

**PAWLING  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**STUDENT/PARENT  
HANDBOOK**

**2015~2016**



# Pawling Elementary School

7 Haight Street - Pawling, NY 12564

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Pawling Elementary School! At our school, we work hard to ensure a safe, nurturing, and academically challenging environment in which all students can benefit. With parents, educators and community working together, we are confident that your child(ren) will flourish.

Our student/parent handbook is designed to provide you and your child(ren) important information regarding our school. Please be sure to review this handbook so that you are aware of the procedures and guidelines that are in place in our school.

Our goal is to provide an excellent educational environment so that every child may reach his/her full potential. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns that you have throughout the year.

We look forward to an outstanding year at Pawling Elementary School!

Sincerely,

***Debra Kirkhus, Ed.D.***

Principal

***Michelle Rivas***

Assistant Principal

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## Our Educational Philosophy

Our goal at Pawling Elementary School is to foster the all-around development and academic growth of each student. The role of the school is to impart practical knowledge and, in cooperation with the home and community, assist the student with his/her intellectual, social, cultural, emotional, physical and moral growth. It is our responsibility to create within each individual an awareness of civic duties, which will encourage and prepare that person to assume a responsible role in society.

We recognize that each student is an individual and has his/her own innate abilities, ambitions, and emotions. In the process of educating each individual, the program shall challenge the student and reflect the concern for the student's needs based on his/her own capabilities.

These goals have been established for Pawling Elementary School:

- Incorporate character education.
- Create a positive learning environment.
- Work collaboratively to meet the needs of all students (i.e. differentiated instruction, inclusion).
- Understand and use technology to enhance learning.
- Know and communicate subject content.
- Know and use the Common Core Learning Standards as they apply to all subject areas.
- Incorporate the use of critical thinking skills in all learning experiences.
- Acknowledge and plan for various learning styles.

### Getting Started at Pawling Elementary School

#### **Student Registration:**

The registration process for new students begins at the Pawling Central School District Office.

#### **Family Contact Information:**

We ask all parents to update their contact information at the beginning of each school year.

Although we have few emergencies, we must be able to reach parents when an accident or illness occurs. Please make certain that your contact information is kept current and that the names and contact information for individuals that may be contacted in the event that you cannot be reached is on file and accurate.

**Please be sure to inform the main office, in writing, if you change your address, telephone number or place of employment during the school year.**

***We rely on these records to contact you quickly in the event of an emergency***

**Thank you for your cooperation in this extremely important matter.**

#### **Registering for the School Messenger Alert System:**

The Pawling Central School District uses a SCHOOL MESSENGER Emergency alert system to communicate information about school closures, delays and early dismissals. This system is also used to communicate timely information about bus transportation issues. The SCHOOL MESSENGER system is occasionally used to provide up to date information about school-wide or district-wide events or share community information relevant to families with students.

All families with students registered in the Pawling Central School District will automatically be registered using the parent/guardian contact information. Parents will also be provided instructions and an online account to select settings for cellular phone text alerts, and preferred methods of communication. With your online account, you will also be given an opportunity to provide contact information for other persons within or outside your family that should also be contacted with the types of information indicated above.

## **School Communications**

This handbook will be posted on the elementary school website and updated periodically. Parents are encouraged to refer to the electronic edition for the latest information on school policies. Throughout the school year, communications are supplemented by other sources of information.

### **Classroom News:**

Teachers will provide regular updates of classroom activities through class specific web-pages or newsletters.

### **Back Pack Mail:**

Important and informative notices are periodically sent home by the principal, the school nurse, teachers, PTA committees, and community groups. It is a good idea to ask your child each day to show you the flyers and schoolwork he/she has brought home from school.

### **Newsletter:**

A monthly newsletter is prepared by the school principal. A calendar of upcoming school-based events is included each month.

### **School Calendar:**

The Pawling Central School District issues an annual school calendar. In addition to the monthly calendars for the elementary, middle and high schools, this document includes some policy information and a directory of district personnel.

### **Websites:**

The Pawling Central School District hosts websites for the district and each of its schools. A wide variety of information is found on these sites. The Pawling Central School District website address is [www.pawlingschools.org](http://www.pawlingschools.org). This website provides ongoing updates to the district school calendar and information about the school budget process, job-opportunities, NY State school testing & accountability reports, and district-wide policies on various topics including health, safety and wellness guidelines. Information specific to the elementary school may be found using a link from the above website or by visiting [www.pawlingschools.org/ElemSchool.cfm](http://www.pawlingschools.org/ElemSchool.cfm) directly. On the elementary school website you will find links to teacher websites and information about school wide and specific grade level special events. The "Principal's Corner" section of the elementary school website provides access to past editions of the newsletter.

### **Facebook:**

Like us on facebook [www.facebook.com/pages/Pawling-Central-School-District/126556247408177](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pawling-Central-School-District/126556247408177)

### **SCHOOL MESSENGER Alerts:**

Families will receive telephone and e-mail communications relaying messages about school closures, bus delays and other timely issues based on their provided contact information.

### **Visiting the School:**

Any time parents visit our school, it is expected that proper protocol be followed. There is only one door for entry located on the north side of the building by the bus loop. You will be asked to sign in, show picture I.D. and obtain a visitor's pass in order to enter our building.

### **Contacting Teachers:**

Teachers may be contacted by sending a note to the classroom, via e-mail, or by leaving a telephone message at the front office. During the Back-to-School Open House, your child's teacher will indicate the best way to reach her/him.

**Contacting the Principal:**

Our principal welcomes opportunities to meet with parents. Please contact the main office (855-4630) to schedule an appointment.

*Please be advised that the principal will not discuss any issues relating to your child's classroom experience or his/her teacher unless an earnest effort has been made to first discuss the situation with your child's teacher.*

**Resolving Problems at School:**

Pawling Central School District policy asks that parents/guardians first contact their child’s teacher to address any questions or concerns. If the problem remains unresolved after speaking with the teacher, please schedule an appointment to meet with the school principal.

Please refer to the guidelines provided in the annual school district calendar to address problems that remain unresolved at the school building level.

**School Schedules, Closings and Attendance**

**Daily Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	
8:45 a.m.	Buses arrive - children report to classrooms
9:00 a.m.	School day begins - Announcements Children who arrive at school after 9:00 a.m. are considered tardy
11:23 a.m.	First Lunch Period Begins
2:15 p.m.	Last Recess Period Ends
3:20 p.m.	School day ends / Parent pick-up begins at 3:15 p.m.
3:35 p.m.	Buses leave our school

**Important Calendar dates and Elementary Newsletters**

A school district calendar is available on-line and in printed form. In addition, the school's monthly newsletter will remind parents of important dates and special events.

Please note that certain dates are designated as half-days while others may be early dismissal days.

**Scheduled Half-Days :**

The school day will end at 11:50 a.m. on these days. Parent pick-up is at 11:45 a.m. Lunch will **not** be served on these days.

**Scheduled Early Dismissal Days:**

On certain days at the end of the school year, the school day will end at 1:20 p.m. Modified lunch schedules will be observed on these days.

**School Closings**

The Pawling Elementary School is subject to delayed openings, early dismissals or closure due to inclement weather, unanticipated problems with building systems or other emergency situations.

**SCHOOL MESSENGER** alert system will relay notice of school closures, delays or emergency dismissals. In the event that your family is not registered for the SCHOOL MESSENGER alerts system, school closures and delays will be posted on-line at *pawlingschools.org*.

### **Attendance**

We believe that daily attendance is critical to success in school. It serves to foster responsible work habits that will generalize to other school and work situations later in life. It is our belief that we can only achieve excellence in academics and maximize the learning process when the students are in school.

The only legal reasons for absence, recognized by state laws, are as follows:

- personal illness
- critical illness or death in the immediate family
- extremely bad weather
- impassable roads
- recognized religious holidays
- required attendance in court
- quarantine
- attendance at health clinics and medical appointments

Any other reason given for absence from school will be considered an illegal absence.

### **Reporting Absences**

*Please report your child's absence from school, by contacting the school nurse at 855-4652.*

*When your child returns to school after an absence, state law requires that the parent/guardian send a signed written explanation stating the reason for the absence and the date of absence.*

*Children absent for more than four (4) consecutive days must report to the nurse upon re-entering school with their note.*

If your child's name appears on the absence list, you may receive an automated phone call from the school or a call from the school nurse inquiring about the child's absence.

To obtain homework for a sick student, call the Main Office (855-4630) by 10:00 a.m. This homework will be in the Main Office for pick-up by 3:30 p.m. Please note that homework will only be provided for excused absences (see above for list of legal absences).

### **Reporting Late Arrival / Early Departure**

Late arrivals and early departures represent a loss of instructional time. As such, signed written explanations for these instances are also required.

## **Bus Transportation Guidelines**

School Bus Transportation is an opportunity to develop self-discipline and cooperation. Teachers and bus drivers will instruct students regarding conduct on the bus.

Below are some general guidelines for safe, efficient and pleasant bus service.

### **Bus Stop Guidelines**

To ensure that students wait for, enter and leave the bus safely, and arrive at their destination as scheduled, passengers are expected to:

- Be at the bus stop at least five minutes before the arrival of the bus.
- Collapse any wheeled backpacks while waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Stay out of the road.
- Not chase the bus.
- Stay at least 15 feet away from the front and back wheels of the bus.
- Cross in front of the bus with at least 10 feet, so that the driver can see the student(s). Look at the bus driver and cross only when the proper signal has been given.
- Enter or leave the bus only when the driver is present.
- Take turns and avoid pushing upon entering or leaving the bus.
- Take seat promptly and remain in it until the bus driver arrives at your stop.
- Walk away from the bus so that the driver knows where you are when you get off the bus.
- Not cross the road after the bus has left the stop.

### **Passenger Conduct**

To ensure the safety of the driver, the passengers, and others on the road, students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with above referenced bus guidelines and rules, as well as the district code of conduct. The full Pawling Central School District Code of Conduct can be found on the school district website.

The School Administration and Faculty, along with the Transportation Department, have developed disciplinary actions that will be enforced for certain forms of passenger misconduct. Students are expected to refrain from the following forms of misbehavior:

- use of obscene language
- smoking
- possession of, or consumption of alcohol
- throwing items (inside/outside)
- creating unsanitary conditions
- possession or use of fire crackers, smoke bombs, or noise makers
- possession/use of weapons or other dangerous objects
- acts of destruction
- insubordination
- fighting
- possession/use/selling of drugs
- loitering within 15 feet of the perimeter of a school bus/van while discharging

### **Items that Cannot be Brought on the Bus**

To ensure that bus schedules are maintained and passengers can be transported safely, certain items are prohibited from Pawling Central School District buses. These include, but are not limited to:

- glass
- large packages, or large school projects
- live animals
- musical instrument larger than a trombone
- pointed objects



- pottery
- sports equipment
- weapons of any type

***Please Note***

- Parents must make arrangements to transport large objects.
- *Students carrying any items to school to help pass time on the school bus (such as handheld electronics), are responsible for storing the items throughout the school day. Students and parents must understand that the school cannot be held responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items.*

**Disciplinary Procedures**

Consequences for not adhering to the above guidelines will be consistent with those stated in the Student Bus Behavior Code issued by the Pawling Central School District. These actions have been posted in each bus with caution to students that misbehavior may result in the loss of bus privileges.

The specific disciplinary consequences which will be incurred by the student for any of the above listed forms of misconduct will be as follows:

- For a first time offense, a parent conference may be required, and the consequences may include a suspension from bus transportation.
- For a second offense, the student may be suspended from bus transportation for a minimum of one day. A parent will be contacted and/or a parent conference will be held.
- For third offense, the student may be suspended from the bus for a minimum of five days and a parent conference will be required.

If a student is involved in any misbehavior other than the serious forms listed above, the administration will use discretionary authority in dealing with the student.

Parochial and private school students are subject to the same procedures regarding bus behavior.

***Notice to Parents and Students***

*In the event of unacceptable behavior, parent contact is required.*

*Since unacceptable behavior on the bus could lead to a loss of transportation privileges for a period of time, it is important that parents and guardians clearly understand that students who are suspended from bus transportation, due to misconduct, will be expected to attend school and classes as usual and to complete their assigned class work. Students who are suspended from bus transportation and who do not attend classes will have their absence recorded on the school register as illegal.*

**In Case of Bus Related Emergency:**

In compliance with New York State requirements, emergency drills will be conducted on each bus periodically throughout the school year. During these drills, students will become familiar with and practice emergency evacuation procedures.

In the event of a bus related emergency students are expected to:

- 1) Report any trouble to the bus driver.
- 2) Obey the driver's instructions.
- 3) Know where the emergency exits are located.

### **Bus Changes**

Most of our buses are at, or near, capacity. In the event a **one-time-use** bus pass is requested, please submit a note, in your child's backpack, with the information necessary for completing a bus pass. The note information required: *Date of intended pass, teacher name, student name **ALSO** name of student your child(ren) is going home with and the bus requested to be ridden.* A confirming note must also be submitted from the parent or guardian of the home your child(ren) will be transported to.

In the event that a **long-term** bus change becomes necessary to accommodate a predictable schedule for before or after school care, temporary or long term arrangements may be made if there is available seating. To initiate a request, please contact the bus transportation office (855-4640) to determine if there is space on the bus you wish your child to ride. Once approval is granted by the transportation office, a written request must be submitted to the main office indicating the start date and schedule for the change.

### ***Reporting and Resolving Bus Related Issues***

*For transportation issues parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the Supervisor of Transportation at 855-4640.*

## **Arrivals and Departures**

### **Parent Drop-Off**

The following guidelines have been prepared for students arriving to school on foot or by automobile.

Children who are walked to school will be met by building staff at the main entrance starting at 8:45 a.m. Please do not walk your child to his/her classroom. **STUDENTS ARE NOT TO BE DROPPED OFF BEFORE 8:45 a.m.**

An orange line has been painted onto the parking lot. This line is to guide parents along the path to the parent-drop off location. Members of the Pawling Elementary School building staff will meet students at this location between 8:45 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Please note that the parking lot during morning drop off is **ONE WAY.**

### **Notice to Drivers**

*It is important that the bus paths and fire lane **not** be blocked. In the event that you need to leave your car to walk your child to the door or to deliver items to the building, be sure to use an appropriate parking space in the parking lot. Also, please be sure to use the crosswalk. During bus arrival, no cars are allowed in the bus loop for any reason.*



### **Arrival by Bus**

Students arriving by bus will be delivered to a secure location along the bus loop sidewalk. They will be expected to enter the building and proceed to their classroom in an orderly and timely fashion. Building personnel are stationed along the bus loop sidewalk and in building hallways to ensure that all students make it to their classrooms for the start of their instructional day.

### **Departure Procedures**

The instructional day ends at 3:15 p.m. At that time, dismissal procedures are initiated. Departure from school at any time prior to 3:15 p.m. represents an interruption in the teacher's lesson plan and a loss of instructional time.

### **Dismissal to Buses**

Students are dismissed from their classrooms when their bus is ready to board students. Members of the school staff are stationed throughout the building and along the bus loop to ensure that students transition safely from the school building to their buses.

### **Dismissal for After-School Programs**

Students staying for the after-school program will report to the cafeteria and/or other designated area. Parents are responsible for making sure that both the after-school program and school office are aware of participation in the program. Also, any changes, in particular related to bussing, should be done in writing.

At the conclusion of after-school programs, students will need to be met by parents/guardians at a location designated by the person(s) in charge of the specific program. Please contact your after school care provider for additional details.

All students will need to be signed out prior to departure.

## **Scheduled Parent Pick-Up**

### **Notice to Drivers**

*When you arrive for parent pick-up be sure to use an appropriate parking space in the parking lot.*

*It is important that bus paths and fire lanes not be blocked.*

### **During the School Day**

If you plan to pick-up your child at school during the school day, please adhere to the following:

- Send a note with your child in the morning noting the time and reason for early departure.
- You must report to the office to sign your child out. Please be prepared to show a photo ID.

### **Classroom Events/Visits**

Students may only be released from the classroom if the teacher has made prior arrangements for classroom dismissal. Parents and students departing from the classroom are expected to exit the building through the main entrance.

### **At End of School Day**

Parent Pick-Up occurs in the "Parent Pick Up Hallway" in the back of the building. Please park your car in the main front parking lot and walk along the left driveway to the back of the building to the parent pick up location.

If you plan to pick-up your child at school at the regular dismissal time, please adhere to the following:

- Send a note to school with your child in the morning.
- Dismissal for student pick-up will commence prior to the bus announcements.
- Students being picked up by parents will report to the gymnasium.
- Parents will sign out their child(ren) in the Parent Pick Up Hallway. Please be prepared to show a photo I.D.

## **Unscheduled Parent Pick-Up**

### **Prior to 3:00 p.m.**

If a parent/guardian determines that it is necessary to collect their child from school prior to 3:00 p.m., he/she must come to the main office and sign the student out. Please be prepared to show photo identification. A note detailing the time and reason for early departure will need to be submitted.

### **After 3:00 p.m.**

Parents/guardians, arriving after 3:00 p.m. for an unscheduled pick-up will be asked to report to the parent pick-up door. For safety reasons, no child may be released directly off the bus or from the hallway at school. Students will be met at the Parent Pick-Up Hallway located in the back of the building.

## **Expectations for Conduct**

Students attending Pawling Elementary School should conduct themselves in a manner that shows respect for others and responsibility for one's own actions. Since misbehavior by one student can create a distraction for other students and an unsafe school environment, poor behavior cannot be ignored.

A detailed code of conduct is available on the Pawling School District website.

### **Student Dress Code**

In general, students are encouraged to dress in a manner that is neat, not unsafe nor distracting to the educational program. Students are to refrain from wearing the following items:

- backless shoes and flip flops (due to the number of staircases in the building and for safety reasons on the playground)
- shirts, tops or dresses with spaghetti straps (Straps should be at least three fingers wide)
- tops that expose a student's midriff
- shorts or skirts should be longer than where the student's fingertips reach when his/her hands are at his/her side
- clothing displaying messages inconsistent with a positive school environment
- hoop earrings or other jewelry that could cause bodily harm if snagged or pulled
- hats (not to be worn inside school buildings, except for medical or religious purposes)

### **Personal Property**

As with all personal property that comes to school, book bags, lunch boxes and clothing should be labeled to allow misplaced items to be easily returned.

Eyeglasses should be labeled. Students who wear eyeglasses are to keep track of their eyewear at all times.

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money to school. Any money brought to school should be secured in an envelope marked with the student's name and the designated purpose for the money.

### **Prohibited Items**

Toys are not to be brought to school.

### *Please Note*

*Electronic communication and handheld entertainment devices including but not limited to I-pods, DS's & cellular telephones should remain at home. Students carrying any items of this nature to help pass time on the school bus, are responsible for storing the items throughout the school day. Students and parents must understand that the school cannot be held responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items.*

### **Lost and Found**

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the Main Office. Labeled items will be returned to their rightful owner. Unlabeled items will be placed in a central location where they can be claimed by the owner.

### **Cafeteria Procedures:**

Please discuss and review the following cafeteria procedures and responsibilities with your child:

- Walk at all times.
- Wait quietly when asked to line up.
- Have your PIN number memorized and your money ready for the cashier.
- Sit at your assigned table.
- Speak quietly (use indoor voice). Absolutely no screaming.
- Use good table manners (i.e. say "please" and "thank you").
- Raise your hand for help or other issues.
- Clean up the table and floor area around your seat after lunch.

### **Recess & Playground Safety:**

Pawling Elementary School has a large outdoor play area. Monitors are stationed throughout the playgrounds during recess. The Peaceful Playground program encourages fair play and teaches simple methods for conflict resolution. It is very important for children to follow the rules for playground safety and to cooperate with those responsible for supervision.

### **General Guidelines:**

- Children are to be considerate of their playmates and supervisors at all times. They are to treat others with respect while keeping in mind the elements of good sportsmanship and the importance of responsible behavior.
- Children must stay within the assigned boundaries of their playground area determined by the playground monitors or supervisors.
- Except for emergencies, children may return to the building only with the permission of a playground monitor or supervisor.
- Children are encouraged to use the playground equipment, as well as to engage in organized sports and games. However, children must refrain from physical contact with peers. "Tackle Football" and "King of the Hill" games are not acceptable.
- Children may only use equipment that is school approved on the playground.
- No food, gum, or candy is allowed on the playground during recess.
- Children should line up quickly and quietly at the end of the recess period and must follow the directions of their playground monitors at all times.

### **General Playground Rules:**

- The playground is open before and after school hours until dusk. Adult supervision is required at all times.
- All forms of recreation on wheels are prohibited on school grounds, with the sole exception of bicycles.

### **Guidelines for Lunchtime and Recess Discipline:**

Misbehavior during lunch and recess that affects the safety or wellbeing of any person on the playground or the integrity of school or personal property will be addressed immediately. Depending upon the seriousness of the incident any or all of the following may occur in response:

- Students will receive a verbal warning.
- Students may be sent to a "time out" bench or other suitable location determined by the lunchroom or playground monitors.
- Student(s) may be given detention time in the office.
- An official conduct report may be issued to the main office. Copies will also be kept on file to monitor behaviors of individual students over an extended period of time.
- Parents may be notified at the discretion of the teacher and/or principal.
- In-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

Recess and the use of the playground are privileges. Repeated violation of the regulations will result in the loss of these privileges.

## **Building Safety**

### **School Visitors**

The Main Entrance for the building is located on the north side of the building (bus loop area) near the flag pole. All visitors are expected to sign-in at this door, show I.D. and obtain a building pass. Visitor I.D.s should remain visible at all times. Visitors are expected to sign out at the same doorway when exiting the building.

### **Building Access During School Hours**

The Main entrance is staffed during the hours of 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. For the safety of the students and building staff, doors will remain locked from the outside during the school day. Unless prior arrangements have been made with a teacher, parents are not to be in the classrooms or hallways.

Visitors must park in the main parking area and use the sidewalks to the building entrance.

To deliver any items to a student, teacher or building employee, please bring the item to the main entrance with a label indicating the recipient's name and room number or department designation. Correspondence for faculty, school administrators and the school nurse are to be left at the greeter station near the main entrance.

### **Building Access After School Hours**

Building Access after school hours should be limited to persons attending after-school programs, previously scheduled appointments or school functions. Unless otherwise authorized (on a building use form or by permission from the main office) no one shall enter the classrooms or classroom hallways after the school day has ended.

### **Emergency Drills**

In compliance with New York State requirements, emergency drills will be conducted throughout the school year. These exercises allow district personnel, building staff and students to become familiar with standard safety procedures that will need to be followed in the event of an emergency. Students will participate in building wide drills to practice what to do in the event of a fire, severe weather conditions or a building lockdown. Visitors will not be provided building access during emergency drills or events. To ensure that the drills are properly conducted, the specific dates and times for most emergency drills will not be disclosed

in advance, nor will the school be able to indicate whether or not the event is a drill while it is being conducted.

### **Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents**

Both parents are presumed to have custodial rights for the purposes of this policy, unless the custodial parent provides the building principal with a certified copy of a Court Order or Divorce Decree to the contrary.

A record shall be kept indicating the legal custodian of each student and the residence of such custodian. Such custodian shall be responsible for informing the school of any change in the student's custodial relationship. If one parent has been awarded custody of a student in a divorce settlement, the custodial parent must inform the school of any change in limitations in the rights of the non-custodial parent, together with a certified copy of a Court Order or Divorce Decree, which shall be kept in the student's personnel file. Without such a notice, the school will presume that both parents have custodial rights for the purpose of the release from school.

### **Reminder:**

It is extremely important that instances where a Court Order or Divorce Decree has established custodial rights regarding a student, a copy of the document is to be provided to the school.

## **Homework and Report Cards**

### **Open House:**

Parents will have the opportunity to meet their child's classroom teacher, usually within the first few weeks of school, to hear about the curriculum, expectations, and plans for the school year. Please remember a large number of parents attend this event and it cannot be used for individual conferences.

### **Teacher Conferences:**

Parents who have questions or special concerns about their child's progress during the school year should contact the classroom teacher. It is best to either send in a note to the teacher with your child, email the teacher directly, or call the school office and request that the teacher return your call. Please do not drop in for a conference without an appointment.

### **Homework Policy:**

Homework provides teachers and children with an opportunity to expand upon, reinforce and enrich what has already been presented in class. Homework helps students develop good study skills, and helps parents to become better informed about their child's school work.

Homework varies according to the needs and grade level of the student. Standards and procedures are set by the individual teachers, but it is reasonable to expect that the amount of weekly homework assigned will increase as the child progresses through the grades. A general rule of thumb is that increments of approximately 10 minutes of homework can be expected for each respective grade (i.e. 10 minutes for 1<sup>st</sup> grade, 20 minutes for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 30 minutes for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 40 minutes for 4<sup>th</sup> grade). In addition reading is encouraged every night!

We encourage you to plan a routine quiet study time at home to enable students to complete their homework assignments. It should not be necessary for parents to assist students with assignments unless there are specific problems. Please contact the teacher if you have any questions or concerns about homework.

Parents can help their children by limiting the number of extra-curricular and social activities planned during the week. By making homework a family priority you reinforce the importance of your child's education.

**Routine Academic Testing:**

During the course of the school year, students will participate in various standardized and routine academic testing appropriate to their grade level. These testing programs allow the school, and in some cases the state of New York, to assess a student’s comprehension and capabilities in reading, writing and mathematics.

Grade Level	Typical Standardized and/or Routine Assessments at each grade level
K	PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening), NWEA MAP, Rigby
1	DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy Skills), NWEA MAP, Rigby
2	DIBELS, NWEA MAP, Rigby
3	DIBELS, NYS ELA (English Language Arts and Math), NWEA MAP, Rigby
4	DIBELS, NYS ELA and Math, NYS Science Test, NWEA MAP, Rigby

NWEA MAP = (Northwest Evaluation Association Measure of Academic Progress)

Results of these examinations are used to inform the teacher of a student’s strengths and weaknesses and how to plan for instruction.

**Report Cards**

Students will receive computerized report cards four times each year. Report cards for the first quarter of the year will be presented for discussion during Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences. At the end of the second and third quarter, they will be presented in an envelope that is to be returned to the teacher to confirm that a parent or guardian has reviewed the report. Parents interested in meeting to discuss these reports are asked to contact the teacher directly to schedule a conference. The final report card of the year will be sent home during the final week of school. The presentation envelope does not need to be returned after the final marking period.

**Classroom Policies**

**Food for Classroom Parties**

As a school that believes in a wellness policy, we encourage healthy snacks. Parents and teachers should refer to the school district’s health and wellness guidelines when planning classroom events.

Be sure to speak with your child’s teacher before sending snacks to the classroom. Teachers will have information concerning any food allergies or dietary restrictions that may need to be accommodated. Parents and teachers are encouraged to consider a classroom activity in lieu of food.

**Special Occasion Parties**

From time to time, classroom parties are scheduled to celebrate holidays or class milestones. On occasion, parents, grandparents and guardians are invited to join the celebrations. We ask that younger siblings not be brought to school for these events.

**Birthday Celebrations**

Arrangements for in-classroom birthday celebrations should be made with the teacher well in advance of your child’s birthday. This allows an opportunity to discuss any classroom allergies and ensures that the timing of the celebration is consistent with the teacher’s lesson plan.



### **Home Parties**

Please be aware that it is school policy not to divulge student names or addresses for party invitations. Also, invitations may not be handed out in school unless all students in the class are invited.

### **Classroom Visits**

If children are to succeed in school, the home and school must work together. This enables children to grow in an atmosphere of shared purpose and consistent expectations. For these reasons, parents should remain active participants in their child's education throughout their school years.

We also encourage parents and other members of the community to share their special skills and interests with the children in the school. If you have an unusual hobby, play a musical instrument, enjoy crafts, or have a career you think children would like to know more about, speak to your child's teacher to arrange a visit to the classroom. We are also always looking for field trip possibilities that are not too far from school.

Please note, any visits to your child's classroom must be prearranged with your child's teacher.

For various safety reasons pets may not be brought to school.

## **School Programs and Services**

### **Computers & Technology**

Computer labs provide Pawling Elementary School students with opportunities for hands-on learning experiences. A diversified range of computer skills is integrated into the students' classroom curriculum and in our library program. Some skills may include keyboarding, terminology, graphic design, power point presentation programs, word-processing, desktop publishing and Internet. Our software library is designed to supplement classroom programs and the Common Core Learning Standards.

An *Internet Use Policy* will be distributed to all families. Parents or Guardians will be required to acknowledge receipt and acceptance of the terms of the policy before students are granted permission to use any school computers with internet access.

### **Library Program & Services**

The school library contains over 9,000 books and non-print materials reflecting the Common Core Standards, district curriculum, and student interests. The library catalogue and circulation records are fully automated using bar-code technology. Students in grades (K-4) will have the opportunity to borrow books from the school library each week.

### **Art Program**

Every student is given specialized art instruction weekly in grades kindergarten through four. The program is designed to help students achieve the goals presented by the NYS Visual Arts Standards. The goal of these art standards is for students to master basic skills and become more creative, resourceful, constructive, and self directed.

### **Music program**

The elementary school music program provides a core of musical experiences which are designed to help the child develop an appreciation of the true essence of music as a means of self-expression and an outlet for creativity. Within this curriculum these experiences are: the study of the basic rudiments of music, rhythm, melody, harmony, form, dynamics, tempo and tone color, singing, playing instruments, reading music, listening, and creative activity. Through the correlation of these activities with other subject areas, music has the unique ability to enrich the school curriculum.

There is a choral experience for all students in third and fourth grade. Students in these grades have the opportunity to perform in chorus concerts two times each year.

### **Special Education**

Pawling Elementary School offers a full range of programs for students identified by the Committee on Special Education. These services include, but are not limited to, self-contained classrooms, co-teaching classrooms, consulting services, transitional services, speech therapy, counseling services, occupational and physical therapy.

If you suspect that your child may have a disability, which requires accommodations or special education services, talk to your child's teacher, the school principal, or contact the district's Director of Pupil Personnel Services at 855-4625/26.

### **Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Reading**

The AIS reading program includes children who qualify for support services based on their standardized and State test scores, as well as students recommended by their teachers. Both in-class and pullout models are used to offer a congruent reading program that maximizes the students' development as confident, skillful readers. Students who qualify for the program, as well as students who may need help for specific problems during the year, benefit from the extra help available during AIS reading classes. A variety of materials and methods are utilized to capitalize on students' strengths and address their weaknesses. These include multi-sensory phonics instruction, high motivational literature, and non-fiction texts at appropriate levels.

### **Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Mathematics**

The role of the AIS math teacher is to provide additional instruction and support to students who are identified as needing extra assistance in improving their concepts of math, computation skills, and/or problem solving processes. Students are identified through math achievement testing and/or teacher recommendations.

AIS math services are provided in a variety of ways – through small pullout groups, whole class lessons and activities using multi-sensory approaches with the AIS math teacher and the classroom teacher working together, and/or groupings of students within a math class to best match all students' needs. The goal of the AIS math program is to provide all students with a variety of tools and techniques to strengthen their math skills and concepts, and to improve their ability to apply these skills and concepts to real life problem solving.

## **Health Office**

The school physician and school nurse cooperate with faculty and staff to provide a healthy and safe school environment. Parents/Guardians are welcome to request an appointment with the school nurse at any time to discuss your child's health and well-being.

### **Illness**

Parents will be notified if a student becomes ill while at school. For the protection of your child and others, sick children should be removed from school as soon as possible.

#### ***Note to Parents***

*If a student has symptoms of a cold, rash of unknown cause, fever, or other illness, he/she should be kept out of school. The student should stay at home until he/she is fever-free for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours without the use of medication (i.e. Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen).*

In the event that your child develops a condition which may change his/her health habits or if medication is needed due to an illness, the school is to be notified in writing.

### **The School Nurse**

The school nurse plays an essential role in helping each child stay physically healthy. The school nurse:

- ensures that all students in grades kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> are up-to-date on their annual physicals

- tests student's hearing and vision and makes referrals for further evaluation when necessary
- inspects individuals for safety and sanitary conditions
- notifies parents of conditions which may require medical or dental care
- maintains a continuous confidential record for each child, which starts when the child enters school
- reviews immunization records and offers information concerning clinics available in the county
- confers with parents, the school physician, family physicians, family dentists, the principal, the school psychologist, and social agencies about your child's health and well being

### **First Aid & Emergency Care**

First Aid will be administered as necessary for sicknesses and injuries that occur at school. When a child suffers a serious injury, the school nurse will immediately notify a parent/guardian.

### **Medication Policy**

The school nurse may not administer oral medications, prescription or over-the-counter, without a note from the child's physician and written parental consent.

The administration of prescribed medication to a student during school hours is permitted only when the medication is necessary to allow the student to attend school or when failure to administer the medication would adversely affect the student's health.

Before any medication may be administered to any student during school hours:

- The parent/guardian must present a note from the family physician which includes the student's name, the date; name of medication; dosage and time to be administered; list of possible side effects; any instructions for administering. This document shall be kept on file in the office of the school nurse.
- The parent/guardian must submit a note giving the school nurse, teacher, principal, superintendent or other staff member, permission to administer the medication or file a medication request form with the school nurse. This document shall be kept on file in the office of the school nurse.
- An adult must bring the medication to school in the original container.
- Students who require emergency application of medication may have such medication, identified as described herein, stored in the office of the school nurse.
- No student may have any other type of medication, prescription or over-the-counter medication, on his/her person in school under any circumstances. If you have any questions, please contact our nurse.

### **Head Lice Procedures**

The following steps are taken at school when a case of head lice is reported:

- The parent contacts the school nurse to report a case of head lice.
- Inspection of child's classmates is conducted by school nurse to detect the possibility of other cases. Siblings are also checked.
- If lice or nits are found, parents are contacted and they take the student home. Instructions are given if needed.
- When deemed necessary, a letter is sent to parents in the class to make them aware and asking that they observe for signs of lice or nits.
- Before the student returns to class, parents must bring the student to the school nurse for an inspection to ensure there are no lice present. If there is presence of such, the student will be sent home.

### **Guidance and Counseling Services**

A wide outreach of counseling services is available to both regular education and special needs students. The types of counseling available include: group, individual, crisis and classroom guidance. The guidance department may provide programs such as: New Kids Club, Banana Splits, Second Step (Anti-Bullying) Curriculum, K-4 Response to Intervention (RTI), School-wide Testing Programs plus other daily school interventions.

### **Psychological Services**

The school psychologist's role is to help all children including the gifted, underachievers, and those with disabilities make the most of their educational experiences. The school psychologist identifies problems in students' emotional health, academic performance, and the manner in which the school system meets the students' needs. The psychologist works through direct contact with students, parents, teachers and outside agencies and recommends programs, services, and/or teaching methods. Families and staff members are given guidance by the school psychologist to assist them in creating home environments and classrooms which are best suited to the needs of students.

### **Physical Education**

The children at Pawling Elementary School are offered a physical education program which uses movement concepts and experiences in Grades K-2 as a foundation for the team and individual sports curriculum introduced and developed in Grades 3 and 4.

The only requirement to participate is that the children must have and wear proper foot attire (sneakers). Since the safety of the children is a concern, the final decision for appropriate, and safe footwear will rest with the physical education teacher. Sneakers should secure on foot (i.e. Velcro, laces, straps). The sole of the sneakers should be traditional (i.e. no heels, no platforms, no metal plates for grinding, no pop out wheels).

In the event of illness and/or physical problems, the child may be excused from gym for one class with a note from the parent. If there is a medical problem which will require two or more consecutive days of not participating, a doctor's note is required. If a doctor's note excuses a child from physical education classes and/or recess, then a doctor's note is necessary for a child to return to physical education and/or recess. If there are any questions regarding this or other physical limitations, contact either the school nurse and/or your child's Physical Education Teacher.

### **Food Services:**

The Food Service department at Pawling Elementary School is proud to provide a healthy, appetizing meal for students and staff. The School Lunch Department strives to serve choices that are supportive of the Pawling Central School District Wellness Guidelines.

Cafeteria monitors assist students at lunchtime by reinforcing good table manners and proper behavior. We encourage a calm, pleasant atmosphere during lunch periods.

### **School Lunch Program:**

We encourage a lifetime of healthy eating habits by helping students develop good nutrition life skills. Our school cafeteria offers nutritious meals for all students who wish to purchase lunch. Menus are sent home each month with the prices listed for each item. Menus may also be reviewed on-line at [www.pawlingschools.org](http://www.pawlingschools.org). In addition to meals, students have the opportunity to purchase milk, fruit or frozen desserts on an à la carte basis.

Our lunch program offers five (5) items daily; protein, grains, vegetable, fruit and milk. Together these items create a full meal. We offer students all five components and serve a minimum of three (3) meal components. They can be any three components, as long as they are not of the same food group. Students may choose all five components depending on their levels of interest and hunger.

Parents may send lunch money to school with their child on a daily basis or may prepay towards the child's lunch account. Please be sure that money is sent to school in a *labeled* envelope. Pricing for items sold in the cafeteria are indicated in the school district calendar and on monthly menus.

### **Parent Involvement/Volunteer Opportunities:**

Parents are invited and encouraged to become active participants in our school community. There are many ways to become involved in school activities such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), parent volunteer assignments and as chaperones on class trips.

Opportunities to participate in the school community include but are not limited to: after school events, assemblies, classroom parties, class trips, concerts, Field Day, Jump Rope for Heart, Math Carnival, reading programs, school projects, Snackarooza, special PTA events, as well as district and school committees.

Participants in any of these opportunities must follow the school's code of conduct including the dress code. To protect the privacy of our students, their families and building staff, access to private information is restricted to school personnel. We ask that parents be respectful and maintain confidentiality of all students and staff.

### **Class Trips:**

Only pre-approved chaperones may go on a trip and they are expected to ride the buses with the students. Parents must not follow the buses in their personal cars when students are on a class trip. Every effort is made to give all parents an opportunity to act as a chaperone during the school year.

### **Parent Teacher Association:**

The PTA is a national association joining parents and teachers together in order to provide a variety of programs to enrich the lives of students, their families and school staff. The Pawling PTA encourages parent involvement through many different initiatives using national standards for family-school partnerships.

The Parent Teacher Association recognizes that every child deserves excellence in education and quality of life. We have numerous committees that any parent can volunteer to help out with. These committees work to plan assemblies, organize the mystery reader program, help with health and wellness events, organize the Scholastic Book Fair, help out at school picture day, and organize Movie Night, amongst many other fun and nurturing activities.

The PTA is a non-profit organization that raises funds in order to enhance programs or provide new or improved supplies for the school. Past fund grants have been used for things such as classroom and curriculum enhancements, beautification of the school, new books for our library and much more.

We encourage everyone to become a member and get involved – The PTA meets regularly to go over past, current and future events. There is room for everyone and all are invited to attend meetings and volunteer at PTA sponsored events. With so many events and programs during the school year, there are a wide range of options for helpers. Volunteers are often needed to simply send emails sharing information while others may be asked to cut watermelon at Field Day. Members can also take advantage of our local discount program which offers discounts or specials at many of the local merchants.

Visit the PTA website at [www.pawlingpta.com](http://www.pawlingpta.com) or access the website directly through the school's website. The PTA also has a Facebook page – “like” the page and you will be kept up-to-date on all the current happenings <http://www.Facebook.com/PawlingPTA>. For more information, you can email the Pawling PTA at [PawlingPTA@gmail.com](mailto:PawlingPTA@gmail.com).

### **Health & Wellness Guidelines**

The Pawling Central School District's (PCSD) Health & Wellness Guidelines encourage healthy eating and exercise habits for all District school children. The guidelines were developed by the Health & Wellness Committee, a volunteer group of parents, teachers, staff, administrators and community members, whose goal is to encourage students and staff to make healthy eating, exercise and lifestyle choices.

The Health & Wellness Committee sought input from parents, teachers, coaches, the Board of Education and the PTA. The result is a set of Board-approved Health & Wellness Guidelines which encourage healthy eating and exercise for all students and staff.

To read the complete PCSD Wellness Guidelines visit [www.pawlingschools.org/webpages/wellness](http://www.pawlingschools.org/webpages/wellness)

### **Board Policies:**

Please note that the School District Board of Education policies are listed online at:  
[www.pawlingschools.org/board\\_education.cfm](http://www.pawlingschools.org/board_education.cfm)

**Offer and Acceptance**  
**of the**  
**Handbook for Pawling Elementary School**  
**2015-2016**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

*I have read my student/parent handbook and have had the opportunity to discuss the handbook with my child. I understand that I must abide by all the policies and procedures on these pages.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please return this page to your teacher no later than Friday, September 11, 2015.*

*Thank you.*







# Telephone Directory

**Elementary School Main Office..... 855-4631  
855-2160**

**Elementary School .....855-4630**

*Please follow the prompts ...*

Main Office ..... Press 1

School Nurse..... Press 2

Guidance..... Press 3

Psychologist..... Press 4

Social Worker..... Press 5

Athletic Department..... Press 6

Habla Espanol..... Press 9

## **Pawling Central School District**

Superintendent of Schools..... 855-4600

Director of Facilities/Operations..... 855-4610

Special Education Office..... 855-4625

Transportation..... 855-4640