts, slacks, or sweatpants and tops suitable for exercise. Proper sneakers and socks should be worn for safety and hygienic purposes. Please remember to follow these guidelines when sending your child to school on physical education days:

- All athletic shoes (sneakers) must be flat and solid on the bottom and have rubber soles. ELEVATED SHOES, SHOES WITH HEELS, or SHOES WITH WHEELS (e.g. Heelies) are NOT permitted. These shoes do not allow the foot to bend or move properly and are heavier and tend to be more awkward. Due to the above limitations, it is very easy to incur injuries.
- All athletic shoes (sneakers) must have shoelaces, secure velcro fasteners or a locking mechanism (e.g. Locklaces) to properly and safely secure the shoe to the foot. Also, the laces should be the proper length so that they do not drag on the floor and cause your child to trip. PLEASE NOTE: “bungee” laces, zipper-only fasteners, buckles, and “slip-ons” as well as sneakers that do not cover the top of the foot are not permitted. These types of shoes DO NOT offer the proper supports and are therefore NOT PERMITTED for physical education activities.
- Any athletic shoe that is deemed unsafe to play will not be allowed to participate in physical education.

We realize that athletic shoes can be costly and hopefully these guidelines will help you to make appropriate choices for proper footwear for physical education. In fact, these guidelines are certainly applicable for all instances where physical activity is taking place. Special considerations may be made for religious, medical, or special education considerations. Please contact the physical education teacher.

Kindergarten Special Areas

Kindergarten students will experience a number of different specials that are developmentally appropriate for their age and ability level. All Kindergarten special area teachers will connect their instruction and activities to a monthly theme that correlates to the curriculum. The overall goal of the entire Kindergarten special area department is to assist in the development of the whole child to become a good citizen with a wealth of experiences in a number of supplemental instructional areas. All Kindergarten students will have nine thirty minute special area classes per week. Examples may include physical education experience, vocal music experience, STEAM, art experience, and social skills.

Preschool Special Areas

Preschool students will have the opportunity, depending on session attending, to experience a number of different specials that are developmentally appropriate for their age and ability. These specials will connect not only to the preschool curriculum, but to the classroom instruction as well. The specials will begin in the students' familiar classroom environment, but as the students become more familiar with the special area teacher, the experiences will take place in new surroundings. Each special will be thirty minutes in duration. Examples of the types of specials are: art experience, gross motor/physical activity experience, literary/technology experience and social skills.

Technology

Our students are living and learning in a world of rapid change and advancement in technology. This has created many important tools that can be utilized in the classroom. Stafford Township School District recognizes the importance and has made great strides in bringing technology into the classroom. It is vital that we begin to prepare our students for the technological world in which they live and believe that technology is an instrumental part in the learning process. At the present time, each student in grades 1-6 have 1:1 chromebooks that can be utilized in the classrooms. Students in grades 3-6 will utilize a google drive account to create and store documents related to classroom activities. We have an internet and intranet system within the district and a computer training site for staff members. Our goal is to use technology as a tool to enhance instruction, foster creativity, encourage higher order thinking, facilitate cooperative learning and increase student motivation. For further information please visit our website: www.staffordschools.org.

District General Information

Affirmative Action

Stafford Township School District is in compliance with the State and Federal Laws which prohibit educational program and employment discrimination on the basis of gender (New Jersey law against discrimination: Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments); handicap (New Jersey law against discrimination: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973); age (New Jersey law against discrimination: Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967); and race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation or national origin (New Jersey law against discrimination: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) and any other class specifically protected by state or federal law, Board of Education Policy and the Comprehensive Equity Plan.

Inquiries should be directed to the District Affirmative Action Officer, 609-978-5700 ext. 1029.

Attendance

Communication is key when it comes to your child's attendance. The Stafford Township School District is committed to helping your child succeed in all areas. Being present and on time to school every day is a key part of academic success. When a child is absent, continuity of instruction is lost and it can be difficult for students to catch up. In addition, when a child is frequently absent it negatively impacts the entire class as the teacher has to spend time preparing work, re-teaching lessons and catching students up. With that said, we understand that there are times when your child must be absent.

When an absence cannot be avoided we ask that you do the following:

- Enter the absence via the Parent Portal on the day of the absence by 10:00 am.
- Contact your child's classroom teacher for assignments and make arrangements to pick up missed work when possible.
- When your child returns to school, provide a note that explains your child's absence and/or a medical note when possible. Upon receipt of notes, absences will be changed to reflect excused or unexcused.

Following these simple steps helps the attendance office as well as the teacher to stay informed and take the necessary steps to provide support when necessary.

Notifications and Procedures

The State of New Jersey has defined chronic absenteeism as any student who misses 10% (approximately 18 days) or more of their total enrolled school days. In order to keep parents informed the Stafford Township School District will do the following regardless of a student’s academic status:

- All students will receive a letter through the Parent Portal when they reach 5 absences.
- All students will receive a letter through the Parent Portal when they reach 10 absences. At this time, the District may require a parent meeting with the Building Principal to address the absences and develop a plan for improvement which may include involvement from Guidance and the I&RS Committee.
- All students will receive a letter through the Parent Portal when they reach 15 absences. At this time, if a meeting has not taken place with the Building Principal, one will be required. If that meeting did take place and the absences have continued the parent and student may be required to attend court mediation. In addition, Guidance involvement will be implemented through the I&RS committee.
- Any student who reaches 18 absences may be required to attend court mediation. Upon completion of mediation, if the student’s attendance does not improve, a complaint may be filed against the guardian(s), with the Stafford Township Municipal Court.

Tardiness and Early Pick-Up’s

Below is a list of start and dismissal times for each school. Please make sure that your child arrives on time and completes the school day. We understand that there may be times when your child can not avoid being late or picked up early. Please provide a medical note when possible. We suggest that students take the bus to ensure an on time arrival.

<p>Oxycocus School: School Hours: 8:55AM – 3:35PM Late Arrival: 9:05AM</p>	<p>Primary Learning Center: School Hours: 8:55AM – 3:35PM Late Arrival: 9:05AM</p>
<p>Ocean Acres School: School Hours: 8:45AM – 3:25PM Late Arrival: 8:55AM</p>	<p>McKinley Avenue School: School Hours: 7:52AM – 2:35PM Late Arrival: 7:57AM</p>
<p>Intermediate School: School Hours: 7:47AM – 2:30PM Late Arrival: 7:57AM</p>	

Attendance Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do I speak to someone in regards to attendance

- A. Call the main office of the school your child attends. Please leave a detailed message with your question or concern, your child's name, grade, teacher and your phone number. The office will get back to you that school day if your message is left prior to 3:00 pm.

Q. What is considered an excused absence?

- A. Below is a list of excused absences approved by the State of New Jersey Department of Education and the Stafford Township Board of Education Attendance Regulation R5200:
- Religious holidays as recognized on the Department of Education website.
 - Take Your Child to Work Day.
 - The student's illness (doctor's note or verified by school nurse).
 - The student's required attendance in court.
 - Stafford Township Board of Education Regulation PUPILS R5200 Attendance M Page 3 of 10 c. Where appropriate, when consistent with Individualized Education Programs, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, accommodation plans under 29 U.S.C. §§ 794 and 705(20), and individualized health care plans.
 - The student's suspension from school.
 - Family illness or death (supported by a written letter from the parent upon the student's return to school).
 - Necessary and unavoidable medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day (medical documentation required).

Q. What can I do when my child is out sick for an extended period of time but the doctor has advised that they do not need to be seen (i.e. stomach virus)?

- A. Please mark your child absent in the Parent Portal, communicate with the Main Office and your child's teacher, pick up and complete missed work, and continue to make every effort to have your child attend school regularly when they are able.

Q. What do I need to do if my child is going to be absent for an extended period of time?

- A. Per Stafford Township Board of Education Regulation PUPILS R5200 Attendance. The parent/guardian of a student that will not be in attendance for 14 days consecutive school days or more must notify the main office to un-enroll the student, i.e. extended vacation. Upon return you will need to re-enroll your child.

Q. What is considered a full day?

A. Your child must be in attendance for 4 hours to receive credit for the day. On School District Half Days which are 4 hours in total students must be present for 2 hours to receive credit.

Q. What do I do if I get a call stating that my child is absent when I know they are at school?

A. There are times when a child is incorrectly marked absent. When this occurs, contact the main office of your child's school. The secretary will call down to the classroom and confirm with the teacher that the student is present

Stafford Township Arts Center (STAC)

STAC is a state-of-the-art theater that can accommodate up to 800 guests. Its primary purpose is for district events, such as student concerts, plays, and assemblies. When not in use by the district, it is available for use by government entities, school-related groups, educational or community based non-profit and for-profit groups. The policy and regulation governing STAC usage are available on the district website.

Extended Day Program

The Stafford Township School District will offer child care programs for children in preschool through 6th grade. There will be full-time before school and after school care available. All AM Extended Day sessions will meet in the Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center (PLC), with the exception of preschoolers; they will have AM/PM sessions at the Oxyoccus Elementary School. The hours offered will be 6:30 AM until the start of school. Ocean Acres students will be bused, at no cost to the parent/guardian, to the Ocean Acres School in time for the start of school. McKinley Avenue and Intermediate School students will be walked to their schools with supervision.

Registration forms and calendars are available on the parent portal and the district website: www.staffordschools.org

District Enrichment Programs

The Stafford Township School District offers enrichment programs to students in Pre-K through sixth grade. The programs are developed around student needs and interests and are run by certified staff members. Programs may be offered in Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Performing Arts, Community Service, Technology, Art, Physical Education, as well as other areas. Students are eligible to participate in these programs. Fifteen students, per staff member, will be randomly selected.

Dress Regulations

The personal appearance of every student is an important component of establishing a safe environment that provides optimal learning and promotes respect for one another. An official dress code has been developed by the Board of Education in order to promote an atmosphere conducive to learning and to provide our students with guidelines to facilitate appropriate decision making skills. A student's dress may not: present a hazard to the health and safety of the student to him/herself or to others in school; materially interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program; cause excessive wear or damage to school property; prevent the student from achieving his or her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement. If there is any question as to the suitability of a student's dress, the building principal will bring it to the attention of the student and/or parents. Our district values and needs the support of parents in upholding the dress code guidelines. Please note that there are special days, as specifically identified by the building principal, where special dress will be accepted (e.g. spirit day, pajama day). Special considerations may be made for religious, medical, or special education considerations. Please contact the building principal. A copy of the student dress code is available on the district website: www.staffordschools.org.

Early Sign Out

Parents/guardians wishing to pick-up their child early should send in a note with their child to be given to their teacher. Parents/Guardians who have not sent in a note must call the main office secretaries at least 15 minutes in advance of dismissal to advise them that the student will be picked up early. Anytime a child is picked up, whether it is during the school day or at dismissal, parents/guardians must come in to the school's main office to sign the student out. If the secretaries in the main office are unfamiliar with the parent/guardians, it may be necessary to present proof of relationship by a current driver's license or other valid ID. No student shall be permitted to leave the school before the close of the school day unless he/she is met in the office and is signed out by a parent/guardian or adult specifically authorized in writing by the parent to act on his/her behalf. All driveways must remain clear for arriving buses. Please use designated student drop-off/parking areas. All visitors to our schools must report directly to the main office or visitor's station and receive a visitor's pass. For more information about Early Sign Out, please see the Stafford Township Board of Education Late Arrival and Early Dismissal Policy and Regulation available on the website: www.staffordschools.org.

Early Dismissal/Emergency Closings

In the event that weather conditions or other emergencies necessitate school closing early, an announcement will be made on 92.7 WOBN and NEWS 12 NJ television station. In addition, updated information will be immediately sent out via email, text, twitter, automated phone call, and posted on the district's website: www.staffordschools.org.

See your school specific page for delayed opening and early dismissal times.

Please make all necessary arrangements for children in advance for any possible delayed opening, early dismissal or emergency school closing.

An abbreviated hot and cold menu will be available to students.

Delayed Openings

In the event that weather conditions are anticipated to be hazardous only for a short time in the morning (i.e. ice), and the district has a two-hour delayed opening, we will immediately send out information via email, text, twitter, automated phone call, and information will be posted on the district's website: www.staffordschools.org. In addition, announcements will be made on 92.7 WOBN and NEWS 12 NJ television station.

See your school specific page for delayed opening and early dismissal times. Please be advised that an abbreviated hot and cold menu will be available to students.

Food Service

Students will be offered foods from five food groups (grain, fruit, vegetable, protein and dairy) and they must take at least 3 of the 5 menu items. In addition, they must always take at least ½ cup of a fruit or vegetable. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be proactive and speak with your child about the USDA Choose My Plate. We will use this identifier to try and help students put into practice the guidelines needed to help them build healthier meals. For more information on Choose My Plate, please visit www.choosemyplate.gov. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the food service general manager at (609) 978-5700 X 1151.

Fundraising Activities

Door-to-door solicitation for grades K-6 is forbidden. Incentives, monetary or material, are not permitted. The Board of Education recognizes the value of having pupils participate in fundraising activities but at no time should a fundraising activity interfere with the education program. Board policy prohibits fundraising activities which include door-to-door sales by students. This policy prohibits any fundraising activity that includes incentives or bonus points awarded to students through which an individual student may earn a prize or other remuneration for raising funds. The Board prohibits the collection of money in school or on school property or at any school sponsored event by a pupil for personal benefit. The Pupil Fund Raising Policy 5830 is available on the district website: www.staffordschools.org

Kindergarten Registration

A child must be five years of age on or before October 1st to be admitted to Kindergarten. A mandatory Parent/Guardian meeting for all incoming kindergarten students will be held in the spring to provide an overview of what your child will experience at the Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center and to distribute all registration materials. Registration appointments will be scheduled in April. Parents/Guardians will be required to attend with the student to review and submit all completed registration forms.

Any pupil entering the Stafford Township School District is required to present a physical exam performed no earlier than 365 days prior to the date the child enters the district, an original birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics with raised seal, two proofs of residency, and a record of immunizations signed by a healthcare provider. Please refer to the Immunizations section of this document for a list of required immunizations for Kindergarten.

Preschool Registration

An integrated, child centered, play based preschool program that includes children of all capabilities, skills, and interests is offered by the Stafford Township School District. Full preschool classes are available for children ages 3-5. The child must be three by October 1st to enroll. The district utilizes a state approved preschool curriculum.

Tuition/Fees

Please contact the Preschool Office at 609-978-5700 x1270 for more detailed pricing and tuition information. All tuition monies are to be paid on the 15th of each month prior to attending. We offer a 10% discount if tuition is paid in full by August 15th for any program option. Our free and reduced 4-year-old students may be eligible for free tuition.

Any pupil entering the Stafford Township School District is required to present a physical exam performed no earlier than 365 days prior to the date the child enters the district, an original birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics with raised seal, two proofs of residency, and a record of immunizations signed by a healthcare provider. Please refer to the Immunizations section of this document for a list of required immunizations for Preschool.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Stafford Township Parent Teacher Organization represents each of the district's five schools. The PTO is comprised of parents, teachers, staff and administrators who work together to make the educational process run smoothly. Members of the PTO arrange fundraisers to provide supplemental activities and programs for our students and families. We encourage all members of the community to join. Information can be obtained at [www. staffordschools.org/PTO](http://www.staffordschools.org/PTO) or by emailing PTO@staffordschools.org.

Producers

Producers is a board approved "School Related Group" supporting visual and performing arts in the Stafford Township School District. The goal of this group is to fundraise throughout the year in order to support the visual and performing arts programs in the schools. Membership is open to all parents and guardians, community members and past students (grades 7-12) who would like to volunteer their time throughout the year to help support the arts. For further information email producers@staffordschools.org.

Student Records

Stafford Township School District student records are kept and access is maintained according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the New Jersey Department of Education Regulations. Parents shall have access to these records upon request. Copies of pages of these records shall be provided to

parents/guardians on request at a minimal fee established by Board of Education Policy and administrative procedure. The Pupil Records Policy, the Pupil Health Records policy, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Policy can be found on the district website: www.staffordschools.org.

Building Use

Any organization requesting the use of a building shall make written application on an official application form available in the main office of each school, the STAC office, and on the district website, www.staffordschools.org.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an important part of our district. Volunteers enrich the educational program by providing assistance to our teachers in daily activities. This assistance to the teacher allows for more one-on-one time with their students. Volunteers can also work in areas outside the classroom, helping with district-wide projects or serving as student mentors. This helps enhance the relationship between the school district and the community. For those individuals interested in being a volunteer on a regular basis, they may contact Director of Preschool to complete the necessary forms/paperwork, which will include a criminal history background check at their expense. You may call [609-978-5700](tel:609-978-5700), ext. 1270

Health and Wellness

Accident Insurance

The Board of Education will provide parents the opportunity to purchase extended accident insurance coverage, at no cost to the board, for injury resulting from accidents sustained by students while participating in activities outside of school, not school-related and not a school curricular program. Said optional insurance is being provided in accordance with Stafford Township Board of Education policy available on the district's website: www.staffordschools.org.

Communicable Disease Control

Parents should notify the school nurse whenever their child contracts one of the following: chicken pox, German measles, measles, mumps, streptococcal infections (including scarlet fever), influenza, hepatitis, mononucleosis, meningitis, ringworm, pinworm, impetigo, scabies, fifth's disease, conjunctivitis or head lice. The School Nurse may request a doctor's note in some situations before the child returns to school.

Emergency Care

A contact verification form is filled out at time of registration. Parents/guardians are asked to review this information, make any necessary changes and let the school know as soon as possible. This form should include the names and telephone numbers of emergency contacts who will be accessible during school hours in the event of an illness or injury of a child. In case of illness or injury during school hours, the nurse will assess the problem and act accordingly. If, in the nurse's judgment, further care is required, the parent/guardian will be notified. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the nurse will contact the person designated on the student's emergency contact list.

Gym Excuses

The school nurse or parent may excuse a child from gym for two days, after which time a note from the doctor is needed. A child with a severe injury, extended illness, surgery or hospitalization must have a doctor's note to return to school or gym. If your child is excused from gym they may also be excluded from recess, certain class trips or other activities depending on the child's condition and an assessment of risk factors. As appropriate, the school principal will confer with the school nurse and the parent to determine if these additional limitations are necessary to provide a safe environment for the student.

Health Updates

Please provide written documentation from your healthcare provider if there is any change in your child's health during the summer or school year.

Immunizations

Preschool

Proof of the following immunizations are required:

- Polio Vaccine: (3 doses)
- DPT Vaccine: (4 doses)
- MMR: (1 dose)
- Haemophilus B: (Hib)
- Varicella Vaccine: (1 dose on or after first birthday)
- Pneumococcal Vaccine: (1 dose)
- Seasonal Influenza: (1 dose annually between September 1 and December 31)

Kindergarten

Proof of the following immunizations are required:

- Polio Vaccine (3 doses, last dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- DPT Vaccine (4 doses, last dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- MMR (1 dose after the age of one year + a second dose of Measles Vaccine before starting school)
- Hepatitis B Vaccine: (3 doses)
- Varicella Vaccine: (1 dose on or after first birthday)

If immunizations are not yet complete at the time of registration, please bring documentation from your Health Care Provider of immunizations given thus far.

Entering 6th Grade

Proof of the following immunizations are required:

- Tdap-1 dose
- Meningococcal

In addition, all children must have a complete physical examination no earlier than 365 days prior to the start of the school year.

Medications Policy

A note from the parent AND a note from the doctor are required for ANY medication to be given by the school nurse. The doctor's order must contain the diagnosis, name, dosage, route and frequency of the medication, the time the medication is to be given, and the length of time the medication is to be continued. An adult must bring all medication to the nurse in the original, properly labeled container; students are NOT allowed to carry medication to school for safety reasons. This policy applies to all non-prescription medicines (cough drops, cough syrup, lip balm, Tylenol, Advil, etc.) and all prescription medicines. If your child takes medication on a regular basis in school, a new parent/M.D. note must be brought in at the beginning of each school year. For life threatening illness (asthma or medically documented history of anaphylaxis and/or treatment of diabetes) students may be permitted to carry and self-administer medication. If you think this is indicated for your child, contact your school nurse and she will give you the appropriate forms, which must be completed by the prescribing physician and the parent/guardian. For the convenience of students with asthma, there is a nebulizer in each nurse's office. Parents will be asked to provide the appropriate prescribed medication, doctor's orders, tubing and mouthpiece or mask for their child's use. On days that the air quality is "unsafe" due to pollen/mold counts or ozone levels, parents of students with asthma or severe allergies may send a note to the teacher

asking that their child not go outside. Medication related permission forms are available from the school nurse.

Safety and Security

Bikers and Walkers

In accordance with Stafford Township Board of Education Policy for those students living close enough to the school to ride their bikes (in grades five and six) or walk, the following conditions must be adhered to:

1. A written permission statement from the parent/guardian must be submitted to the building Principal.
2. Bikers must wear required safety equipment and follow all rules set forth in Board of Education Regulation - Pupil Use of Vehicles.
3. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Lateness may result in suspension of this privilege.
4. Students will wait until all buses have left before they are dismissed.
5. Any witnessed reports of unsafe riding may result in loss of privilege.

A copy of the Stafford Township Board of Education Regulation is available on the district website: www.staffordschools.org.

Bus Rules and Regulations

Our school bus drivers have been trained in safe driving techniques. We respect and appreciate their abilities and contributions to the Stafford Township School District. Our drivers have the tremendous responsibility of transporting 2,500 students on a daily basis. The Stafford Township School District's Bus Rules Handbook is sent home with students on the first day of school. Parents should arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to scheduled pickup time. Parents should read and discuss the rules and regulations with their children. It is extremely important for parents and students to know and adhere to the handbook's rules and regulations. The driver's ability to operate the bus in a safe manner largely depends upon your support of these rules and regulations.

Thank you for understanding how your support of the rules will assist our drivers in providing safe transportation for your child. Please also be aware that the buses are equipped with cameras which serve as monitoring devices to help maintain safe and

secure conditions for all pupils. The Monitoring Devices on School Vehicles Policy is available on the district website: www.staffordschools.org.

Emergency Response Plan

The Oyster Creek Nuclear Power Plant in Forked River and the State of New Jersey have provided the school district with the following emergency response plan. If a problem arises, the degree of emergency will be classified as follows:

Emergency Category	Plant Condition	Public Response
Notification of Unusual Event	Off-Normal Situation No Release Expected	Requires No Action
Alert	May affect plant safety Off-site release not probable	Requires no action
Site Area	Equipment failure Potential for radioactive release.	Public protective actions will be directed after incident assessment.

Based on information received from the power plant, field evaluation by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and meteorological conditions, the State Office of Emergency Management will provide measures to insure public safety. The public response and the localities affected will be broadcast in the form of specific instructions. Stay tuned to one of the following radio stations: WOBN 92.7 FM or WJRZ 100.1 FM. When necessary and for safety's sake, during normal school hours your child will be relocated to Stockton State College in Pomona. In this instance, please do not go to school to pick-up children.

Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB)

Stafford Township School District recognizes that harassment, intimidation and bullying have a negative effect on school climate and are therefore, strictly prohibited. Students who are intimidated and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success. Bullying can also lead to more serious violence. Every student has the right to an education and to be safe on school grounds.

“Harassment, intimidation, or bullying” means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or
2. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
3. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:17-15.3, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and that
4. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil’s property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage his/her property; or
5. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
6. Creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

Consequences and remedial actions for incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying are as set forth in the Stafford Township Board of Education Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying and Pupil Code of Conduct Policies and Regulations (available on the district website: www.staffordschools.org).

All incidents of alleged harassment, intimidation, and bullying should be reported to the building principal. From there, the building principal will refer the matter to the anti-bullying specialist for further investigation. In addition, anti-bullying hotlines, which allow parents/guardians and students to anonymously report incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying, are available and will continue to be available under the revised reporting procedures. These hotlines can be reached by calling 978-5700 and one of the following extensions: Oxycocus Elementary School x 1802; Ronald L. Meinders Primary Learning Center x 1805; Ocean Acres Elementary School x 1801; McKinley Avenue Elementary School x 1803; and Intermediate School x 1804. You may also contact David Ytreboe, the Anti-Bullying Coordinator at x 1029.

Integrated Pest Management

Pests and pesticides can be harmful to people, especially children. Our district has a policy and plan, which include a notification system for pesticide use. IPM focuses on preventing pest problems first. If necessary, pesticides may be applied when other methods are ineffective. Preference will be given towards the choice of a “low-impact” pesticide whose use can result in reduced exposure and reduced risk to both human health and the environment. All parents, teachers, staff members and school

administrators play a key role in keeping the school environment safe and healthy. By staying informed, you can ensure proper implementation of our policy and state law. The policy and a list of pesticides used during the prior school year are available on our website or from our IPM Coordinator, 609-978-5700 x1045.

Lost and Found

Please mark all of your child's property such as book bags, lunch boxes, clothing, etc. If an article is lost, the main office of each school maintains a "lost and found" department.

Personal and School Property

Parents/guardians are cautioned not to allow students to bring expensive personal property (e.g. large amounts of money, cameras, jewelry) or other valuables to school. Students, not the school district, are responsible for their personal property. Students who bring these items to school do so at their own risk, and the district assumes no responsibility for these items if lost or stolen. In addition, please note that electronic communication and recording devices (e.g. cell phones, electronic games) are only permitted in accordance with the policies and procedures set forth by the Stafford Township Board of Education which are available on the district website, www.staffordschools.org.

The Board of Education has allocated a substantial portion of the educational budget for books, supplies and equipment. Students are encouraged to treat all school property with care and respect. In order to insure a longer book life, all books must be covered for the school year by the end of September. Replacement costs for all lost or damaged books will be charged. End of year fines are assessed for loss or misuse of books, materials, and other school property. Final report cards will not be issued until all materials are returned and/or fines paid.

Start of the School Day

Unless a student is enrolled in the Extended Day or Drop In program, there is NO SUPERVISION, before the opening of the school day. Parents/guardians should consider enrolling their child in either of these programs if they must drop their child off prior to the opening of school. To ensure proper supervision and to prevent unnecessary tiring of the child, parents transporting their children to school should NOT arrive more than 5 minutes before the start of school. Please remember to use the designated student drop-off/parking areas.

Youth Helpline

The New Jersey Youth Helpline, 2NDFLOOR, is a toll-free, anonymous and confidential helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to all New Jersey Young people, ages 10-24. Youth can call 2NDFLOOR at 1-888-222-2228 to speak with professionals and trained volunteers who listen attentively, non-judgmentally and compassionately to issues and problems they are facing. Visit www.2NDFLOOR.org for more information.

School Visitors

The Principal maintains a logbook in the main office of the school. Each visitor shall enter through the main entrance only and record his/her name and the purpose of his/her visit in the logbook. Each visitor will be given an identification tag or badge, which must be worn while the visitor is in the school.

When a visitor has completed the business of his/her visit, he/she will return directly to the school office, return the identification tag or badge, and promptly leave the building. Permission to visit a classroom in session must be sought from and granted by the Principal and must be made at least one day in advance of the intended visit. All guidelines set forth by the Principal for orderly operation of the school/class shall be followed. For more information on visitor procedures, please contact the building Principal.

Special Services

English Language Services, Guidance, & Home Instruction

English Language Services (ELS)

The English Language Services (ELS) Program is one in which the limited English proficient student will receive a minimum of 100 minutes of instruction per week. Specific mandated tests and classroom performance are used to select students for this program.

Guidance

The school district employs four certified guidance teachers to promote growth of the pupil within the family, school, and community.

Home Instruction

Pupils who are unable to attend school because of an injury/illness may receive home instruction. With the written note of concern of the pupil's physician, home instruction may be provided. All home instruction will be arranged through the Office of Special Services by calling 978-5700 x1030.

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS)

The purpose of the I&RS committee is to recommend interventions for students experiencing difficulties in school. Each I&RS committee is made up of the building Principal, the classroom teacher and the guidance counselor. Other staff members are encouraged to join the team on an as needed basis. Classroom teachers request assistance from the I&RS committee to help students gain school success. Students may be referred to the committee because they are experiencing academic, behavioral, family, and/or health difficulties. Parents/guardians may also request assistance for their child through the I&RS committee by contacting guidance counselor in their building. The teacher and the I&RS committee develop an action plan to help the student become more successful. This plan lists suggestions and strategies for the classroom teacher to use and may note other recommendations that would be helpful to the student, parents/guardians, and teacher. Throughout the process, parents/guardians are involved.

Basic Skills and Other Special Services

Students who need additional assistance are provided help in school via individual instruction or small group instruction provided by basic skills teachers. The job of the basic skills teacher is to support the educational needs of struggling learners in the classroom or small group setting.

The Stafford Township School District offers a full complement of special services in compliance with state and federal regulations. Child Study Team members (psychologists, social workers and learning consultants) are assigned to each school to identify children with learning disabilities and to provide consultation and intervention services. Parents who need more information regarding special services offered in the district are invited to contact their child's teacher, principal, or Supervisor of Special Services. A copy of Parent's Rights in Special Education (PRISE), created by the New Jersey Department of Education, can be obtained from the Supervisor of Special Services or from the district website: www.staffordschools.org. In addition, copies of the Special Education Policies are available on the district website at www.staffordschools.org.

Special Education Preschool

Special Education for Preschool Children with Disabilities

Each spring, Stafford Township School District provides a screening of 3 year olds (and those who will turn 3 by the end of the calendar year) whose parents/guardians suspect the presence of a developmental disability or educational handicap. If the screening team determines that more intense testing is warranted, the preschooler is referred to the Preschool Child Study Team (psychologist, social worker, learning consultant, speech/language therapist) for a comprehensive evaluation.

If determined eligible for special services, the team may recommend placement in one of the preschool programs for children with disabilities located at the Oxycocus Elementary School. Preschool classes are full-time and are held Monday-Friday. For further information regarding preschool services, contact the Supervisor of Special Services or a member of the Preschool Child Study Team.

Speech

All students in district identified with language disorders are provided speech and language assistance.

Code of Conduct

Student/Parent/Guardian Guide

The Board of Education adopts this Pupil Discipline/Code of Conduct to establish standards and procedures for positive pupil development and behavioral expectations on school grounds, including on a school bus or at school-sponsored functions, and as appropriate and as permitted by law, for conduct away from school grounds. Stafford Township Schools belong to all of us. We must respect all who work and learn here. We must take care of the buildings, vehicles, furniture, equipment and grounds to assure that we maintain a safe and pleasant learning environment for everyone. In keeping with our district mission, we believe that the schools should be a secure place with high standards of student behavior. To achieve this goal, we believe the following ideals must be supported:

- All students have the right to learn.
- All teachers have the right to teach.
- Everyone has the right to enjoy a safe and secure environment at school.
- Everyone has the right to safe and secure transportation to and from school.
- We must respect the differences and dignity of all people. Bias and/or prejudice toward anyone, in any way, cannot be tolerated.

- All people, children and adults, should treat each other with respect and kindness. This means never trying to be deliberately hurtful to anyone with words or actions.
- We must be considerate of the rights of others to work without disruption.
- We must respect and care for the property of others.
- The school, bus and playground rules must be followed.

Code of Student Behavior

- Respect for other students is expected within the buildings, playgrounds and school buses.
- Respect must be shown for teachers, aides, cafeteria/playground aides, bus driver aides, custodians, and all staff members, parents and visitors who may be in the school.
- Students are expected to be cooperative with substitute staff and adhere to their rules and procedures.
- Staff directives must be followed.
- Name-calling, teasing, hurtful remarks and/or gestures are not acceptable.
- Personal belongings may not be touched without the permission of the owner.
- Any student who is teased, physically injured or has his/her rights violated as per this code shall be obligated to report such incidents immediately to the nearest adult in charge. No student is justified in retaliating in any way, and such retaliation itself will not be tolerated. The supervising adult in charge will handle all reported incidents fairly and expeditiously.

Consequences of Not Meeting Expectations

The following steps will be followed when expectations are not met:

- Individual classroom teacher behavior management plans implemented.
- Teacher or principal confers with student.
- Parents/guardians may be informed through phone calls, conferences, or written notes when expectations are not met repeatedly or if the severity of the incident requires immediate parent involvement.
- Certain privileges may be revoked when appropriate. These may include separation from the group or loss of lunchtime recess.
- Repeated bus discipline referrals will result in suspension from bus transportation.
- For serious continued inappropriate behavior, a supervised in-school suspension may be warranted.
- In extreme circumstances, a student may be excluded from school via an out-of-school suspension for a period of time determined by administration.

Code of Conduct

Consequences that follow when expectations are not met will be appropriate to the age of the student. Student discipline and code of conduct in the district will be applied without regard to race, creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, a mental, physical or sensory disability, perceived disability, refusal for genetic test, genetic information, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, AIDS and HIV status, or by any other distinguishing characteristic, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5. As appropriate and as required by law, any student to be disciplined shall be provided the due process procedures for students and their families as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2 through 7.6. Staff members and/or principals will review the circumstances related to each incident.

The Stafford Township School District Code of Conduct consists of Board of Education authorized policies and procedures containing a system of school rules which define acceptable student behavior through a system of rewards, sanctions and due process. The information contained in this portion of the handbook is intended to be the student/parent/guardian guide to the Code of Conduct and Code of Student Behavior. More detailed information is available in Policy and Regulation 5600-Pupil Discipline/Code of Conduct, which can be found on the district website:

www.staffordschools.org. Our notion of what is suitable or correct behavior is grounded in our common sense of ethical behavior and shared values, as well as in the laws that define specific acts which are socially acceptable. A set of core values serves as the foundation for the district's code of conduct. The framework for our core values is based upon respect for self, respect for others, respect for society and respect for the environment.