

Holmes Elementary School

*365 Dupont Avenue
Tonawanda, NY 14150
Phone: (716) 874-8423*

Mrs. Lisa H. Cross, Principal

2018-19 PARENT HANDBOOK

*---A quick reference guide
for your family!*



We Welcome You!

Our Holmes Visual Mission Statement:

We believe in . . .

- ❖ *Respect*
- ❖ *Empathy*
- ❖ *Teamwork*
- ❖ *High Expectations*
- ❖ *Life Long Learning*
- ❖ *Celebrating Success*

***OUR VISION: At Holmes Elementary School,
we foster lifelong learning through
academic excellence in an environment
where a partnership exists between
school, home, and community.***

It is my pleasure to welcome you to **Holmes Elementary School!** We are happy to have our students returning this fall and provide a special welcome to the new students joining our neighborhood. Our **Visual School Mission** which is on the cover of this Parent Handbook highlights the six key components of our educational program at Holmes: **Respect, High Expectations, Empathy, Teamwork, Life Long Learning, and Celebrating Success.**

We want your child to be happy and successful at Holmes Elementary School and believe that you play a key role. That role is to continually show interest in and support for your child. The child who knows that his or her family is interested in and supports the school program will almost always have fewer problems in school and will enjoy greater success.

We believe in fair and consistent discipline that encourages students to be responsible for themselves. Our character education program, *Second Step*, teaches our students about empathy, anger management, and problem solving throughout the year. At school, we strive to create a safe environment where courtesy and kindness prevail and where there is respect for differences in other people, customs, and cultures.

Please share with your child's teacher any information regarding his or her special needs that will help us better serve your family. We believe communication among parents, students, and teachers is critical in ensuring student success.

You will find information in this handbook that will be of assistance to you and act as an information and quick reference guide. It includes information about programs/services, school safety, transportation, health, and parent participation opportunities at Holmes Elementary. Again, welcome to our school and I look forward to working with you and your child!

Sincerely,

Lisa H. Cross
Principal

COMMUNICATIONS

School Phone: (716) 874-8423

Important Contacts:

Mrs. Lisa H. Cross, Principal

Mrs. Karen Kren, Lead Secretary
Mrs. Jennifer Szustakowski, Part-time Secretary

Mrs. Kristine Pieczonka, Social Worker
Mrs. Christine Metzger, School Psychologist

Mrs. Maryanne Aquino-Rife, Nurse
Mr. Tom Fitzgerald, Head Custodian

Mrs. Nora Ferdinand, Cafeteria Manager

Website:

<http://www.ktufsd.org>

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

All teachers employed in the district have met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction. There are no teachers working under emergency or other provisional status where the licensing criteria have been waived. Initial instruction to students is always provided by a teacher, not a paraprofessional. When paraprofessionals, teacher aides, work with students, they are following the lesson plans created by the teacher.

CURRICULUM

All curricula are aligned with the NYS Standards found at the State's Website at: www.nysed.gov

Art, Music & Physical Education: Students receive art, music and physical education instruction weekly in grades K-4.

Language Arts: Students receive 135-145 minutes of daily language arts instruction in reading, writing, listening and speaking in grades Pre-K - 4, utilizing *Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading* and Reader's and Writer's Workshop. Certified reading specialists assist in grade level planning and instruction.

Math: Students receive 60-70 minutes of daily math instruction in grades Pre-K - 4 utilizing the *Every-Day Math* Curriculum.

Social Studies: Students receive daily social studies instruction in grades Pre-K - 4.

Science: Students receive daily Science instruction in grades Pre-K - 4 utilizing the hands-on *Scott Foresman* Curriculum.

PROGRAMS

Author Visits: Every two years Holmes Elementary invites a children's author into school for Author Visit week.

Character Education - Second Step: The Ken-Ton school district adopted the *Second Step* program to increase student self-awareness and provide conflict resolution strategies for students. Instruction occurs on a weekly basis in Grades K-4.

Chorus: Students in grades 4 participate in weekly chorus instruction and perform at least twice a year.

Technology K-4: Students have access to iPads daily for learning.

Field Trips: Grades K-4 attend a variety of field trips that are aligned to their grade level curriculum. Parents are encouraged to attend.

Gifted and Talented: A gifted and talented teacher provides advanced instruction for identified students on a weekly basis.

Instrumental: Students in grades 3 begin the instrumental program with recorder class. Students in grades 4 are invited to participate in our instrumental program and perform at least twice a year.

Service Clubs: Students in grades 4 are invited to participate in volunteer service clubs. They participate in community service activities at least twice a month after school.

Mentor Program: Praxair has many volunteer employees that participate in our mentoring program. Up to 40 students participate per year, based on teacher, counselor and parent recommendation.

Musical: Our music program includes various musical performances at each grade level for parents to attend.

Praxair Scientist Program: Praxair scientists present grade level science lessons to our students K-4 in collaboration with our classroom teachers.

Read to Succeed! Students and teachers participate in our school wide reading campaign to read 25 books independently throughout the year.

SERVICES

Academic Intervention Services: Children in need of academic intervention will be evaluated and provided service in reading or math based on need.

ENL: English as a New Language program for students whose native language is not English. Students are tested before qualifying for services.

Instructional Support Team: A team of professionals across the academic disciplines meets weekly to discuss and provide instructional support for teachers and students.

Special Education Services: Special education services are provided to students according to New York State Law and recommendations by the Committee on Special Education. Services include: resource room, small class size, speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, visual therapy, as well as others based on need.

Speech/Language Therapy: Children with moderate to severe speech and/or language development problems receive services on a regular basis. To receive services, students are identified as speech impaired through a recommendation by the Committee on Special Education. The Speech/Language Pathologist screens all kindergarteners before December 1st each year. Third grade students receive a speech screening in September. Parents are notified of screening results only if the child requires these services. Parents can reach the Speech/Language Pathologist by calling the school office.

SCHOOL SAFETY

1) **Arrival/Dismissal:** School hours are:

Grades K-4: 9:15 a.m. until 3:20 p.m.

Pre-K: 8:15 a.m. until 10:45 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. until 2:30 p.m.

Breakfast: 8:45 a.m. until 9:05 a.m.

Late Bell: 9:15 a.m.

2) **Picking Up Your Child:** For child safety reasons, pick-ups during the school day will be from the Main Office ONLY. No child will be dismissed by anyone at the classroom door. At the end of the school day, parents must pick up children in the main hallway.

3) **Child Safe Program:** Holmes Elementary School uses a Child Safe Program for reporting absences. Please call **874-8423 – Press #1 for Attendance** to report your child's absence between the hours of 3:30 p.m. and 9:00 a.m.

When calling **874-8423**, you will hear a taped message asking you to leave the following information:

- ❖ The child's name and the name of the person calling.
- ❖ The child's room number and teacher's name.
- ❖ The reason for the absence.
- ❖ The estimated length of the absence.

If we do not receive a call from you, we will call you. It is important that you provide us with a working telephone number where you can be reached. Please be sure the office always has your current telephone numbers and all necessary information to reach you.

4) **Late Bus:** On Wednesdays, students who need academic remediation or students who participate in the Praxair Mentor Program can board a 4:20 p.m. bus.

5) **Building Security:** Main entrance access is operated by an electronic locking intercom system where all parents and visitors must report to the main office. A visitor's pass will be issued for security measures and our staff is trained to approach anyone who does not have a pass or district employee badge in order to ask if they can be of any assistance. We ask that students are not picked up in classrooms. The Main Office or Nurse's Office ONLY are used to release students.

6) **Release Information:** It is a parental responsibility to come to school to pick up your child if he/she is ill. If you do not own a car, you need to make arrangements NOW with a friend or family member who does have a car. Please do not wait until you are called to try to find someone. Perhaps you could put money aside for a taxi if all else fails.

7) **Student Pick-Up:** When you amend the Pick-Up Plan enclosed in your parent packet, please consider carefully the name (or names) that you put down as a parent substitute. That person needs to be able to pick your child up from school in case of an emergency, illness, or injury. The State requires that we have this information on file so you must write a name down.

8) **Written Notes:** In the following situations, we are in need of documentation from you by a parent note:

- ❖ When your child returns to school from an absence.
- ❖ Early release/dismissal of your child.
- ❖ Permission to participate in field trips or school activities or when religious instruction takes place.
- ❖ Going home for lunch.

9) **School Emergencies:** School closings during the day are authorized by the Superintendent. Notification is made through TV, radio broadcast, and the Holmes HSA phone committee. Make sure your child knows where to go when you are not at home. Keep Emergency information up to date. We have a partnership with Praxair for our School Evacuation Plan, as well.

SCHOOL CONDUCT

Our Board of Education has adopted a School Code of Conduct which is outlined by SAVE Legislation under the State of New York whereby:

WE BELIEVE IN . . .

- ❖ A safe and orderly school environment.
- ❖ An environment where students can learn without interruption or disruption.

RULES WE LIVE BY:

- ❖ Respect others.
- ❖ Follow directions given by teachers and staff.

According to legislation and our Board adopted policies, some examples of disciplinary matters include, but are not limited to the following items:

- ❖ **Disorderly conduct**—running, screaming, vulgar language/gestures, trespassing/loitering.
- ❖ **Insubordination**—disrespect, failure to comply with reasonable requests, truancy.
- ❖ **Disruptive behavior**—any act which disrupts the educational process or prevents a staff member from carrying out their duties.
- ❖ **Violence**—committing/threatening any violent act or harm against self or others.
- ❖ **Endangering others**—lying, stealing, generating rumors, harassment, discrimination, bullying, abusive language, drug/weapon use, possession, or distribution, false alarms.
- ❖ **Academic infractions**—cheating, plagiarism, tampering with records/computer use.

****All disciplinary incidents apply to the bus, Cafeteria, any on-school-property area, and during arrival to or dismissal from school.**

DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS

The following options will be applied in a firm, but fair manner according to the severity of each infraction:

Oral warnings, written warnings, parent notifications/conferences, detention, suspension from school, transportation, school events, sports, and activities, suspension of privileges, removal, restitution of damaged or stolen goods or property, legal action through district hearing, Family Court, or law enforcement agencies.

HEALTH OFFICE, ATTENDANCE AND NUTRITION

IMMUNIZATIONS:

- ❖ Before any child enters pre-kindergarten or kindergarten, all of his or her immunizations must be brought up to date—and documented/signed off by your physician. Our school nurse will notify you if more information is needed.

ALLERGIES/HEALTH PROBLEMS:

- ❖ Please inform us of any allergies or medical problems/issues that your child might have.
- ❖ During the school year, a vision test, hearing test, and doctor's physical will be provided. You may wish to have your own physician complete these required examinations. If so, it will be necessary to have a school medical form completed and returned to the school nurse.
- ❖ Should your child receive an injury at school, the nurse will render any necessary first aid. You will be notified if the nurse feels that there is a possibility that a physician's services should be sought.
- ❖ If your child needs to go home due to an illness, you will be notified. It will be up to parents to ensure that your child gets home. It is important that you have an Emergency Contact Adult written on your child's Student Profile Information Sheet, so if you are not available to pick your child up from school, we can proceed to call that person.

MEDICATION

- ❖ **NO MEDICINE WILL BE GIVEN IN SCHOOL UNLESS WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION IS FIRST GIVEN BY A FAMILY PHYSICIAN. MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE HEALTH OFFICE BY THE PARENT WITH WRITTEN PERMISSION FOR THE NURSE TO ADMINISTER THE MEDICATION.**
- ❖ **Any medication brought to school without following these guidelines will not be administered by the school and are deemed to be inappropriate for your child to have in school.**

NUTRITION

**“Children can't function if they haven't eaten.”
--Julia Childs, Master Chef, 1988**

- ❖ A nutritious breakfast and lunch is available for your child;
- ❖ Students may choose to bring their lunches to school, and milk is available

ATTENDANCE/ILLNESS

At Holmes, we feel that regular attendance is necessary for your child to achieve success at school. Therefore, we routinely review each student's attendance record. We encourage your child to have perfect attendance or at least less than (5) five absences during the school year. Periodically, you will hear about our attendance incentive programs. When it is necessary for your child to be absent, a written excuse must be sent to school within (3) three days in order for the absence to be logged in as "legal".

We encourage you to send your child to school on time every day. However, in order to prevent illness from spreading to other children, it may be necessary to keep your child home if he or she is ill.

****WE RECOMMEND KEEPING YOUR CHILD AT HOME IF HE OR SHE HAS ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS:**

- ❖ Temperature of 100 F or higher.
- ❖ Stiff neck.
- ❖ Swollen glands.
- ❖ Sore throat.
- ❖ Rash on skin.
- ❖ Earache or ear drainage.
- ❖ Inflammation of eyes or crusting eye lids.
- ❖ Nausea or vomiting.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

- 1) **Homework:** Each teacher will outline the homework policy for your child. Please understand that homework promotes learning outside of school as it relates to in-school progress.
- 2) **Cafeteria:** Children are required to stay in their seats, talk quietly, and use good table manners.
- 3) **Telephone:** The Principal grants permission to use the phone. Messages from home will be given to the office staff so your child receives them.
- 4) **Library Books:** Remind your children to return books no later than their due dates.
- 5) **Money:** Money should not be issued to students other than lunch money. When money is needed for special occasions, it should be sent in a labeled, sealed envelope with the student's name on it and what it is for.
- 6) **Dress Code:** Students are to remove hats and hoods when entering the building. Respectful and appropriate attire is required at all times.
- 7) **Cell Phones:** Cell phone use is prohibited. If a child brings a cell phone to school, it must be cleared by the administration. All cell phones that have not been cleared will be sent to the office and parents will be notified to pick them up.
- 8) **Birthday Parties:** Please simply contact your child's teacher ahead of time for guidelines.
Birthday Party Invitations: If you send invitations to school, it is our school policy that either you choose to invite all the boys, all the girls, or the entire class. Otherwise it is required that invitations are delivered outside of school. Thank you for your cooperation.
- 10) **Classroom Parties:** The teacher or Homeroom Parent will contact you.
- 11) **Interim Reports:** These communications are mailed to parents at the teacher's discretion.
- 12) **Parent Conferences:** Scheduled conferences are held twice each year. Teachers are always available to conference with you. Please call for an appointment.
- 13) **Open House:** This year's Open House will take place on Wednesday, September 19, 2018 and will follow the schedule outlined below:

Pre-K and K – 6:00 p.m.

Grades 1 & 2 – 6:30 p.m.

Grades 3 & 4 – 7:00 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION

The purpose of the transportation program is to provide safe, efficient, transportation to all of our students.

Please be sure to provide Holmes Elementary with any address change that may occur so we can make appropriate changes to your child's transportation.

GRADES K-1

A parent or designated adult according to your Transportation Form **MUST** be present at the bus stop to receive your child. You **MUST** indicate **in writing**:

- ❖ The name(s) of the adult(s) who will receive your child at the bus stop, if it will be someone other than you.
- ❖ Students are only allowed to ride the school bus that they are assigned to for the school year. There are no exceptions.
- ❖ Every child is required to stay seated, obey the driver, and talk quietly.

Disciplinary action for bus misconduct can be applied by the school's administrators, including a suspension from the bus.

BUS SAFETY

- ❖ Stay back from the road while waiting for the bus.
- ❖ Wait for the bus to stop and the red lights to flash before approaching the bus to board.
- ❖ If your child must cross the road, he/she must cross in front of the stopped bus and maintain eye contact with the driver at all times.
- ❖ Wait to cross until the bus driver signals.
- ❖ Stay seated while the bus is in motion.

PARENT PARTICIPATION/PARTNERSHIPS

Home School Association: The Home School Association is the Holmes Elementary parent group that meets monthly to plan and support the educational program. We invite you to become an active member in our HSA. Information on meetings will be forthcoming this year.

Praxair Partnership: Holmes Elementary has had an award winning partnership with PRAXAIR INC. for over 20 years. Activities include: mentoring program for over 40 children, on-site scientists who provide instruction for students, and community sponsorship of events such as the Holmes Elementary Playground – PLAY TOWN.

School Planning Team: The School Planning Team is a partnership among school and community and meets monthly. The team works toward setting and implementing goals in order to increase student achievement. You also have a standing invitation to attend any of our School Planning Team meetings.

Other Opportunities: In order to become highly involved and to make a home/school connection, many school-wide activities are available to parents. Some examples include . . .

Open House
All-School Play
Parent Conferences
Family Fun Nights
Music Concerts
Arts Rock Festival
Field Trips
Book Fairs
Holiday Celebrations

Carefully read over the Holmes Elementary School calendar to keep up to date with all of the wonderful opportunities that our school has to offer.