

Elementary Parent and Student Handbook

Welcome to Massena Central Schools

This handbook has been developed to give both students and their parents useful information that will help everyone participate in school with greater confidence and more success.

We've gathered the information about which we receive the most questions. If you find we've left something out, please let us know so it can be included in future editions of the handbook.

Key Contacts:

Nightengale

Principal (315)764-3750

Secretary (315)764-3750, ext. 3501

Nurse (315)764-3750, ext. 3502

Counselor (315)764-3750, ext. 3505

Madison

Principal (315)764-3740 ext. 3400

Secretary (315)764-3740, ext. 3401

Nurse (315)764-3740, ext. 3402

Counselor (315)764-3740, ext. 3405

Jefferson

Principal (315)764-3730

Secretary (315)764-3730, ext. 3301

Nurse (315)764-3730, ext. 3302

Counselor (315)764-3730, ext. 3305

Hours

The instructional day is from 8:45 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. Buses unload at 8:20 a.m. **Please do not drop off your child prior to 8:20 a.m.** Before school, staff is busy preparing for the day. No student will be allowed beyond the lobby prior to 8:20 a.m. Because there is no supervision available prior to this time, if children are left unattended the principal will contact parents.

Breakfast - Breakfast is served between 8:20 and 8:45 a.m.

Walkers - Walkers should arrive as close to 8:20 a.m. as possible and will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m.

Drop-offs - The best time to drop off students is at 8:30 a.m. All students being dropped off must arrive through the main doors of the building. Do not park in the No Parking Zone if you plan to walk your child into the school. Parents may park in visitor parking spaces in front of the building. The side parking lot is for faculty and staff. Please be aware that there is only one-way traffic in the parking circle.

Tardy - Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. are considered tardy and parents must sign them in at the office *before* they go to class.

School Safety

Our school has safety procedure policies in place for fire, bomb threats, natural disasters, and any necessary evacuation. Please be assured your child's safety is our utmost concern. Please listen to the radio for any further instructions if there is an emergency situation. Our radio station is 1340 AM, WMSA.

Parking Lot

Parking is available for parents. Enter the school driveway and park on the left-hand side in the marked parking spaces. Please do not park on the lawn or block buses by parking on the right side of the driveway.

Latch Key

This program provides childcare before and after school for students in grades K-6. Latch Key hours are from 6:30-8:30am and 3:00-6:00pm. If school delays opening, or closes early Latch Key will not be available. The cost is \$3.00 per hour per child, with family discounts available. Each year new paperwork must be completed to enroll in the program. Parents will need to sign their child in and out of the program daily.

Attendance

As standards are raised it becomes even more important for all students to attend school regularly and on time; students really cannot afford to miss school. Even the best students will quickly fall behind when attendance drops or if there is chronic tardiness. Parent support on this issue is absolutely essential.

- ◆ Please call the school as early as possible when a student is ill or will be absent or tardy for some other reason. If the school does not receive a call when a child is absent, the school will call the home of each student that is unaccounted for. Students should bring their written excuse with them at the start of the first day of school after their return.
- ◆ In compliance with the New York State Commissioner of Education's request, Massena Central School Board has written and adopted Policy #7111:
The district recognizes that consistent school attendance, academic success and school completion have a positive correlation, and based upon our district's educational and community needs, values and priorities, the Board of Education has determined that absences, tardiness, and early departure will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards:
Excused: An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to personal illness, or death in the family, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, road test, approved college visits, approved cooperative work programs, military obligations, or such reasons as may be approved by the state Board of Education.
Unexcused: An absence, tardiness or early departure is considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories. (Ex. Family vacation, hunting, haircut, etc.)
- ◆ **The state requires a written excuse defining the dates and reason for each absence, tardiness, or early departure.**
- ◆ A student who is absent from school may not participate in any school activity on that day. Children should be kept home when they are ill. Keeping sick children home will

prevent the spread of contagious conditions. A child with impetigo, ringworm, strep or pink eye will need to be seen by a physician before they will be allowed to return to school. Please inform the nurse of any contagious disease your child has encountered in order for the school to monitor the types and frequencies of illnesses.

Make-Up Work

Make-up work is required when you are absent from school. You must ask your teacher for your assignments on the first day you return to school. If you expect to be absent for three or more days, your parents may phone the school by 10:00 a.m. and a list of your assignments will be ready to be picked up after 3:00 p.m.

It is your responsibility to check with your teacher about make-up work. The number of days allowed to complete make-up work will be determined by the principal, or the principal's designee, but will not exceed the number of days you were absent. A grade of zero (0) will be given for work missed and not made up.

Moving

Please notify the school secretary in the main office of any address or telephone number changes. If your child is moving out of the district a records release form must be completed at the new school. Return all school-owned books and library books. Make sure desk(s) and the locker have been cleared of all student belongings. If you are moving within the Massena Central School District, proof and verification of address is required.

Health

School health services help to protect and improve the health of children, thus aiding their growth and development and enabling them to benefit fully from school.

◆ Health Exams

- ◆ The school doctor does annual health exams for pre-kindergarten, junior kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1 and 3 annually.
- ◆ Parents will be notified if any findings warrant further screening.

◆ Immunizations

- ◆ The Health Department of the State of New York requires every student to have specific immunizations or be denied entrance into school. These are: Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Oral Polio, Measles, Mumps and Rubella, Varivax (chicken pox) and the Hepatitis B series.
- ◆ Written proof must be submitted to the school indicating these dates of immunization.

◆ Emergency Cards

- ◆ The emergency card provides the school with information about who to contact when a student is ill or injured.
- ◆ Every student must have an emergency card filled out by a parent or guardian. The information on the emergency card must be accurate and up to date at all times.
- ◆ Please list only those persons who are willing to accept responsibility for your child, and who have a phone and transportation, as alternate contacts.
- ◆ Students cannot be released to persons not listed on the emergency card without written permission from the parent or guardian.

- ◆ **Medications** – Massena Central Board of Education policy and Nurse Practice Act regulates the administration of medication to schoolchildren during school hours. Therefore:
 - ◆ A School Medication form must be completed by the student’s doctor. This is required for either prescription or over-the-counter medication.
 - ◆ The form includes space for the physician’s order and the parent’s permission.
 - ◆ Medication must be in its original container and labeled with the student’s name, drug name, dosage, time to be given and parent’s name.
 - ◆ Children cannot carry medication to school on the bus.
 - ◆ Parents must deliver the medication to the school themselves and pick it up when it is no longer required.
 - ◆ All medication must be stored in the Nurse’s Office.
- ◆ **Accidents** – If an accident occurs involving a student, every effort will be made to contact the parent of the child and to take action at the parent’s direction. If a parent cannot be contacted, school officials will take whatever means necessary to preserve the health of the child. Parents of any child with health problems that might cause a health emergency should be certain to notify the school of the problems and the procedures that would need to be followed should the child become ill at school.
- ◆ **School Insurance** – The school insurance policy is an “excess” policy that requires parents to first use their own insurance for any injury.
- ◆ **Head Lice (Policy 7515)**- While a nuisance, head lice do not pose a public health risk and are not associated with any disease. For the purpose of this policy an “active case” of head lice means the school nurse found live lice or nits that are ½” or closer to the scalp.
- ◆ When a classroom teacher notes signs of infestation, they will send students to the school nurse to be checked. If an active case of head lice is found by the school nurse, the student will be sent home and parent/guardian will be instructed to begin treatment. Treatment is to include a pediculoci (over the counter or prescription). If the parent/guardian chooses to use homeopathic or natural treatment then all nits must be removed before return to school. Close contacts of the student will also be checked by the school nurse. **If treatment has been started student may return to school the next day to be checked by school nurse before returning to class.** Nit removal is strongly encouraged to decrease chance of re-infestation or risk of possible misdiagnose of a new case in the future. From the date a student returns to class he/she will be checked in one and two weeks. **Mass screenings will be done at the discretion of the school nurse.** Classroom screenings will be done at the discretion of the school nurse, but no sooner than when three students in a given classroom at the same time have been positively identified by the school nurse with an infestation. The school nurse will also offer verbal and written information to school staff and parents/guardians as needed.
- ◆ Parent/guardians are encouraged to check student’s hair for infestation regularly. If a student has multiple cases of head lice causing frequent absence from school, the parent/guardian will need to coordinate with the school to pick up missed work. If a student has multiple re-infestation a referral to Public Health will be offered.
- ◆ School personnel are encouraged to take precautions to contain the spread of lice. Classroom teachers should limit cloth items in the classroom. When such items are considered to be educationally beneficial, classroom teachers are encouraged to rotate items on a monthly basis.
- ◆ Students should be warned against the sharing of hair and head items. Building custodians are encouraged to vacuum classroom rugs daily.

◆ **Facts and Treatment Procedures for Head Lice and Nits**

Head lice start with nits which are small, white eggs that attach themselves to the hair close to the scalp and especially behind the ears. Nits are different from dandruff in that they cannot be easily removed. The nits will hatch out in about a week if not properly removed. Head lice are spread through personal contact and by sharing hats, brushes and combs. If caught in time, head lice will not cause your child any serious trouble but they can be unpleasant. School police requires affected children remain home until head lice and nits are gone.

Steps to Take

1. Prevent spreading head lice by checking the hair of everyone at home at least weekly.
2. If one person in your home has head lice or nits, check the heads of all persons in the home.
3. There are several shampoos available which give effective treatment: *Kwell* – shampoo, cream or lotion, by prescription; *A-200* or *Rid*. A relatively new product called *Step 2* is designed to help remove nits after treatment with the treatment shampoo. *Step 2* loosens the nits or eggs, making it easier for them to be removed.
4. In treating hair, carefully *follow directions* included with the product to get the best results. The problem may remain if directions are not followed exactly.
5. A steel nit comb or hard-rubber comb is essential in removing nits.
6. Be sure to keep the hair wet while you are using the nit comb. Pick up a few strands of hair and, holding the nit comb at an angle, comb from the scalp to the end of the hair. Repeat this until all of the nits are removed then pick up another few strands of hair and begin again. Do the rest of the hair in the same way until all of the nits are removed. It's best to work in good light. To prevent a recurrence, boil the nit comb after *each combing*. You may want to use a little household ammonia in the water.
7. If some nits are hard to remove with the comb, try picking up the single hair between your thumb and forefinger and run your nail down it to pull off the nits.
8. Be sure that bedding, towels, clothing, including hats, hoods, scarves and coat collars are clean because sometimes you will find lice or nits there. Wash them with hot water and detergent. *Washing alone will not kill the nits*. If you do not have a dryer and cannot get to a Laundromat to use one, the heat from ironing the clothing and bedding will kill the nits. Dry cleaning should be used for all items that cannot be washed.
9. Thoroughly vacuum the home – mattresses, springs, pillows and stuffed furniture. Repeat vacuuming periodically. Baseboards and closets can be sprayed with *Raid Ant and Roach Killer* and *Raid Professional Strength Ant and Roach Killer* or some other insecticide sold for use in the home. Please be sure to read and follow the manufacturer's directions before using an insecticide.

Parent Pick-up and Student Early Departure

For the children's safety:

- ◆ Parents are required to come to the office to sign out their child. A written note from the parent should be sent to school with the student to notify us of your plans.
- ◆ Students will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than their parent or guardian, or those designated on the emergency card, unless a written note by the parent is received and approved by the principal.
- ◆ A student may be released to either parent unless a custodial parent supplies the principal with a copy of a court order or divorce decree that states otherwise.
- ◆ If you plan to pick up your child, who normally takes a bus, please send a note with your child in the morning. We ask that you wait in the lobby until walkers are dismissed.
- ◆ When picking your child up from school, please do not pick them up from the entrance, which is reserved for faculty and staff. All students will be dismissed from the main entrance. Please park in the designated parking areas. No cars will be allowed to park or stand in the designated No Parking Bus Zone during dismissal.
- ◆ Walkers will be dismissed at 3:05 p.m. daily.

Closings

- ◆ The superintendent of schools may close schools or dismiss students and staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten health and safety. Announcements will be broadcast over 1340 WMSA radio stations. Channel 10 and Channel 7 News also carry closing and delay announcements.
- ◆ Emergency closing information is also posted on the Massena Central School District web site at www.mcs.k12.ny.us and district social media pages. WMSA also has a web site with up-to-the-minute closings: www.1340wmsa.com.
- ◆ If your contact information is up-to-date in our school records, a student's primary contact will receive a phone call notification via school messenger.
- ◆ Parents are asked to avoid calling the school office for this information in order to keep phone lines open.
- ◆ Please have a plan with which your child is familiar in the event of an unforeseen early school closing. Reviewing this plan periodically with your child, especially during winter months, will help make your child more comfortable in the event an early closing occurs.

Cafeteria

A nutritious breakfast and lunch are available to students daily. Breakfast is served between 8:20 and 8:45. Families that are eligible for free or reduced lunches according to federal guidelines must complete the application every year and return it to school. Prices are as follows:

Breakfast	\$1.20	Reduced Price	\$.25
Lunch	\$2.25	Reduced Price	\$.25

Classroom Snacks

Food items brought into the District to be consumed as part of a classroom celebration are to be commercially prepackaged or purchased from a commercial kitchen. Classroom celebrations will include healthy alternatives.

My School Bucks

MySchoolBucks is a website for parents and caregivers to pay for their child's school meals using a credit or debit card. With this online service, parents can also view a child's updated meal account, monitor what their child is eating, check balances, and set up low balance alerts for cafeteria purchases. A link to myschoolbucks is conveniently located under the Home tab of each Elementary Building webpage.

Have a smartphone? Go to myschoolbucks.com and download the app

ABOUT MYSCHOOLBUCKS

How do I get started?

Getting started is a simple three-step process.

1. Create a user profile by clicking on the Start Here button on the home page.
2. Add students to your household - you'll need the child's name and birthdate and student ID.
3. Now you're ready to make payments!

How can I request notification via email when my child's balance is low?

In the left navigation panel, click the 'Email Preferences' link, then check the box to request low balance notifications and fill in the amount. When your child's balance goes below that amount, an email message will be automatically sent to the email address in your user profile.

Can other people make payments on my child's account?

Other adults can make payments on your child's account if they know the child's name and either birth date or student ID. Multiple users can have the same child added to their profile. Remember that MySchoolBucks.com is intended to be used by adults who can purchase with a credit card, and that you are responsible for protecting the confidentiality of your password and should not permit any other person to use your password.

How do I setup a future scheduled or recurring payment?

Choose 'Make A Payment' from the menu. Choose the item to purchase and enter the amount to pay for your child then add the item to the basket. Once the item is in the basket, if recurring payments are enabled you'll find the option to 'Setup A Payment Schedule' just under your child's name. Click the link to enter your schedule options.

Field trips

- ◆ Subject matter can be enriched and extended by firsthand experiences. Teachers will communicate field trip details and elicit parent permission for all field trips. Students who are attending school-sponsored educational field trips will not be allowed to use any other means of transportation. The principal may grant exceptions, if the alternate transportation is to be provided by the child's parent or guardian, and a written request is received prior to the field trip. A copy of your child's birth certificate is necessary for trips to Canada.
- ◆ Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked based on behavior, attendance or school performance. Students are representatives of their school while on field trips and should behave according to school rules.

Visiting

- ◆ Parents and guardians are always welcome at our school, but to ensure the safety of all children we ask all visitors to stop at the main office, sign in and get a visitor's badge that must be prominently displayed - no matter how short the visit will be. Permission from the principal is required prior to visiting a classroom. Visits that interfere with instructional time will be denied. The visitor's pass must be returned to the main office at the end of the visit.
- ◆ Parents are encouraged to visit teachers, the school counselor, the school nurse, or other school personnel by appointment to discuss any problems or concerns the parent may have regarding a student.

Communication

- ◆ The most convenient times for contacting classroom teachers are from 8 to 8:20 a.m. Each teacher has a phone in his or her classroom. We ask that you refrain from calling the classroom during instructional time. Messages for students leaving school early for appointments must be channeled through the main office.
- ◆ Please call the main office in advance to make appointments for personal conferences with your child's classroom teacher. This will prevent conflicts with other meetings and will allow the teacher to give you his or her full attention.
- ◆ Children are only called out of class to receive a telephone call in the case of an emergency. Please remember the school phone is a business phone and encourage your child not to rely on using it. If there is a real need for a child to use the phone, he or she should always ask for permission.
- ◆ Communicate any transportation changes to the office in writing (fax or email are acceptable), prior to 2:00 pm. Requests for changes in transportation arrangements after 2:00 pm will not be honored unless of an emergency nature and with approval of the building principal.
- ◆ All transportation changes must be in writing. We will not accept changes over the phone as we cannot verify the identity of the caller.
- ◆ Please avoid routinely picking up your child between 2:30pm and 3:00pm as it disrupts the academic day and creates additional stress to the office staff during an already hectic time.
- ◆ If we are ever in doubt as to the transportation arrangements for your child, your child will remain safely at school until you are able to come pick them up.

Electronic Devices & Cell Phones (Policy 7316)

Personal technology use by students is permitted during the school day for educational purposes and/or in approved locations only. Teachers will indicate when and if classroom use is acceptable. Students are expected to act responsibly and thoughtfully when using technology resources. Students bear the burden of responsibility to inquire with school administrators and/or teachers when they are unsure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in such use. The District reserves the right to restrict student use of District-owned technologies and personal technology on school property or at school-sponsored events, at the discretion of the administration. The District shall not be liable for the loss, damage, misuse, or theft of any personal technology brought to School. The District reserves the right to monitor, inspect, and/or confiscate personal technology when administration has reasonable suspicion to believe that a violation of school policy or criminal law has occurred.

Lost and Found

Children should be encouraged to bring a minimum of personal belongings to school. What is brought should be clearly marked with the child's name. Lost and found items are placed on a table located on the stage in our cafeteria. At the end of the year all unclaimed items will be donated to a needy organization in the community.

Six-Day Schedule

Massena Elementary Schools operate on a six-day schedule. The first day of school will be day one. All special classes meet on a 1-6 schedule instead of a Monday-Friday schedule. By using this schedule, instructional time is maximized, teachers have common planning time, and no special classes are missed due to vacations or snow days. There will be signs posted around the school and reminders will also be on the morning and afternoon announcements.

Public Concerns

- ◆ Public concerns about any facet of school operations should generally follow a chain of command, starting with the person closest to the source of the complaint. In most instances, concerns will be directed to the building principal if the matter cannot first be resolved by the teacher, coach or other staff member involved.
- ◆ If an issue is not satisfactorily resolved at the building level, the concern may be carried to the superintendent of schools.

Questions or Concerns: Chain of Command

Please refer to the following FAQ list to determine the chain of command in any of the following areas. Our goal is to provide a seamless flow of information for all stakeholders.

Answers

1) **Q Homework Pre Kindergarten - Grade 6**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board

3) **Q Bus Stops**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level	5th Level
	Driver	Director of Transportation	Principal	Superintendent	Board

4) **Q Classroom Incident Pre Kindergarten - Grade 6**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board

7) **Q Student Discipline: Pre Kindergarten - Grade 6**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Teacher	Principal	Superintendent	Board

9) **Q Student Discipline: Bus**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Driver	Director of Trans	Superintendent	Board

11) **Q Curriculum**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Teacher	Curriculum Director	Principal	Superintendent

15) **Q Medical**

A	1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level	4th Level
	Nurse	Principal	Director of Physical Education/ Athletics	Superintendent

16) Q **Special Education**

A

1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level
Teacher	Director of Special Education	Superintendent

17) Q **Breakfast / Lunch**

A

1st Level	2nd Level	3rd Level
Food Services Director	Business Manager	Superintendent

18) Q **Board Policy**

A

1st Level	2nd Level
Superintendent	Board

19) Q **(New Question)**

A No answer was supplied

Board Meetings

The Massena Central School District Board of Education holds public meetings monthly. You can find the dates for the meetings on the school calendar, the web site, or by calling the superintendent's office.

Board Policies

Copies of the policies of the Board of Education are on file in each school and are available for inspection.

Tips for Parents:

According to researchers, an action repeated for just 21 days usually leads to the action becoming automatic, thus becoming a habit. That's about the number of school days until the first five-week reports are written by teachers. You can help your child to take on the practices of successful students during these 21 days to form productive habits. When a student makes school responsibility a habit, success surely follows.

◆ **Successful students set goals**

PARENTS: Talk with your child about setting goals. Check monthly, assisting your child in evaluating the success of the previous month's goals and setting new ones.

◆ **Successful students plan their time**

PARENTS: Work with your child in using the planner to organize activities. Writing down all commitments (projects, homework, sports practices and games, family plans, etc.) in the planner should become automatic.

◆ **Successful students take notes in class (grades 3-6)**

PARENTS: Ask to see notebooks. Teachers should emphasize important subject content; successful students make a habit of writing that material in a way that is easy to read and study from. Spend time reviewing notes before scheduled tests with your child. Contact your child's teacher if you are concerned about the quality of any notebook.

◆ **Successful students study daily**

PARENTS: Subject matter is mastered one step at a time. Successful students set aside time for daily study even when no homework is assigned. These students take the opportunity to study areas "they assign to themselves." Reviewing notes regularly is probably the best such self-assigned study. Talk with your child about daily study and assist them in following through.

◆ **Successful students are prepared for school**

PARENTS: Check to make sure your child has a system at home for getting all materials ready to go in the morning---materials left at home are of no use to a student sitting in class! Teach your child to take a few minutes at bedtime to get ready for morning (i.e. pack the book bag, select clothes, etc.) Students will find a routine helps them to be ready in the morning and prepared for school.

◆ **Successful students commit to attending school**

PARENTS: Expect your child to be in school unless they are ill. Adults report to work with a headache or a slight cold---students should set the same standard. Explain to your child that employers expect excellent attendance. Good school attendance helps students develop a productive work ethic.

Getting to bed early enough for a good night's sleep and eating breakfast are two key elements for student success. Help your child continue a successful pattern or develop a new one where one is lacking. Set a bedtime if necessary.

◆ **Call us...we want to work with you!**

Curriculum Night

Grade-level meetings are scheduled in September to acquaint parents with the school's basic curriculum. Parents will meet the teacher, visit the classroom and building and become familiar with their child(ren)'s subject material. This is not a time to discuss individual students.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

A parent/teacher conference is scheduled for all students at the end of the first marking period and as-needed at the end of the second marking period. Both the parent and teacher share valuable information during these meetings. All parents are required to attend the November conference. Please check your Massena Central School District calendar for these dates.

Academic Reports

Parents will receive the first trimester report card at Parent/Teacher Conference in November. Second trimester report cards are issued in March. Third trimester report cards are issued in June. Parents are highly encouraged to register for parent portal to receive progress updates, and contact teachers throughout the school year.

MCSD Parent Portal

If you would like access to the MCSD Parent Portal, please send an email to the following address: parentportal@mcs.k12.ny.us with your child(ren)'s name(s) and date of birth(s). Please also verify your email address in the body of the email. Please anticipate a minimum of 3 to 5 business days for you to receive an email verifying your account.

MCSD Parent Portal - https://schooltool8.neric.org/SchoolTool_MASS/Default.aspx

SchoolTool Mobile App for Parents

The Schooltool Mobile Application is now setup and available for Massena CSD parents and students. A guide on the district website under "Parent Portal Information" provides instructions for configuring and using the Massena CSD Schooltool mobile application for iOS and Android devices.

Award Assemblies

We will honor students throughout the year for both academic and non-academic achievement. You will be invited to attend the assembly when your child receives recognition for their accomplishment. Please look in the district calendar for times and dates.

Photographing/Videotaping of Students

Massena Central School District is a Professional Development School in partnership with local colleges and universities. Videotaping of lessons is a valuable tool for professional growth both for our staff and visiting college students. Additionally, photographs and videotapes of students and/or student work may be used occasionally in district and community publications. If you object to your child(ren)'s being photographed or videotaped for the above-mentioned reasons, you must contact the building principal in writing.

Homework

- ◆ Homework provides excellent opportunities for developing good study habits, providing for individual differences and abilities, and encouraging self-initiative on the part of the student.
- ◆ Parents and the school share the responsibility for student learning. Parents can assist their children with homework by:
 - ◆ Providing a well-lit study area free of distractions
 - ◆ Asking questions about the content of student homework
 - ◆ Giving requested assistance, but letting the student do his or her own work
 - ◆ Avoiding undue pressure
 - ◆ Helping create a “homework habit” at the same time each night
 - ◆ Encouraging and monitoring homework assignments.

Library/Media Center

- ◆ The media center is an integral part of the instructional program. Students are given the opportunity to acquire skills and to use a variety of resources in learning beyond the facts presented in textbooks. Along with enjoying these learning experiences, children can find pleasure and satisfaction from the many fine literature books available.
- ◆ The media center is open to all grade levels during school hours. The library personnel help to guide children in their independent endeavors.
- ◆ Library books *must* be returned *each week!* We do not have fines for overdue books, but fines are charged when books are damaged or lost at the end of the school.

Special Areas

◆ Instrumental Music

Instrumental music is an elective open to interested children in grades 5 & 6. There are some school-owned instruments available. Instruments can be rented on a trial basis from nearby music stores. Children who aspire to participate in band or orchestra in junior or senior high school should become involved early, so that mastery of performance skills can be developed.

◆ Physical Education

The activities included in the physical education program help children to develop a better understanding of their strengths and limitations in all areas of athletics. They are introduced to all basic skills necessary to participate in and enjoy the games and contests that will help them develop poise and confidence.

All children are expected to dress appropriately and attend all gym classes, unless they are excused by a doctor’s note. **Sneakers are required for gym classes.**

◆ **Art**

Instruction is offered each week to acquaint students with the importance of art as a means of creative expression. The school furnishes most art supplies. However, from time to time children will be asked to bring items from home not generally purchased or supply their own materials for a special project of their own choosing.

Special Student Services

- ◆ **School Counselor** – Our school has a counselor who is available to help students who are dealing with personal problems such as depression, drug or alcohol abuse, a family crisis, etc. Students may contact the counselor directly or they may be referred to the counselor by a parent or school personnel. Parents may also call the counselor for information and referrals to community and social services programs.
- ◆ **School Psychologist** - The school psychologist works with students, teachers, parents, and various community agencies. Individual counseling and psychological testing are provided to students in need of such services.
- ◆ **Academic Intervention Services (AIS)** - Students who are in need of extra help are identified for remediation by teacher recommendation, daily class work, and state assessment scores. Students who score below the state criteria on NYS Assessments must receive academic intervention services. This program is designed to help students achieve the learning standards in all areas. This is additional time for focused instruction not a time for homework help.
- ◆ **Special Education** - These services are provided to students who have an Individual Education Program (IEP) as recommended by the Committee of Special Education. Students with handicapping conditions could benefit from these opportunities.
- ◆ **12:1:1 Option** – Students receive primary instruction from a special education teacher.
- ◆ **Resource Room Option** – Students receive supplemental instruction or help with classroom work.
- ◆ **Consultant Option** – Special education teachers provide direct instruction to a student in the student's classroom or a special education teacher can provide indirect support to the student's teacher.
- ◆ **English as a Second Language** - These services are provided to students for whom English is not their first language as well as Native American students in grades K-6 who need extra assistance in all academic areas. Referral is by teacher recommendation. The Native American Coordinator position is available through English as a Second Language grant monies; however, this does not mean that English is not spoken in the student's home, but rather that two languages can be spoken in the home. (English and a Native American language, for example.)
- ◆ **Title I (Math and Reading)** - These services are provided for students in grades 1-6 who need extra assistance in reading and/or math. Teachers' recommendations and/or results of Early Literacy Profile (K-3) or other standardized test results determine referrals.

- ◆ **Speech** - These services are provided for students who have difficulty with speech. Referrals are made by parents, teachers, and the Committee on Special Education (CSE).
- ◆ **BOCES Services** - The Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) makes available Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Visual and Auditory Services, and Assistive Technology. Referrals to this program are through the Committee on Special Education (CSE).
- ◆ **Web Resources** – The Internet is a wonderful source of information for parents and students who want to learn more about a particular disability, find resources, network, etc. What follows are just a few good sites that address some of the most common disabilities among district students:
 - ◆ **The New York Autism Network** – www.albany.edu/psy/autism.html
 - ◆ **Asperger Syndrome Education Network** – www.aspennj.org
 - ◆ **Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (CHADD)** – www.chadd.org
 - ◆ **National Attention Deficit Disorder Association** – www.add.org
 - ◆ **Dyslexia Treatment and Counseling Center** – <http://gatenet.com/dyslexia-add>
 - ◆ **Learning Disabilities** – www.idonline.org
 - ◆ **National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities** – www.nichcy.org
 - ◆ **Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation** – www.ocfoundation.org
 - ◆ **NYS Talking Book and Braille Library** – www.nysl.nysed.gov/talk.htm
 - ◆ **Vocational and Education Services for Individuals with Disabilities** – www.nysl.nysed.gov/talk.htm
 - ◆ **Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services** - www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS
 - ◆ **Educational Resources Information Center** – www.accesseric.org/index.html

Homebound Instruction

Homebound instruction – or home tutoring – is a service that schools are required to provide to students who are unable to attend school due to medical, emotional or disciplinary problems. If the inability to attend school is due to a medical condition, parents should call the school as soon as possible and provide a written medical request for homebound instruction from the child’s physician. The school will then submit the doctor’s note along with additional paperwork to the superintendent of schools for approval of home tutoring.

Student Conduct

The Board of Education expects all students to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. Therefore, students will be expected to:

- ◆ **At All Times**
 - ◆ Follow directions of all staff members;
 - ◆ Speak in a respectful manner to all staff members and to fellow students. Use conversational voices and appropriate language at all times. Refrain from speech that is slanderous, malicious, vulgar, or disruptive to the educational process;
 - ◆ Refrain from harassment of any kind;
 - ◆ Respect the personal space of all people. No inappropriate contact: no pushing, fighting or other behavior considered to be unsafe or in violation of the rights of others will be tolerated;
 - ◆ Respect school property, one's own property and the property of others. No dangerous, unnecessary, or illegal items will be permitted at school. These may include objects or materials used to cause distraction or discomfort to others;
 - ◆ Be at school and in class on time and attend school unless ill or absent with a legitimate excuse;
 - ◆ Be prepared for classes, do their homework and participate in their classes to the best of their ability;
 - ◆ Not to use or be in possession of tobacco products, alcohol, illegal substances, matches or cigarette lighters.
- ◆ **At Recess and On the Playground** - Students may have the opportunity to go outside for recess throughout the school year. It is important that students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.
- ◆ When at all possible, we attempt to have daily outdoor recess for our students. This policy will be followed consistently throughout the district:
 - Temperature Below Zero (0) Degrees: No outside recess.
 - Temperature Between Ten (10) Degrees and Zero (0): Teachers utilize their own judgment.
 - Temperatures Higher than Ten (10) Degrees: There will be outside recess
- ◆ For the safety and enjoyment of all students on the playground, students are asked to:

Playground Rules

 - ◆ Stay in the designated playground area or with their teacher.
 - ◆ Respect others, take turns, share and allow others to play.
 - ◆ Maintain a safe distance from playground equipment while others are using it.
 - ◆ Refrain from throwing snowballs, playing king of the mountain, or throwing objects (sticks, stones, dirt, rocks, etc.)
 - ◆ Stay away from icy areas.
 - ◆ Refrain from using foul language, offensive names, or put-downs.
- ◆ **In the Cafeteria** – We want students to be able to socialize with their friends while eating in a safe, orderly environment that does not interfere with the educational process. Because of the potential danger that exists with their disposal, students should not bring glass bottles or containers with sharp metal pull tops in their lunches. If you would like to join your child for lunch, please let your child's teacher know in advance so that the kitchen staff can plan accordingly. We ask that no fast food or soda be brought into school as it causes major distractions.

Cafeteria Rules

 - ◆ Once you sit down you *cannot* get up again unless you raise your hand and ask permission from the monitor.
 - ◆ Talk quietly with neighbors at the same table, and stay in your seat.

- ◆ Be courteous and considerate of one another at all times.
- ◆ *Walk* in the cafeteria.
- ◆ Follow the directions of the cafeteria monitor.
- ◆ When the monitor raises his/her hand, you also raise yours, and *stop* talking.
- ◆ Chew with your mouth *closed*
- ◆ Do not talk with your mouth full.
- ◆ Do not play with your food.
- ◆ *No* throwing of food or other objects.
- ◆ The monitor will dismiss one table at a time.
- ◆ Pick up after yourself.

For students who choose to act inappropriately, a cafeteria monitor will complete a conduct report and send it to the principal who will provide appropriate consequences.

- ◆ **On the School Bus** - Riding the school bus is a privilege provided to students for transportation to and from school, field trips and other special events. It is the responsibility of each student to demonstrate a desire to ride the bus by practicing safe and courteous bus ridership. The safety and comfort of all students is of primary importance and must be protected.

Bus Rules

- ◆ Respect the bus driver and follow the driver's instructions – these instructions are for your benefit.
- ◆ Take a seat promptly – move to a window seat when possible.
- ◆ Remain seated with arms and legs inside of bus.
- ◆ Use appropriate language at all times.
- ◆ Talk quietly so that you do not bother others or distract the bus driver.
- ◆ Keep aisles clear of legs, instruments or other objects. Find alternate transportation for instruments and other large objects that cannot be held on their lap.
- ◆ Do not tamper with safety or bus equipment.
- ◆ Ride assigned bus to designated stop unless a written note signed by parent and approved by the office is given to the driver.
- ◆ **School Bus Incident Reports** – If a student chooses to act inappropriately, the bus driver will complete a bus referral and submit copies to the director of transportation and the building principal. The principal will then provide appropriate consequences to the student. For example, **students who misbehave and endanger the safe transportation of other students may have their privilege of transportation suspended.** If this occurs, parents/guardians must provide transportation to and from school for the period of bus suspension. Examples of inappropriate behavior:

- ◆ **Damaging bus property** – cutting, destroying seats; scratching, marring paint or seat finish; breaking or cracking windows;
- ◆ **Abusive language** – swearing, abusive or derogatory language; sassing, talking back to the bus driver; calling the bus driver or other riders names; putting down others;
- ◆ **Injury to others** – hitting, scratching, kicking, pushing, tripping other riders; throwing at or shooting someone with a hard or sharp object (i.e., pencils, paper clips, pins);
- ◆ **Unsafe behavior** – failure to stay clear of bus when bus is approaching; failure to stay clear of bus after getting off; playing around with safety door or safety equipment; hanging out the window; throwing objects in the bus, out of the bus, or at the bus; hanging onto bus bumper; getting on and off at the wrong stop;
- ◆ **Excessive noise** – yelling, screaming; shouting across the bus; loudly playing radios; creating a disturbance with other types of noise;
- ◆ **Disobeying the driver** – failure to follow the driver’s instructions;
- ◆ **Other** – any behavior not included above, but which is felt by the bus driver to warrant a report.

The building principal may set up a conference with the students or parents. Parents may be notified by phone, in person or in writing. A pattern of minor infractions or a single major infraction of the rules will result in suspension of bus riding privileges. It is essential to enforce the rules to ensure your student’s safety and comfort.

Transportation

Transportation is provided for all elementary students who live $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile or more from their school. Massena Central School District intends to make transportation services as safe and pleasant as possible. To retain bus privileges students are expected to abide by all student ridership rules as outlined under Student Conduct, above. Additionally, policies regarding:

- ◆ **Baggage** - Baggage packed for special school trips such as environmental camps may be transported to school on the regular bus as long as the students can hold everything in their laps. Usually this excess baggage needs to be transported to school by other means. It is the parent/guardian responsibility to get the baggage to school for the scheduled outing. Large objects of any kind cannot be transported on the bus.
- ◆ **Hazards** - Breakable glass objects, skis, sleds, skateboards, etc., that may injure other students may not be brought on the bus. Skates must be enclosed in a protective case.
- ◆ **Loose Paper** - Students should carry school papers and other items in a school bag. They should be instructed not to pick up dropped papers in front of the school bus when crossing the street.
- ◆ **Bus Stops** - Students should be at their bus stop five minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the bus. If the child is late, they should not run after the school bus. Buses cannot return to pick up students who have missed the bus. Students should go to the stop nearest their home. Use only that stop.

- ◆ **Daycare** - If daycare is used, arrangements must be made so that the student gets on at the same stop every day and gets off at the same stop every day. The morning stop may be different than the evening stop. Be sure your daycare provider has bussing information and rules. It is important to remember that pick up and drop off locations need to be consistent. Transportation will not approve a “two days here and three days there” arrangement. Do not send notes to school with students asking for temporary bus or stop changes. Parents are asked to review busing guidelines with their children. It is very important that parents help instruct and enforce these rules with the students.
- ◆ **Bus Cameras** - To maximize safety, students may be videotaped on buses.
- ◆ **Musical Instruments** - Musical instruments are permitted on the bus as long as the student can hold them on their own laps. If the instrument is so large that it cannot be kept with the student, other provisions must be made to transport it.
- ◆ **Pets or Animals** - Students are not permitted to bring pets or animals of any kind on the bus.
- ◆ **Requests to Ride an Unassigned Bus** - The transportation system is not designed to permit children to go on different buses or to other stops because of birthday parties, clubs, etc., Parents need to find other means for meeting transportation needs on these occasions. Requests to ride a different bus than the one assigned will be denied. Parents must obtain permission from the principal if they are requesting to ride the bus with their student.
- ◆ **Crossing Streets** - If your child must cross the street after getting off the bus, they should walk at least 10 feet in front of the school bus, wait for the driver to signal and then proceed to cross while watching for any vehicle that may not be stopping.
- ◆ **Food and Drinks** - Food and drinks are not permitted on the buses at any time.

Walking to and from School

- ◆ For maximum safety, please teach your child to follow the safest route to school. Teach and review the use of crosswalks, stopping at the curb and looking both ways before crossing a street. Teach your child the meaning of traffic signals.
- ◆ Winter weather conditions create possible safety hazards for walkers. Extra caution must be used if snow has blocked sidewalks. Students should avoid walking on the high banks next to the street as they may fall into the street. Please teach your child to walk facing traffic if it is necessary to walk along the side of the street. Encourage your child to follow the directions you feel are the safest.

Bicycles, Boards, Scooters and Skates

Children riding bikes, skateboards, scooters or skates to school must submit a parent’s note to the office granting them permission to do so. They must also be in fourth grade. All bikes must be parked in the bike stand and should be locked. Skates, skateboards and scooters may be *carried* into the school and should be kept in the coat cubbies outside the child’s classroom. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged bikes,

skateboards, scooters and skates. No riding on school sidewalks is allowed. Helmets must be worn when riding bikes, skateboards, scooters and skates.

Dress Code

- ◆ All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. The responsibility for appropriate dress and appearance of students should rest with the individual students and parents, provided that such attire is not offensive, provocative, outlandish, or distracting to the school environment. Attire that interferes with the educational process or infringes on the rights of others will not be tolerated. Clothing and hairstyles will be neat and clean. The school expects reasonable personal hygiene practices to be followed. The administration will determine what is or is not appropriate, and is authorized to take action in instances where an individual's mode of dress does not meet these requirements.
- ◆ According to Massena Central School District 7310, School Conduct and Discipline, which was designed to promote responsible behavior. Chapter V, Student Dress Code indicates students' dress, grooming, and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, make-up and nails should:
 - ◆ Be safe, appropriate and not disrupt the educational process;
 - ◆ Ensure that underwear is completely covered by outer clothing;
 - ◆ Include footwear at all times. No open-toe shoes shall be worn on the playground. Other footwear that presents a safety hazard will not be allowed;
 - ◆ Not include wearing hats of any style, including hoods up, except in the corridor;
 - ◆ Not include items that are distracting, offensive, or advertise alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs.
- ◆ Extremely brief garments such as net-, tank-, tube-, and or halter-tops, midriff shirts, spaghetti straps, see-through garments, plunging necklines (front or back) and shorts above the mid-thigh are not appropriate.

P.B.I.S.

- ◆ P.B.I.S. stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Through P.B.I.S., we are trying to emphasize positive behavior. By teaching expectations and procedures throughout the building and grounds, we are changing the attitudes of both students and staff toward a more positive outlook.
- ◆ P.B.I.S. is not a behavior program. It is not meant to replace individual teachers' personal approaches to dealing with behaviors in their classrooms. It is meant to frame the behavioral expectations for the building and for the individual classrooms in a positive language that promotes and reinforces positive behaviors throughout school.
- ◆ Our goal is to increase student achievement by improving student behavior. Students who demonstrate their best efforts at positive behavior will be rewarded for it. There is a celebration system in place when students are caught acting safely, respectfully and responsibly.

Supplies

Massena Central School District furnishes classroom textbooks to all children. Fines are levied for carelessness or loss. A list of supplementary materials is given to each child before the start of the school year. As additional supplies are needed throughout the year, requests will be sent home with students.

Student Council

- ◆ Student Council is a student service organization of our school. To become a member of this group, a student must be elected as a representative from his/her homeroom. Representatives are required to attend several meetings during activity period from 2:10-3:00 p.m. Homeroom representatives keep their homeroom informed of the topics of business discussed in the Student Council meetings, and they bring suggestions from their homerooms to the Student Council.
- ◆ Student Council officers are elected by the student body in a manner designed to extend awareness of the American political process. The main purposes of the Student Council are to promote pride in our school, conduct special activities and opportunities for social development and recreation, work with the administration and faculty to improve our school, and work toward appropriate physical improvement in our school.

Character Education

This state-mandated program instructs our students on the principles of honesty, tolerance, personal responsibility, respect for others, observance of laws and rules, courtesy, and dignity. The themes for each month are as follows:

- ◆ September – Caring/Friendship
- ◆ October – Courage
- ◆ November – Respect/Acceptance
- ◆ December – Citizenship
- ◆ January – Perseverance
- ◆ February – Honesty
- ◆ March – Self Discipline
- ◆ April – Resolving Conflict/Fairness
- ◆ May – Responsibility
- ◆ June – Cooperation/Safety

Animals on School Property

Although there is nothing like a furry friend to brighten our day, we ask that you please do not bring your pets into the school building. Due to allergies as well as unpredictable animal and student behavior, this could set us all up for an unfortunate situation that we wish to avoid. Please refer to Board Policy 8214 for complete policy

No dogs will be allowed within 100 ft of a school building or outside areas where children are located while school is in session between the hours of 7:00 am and 3:30 pm.

Animals for Educational Purposes. The Board of Education, in recognizing the educational uses of animals in the classroom, requires that permission be obtained from the building principal before animals are brought to the school or classrooms.

Allowable Animals with Prior Permission and for Educational Purposes Only: Birds, Reptiles and Amphibians, Chickens and Ducks, Guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, rabbits, Fish, Vaccinated Dogs, Cats, Ferrets and Farm Animals with proof of current vaccination, Law Enforcement Dogs.

Illegal Substances

- ◆ The school is committed to the prevention of alcohol and other substance use/abuse. No person may use, possess, sell or distribute alcohol or other substances, nor may they use or possess drug paraphernalia on school grounds or at school-sponsored events, except drugs as prescribed by a physician. The term “alcohol and/or substances” refers to the use of all substances including, but not limited to alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroine, steroids, look-alike drugs, and any of those substances commonly referred to as “designer drugs.” The inappropriate use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs is also forbidden.
- ◆ Additionally, the following persons are not permitted to enter the school grounds or school-sponsored events: any person who gives visible and/or physical indication that he/she has used or consumed alcohol or other substances, or any person who school personnel have reasonable grounds to suspect has used alcohol or other substances.
- ◆ Disciplinary measures for students found to have used or to be using, in possession of, selling, or distributing alcohol and/or other substances and for students possessing drug paraphernalia (on school grounds or while attending school-sponsored activities) are severe. The appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified whenever a violation occurs. The school will cooperate fully with the agency.

Weapons

- ◆ This section refers to the use or possession (in school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, on school buses) of a weapon, which constitutes a firearm or destructive device, a knife, or any object intended to be used as a weapon, which poses a danger to the safety and welfare of others.
- ◆ In accordance with applicable federal and state laws and school board policy, the punishment for possession of a weapon that constitutes a firearm or destructive device may be a suspension from instruction for not less than one calendar year, unless the superintendent modifies the punishment. The superintendent's determination will be made case-by-case.
- ◆ The term firearm includes any weapon, including a starter gun, which will be or is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer, or any destructive device. The term destructive device means any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any device similar to any of those devices already described in this paragraph – except that destructive device shall not mean any device not designed or redesigned for use as a weapon.

Discipline Code

Classroom disruption, foul or abusive language or gestures, vandalism, inappropriate cafeteria behavior will not be tolerated. For the first discipline offense the student will get a verbal reprimand and the parent will be contacted. For the second discipline offense the student will have privileges withdrawn, and there will be a parental meeting. For the third discipline offense the student will get referred to the principal, and immediate suspension will ensue for the remainder of the day.

- ◆ **Major Behavior Problems:**
 - ◆ Abusive and/or foul language toward any staff member
 - ◆ Threats towards a staff member
 - ◆ Violent displays of temper
 - ◆ Possession of any weapon
 - ◆ Noncompliant behavior
 - ◆ Physical violence towards anyone

- ◆ **Will result in:**
 - ◆ Immediate suspension for the remainder of the day.
 - ◆ Parent conference when the child returns to school.
 - ◆ Student is not excused from missed work.

***I HAVE READ THIS HANDBOOK POLICY AND WILL SUPPORT THE SCHOOL
IN AN EFFORT TO ASSIST IN EDUCATING MY CHILD.***

SIGNATURE OF PARENT

DATE