

Pathways Elementary School

2008-2009



Student-Parent Handbook

Mrs. Connie Brimmer, Principal
Mrs. Lynn Brown, Assistant Principal

431 Strouds Creek Road
Hillsborough, NC 27278
Telephone: (919) 732-9136
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www.orange.k12.nc.us/pe

Staff Directory

Administration

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Teacher Assistants

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Vision Statement

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

Belief Statement

Stars believe in...
Telling the truth while being sensitive to others,
Always trying our best and never giving up,
Respect, for ourselves, others and for our school,
and
Striving to reach our goals.

Mission Statement

Focusing on academic excellence, Pathways Elementary strives for an atmosphere of learning, cooperation, and mutual respect. Our approach to education is through a partnership with parents, students, community members, and staff. Individualized assessment drives instruction so that we can meet the needs of each learner on their quest for lifelong learning in a highly technical and diverse society.

Pathways Elementary Quick Reference Phone List

Frequently Called Extensions

Main Number 732-9136
After School Care 732-9136 ext 46095
Cafeteria 732-9136 ext 46075
Fax 732-9142

732-9136
Office 46005
Principal 46001
Associate Principal 46002
Counselor 46021
Media Center 46080
Nurse 46065

Pathways Shining Stars Code of Conduct

Expectations

The success of the Pathways Code for Shining Stars is based on a strong partnership between home and school. It is imperative that students recognize the home/school alliance as a strong and cooperative team. The school supports the development of students who are responsible for their behavior and who actively participate in the learning process. We expect students to report to school each day on time with their homework completed and prepared to learn.

Core Principles

Pathways Elementary School believes that students should be treated as individuals working from a standard of consistent expectations for which everyone is held accountable. To that end, staff and parents will model and teach the following core principles.

Respect Ourselves * Respect Others * Respect Property

Rules for Learning

Pathways Elementary School rules are based on the Core Principles. When all students, parents, and staff demonstrate, encourage, and insist on the following rules, we expect that students follow the example being set.

Students, staff and parents will:

- Follow the **Hall Rules** (see below).
- Speak respectfully to each other.
- Respect and care for school property.
- Respect and care for others' property.
- Remove hats when entering the school.
- Use respectful and thoughtful language with each other.
- Wear clothing at school that permits and promotes the goals and values of the school.

Hall Rules

While traveling the halls, students, staff, and parents will:

- Talk with quiet voices.
- Walk in a slow and calm manner.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.
- Respect students and adults.
- Walk on the right.

Disruptive Behavior

1st Step – Classroom

Teachers will take appropriate action with each discipline issue based on classroom and school rules. If classroom consequences and strategies do not work, the student may be brought to the office.

2nd Step – Office

Administrators and counselors will take action consistent with the infraction using one or more of the following interventions:

- Administrative conference
- Parent call/parent conference
- Timeout in appropriate supervised area
- Other appropriate consequences/restitution

A discipline referral form will be completed each time a student is sent to the office.

3rd Step – Suspension

Once the administrator decides to suspend a student, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

- Orange County Schools Due Process Procedure
- Suspension (1-10 days)
- Re-entry meeting (parent/guardian, teacher, administrator and/or counselor, and other appropriate adults)
- School Success Plan (The plan is developed or revised during the re-entry meeting, during which the student has the opportunity to describe the event, explain his/her behavior and participate in the plan development/revision. The plan is developed/revised to ensure that the child learns the values of following school and classroom rules.)

Non-Negotiable Behaviors

A non-negotiable behavior is absolutely unacceptable and will always result in the due process procedure outlined below.

Non-negotiable behaviors include:

- Stealing school or student property
- Bringing a weapon to school
- Bringing, using, or dispensing drugs (includes alcohol or any form of tobacco)
- Serious aggressive behavior or fighting
- Serious verbal or physical attacks toward an adult

OCS Due Process/Consequences

- Students will have the opportunity to meet with an administrator or counselor to explain their behavior and describe the event.
- The student will be suspended from school and sent home with a parent or guardian.
- A student/parent/administrator conference will be held prior to the student returning to school.
- At the conference the student will have an opportunity to describe the event and explain his/her behavior.
- The student, parent, teacher, and administrator will determine a consequence and restitution collaboratively.

Arrivals and Departures

Building Opens	7:30 AM
Tardy Bell / WPEN	7:55 AM
Instruction Begins	8:05 AM
Dismissal	
Bus Riders	2:20 PM
Car Riders	2:25 PM
Buses Leave Campus	2:25 PM

- Please note that late arrivals and early checkouts are disruptive to an entire class and should occur only in emergencies.
- Any student arriving after 7:55 AM must be signed in at the office by his/her parent.
- Students not in their classes and ready for instruction by 7:55 AM will be considered tardy.
- Any student leaving school before 2:20 PM must be signed out in the office by his/her parent.
- When early checkout is necessary, students must give their teacher a note from home stating the time of departure and the reason. If someone other than a parent will pick up the student, the note should say who that person is. Parents/Guardians must pick up the student in the office; they may not go to the classroom.
- A student will not be allowed to leave school with anyone other than his/her parents unless the student brings a note, signed by the parent, stating the name of the person who will pick him/her up. "Anyone other than his/her parents" includes older brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and/or family friends.
- At the end of the school day, a child will only be allowed to leave by his/her usual means of transportation unless the student brings a note, signed by a parent, stating that he/she is to leave in a different way.
- When an early checkout or change in departure is necessary in an emergency and a note is not or cannot be sent, the parent may telephone the office to notify the school of the pick-up or departure change. However,

we do verify telephone calls, and this often results in a considerable delay in getting the information to the child and the teacher.

- Children wishing to ride home on a bus with a friend may only do so if they have prior approval. To obtain permission, send a note to your child's teacher who will then forward it to the office. This is necessary to avoid overcrowding on the buses.
- In all instances where a note is required, a parent may e-mail their child's teacher directly. An e-mail address list is published at the first of the year, or may be obtained from the school web page.

Attendance & Absences

- One of the most important factors in a child's success in school is regular attendance. This includes arriving on time each day and remaining throughout the entire school day.
- Attendance awards will be given at the end of the year for students who have not missed a day.
- Students' absences may be excused for the following reasons: (1) illness, (2) medical or dental appointments, (3) religious holidays as defined by local board policy, (4) death of an immediate family member, (5) quarantine, (6) subpoena to court. **To be excused, absences must fall into one of these categories and be accompanied by a call to the office and a written note to the teacher.** If absences are determined to be excessive, validation, such as a note from a doctor, may be required. (NC State Board of Education Policy)
- Whenever a student has accumulated three unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent/guardian of the student's excessive absences. After not more than six unexcused absences, the principal shall notify the parent/guardian by mail that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law and may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the State

and the Orange County School System. Following this notification, a school system employee shall work with the student and family to eliminate the attendance problems and may request that a law enforcement officer accompany her/him on a home visit. After ten accumulated unexcused absences in a school year, the principal shall conduct a review and determine whether the parent/guardian has made a good faith effort to comply with the law regarding the compulsory attendance. If not, the principal shall notify the district attorney or file a complaint with a juvenile intake counselor. If it is determined the parent/guardian has made a good faith effort, a complaint may be made that the child is habitually absent from school. (NC Public School Law)

Bus Transportation & Safety

- The cooperation of every student, parent and guardian is needed in order for every bus ride to and from Pathways Elementary School to be a safe bus ride.
- School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Under North Carolina State Law, the Orange County Board of Education is authorized, but not required, to own and operate school buses for transportation of students.
- Your child's bus driver is responsible for the safety of all students assigned to ride his or her bus. Safety rules will be reviewed by drivers and posted on every bus at the beginning of the year. If a bus safety rule is broken, the driver will notify the associate principal in writing using the school system's bus conduct form. Reports of bus misconduct are cumulative for the school year with two offenses resulting in a short-term suspension from riding privileges. Seven offenses will result in a loss of bus privileges for the remainder of the school year. Serious bus safety violations, such as fighting, may result in an immediate suspension from bus riding privileges.

- Each student will be given an Orange County School's (OCS) Department of Public Transportation Handbook at the beginning of the school year. Parents/guardians and students are asked to review this handbook, then sign and return the signature portion to the classroom teacher. .
- Bus route information is published in the *News of Orange* before the first day of school and is available at the annual Open House.



Book Bags & Belongings

Book bags should be small enough to fit into cubbies (no larger than 11"x11"x11"). Rolling book bags are not permitted to be rolled inside the building due to safety concerns and noise disruption. If all personal items (such as toys, Game boys, sports equipment and make-up) are left at home as they should be, students will easily be able to fit all materials required for school in a smaller sized book bag.

Cafeteria

- Students may pay the cashier each day or may pre-pay for a week or a month at a time. Our computerized system deducts each meal's cost from any prepayment.
- Students are allowed to charge their lunch only in the event of an emergency, and they are expected to pay for the lunch the following day.
- Free and reduced-price meal applications must be completed and returned to school during the first week of school.



- Food brought from home should be nutritious and non-perishable. Beverage containers must be non-breakable.
- **No glass bottles** are allowed in the school.
- Parents are welcome to come and have lunch with their children.

Lunch Fees for the 2008/2009 School Year

	Breakfast	Lunch
Regular	1.25	1.75
Reduced Fee	.30	.40
Adult Fee	1.50	3.00

Other Fees: **Milk** .30 **Juice** .30

Most "extras", such as cookies or ice cream, are 35 to 50 cents. Children may buy one "extra" with each lunch when they have bought a lunch in the cafeteria or brought one to eat from home. They may **not** have only "extras" for lunch.



Campus Security

Parents are always welcome at Pathways Elementary School; however, in order to ensure the safety and security of our



children, we require that every person who visits our campus check in at the office to get a visitor pass. This procedure is very important if staff are to be able to identify who has been approved to be on campus and who has not.

Based on the recommendations of security officers and a parent review, we have agreed upon the following measures to help ensure our children's safety. All of these measures are based on NC Public School Law and/or Orange County School (OCS) Board policy. We have tried to establish a balance between making Pathways Elementary School a safe place for children and maintaining a friendly and welcoming atmosphere for parents and families.

Pathways Elementary School will continue to review safety issues and expand measures on our campus on an ongoing basis.

1. Identification: These measures apply at all times (before, during, and after school hours) **except** when there are large gatherings such as PTA meetings.

- Teachers, assistants, office staff, cafeteria workers, and custodians will be identified by badges.
- OCS maintenance workers will wear uniforms.
- Parents and all other visitors to campus will:
 - ◆ Sign in at office
 - ◆ Wear a visitor pass with their name and the current date.

2. Drop-Off & Pick-Up

- **Children may be dropped off at 7:30 AM;** there is no campus or classroom supervision before 7:30 AM.
- Parents may not wait outside classroom doors for children to be dismissed in the afternoon; they should wait in their cars in the pick-up line. If you feel that you need to come in, please wait for your students outside under the walkway.
- If students are consistently dropped off before campus supervision begins at 7:30 AM or left on campus long after dismissal, the principal will attempt to make one contact with the parents.
- All car riders should be dropped off or picked up at the curb. **IT IS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS TO DROP CHILDREN OFF IN THE PARKING LOT, HAVE CHILDREN CROSS TRAFFIC, OR WALK AMONG CARS TO GET INTO THE BUILDING-** please do not do it.



3. Use of School Grounds

The playgrounds at Pathways Elementary School may be used only by enrolled students during supervised school times.



4. Locked Doors

After 8:00 AM, the only entrance into the school will be via the main entrance near the office. The east entrance (near the gym and cafeteria), as well as the entrances at the end of each wing will be locked each morning.

Exit will still be accessible from all doorways.

5. Other Safety Measures

When leaving the classroom during the school day, all students go with a buddy. We talk with the children at Pathways Elementary School about staff identification, and tell them to tell a staff member if they see an adult on campus that does not have a visitor tag. (The children are told they should not themselves approach someone without a visitor tag.)

Dress Code

Acceptable, appropriate clothing for Pathways Elementary School students has been defined with emphases on health/safety and decency. Please reference the Orange County Board Dress Code Policy for questions.

Health & Safety

- (1) High heels and platform shoes are literally dangerous for elementary girls. They don't walk well in them, and when they forget and try to run (which they do), they trip, fall, and twist/break their ankles. Please have your children wear, **nice flat shoes that attach to their feet securely.**
- (2) Head coverings (hats, scarves) present a constant problem for spreading head lice and ringworm. Please, **NO head coverings.**

Decency

- (1) Boys' pants without belts tend to fall down or expose areas that are best kept private.
- (2) Girls' tops that expose tummies or undergarments also show areas that should be kept private (at this age, they are too active to keep tops in place).
- (3) Please, **DO have boys wear belts** if pants are too big to stay snug around their waist. Please **don't let children come to school in**

skimpy clothes such as tank tops, spaghetti straps, bare midriffs, with underwear showing, or anything too tight, too small, or too short.

If children come to school in inappropriate clothes, teachers will call parents and ask them to pick up the children or bring them a change of clothing.

Drills

(1) Fire

State law requires that schools conduct a fire drill each month. All students and adults must exit the building and proceed to their designated areas. Upon sound from school bell, students and adults may return to the building.

(2) Tornado

At least once during the year a tornado drill will be conducted. All students and adults proceed to designated hallways, bathrooms, and rooms. Upon signal from school bell students and adults may return to the classrooms.

(3) Lockdown

At least twice during the year a lockdown drill will be conducted. All students and adults proceed to the designated safe place in the school. Upon signal from the office, students and staff may return to the normal daily routine.

Emergency Closing of School

During inclement weather, please tune your radio or television to one of the following stations to receive information about closings or delays for Orange County Schools.



Inclement Weather TV Stations



WFMY	Greensboro	Channel 2
WRAL	Raleigh	Channel 5
WTVD	Durham	Channel 11
WYLF	Raleigh	Channel 22

Inclement Weather Radio Stations



WPTF	Raleigh	680 AM
WQRB	Burlington	1150 AM
WTIK	Durham	1310 AM
WUNC	Chapel Hill	91.5 FM
WYLT	Raleigh	96.1 FM
WPCM	Burlington	101.1 FM
WRAL	Raleigh	101.5 FM
WRDU	Raleigh	106 FM

Please discuss with your child's teacher the procedure the teacher is to follow in case school is closed early. This action plan should be in place and understood by all involved prior to the event. After-school care will not operate during emergency closings due to inclement weather.

Student Assistance Team & Exceptional Children's Services

A referral to the Student Assistance team may be initiated by a parent or staff member. The team provides suggestions and strategies to assist the parent and/or teacher in meeting the needs of the child. After consideration from the team the committee has the option of referring the child to the School Based Committee for further evaluation and possible placement in the exceptional children's program. The School Based Committee is responsible for receiving referrals from the Student Assistance team, obtaining parental permission



for assessment, initiating evaluation procedures, evaluating information, and seeing that an individualized education plan (IEP) is developed and re-evaluated annually, if placement is made.

Field Trips

- Field trips related to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study are taken during the school year.
- A letter of explanation will be sent home and a permission slip **must** be signed and returned to the classroom teacher before any student can participate.
- Often parents are asked to pay for field trips, but no child will be prevented from participating due to his/her inability to pay.
- The school reserves the right to restrict a child from participation in a field trip if the teacher and the principal determine that due to the child's behavior, the school cannot ensure the child's safety and the safety of others.
- The safety of students is a priority during field-trips. Accounting for students is paramount to student safety on field trip. To maintain consistency in accounting for all students, students should travel to and from fieldtrips on the approved activity or charter buses. We feel that when you begin to make changes on trips, you create room for error. Only in cases of emergencies should changes be made from the approved transportation. Please route all requests for changes in transportation through the principal before the actual field trip.



Chaperone Guidelines

School staff members appreciate the willingness of parents to help the school meet or exceed supervision and safety requirements for students on field trips. Field trips would not be possible without parent chaperones. The following guidelines

should clarify expectations for adults assisting with field trips.

- (1) Let your child's teacher know if you can serve as a chaperone when the field trip is announced. Teachers need to know how many people will be participating in order to finalize plans for buses, tours, admission fees, and/or meals.
- (2) All students must be closely supervised at all times. The teacher will assign students to each parent chaperone and will develop and distribute a schedule for the day. Students will wear identification tags and stay with their chaperone for the entire field trip.
- (3) Chaperones may not transport students in privately owned vehicles.
- (4) Ensuring the safety of students is more challenging and complex on a field trip than while students are at school. **Taking on the role of chaperone means the adult understands that he/she cannot be responsible for siblings of students or children of staff (not in the class) on field trips.**
- (5) Field trip experiences focus on specific educational objectives. In order to maximize learning time for students at field trip destinations, children or adults will not visit gift shops.

Home-School Communication

- Prior to the end of the first nine weeks of school, your child's teacher will contact you to schedule a parent-teacher conference. However, if you wish to talk with child's teacher prior to that time or at any time, please contact the teacher to schedule a conference.
- It is not possible for teachers to talk with parents between 7:55 AM and 2:20 PM, as teachers must spend that time with the children. Each teacher has voice mail and e-mail that are checked daily, and during the instructional day you may leave a message.
- In an emergency, call the school secretary, who will contact the teacher.

- A school newsletter will be sent home at the beginning of each month.
- Additional information will be sent home through Connect Ed phone calls as well as listed on our website.

Questions or Concerns

- If you have questions about a classroom issue, please talk with your child's teacher first. If you have further concerns, the principal or associate principal will be glad to talk with you.
- If you have questions about school functions or operations, please call the staff person responsible for that area, or the school secretary if you are unsure of whom to call.
- Always speak to the school secretary in an emergency or time-sensitive situation, instead of leaving a voice mail message. She will ensure that the person you are trying to reach gets your message in a timely manner.

Illness During the School Day

If a student gets sick during the school day, the school nurse will notify the parent or guardian so the child can be picked up. Be sure the contact information on your child's information card is always correct and updated. Please include the names of two other people who can be contacted when you cannot be reached.



Immunization

North Carolina requires that a physical examination and several immunizations be given to every child in order to attend school. A 30-day grace period following your child's enrollment is allowed. If a student does not have proof of a physical examination and the required immunization by the end of the 30-day period, the law requires the principal to suspend the child until the requirement is met. The school office has a list of the required immunizations.



Medication

- Whenever possible, students needing occasional medication, such as penicillin or cough syrup, should take the medication at home. Medication that is taken three times per day can be given before school, after school, and again at bedtime.
- When occasional medication must be taken at school, it must be in the original container with the doctor's directions for dispensing clearly printed on the container.
- Medication to be given at school (prescribed for the entire school year) requires a completed medication form. The form may be obtained from the school office and must be signed by a physician.
- The classroom teacher assistant, school nurse, or office staff member will administer the medication.
- No medications (over-the-counter or prescription) will be dispensed at school without doctor's instructions.
- All medication must be brought directly to the school office to be secured. No medication is to be taken to the classroom at any time.
- If you have any questions regarding medications, please call the office and ask to contact the school nurse.



Lost and Found

Please label your child's possessions such as coats, caps, sweaters, book bags, and lunch boxes. The school maintains a lost and found bin where articles may be claimed. Items not claimed at the end of each semester (January and June) are donated to charitable organizations.

No Smoking Policy

Pathways Elementary School is a SMOKE FREE campus, inside and out, as are all Orange County elementary campuses. The Board of Education believes that a smoke/tobacco-free environment will better protect the health and well-being of employees and students of the Orange County School System and of other persons. To this end, the Board of Education will prohibit or restrict smoking and the use of tobacco products as follows:

- Students may not possess, display, or use any tobacco product at any time on school premises, including school vehicles or while participating in school events, both indoor and outdoor and both on and off school property.
- School employees, volunteers and visitors to the school may not at any time use or display tobacco products on school premises. School employees and volunteers attending in an official capacity may not use tobacco or tobacco products at school events both on and off campus. The prohibition of display of tobacco products shall not extend to display that has a legitimate instructional or pedagogical purpose.
- School employees and volunteers to the school may not at any time display or use any tobacco product in school vehicles.
- No student, employee or visitor shall be permitted under any circumstances to use tobacco products in any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Orange County Schools.

For purposes of this policy, "tobacco product" is defined to include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. "Tobacco use" includes smoking, chewing, dipping, or any other use of tobacco products.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

PTA is an integral part of the school and community cooperative effort. All parents and interested community members are encouraged to join. Information concerning PTA meetings, programs, and projects will be sent to parents throughout the school year.



Parking

Parking spaces are in very short supply at Pathways Elementary School!!! PLEASE, park only in spaces marked for parking. Every time we have to interrupt classes to ask an illegally parked car to be moved, every child loses instructional time. **Please do not leave cars in the staff parking lot in unmarked places!** Please remember, it is not only illegal, but also unkind and disrespectful for those who are not entitled to park in handicapped spaces or to block the ramps needed for handicapped access. We do have several students or their family members who must use these spaces and ramps to get into the building.



School Governance Committee

The School Governance Committee (SGC) is a decision-making body established to help make major decisions affecting Pathways Elementary School. The council is composed of parents, teachers, other staff members, and administration. The SGC meets monthly, and the minutes are posted on the school website.



School Pictures

Twice a year (fall and spring) all students will have the opportunity for their photographs to be taken by a professional photographer. Participation in the school picture plan is voluntary. Detailed information is sent home prior to the day pictures are taken.



School Telephones

School telephones are not for student use, except in case of an emergency. Parents and guardians are requested to make transportation arrangements before their children come to school. A written note to your child's teacher is required if your child's normal means of transportation or destination changes for one or more days (See Arrivals and Departures).



Textbooks and Library Books

Textbooks and library books are loaned on a temporary basis throughout the school year. It is the student's responsibility to take care of all books and return them in good condition so others may use and enjoy them. There will be a charge for all lost or abused books. The charge will vary depending on the original cost of each book.



Toys

Toys and other items not related to instruction are not allowed at school. If students bring these items to school, the first time they will receive a warning to take the item(s) home and leave them there. If students bring such items a second time, the items will be confiscated and held until a parent/guardian comes to school to pick them up.



Visitors

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the school at any time. To ensure the safety of all our children, we must insist that everyone visiting the school sign-in at the office and wear a visitor's pass (See Campus Security, Identification). Students from other schools are not allowed to visit unless their home school principal and the Pathways Elementary School principal have approved the visit.