



# NORTH RIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Parent Handbook 2008-09

Mis

"It's a Very Fine Place"

<b><u>School Policies and Procedures</u></b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Late Arrivals/Early Pick Ups</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Absences</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Parking Lot Safety</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>Building Security</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Bus Information</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Class Trips</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Discipline Policy</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>Lunch/Recreation Program</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>Emergency Contact and Early Dismissal Information</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>Health Office/Student Medicals</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Medication for Students at School</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Request for Information from Staff to Physician</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>School Closings</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Inclement Weather Conditions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>North Ridge Civility Plan</b>	<b>7-8</b>
<b>Visitor's Procedures</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Student Drop-Off Procedure</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Classroom Routines</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Extra Help</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Holiday Observances</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Homework</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Lost and Found</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Snacks</b>	<b>11</b>

**Academic Programs**

<b>Classroom Curriculum</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>Special Area Routines:</b>	
<b>Art</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Computer</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Science Lab</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Instructional Support Team Services</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Extended Educational Support Services</b>	<b>13-14</b>
<b><u>General Information</u></b>	
<b>After-School Clubs</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Arts-In-Education</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Birthday Celebrations</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Class Parents</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>Parent/Teacher Communication</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>American Education Week</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PIR (Partners In Reading Program)</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PTA</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>North Ridge Site-Based Management Team</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Scouting</b>	<b>17-18</b>
<b>School Store</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Separation Adjustment</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Standardized Testing</b>	<b>18-19</b>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Weather Alert</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>Web Email Notification</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Website</b>	<b>20</b>

Dear Students and Parents,

A committee of parents, staff and administrators at the North Ridge Primary School initially developed this handbook. It has since been updated to reflect some of the new programs and procedures implemented at North Ridge.

Its purpose is to briefly outline routines and procedures that guide North Ridge in its daily operation.

Please refer to this handbook as your primary reference. Most topics have been listed alphabetically.

It is our hope that you find this handbook to be the helpful guide it was intended to be. We welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,  
North Ridge Staff

## MISSION STATEMENT

**To maintain the excitement and natural enthusiasm for learning that all children initially bring to school! To foster the development of a caring, considerate, compassionate school climate where every child can flourish.**

# SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## ARRIVAL

Welcome! School doors will open at 9:25 a.m. All students should arrive on time each day in order to benefit from our enriched academic program. Any child brought to school earlier must be supervised in our cafeteria by the parent/guardian as there are no staff members available for early morning supervision.

## ABSENCES, LATE ARRIVALS & EARLY DEPARTURES

When your child is absent, please telephone the Health Office at 912-2196. Give your child's name, teacher's name, date and reason for absence. Upon your child's return to school, a note must be sent to the classroom teacher.

The instructional day begins at 9:30 a.m. and ends at 3:45 p.m. Late arrivals and early departures compromise your child's instructional time and consequently disrupt the instructional time for all children in the class. Late arrivals and early departures should be reserved for unavoidable and emergency situations only. Students arriving past

9:30 a.m. must be signed in at the Reception Desk and escorted to the Health Office. A late note will be submitted to the Health Office at this time. Any requests for work to be sent home or picked up at the end of the day, should be made no later than 11:00 a.m.

Please be aware that **students who are absent from school, are not permitted to attend after-school or evening activities, nor are they to be brought to school for a particular event, such as a holiday feast, in-school concert, or field trip**, if they are too ill to remain in attendance for the entire day. Absences of more than four days, due to illness, may require a physician's note.

**Absences, late arrivals (past 9:30 a.m.) or early departures (prior to 3:25 p.m.) other than those due to illness, death in the family, religious observances, impassable roads or severe weather, quarantine, required court appearance, or attendance at a health clinic are considered illegal. After three illegal absences within a ten week period, parents will receive written notification from the Principal.**

## PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please help us keep our children safe. Children who are driven to school should be dropped off at the designated area in the presence of assigned staff no earlier than 9:25a.m. Once the walker door locks, at the start of the school day, children must be signed in as indicated above. **NO** cars are permitted in the bus lane in the front of the school during arrival and dismissal. **Please obey the No Parking and Handicapped signs.** You will note that a parking lot has been created adjacent to the portables. This parking lot is designated for staff use to allow for additional visitor parking in the main parking lot. We ask for your assistance as we continue to address our parking needs.

## BUILDING SECURITY

During school hours, all visitors or parents who arrive at North Ridge must enter the building through the main entrance. The Reception Aide will greet all visitors. Visitors must sign in and may be asked to show identification. The Reception Aide will then direct visitors to the proper location within the building. Prior to exiting the building, visitors must return their visitors pass to the Reception Aide. Before or after school, the doorbell rings in the Main Office. A TV monitor allows us to screen those who wish to enter the building. Please note that once the secretaries leave the office, there is no one to answer the bell.

After school hours, it is essential that organizations make arrangements for an adult to monitor the front door when they anticipate parents will be arriving to visit their child's program, or to pick up their children at the program's conclusion. **It is not the responsibility of the school custodians to monitor the front doors for this purpose.** In the evening, a custodian will be able to unlock the doors when the first member of the organization arrives at the time indicated on the Use-of-Building form. After that, the school doors will remain locked. The organization bears the responsibility of monitoring the doors.



## BUS INFORMATION

All K-2 children, with few exceptions, in the Commack School District, receive bus transportation in accordance with District Policy. This policy was determined by a community referendum.

If you have questions regarding transportation, you may contact the PTA Transportation Representative, or you may call our Transportation Office at 912-2020.

All students must ride their designated buses unless a written note is brought to school. If there is a need for your child to ride a different bus, or is to be picked up at school, a written note must be sent, and will be approved at the Principal's discretion. Requests should be reserved for emergency situations only. Playdates do not qualify as reasons for such a request. Parents of students who receive bus transportation need to sign their children out at the Walker Line if they are not taking the bus home. A child who is not entitled to busing may not ride the bus to or from school.

If a stop is missed, or there is no one present to meet your child, instruct your child to remain on the bus. The driver will either take the child home at the end of the route if an authorized adult is present, or return the child to the school. Assure your child that he/she will arrive home safely.

## BUS RULES

1. Be at the bus stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. Watch the bus driver for the signal to cross in front of the bus.
3. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
4. Keep aisle clear.
5. Listen to the bus driver.

6. Respect the driver and other children riding the bus.

Safety belts are available for your child's use. It is the parents' responsibility to instruct the children as to the proper use of seat belts. **Only school personnel and students are permitted to board the bus.**

For additional Bus Rules and Information, refer to the District Transportation Handbook.

## SCHOOL BUS MISCONDUCT

Minor misbehaviors may be handled collaboratively by the bus driver, student and parent when appropriate. If the Principal becomes involved, the child may receive a warning. A second meeting with the Principal will result in a phone call to the parent/guardian, followed by a formal written notice. Severe and repetitive occurrences of misconduct may result in a suspension of bus privileges for a period of time to be determined by the Principal, Director of Transportation, Superintendent of Schools, or his designee.

## CLASS TRIPS

Field trips are an enjoyable enhancement to our educational program. Follow-up activities conducted in the classroom are for the educational benefit of all students. **Therefore, please note that students, whose parents chaperone, are expected to remain in school for the remainder of the day following a field trip.** Only designated parent chaperones are to attend class trips. Parents are urged to refrain from meeting their children at a trip destination. Class parents and teachers will try to accommodate as many parents as possible who wish to accompany classes on field trips during the year. Prior to the scheduled trip, chaperones will receive a copy of the responsibilities guide established by our Site-Based Management Team. In some instances, parent chaperones may be expected to pay for admission to the event. Depending upon the nature of the trip, children may be encouraged to wear their North Ridge T-shirts, or school colors, for security purposes.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

The District has recently adopted a Code of Conduct for students and parents, as well as for all visitors to our school building. Copies of this code will be made upon request. You may also read the Code of Conduct by accessing the School District's website <http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/do/conduct.htm>. At North Ridge, the code is adapted to meet the needs of primary students. Disciplinary issues are usually handled by the classroom teacher. When necessary, the Principal intervenes. There is a program of progressive disciplinary action.

It is our policy that even young children should be held accountable for their own actions. We involve and inform parents when children demonstrate inappropriate behavior.

These are the appropriate behaviors that are expected on the primary level:

### BUILDING RULES

1. Walk in the building.
2. Talk quietly.
3. Respect classes in session.
4. Handle school property with care.

5. Respect the property of others.
6. Respect other children and adults.

## UNACCEPTABLE PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR

1. Fighting.
2. Running in the halls.
3. Use of obscenities, written or spoken.
4. Destruction of personal and school property.
5. Continuous disruptive behavior.
6. Stealing.

When disciplinary action is necessary, any of the following procedures may be implemented:

1. Teacher and child will resolve issue.
2. Parents and teachers may meet to discuss the situation.
3. Child may be restricted from participation in school activities.
4. Principal intervenes.
5. Child may be suspended from school for a period of time.

Parental input and support are essential and invaluable to the successful resolution of any disciplinary problems

## LUNCH INFORMATION



Children have the opportunity to eat a well-balanced and delicious hot/cold lunch at school. They are also welcome to bring a cold lunch from home. Our District participates in government-funded programs and provides free or reduced priced food services to qualifying students. A monthly menu is sent home providing prices and nutritional information. It is suggested that you consider paying for your child's lunches, twenty at a time, by purchasing a prepaid lunch ticket, in order to avoid the tears that come with lost nickels and dimes. Please make checks payable to "Commack UFSD #10," and clearly label the envelope "Cafeteria."

If a child charges or the pre-paid card runs out, the cafeteria staff will give the child a written reminder. Children are expected to repay the lunch money the next day. Parents are encouraged to keep cafeteria payments current.

Please review your child's cafeteria selections each morning. This will reduce anxiety and eliminate confusion.

## LUNCH/RECREATION PROGRAM

North Ridge Lunch/Recreation Program is designed to provide our students with an opportunity for socialization and physical activity.

When choosing footwear for your child, please keep in mind that on most days, children will be active at recreation. Sneakers are the most appropriate choice. Children will have outdoor recreation throughout the winter, weather permitting. Please dress them accordingly.

### Playground Rules

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Stay in assigned area. If you need to leave, speak to an adult.
- C. Always be respectful to other children and adults.
- D. Use playground and equipment safely.
- E. Avoid muddy areas.

Recess time is a privilege. Infractions of these safety rules will result in time out. Serious violations will be handled by the Principal.

### Rules for Cafeteria

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Raise your hand to seek permission to leave your seat or leave the cafeteria.
- C. Always be respectful to other children and adults.
- D. When waiting in line to be served, keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
- E. Follow proper eating behaviors.
- F. Be responsible for cleaning your own space.

### Hallway Rules

- A. Follow directions of the adult in charge the first time they are given.
- B. Walk quietly in the halls especially when classes are in session.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT AND EARLY DISMISSAL CARDS

At the beginning of each term, Emergency Contact Sheets and Early Dismissal Cards are sent home. It is important that these cards/sheets be filled out and returned speedily, and kept up to date. Please notify the school nurse and the teacher of any changes to this information as soon as possible to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. Cell phone numbers, in particular, must be updated whenever changes are made.

## HEALTH OFFICE/STUDENT MEDICALS



The school nurse is on duty during school hours. Vision and hearing screening are given annually to all students.

The New York State Department of Education requires that all Kindergarten and Second Grade students, as well as any new entrants, have a physical examination. Physicals should be no earlier than September 4<sup>th</sup> of the preceding school year. Physical examinations will be administered by the district physician unless the child submits a medical report from his/her own physician prior to October 1<sup>st</sup>.

All students must have appropriate up-to-date immunization records, according to New York State Health Regulations, on file in the school Health Office prior to the start of the school year.

## MEDICATION FOR STUDENTS AT SCHOOL

No medication, prescription or over the-counter (including cough drops, eye drops, skin lotions or sunscreen) may be used or dispensed at school without the following:

1. Written directions from the doctor including the name and dosage of medication, the time to be administered and the reason for the medication's administration.
2. Written request from the parent/guardian.
3. Containment of medication in a properly labeled bottle from a pharmacy.

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM STAFF TO PHYSICIAN(S)

North Ridge staff will accommodate requests by parents to complete checklists for physicians. Please provide the staff with several days to complete the lists. We will mail the original to the physician and provide the parents with a courtesy copy upon request.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Commack School Calendar and the Principal's Newsletter list radio and TV stations that have agreed to announce school closings and delayed openings. Parents may also check on the Commack Web-Site for school closings. Additionally, recorded messaging by a District office representative or the Principal has been added as a means of communication regarding school closings, delayed openings or the rescheduling of events. Again, please be sure that your telephone numbers are current and accessible to us.

As a courtesy service, PTA Class Parents have set up an emergency contact procedure to notify parents in the event of school closings and delayed openings. Class Parents need to be informed of work numbers, cell phone numbers, or changes of any phone numbers to perform this service. Courtesy calls for school closings or delayed openings may be made as early as 5:30 a.m. If you do not wish to receive calls that may come this early, you should, in written format, notify both the school Principal and Class Parent.

A delayed school opening may be used on inclement weather days when it appears that the school can open safely at a later time.

## UNEXPECTED LATE DEPARTURES FROM SCHOOL DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER CONDITIONS

From time to time snow or heavy storms may cause afternoon buses to arrive late to North Ridge resulting in a later than usual departure. When those situations occur, due to the volume of incoming calls by concerned parents, and our need to stay in close contact with our Transportation Department, we are unable to call home to report these unfortunate delays. Parents should expect that on days when weather conditions are extreme, buses will arrive home late.

## NORTH RIDGE CIVILITY PLAN

The North Ridge Civility Plan, established by our School-Based Management Team, follows the guidelines set forth by the Commack School District's Code of Conduct. To read the Code of Conduct in its entirety please view the following link: <http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/do/conduct.htm>

It is the belief of this Committee that our plan supports and reaffirms the positive climate that is fostered at North Ridge as well as throughout the Commack Community. In an effort to provide guidelines both to our visitors and to our staff, the School-Based Management Team has endorsed a Civility Plan clearly outlined on our website at the following link: <http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/NR/sbmt/civilityPlan.htm>.

At North Ridge, we believe that it is our role to create an environment where people exhibit behaviors that foster sound educational practices, allow people to grow socially and academically, and encourage healthy dialogue, in respectful ways, by presenting ourselves as positive role models. We foster positive communication and exhibit respect for one another.

North Ridge warmly invites our families, community members and guests into our learning environment, where myriad activities and events occur throughout the year. Every person who enters the North Ridge facility should expect, and is entitled to experience, a safe, welcoming and non-threatening environment.

## VISITOR'S PROCEDURE

Parents and others are encouraged to visit the school throughout the year. Everyone must report to the Reception Aide upon entering the building to sign in.

It is essential that your children not be interrupted once the instructional school day has begun. If parents or any other visitors need to speak to a child or a teacher, they must make arrangements with the secretary in the Main Office.

Visitors should park their cars in designated parking spots. At no time should cars be parked on the sidewalk, in the circle, or the Fire Zone. **Please obey the No Parking and Handicapped signs.** No cars are permitted to enter or leave the circle when the buses are parked. No cars can park in the driveway in front of the school. This area is reserved for buses and emergency vehicles only.

**Please be considerate of our neighbors. When attending school functions, be sure to park considerately along the curb and not block driveways or compromise roadways. Be sure to observe the "No Parking" signs posted on Townline Rd. facing our building.**

## STUDENT DROP-OFF PROCEDURES/PARKING LOT

### SAFETY

The safety of our children is our primary concern and, to that end, we have made great strides to improve our drop-off procedures.

If you are dropping your child off at the designated arrival time, we ask that you do so quickly and without blocking the driveway, or the adjacent street. The crosswalk area must be kept clear of cars, at all times, to ensure safe crossing for all of our walkers.

## CLASSROOM ROUTINES

Upon arrival at school, children go straight to their classrooms. Once inside the classroom, the teacher takes attendance, the lunch count, and collects absence notes, bus notes and other correspondence. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited and a patriotic song is sung as a school community. When all necessary "housekeeping chores" are completed, the instructional day begins.

At Open House, which is early in the year, specific routines unique to each classroom are discussed. Also, at Open House, teachers will inform parents of curriculum and grade-level expectations. Each teacher will present his/her goals for the year and let you know how you can become involved in your child's education.

## CONFERENCES

**Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled at the end of the first and third marking periods. Fall and spring conferences are offered during the day and on one evening. Students are dismissed for the half-day and full-day conferences. Please refer to the District Calendar for specific dates. These formal conferences are scheduled at twenty-minute intervals. If additional time is needed, please advise the teacher prior to the conference. Appointments will be scheduled by the individual teachers. Please note that evening conferences are reserved for working parents.**

Informal conferences between parent and teacher may be scheduled at any mutually convenient time.

A parent/guardian who wishes to communicate with the classroom teacher is asked to send a note to school, e-mail the teacher or phone the Main Office (912-2190).

We request that you do not bypass these procedures in order to see a teacher. Please make an appointment or call.

## EXTRA HELP

Commack School District has established an “Extra Help” period at the elementary level. Teachers will select students for the “Extra Help” and notify parents, in writing, prior to the actual meeting period.

If your child is scheduled for a before-school period, you must sign your child in at the Reception Desk at the beginning of the period. Teachers will meet all students in the Cafeteria or request that they report to their classrooms. If your child is scheduled for an after-school session, you must sign your child out at the Main Office at the conclusion of the “Extra Help” session.

## HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES

Holiday observances at North Ridge reflect the multi-cultural world in which we live, as well as the varied cultural and religious make up of our school. Students need to be aware of various holidays observed by their classmates in order to develop an appreciation of unifying themes, as well as an understanding and respect for others.

At the primary level, activities may include selections from children’s literature, weekly news publications, games, art and music activities, food tasting and appropriate research. Children are encouraged to share their favorite holiday traditions with their classmates. Parents are welcome to contact their child’s teacher to make arrangements for a classroom visit to share special holiday activities. Needless to say, the religious nature of these holidays is not appropriate for sharing with students at this age in the school setting. The religious component is best developed at home. The school focuses on the secular nature of the holidays. For example, a class may share the holidays by baking cookies for Christmas and making potato latkes for Hanukkah, having Chinese food in celebration of the Chinese New Year and enjoying fruit for Kwanzaa.

## HOMEWORK

At the primary level, homework should generally be completed within a fifteen to thirty-minute time period, depending upon the child's particular grade level. In addition, parents are urged to read with and to children each day. Each teacher has a personal homework policy that is addressed at the Open House. Homework enhances children's learning. It may be used to reinforce or supplement class work. Parents/Guardians should affirm the importance of homework by providing a special time and place at home for completing homework assignments.

When a child is absent for more than one consecutive day, due to illness, homework assignments may be obtained after 24 hours by requesting that work be available for pick up at the Main Office, or it may be sent home with another child. Please provide the teacher with adequate time for preparation by making this request as early in the day as possible.

When a child is absent due to a family vacation, all missed assignments and class work can be completed in a reasonable and timely manner. While away, please read to your child daily and review recent math concepts. You may also wish to have your child keep a journal of the trip. Homework assignments may not be given in advance of a child's absence.

## LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found items are kept in the Health Office next to the Main Office. Parents and students are encouraged to check these items frequently. To ensure that your child's belongings never reach this room, please label all personal items including lunch boxes and backpacks.

## SNACKS

Each class has a brief snack period each day. Should they be deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher, whole-class snacks are to be brought to the Main Office. Please be sure that they are labeled with the teacher's name and room number. A staff member will deliver snack to the designated classroom. In support of our District's newly adopted Wellness Policy the following guidelines are provided. Nutritious snacks are **strongly encouraged**, ex: fruit, vegetables, pretzels, raisins, trail mix, water, crackers. To ease confusion, snacks should be packaged separately from lunch. Children who purchase lunch at school still need to bring in a snack from home on a daily basis.

## BACKPACKS/UMBRELLAS

Traditional backpacks are used by most students to aid them in carrying their supplies to and from school each day. At the primary level, backpacks on wheels are not appropriate and are not permitted as they are cumbersome and have the potential to cause accidents. Umbrellas, as well, pose a safety risk for primary students. Therefore, we ask that you not send your child to school with an umbrella.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

### CLASSROOM CURRICULUM

The curriculum implemented at North Ridge is aligned with the New York State mandates and Learning Standards. Curriculum guides for each grade are distributed at Open House. The philosophical underpinnings of our academic program hold that learning takes place best when facts are presented in meaningful context.

Thematic units using a hands-on approach, integrate Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, Art and Music, so that our children understand the intricate connections that form the world around them.

The Balanced Literacy philosophy facilitates this approach by teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing together. All skills from phonics to critical thinking, from receptive to expressive language, and from temporary to conventional spelling, are incorporated into this model.

### CLASS STRUCTURE

At North Ridge we wholeheartedly support the practice of heterogeneous grouping. Children of varying levels of cognitive ability are placed in each class. As part of our successful general educational program, North Ridge supports our District's commitment to the Special Class Integrated model. This model promotes an environment of collaboration, enhanced learning and high expectations for all students. The classroom teacher, a half-time learning specialist and a full-time teacher assistant comprise the instructional team that will provide an exciting instructional program that will meet the individual needs of all students. Designated and non designated students comprise the integrated classroom population in this educational setting.

### ENRICHMENT

The Challenge and Discovery Program begins officially at the Third Grade level. Three to five percent of the students in the district are accepted into this program at that level. Qualification is three-pronged, based upon standardized test scores as well as information contained in a teacher questionnaire.

### SPECIAL AREA CLASSES

#### ART



Weekly instruction is provided by the Art Teacher who will guide children as they explore and use art materials throughout the year. The work of every child is often displayed throughout the school, during our Spring Art Exhibit, the Festival of the Arts Program, and at outside exhibits held at local libraries and state office buildings.



## COMPUTER

Computer skills are taught while children use educational software that is integrated with the curriculum. Specific instruction is provided at each grade level so that our students can competently reach prescribed technology. Each classroom has several computers that are networked and are utilized with close teacher supervision and design to supplement our curriculum.



## LIBRARY/MEDIA PROGRAM

The District provides weekly library instruction that supports our curricular study and provides our students with basic research and reference skills and provides opportunity to introduce students to the various services available to them. With assistance, our students are given the opportunity to select appropriate books. Children are provided an opportunity to work on projects and reports throughout the school year in the Library.

North Ridge students are responsible for the care and safe return of all library materials. Payment is expected for lost or damaged materials. Children are encouraged to borrow and return books frequently and may do so during their assigned circulation time. Please note that as per District policy, report cards will be held by the school until all outstanding books and/or fines are received.

## MUSIC



As in all other facets of our Special Area program, Music instruction at North Ridge is aligned with the New York State Learning Standards, and supports our curricular study.

In addition to classroom music, children participate in musical activities such as class plays, Town Meetings and sing-alongs under the direction of the music teacher.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Physical Education curriculum is designed to demonstrate a comprehensive, progressive, interdisciplinary Physical Education program. It consists of the following; small equipment (bean bags, scoops, scooters, etc.), tumbling, gymnastics, dance, and organized games such as T-ball, and soccer.

Children are provided with two periods of physical education each week. Appropriate attire, loose-fitting clothing, i.e., sweatshirts, sweatpants – is suggested for safety reasons. Dresses would not be advisable on gym days. Sneakers are required, and jewelry should not be worn during the physical education class. Each year, our Second Graders participate in our Second Grade Sports Night, usually held in March at Burr Intermediate School.



## SCIENCE LAB

Children will attend the Science Lab once each week. The children have the opportunity to perform hands-on experiments which supplement the Science curriculum. Science instruction continues in the classroom as well and is equally supported by the Great Body Shop program. Each spring, North Ridge presents its annual Science Fair at which classes at each level exhibit a Science experiment. Each experiment is conducted using the scientific method.

## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM/SUPPORT SERVICES

The Instructional Support Team, (IST), formerly known as the Child Study Team consists of the Principal, Psychologist, Special Education Teacher, Reading Teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Classroom Teacher and School Nurse (when appropriate).

The Team meets on a regular basis to discuss ways to meet the needs of children who require individualized, psychological, social, physical, behavioral or academic programs.

In addition to the Team members, the teacher of English as a Second Language (ESL) is available to meet the long or short-term needs of designated students.

If the Instructional Support Team believes that evaluation is warranted, parents will be notified. Written permission is required for psychological, speech/language or a full-scale evaluation. The District Committee on Special Education (CSE) may recommend additional services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or may recommend psychiatric or neurological evaluations. The purpose of testing is to assess progress or diagnose a problem and recommend services if needed. Test results may be used to develop a behavior plan or an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for the child. If no handicapping condition is suspected, individual Instructional Support Team members may, with parental permission, administer informal tests to assess strengths and weaknesses in a given area.

## EXTENDED EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

North Ridge provides small-group educational support services designed to meet the individual needs of those students who require additional support which includes:

- Academic Intervention for Kindergarten, (Language Arts and Math).
- Academic Intervention Services, (AIS), for Reading/Language Arts in Grade 1.
- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for Math and Reading/Language Arts in Gr. 2.
- Speech and Language.
- Resource Room.
- English as a Second Language (ESL).
- Adaptive Physical Education.
- School-Based Counseling.
- Occupational/Physical Therapy.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS

The PTA offers a wide variety of enjoyable activities during our After-School Club program. There are 2 sessions, one in the fall and one in the spring. When scheduling permits, morning clubs are occasionally offered. Clubs meet once a week for 6 weeks.

Prior to registration you will receive an information packet with club listings and registration information.

Please note that after-school clubs are available to students in Grades 1 and 2 only. When available, some morning clubs may be offered to Kindergarten students in the spring. After school hours, it is essential that organizations make arrangements for an adult to monitor the front door. It is not the responsibility of the school custodian to monitor the front doors for this purpose. The organization bears the responsibility of monitoring the doors.

### ARTS-IN-EDUCATION

Theatrical groups, dance companies, musicians, authors and artists educate and entertain our children through our Arts-in-Education program. These presentations supplement and enrich the school's curriculum. Funds for these programs are generously provided by PTA through fund-raising activities. These events are listed in the Principal's and PTA Newsletter.



### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

A monthly birthday bulletin board noting the birthdays of all students and staff is maintained by the PTA in the school entrance hallway.

Children may celebrate birthdays in their classrooms with cookies, doughnuts, cupcakes or brownies brought from home, and are limited to the child's classroom only. If you are sending goodies, they should be the same (all chocolate donuts, all vanilla cupcakes, etc.). However, we do ask our North Ridge families to refer to the newly-adopted Wellness Policy and select healthy foods when choosing snacks for any classroom celebration. <http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/ourschools/wellness.asp> Please contact your classroom teacher ahead of time to make the necessary arrangements and to determine any special needs, i.e. food allergies, and/or restrictions. Party favors and goody bags should be reserved for out-of-school celebrations. Please note that elaborate classroom birthday celebrations are not permitted as they compromise classroom instructional time. Please save candles for the home celebration for the safety of all North Ridge students and staff.

Should your child wish to have a party outside of school, invitations may be given out in school **only** if everyone in the class is invited. If a child misses a “home party,” goodies or favors must be delivered privately.

In honor of your child’s birthday or any special occasion, you may donate a hardcover book to the school Library/Media Center. A book plate will be placed in the book indicating the honoree, the occasion and the date. Please contact the school Library/Media Specialist for additional information.

## CLASS PARENTS

At Kindergarten Registration for incoming Kindergarten parents, notices are distributed asking for Class Parent Volunteers. Volunteers will be selected by the classroom teachers.

### RESPONSIBILITIES – A Class Parent:

1. Acts as a liaison between the PTA and parents and must be a PTA member. Class parents are asked to attend PTA meetings to keep apprised of school happenings.
2. Provides courtesy calls, that may be made as early as 5:30 a.m., to parents in the event of school closings, delayed openings, and early dismissals.
3. Collects party money at the beginning of the school year.
4. In charge of refreshments for class parties.
5. Arranges for chaperons to go on class trips.
6. Requests “baking parents” for class parties or PTA events.
7. Supports the classroom teacher in his/her efforts to provide an optimal learning environment.

## PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Our most effective tool in providing our young students with an optimal learning environment is the establishment of an effective and ongoing communication system between parent and teacher. North Ridge is proud to boast that its staff maintains a strong and effective bond between school and home. Should any concerns or questions arise regarding academic or behavioral needs and/or practices within the classroom, please contact the teacher first. If the concerns are not satisfactorily resolved, the parent may then contact the building Principal.

## AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK OBSERVANCE

The North Ridge Primary School observes American Education Week in November with visitations by parents to their children’s classroom to observe a typical lesson. On alternating years, parents will be invited to visit one of their children’s special area classes.

## PIR (Partners In Reading Program)

Reading aloud to children from meaningful literature is considered by experts to be the most effective way to foster in children a lifelong love of books and learning. Reading instruction alone will not suffice. To help achieve this goal, the North Ridge PTA, in conjunction with the school, sponsors a Partners-In-Reading Program during each school year. The “PIR” program is designed to encourage parents and children to become parents in reading, to experience the joy of reading books and to improve reading skills. For the past several years, more than 98% of our families have participated. We continue to strive for 100%. Please help us to reach our goal.

## PTA

The PTA is your forum for sharing and gathering ideas. Please join and participate in the process. PTA meetings are held on the second or third Monday of each month in the Cafeteria at 7:30 p.m., or 9:45 a.m. Be sure to refer to the dates listed on the school calendar, the *PTA Newsletter*, *The Ridge Reporter*, and the Principal’s bi-monthly Newsletter.

At the first meeting of the school year, a PTA Executive Board Member list is distributed with the names of all Grade Level Liaisons, Committee Chairpersons and their phone numbers. Please contact the Chairpersons with any questions or interest in donating any time you can. Volunteers are always welcome and are needed to make PTA functions successful. If you are interested in chairing or participating in a committee, contact the PTA President, Ms. Julie Petruzzi. The PTA mailbox is located in the Main Office. For your convenience, PTA flyers are distributed, when appropriate, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Each year we use a color-coded process for the dissemination of information. Lavender will be used this year for notices sent by the Principal.

## NORTH RIDGE SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT TEAM

The SBMT serves as a collaborative body whose function is to enhance the school environment for all students. The North Ridge School-Based Management Team (SBMT) includes the following members:

- 1– Principal
- 1 – Commack Teachers’ Association Chief Union Representative
- 1 – Support Staff Representative
- 4 - Teacher Representatives
- 3 - Parent Representatives

Selection/election of the School-Based Management Team members is made by the constituent groups they represent.

Meetings are usually held once a month and minutes are available for public viewing in the Main Office and at the PTA meeting, and posted on the North Ridge Web Site. All decisioning records are compiled in binders in the Main Office.

Concerns, questions and suggestions are always welcomed and should be brought to one of your SBMT parent representatives.

## SCOUTING

### BOY SCOUTS

In First Grade, a boy may begin scouting as a Tiger Cub. Tiger Cub dens are made up of a small group of boys and their adult partner. They usually meet once each month. Information regarding registration may be available in the Main Office.

When a boy enters Second Grade, he may become a Cub Scout. Dens are formed with volunteer den leader (s). They usually meet every other week to work on achievements. Each month the dens gather at Pack Night where awards are handed out and various activities take place.

### GIRL SCOUTS

In Kindergarten, a girl may begin scouting as a Daisy. Daisies usually meet every other week to participate in games, sports, crafts and other exciting events.

First and second graders may become Brownies. Volunteer Girl Scout leaders and troops usually meet weekly to work on achievements. Monthly activities such as Country Fair, Father/Daughter Dances, environmental awareness programs and trips, take place.

## SCHOOL STORE

The School Store, which is open periodically, offers students the opportunity to purchase school supplies and various novelty items. The School Store is operated by PTA volunteers. Students are escorted by their lunch aides to and from the store during their recreation time. The PTA notifies parents and students of the schedule. Notification is also provided on the school's website and in the Principal's and PTA Newsletter.

## SEPARATION ADJUSTMENT

Sometimes, at the beginning of the year in a primary school, there may be children who are reluctant to leave their parent or caregiver. Usually, this is the result of a separation anxiety rather than a school phobia and should be treated as such.

A consistent, firm insistence on getting on the bus or a quick good-bye hug and kiss at the school door is most effective. Wavering or acquiescing to the crying or reluctant child always makes the situation worse. Be gentle, but firm and all will be well. Repeated difficulties should be brought to the attention of the classroom teacher or appropriate personnel.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Every pre-school child known to reside in the North Ridge geographic zone is screened prior to entering school. This is required by New York State law. The screening takes place at the school in the spring prior to fall admission. Please note that no child will be placed in Kindergarten unless he/she is administered the DIAL (Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning) prior to the start of the school year. The screening program is designed to alert parents and staff to special needs, and to inform parents about the special programs that are available. This same procedure is followed in every primary school in the Commack School District.

Group academic (TerraNova) and cognitive abilities (Cognitive Abilities Test) testing is conducted for students in second grade. Refer to the District Calendar and Principal's Newsletter for testing dates.

## VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers provide enrichment for our educational programs, as well as service to our young children. The experience is quite rewarding for both the volunteers and the children. First-hand involvement with our children and our staff is the number one way to get to know us better. Parents are most welcome to volunteer their time for the following types of activities:

- special events
- kindergarten assistance
- xeroxing
- laminating
- creating big books
- binding books
- publishing books

These are just a few. Please join us!

## WEATHER ALERT

A delayed school opening procedure on inclement weather days will be implemented when it appears that school can open safely at a later time. Opening will be delayed for one or two hours later than the usual schedule. In the event of a delayed opening, we will adjust our day accordingly so that we end at the usual time. Children will be transported back home according to the regular transportation schedule. In addition, school closing announcements will be provided through our Connect-Ed telephone system, on the School District's Website at [www.commack.k12.ny.us](http://www.commack.k12.ny.us) and on the following radio/television stations:

WALK..... 97.5 FM  
WBAB..... 102.3 FM  
WBLI..... 106.1 FM  
WBZO (B-103)..... 103.1 FM

WCBS.....880 AM  
WGSM.....740 AM  
WHLI.....1100 AM  
WLUX.....540 AM  
WMJC.....94.3 FM  
L.I. News 12 – Cablevision 12

## WEB EMAIL NOTIFICATION

As indicated in the Commack Courier, as a service for the parents of students in the Commack Schools has been put in place for community residents on the Commack Website ([www.commack.k12.ny.us](http://www.commack.k12.ny.us)). Subscribing for email notification will facilitate increased communications between home and school and will provide parents with all flyers, memos, and newsletters from the schools of their choosing, as well as provide the option to receive District news such as the Commack Courier and emergency closing announcements by email.

Parents who sign up will be able to receive this information in their email when available, and the new system will assist the District in saving postage, paper and printing costs as well as cut down the time devoted by staff and teachers in disseminating the multitude of paperwork that comes home (or doesn't) in students backpacks each day.

To sign up, go to the Commack Website and click on the link for Parent Resources. The direct website is:

<http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/DO/maillist/signup.htm>

Signing up is entirely voluntary, and parents may choose to opt out of the service at any time.

## WEBSITE Information

### Commack School District

The Commack School District website [www.commack.k12.ny.us](http://www.commack.k12.ny.us) provides the residents of our community with a wealth of information regarding District policies and procedures, important telephone numbers, technology information, a calendar of events and the District newsletter, the *Commack Courier*. Additionally, the website contains web pages for each of its schools within the district. Be sure to visit the web page which is replete with information regarding our schools' programs and events.

### North Ridge Primary School

The North Ridge webpage [www.commack.k12.ny.us/NR](http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/NR) has been redesigned and is replete with current up-to-date information about our school and its enriching program. Be sure to visit our "Happenings" page which will be updated monthly throughout the school year.

Additionally, our PTA link provides a wealth of information and reflects the many activities and events that support our programs as well as the home-to-school connection. We welcome your feedback. Visit us often.

**COMMACK PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Mary Jo Masciello, *President*  
Joseph Pennacchio, *Vice President*  
Thomas L. Torneé, *Trustee*  
Deborah Guber, *Trustee*  
Allen Leon, *Trustee*

**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. James A. Feltman, *Superintendent of Schools*  
Ms. Laura A. Newman, *Assistant Superintendent for Business*  
Dr. Adrienne Robb-Fund, *Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education*  
Mr. David Weiss, *Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education*  
Ms. Sheryl L. Haimovich, *Assistant Superintendent for Personnel*  
Ms. Amy Ryan, *Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services*  
Mr. Paul Infante, *Director of Fine and Applied Arts*

**BUILDING ADMINISTRATION**

Ms. Katherine M. Rihm, *Principal*

**NORTH RIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
MISSION STATEMENT**

The North Ridge learning community is committed to helping all of our students become lifelong learners. Together we will encourage them to develop self-confidence and promote respect for themselves. Through a growing understanding of their rights and responsibilities, our children will become contributing citizens of the world in which we live.