

*Plain City  
Elementary School  
Handbook*



# Plain City Elementary School

580 South Chillicothe Street Plain City, Ohio 43064

614-873-4608 [www.alder.k12.oh.us](http://www.alder.k12.oh.us)

*Kelly L. Hicks, Principal*

## **WELCOME**

The staff of Plain City welcomes you to the new school year. You, and your family, are now a part of our school community. We look forward to getting to know each of you. We are a part of the Jonathan Alder Local School District. Our JA mission statement (The Pioneer Pledge) is:

We have the most important job in the world, educating children. That means you have entrusted us with the care and nurturing of your loved ones. In preparation for their future lives, we will be responsible for educating and guiding the young people who enter this building. With this enormous task at hand, we promise the following:

- We will always keep the best interest of your child at heart
- We will maintain high but reasonable standards
- We will keep you informed about your child
- We will be firm but fair with all discipline
- We will never lose sight of the fact that children make mistakes and this is a natural part of the learning process.

In order to ensure the best education possible for your child, parents and the school need to become partners. We will gladly accept our share of the responsibility of the education of your children. We need your support and cooperation as we attempt to make our school district the best it can be.

*Kelly Hicks*

Principal

## **SCHOOL FEES**

In accordance with Ohio law, as upheld by the Supreme Court in 1996, public schools may charge fees for materials (not textbooks or administrative charges) used in the classroom. Parents/guardians who are unable to pay fees by September 30 deadline are expected to set up a payment plan. Should this not be done or not conscientiously addressed, the student(s) will not be eligible to participate in special activities throughout the course of the year.

\*Families eligible for ADC are required to pay these fees in the Jonathan Alder school district as we do not receive DPIA funds ORC 3317.023.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS (CODE OF CONDUCT)**

The following expectations hold true for all students. We (the staff) ask and expect behavior consistent with these expectations.

- a. I am responsible for my actions and my words at all times: in the classroom, on the bus, in the cafeteria and hallways and on the playground
- b. I will understand and follow all safety rules, making sure that all people (students and staff) stay safe at all times.
- c. I will respect other people and their property
- d. I will follow classroom, cafeteria, bus and playground rules.

## **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

Our staffs value the family as the primary educator and child care provider for our students. The PTO has been established in order to foster positive, productive interactions among parents and teachers that benefit children. If you are interested in more information or want to volunteer, please contact a PTO officer.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Children are not to bring their personal belongings without permission from their teacher. The school will not be responsible for lost or broken items. Examples include portable radios, game boys, dolls, toys etc. In addition, baseballs, softballs and wood and metal bats are never allowed at school. Tennis balls, wiffle balls, and wiffle ball bats are allowed with teacher's permission.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

In order for the school to provide a consistent educational program for your child, daily attendance is extremely important. Your support of your child's attendance is critical to their success. Medical documentation will be required after ten absences. Consultation with the attendance officer will be pursued after 10 absences. A half day absence will be counted if the student arrives after 9:40 a.m. or leaves before 2:40 p.m. Excessive absences will be taken into consideration when making promotion/retention decisions.

## **ABSENCES (CALL IN)**

When a student is unable to attend school, parents must call the school before 8:30 a.m. Parents should give the student's name, teacher's name and reason for the absence. If a parent forgets to call, the school will call the home to confirm the reason for the student's absence. Our voicemail system will pick up all calls when the office is closed.

## **MEDICAL EXCUSES**

When students need to be excused from physical activity from PE, they will also be required to sit out of physical activity at recess until the school receives a release from the physician.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM PARENTS**

When it is necessary for a child to deviate from his/her normal routine, a note from the parents must be presented to the teacher. These changes include staying after school for a special event, riding or walking to an address other than his/her own or being picked up by someone other than the parent or guardian.

For better communication with the school, please make all after school plans for your child the night before.

## **INFORMATION CHANGES**

It is important to notify the school of any change of telephone number, address, emergency number, or place of employment of either parent or emergency contacts.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEO**

It is the policy of Jonathan Alder Local Schools to allow photographs and video footage of students to be used in district produced materials including but not limited to websites, brochures, posters, and other printed materials. Students may be identified by name in printed material to provide them with recognition opportunities when appropriate. *Students will not be identified by name on Internet sites. **Any parent not wishing for their child to be photographed or videotaped should contact the school for a form to waive this right.***

## **TELEPHONE MESSAGES**

Messages for students may be taken by the office when there is an emergency or when it is essential for a student to receive information. Students are not usually called to the phone. Since office telephones are constantly in use

for school business, students may not use an office telephone to call home unless there is an emergency. Parents are encouraged to call teachers when they have questions. Teachers will return calls when they have planning time.

### **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All individuals visiting the school for any reason must report first to the office. If it should be necessary to speak with a student or teacher directly, the office personnel will make the proper arrangements.

### **CALAMITY DAYS (SCHOOL CLOSING)**

School closing, because of inclement weather, will be announced on major radio stations. Unscheduled closing due to equipment failure or weather may also occur. Each child should know where to go if an emergency arises and school is dismissed early. The State of Ohio allows five calamity days before makeup is required. See calendar for make-up plan.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS**

For the safety of each child, when a student must be dismissed early from his/her daily schedule, the parent must visit the office to properly release the student and notify the teacher. We will not release any student to anyone other than parents or legal guardians without written permission from parents.

### **JONATHAN ALDER SCHOOL DISTRICT WEB PAGE**

One way that we like to communicate all of the great things that are happening in our schools is through the district web page. It is our policy to not publish names with pictures of our students. If you have any concerns with the following, please contact the school office for a release form.

- Photographs of your child being electronically displayed.
- Your child's name being electronically displayed.
- Your child's work being electronically displayed.

### **WEAPONS ALERT**

“Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to Ohio revised code section 2923.122, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person’s control, convey, or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance into a school safety zone.”

### **BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR Policy 5517.01**

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the District, including activities on school property, on a school bus, or while enroute to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school’s control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, District employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Board of Education’s Model Policy.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying means:

A. any intentional written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental or physical harm to the other student(s) and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student(s); or

B. violence within a dating relationship.

“Electronic act” means an act committed through the use of a cellular telephone, computer, pager, personal communication device, or other electronic communication device.

Aggressive behavior is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student’s educational, physical, or emotional well-being. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It would include, but not be limited to, such behaviors as stalking, bullying/cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercion, name calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying also means cyberbullying through electronically transmitted acts (ie., internet, e-mail, cellular telephone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that a student(s) or a group of students exhibits toward another particular student(s) more than once and the behavior both causes mental and physical harm to the other student and is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other students(s).

Any student or student’s parents/guardian who believes s/he has been or is the victim of aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to teachers and other school staff who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

All complaints about aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. The building principal or appropriate administrator shall prepare a written report of the investigation upon completion. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of harassment, intimidation, and /or bullying were verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.

If the investigation finds an instance of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying/cyberbullying by an electronic act or otherwise, has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include suspension or up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participated in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of aggressive behavior is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as aggressive behavior. Retaliation may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Deliberately making false reports about harassment, intimidation, bullying and/or other aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Deliberately making false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

If a student or other individual believes there has been aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

The District shall implement intervention strategies (AG 5517.01) to protect a victim or other person from new or additional harassment, intimidation, or bullying and from retaliation following such a report.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify the custodial parent/guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification care shall be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

If after investigation, acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by a specific student are verified, the building principal or appropriate administrator shall notify in writing the custodial parent/guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in the notification.

## **COMPLAINTS**

Students and/or their parents/guardians may file reports regarding suspected harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Such reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review, investigation, and action.

Students, parents/guardians, and school personnel may make informal or anonymous complaints of conduct that they consider to be harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such complaints shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of suspected harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. A school staff member or administrator who receives an informal or anonymous complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the information provided. This written report shall be promptly forwarded by the school staff member and/or administrator to the building principal for review, investigation, and appropriate action.

Individuals who make informal complaints as provided above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action shall be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

When an individual making an informal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

### **PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY**

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

### **REPORTING REQUIREMENT**

At least semi-annually, the Superintendent shall provide to the President of the Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the District web site (if one exists). The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.

Allegations of criminal misconduct and suspected child abuse will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and/or the Child Protective Services in accordance with statute. District personnel shall cooperate with investigations by such agencies.

### **IMMUNITY**

A School District employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with this policy and R. C. 3313.666 if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying promptly, in good faith, and in compliance with the procedures specified in this policy. Such immunity from liability shall not apply to an employee, student, or volunteer determined to have made an intentionally false report about harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying.

### **NOTIFICATION**

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. At least once each school year a written statement describing the policy and consequences for violations of the policy shall be sent to each student's custodial parent or guardian.

This statement may be sent with regular student report cards or may be delivered electronically.

The policy and an explanation of the seriousness of bullying by electronic means shall be made available to students in the District and to their custodial parents or guardians.

State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedures.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of aggressive behavior, including bullying and violence within a dating relationship. The Superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines and aggressive behavior and bullying in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Annually, the District shall provide all students enrolled in the District with age-appropriate instruction regarding the Board's policy, including a written or verbal discussion of the consequences for violations of the policy to the extent that State or Federal funds are appropriated for this purpose.

Students in grades seven (7) through twelve (12) shall receive age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education, including instruction in recognizing dating violence warning signs and characteristics of healthy relationships. Parents, who submit a written request to the building principal to examine the dating violence prevention instruction materials used in the school, will be afforded an opportunity to review the materials within a reasonable period of time.

The District shall provide training, workshops, and/or courses on this policy for school employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students, to the extent that State and Federal funds are appropriated for these purposes. Time spent by school staff in these training programs shall apply toward mandated continuing education requirements.

In accordance with Board Policy 8462, the Superintendent shall include a review of this policy on bullying and other forms of harassment in the required training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development.

R.C. 3313.666, 3313.667

## **PICKING UP CHILDREN AT SCHOOL**

When parents have occasions to take pupils out of school during the school day, the following policy should be followed:

1. If it is known in advance that the child needs to leave school for a medical or dental appointment, the parent should send a note with the child to the teacher/office. At the time the pupil is to leave, the parent should come to the office and the pupil will be waiting or he/she will be called.
2. If the child must be taken out of school for some reason that is not known in advance, a phone call to the school will make it possible to have the child ready and waiting to be picked up.
3. If an advance call is not possible, please stop at the office and the child will be called from his/her classroom.
4. All students must be signed out in the office.

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

Students will be made very much aware of the rules we have for our grass playground and our blacktop playground. Listed below are some very general conduct rules for the playground. We certainly would appreciate your taking the time to go over these rules with your child. Most of our school discipline problems result from incidents which occur on the playground.

1. Throwing dirt, rocks, sticks, snowballs, etc. will not be allowed.
2. Fighting is not permitted at any time. This applies to all children whether you hit first or hit back.
3. Baseballs and bats are not allowed to be brought to school.
4. Competitive games are discouraged. Basketball courts are for recreation only -- no competitive games.

5. Once children are outside, they are not to go back into the building unless permission has been granted by the duty teacher.

### **OUTDOOR RECESS WILL BE MOVED INDOORS IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS.**

1. Outdoor temperature is 20 degrees or lower
2. Weather and wind chill are Principal's discretion.

### **SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE CODE**

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Therefore, riders must act responsibly and observe the code of conduct to insure the continuation of your bus riding privilege. The bus drivers will pass out rules and regulation sheets to each student at the beginning of the school year. Please make sure you review this code of conduct with your child. If a student is to go home in any way other than his or her regular bus, the school must be notified by the parent of this change.

### **CAFETERIA**

Nutritious breakfasts and lunches are prepared and served each day. The cost of the lunches is established by the Board of Education for each school year. Children who bring their lunch may buy milk if they wish. The menu is posted on the district web site. Proper nutrition is important to your child's health and will help them perform better in school. Please make sure your child eats a balanced breakfast and lunch every day. Applications for free or reduced price lunches are sent home at the beginning of each school year. Please return these to school as soon as possible.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

Students are instructed on emergency drill procedures. A fire drill will be held monthly. Tornado drills will be held in the fall and spring. Safe school drills will be held periodically throughout the year.

### **PARTIES**

There are three planned room parties each year. They are Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. The parties are usually organized by the room mothers. If you wish to send birthday treats, please contact the classroom teacher.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Parents are encouraged to print names in or on coats, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, boots, etc. to help insure safe keeping. Occasionally such items find their way to the Lost and Found. Students should check when they have lost something.

### **HEALTH CARE**

If a child has an accident or becomes ill at school, the parents will be notified and asked to come and get the child. Parents are asked to complete the Emergency Information & Medical Authorization Form stating a responsible person, doctor, dentist, and hospital preference if the parent can not be reached. If your child requires either prescription or nonprescription medication to be administered during school hours, a form of instructions signed by the parents must be sent in to the teacher. In addition, for prescription medications, a copy of the prescription including directions for administration (times, frequency and dosage) must be given to the teacher.

## **SOMETHING SPECIAL**

Students will have opportunities to participate in special activities that supplement their education and enrich their lives. There will be opportunities for students to participate in various groups conducted by the school counselor. Cultural arts activities include all-school assemblies and speakers as well as grade-level events.

## **MOVIES AND VIDEOS**

The following policy has been established by the Board of Education.

1. Any movie or video which is considered for use should consider the rating system assigned to the movie and the age-appropriateness for the students who will see it. No R-Rated movie or video, or segments of such movies or videos, shall be shown during the school day or be required as part of any class assignment.
2. Any PG-13 movie or video may not be shown in its entirety below 9th grade.
3. Any segment of a PG-13 movie or video that is deemed to be instructionally appropriate below 9th grade by a teacher must be pre-approved for showing by the building principal. A permission slip must also be signed by each child's parent or guardian. Any parent or child who objects to the segment of movie or video shown will not be forced to participate and will be given an alternative assignment.
4. The regular use of movies or videos for recreational purposes is discouraged.
5. Any movie or video which is unrated must have the pre-approval of the principal before it is shown.
6. Copies of movie/video guidelines are to be included in the school handbooks.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

The elementary schools in the Jonathan Alder School district provide access for pupils to computers and software during the course of the instructional day. Access is provided solely for the purposes of education and research. We will exercise reasonable effort to limit pupil access to inappropriate materials, but cannot provide assurances that all material would be considered appropriate by all parents.

With supervision, the students will have limited internet access. We expect our students to abide by the policies adopted by the Board of Education regarding the computer network. Violating these policies and rules will result in disciplinary action and may also ban a student from future computer use. Any parent not wishing for their child to have the opportunity to use the internet as an educational tool should contact the school to waive this right. (For questions, forms or policy, see the Art/Technology teacher).

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework assignments are a part of learning. It is an opportunity for the student to practice and review information taught in class. The accuracy as well as the completion of homework assignments will affect a student's overall grades. Homework shall be given for the purpose of:

- A. Reinforcing learning.
- B. Fostering independent work skills.
- C. Researching and acquiring the opportunity to enhance and expand upon what has been learned.

## **PROPER CLOTHING AND DRESS**

Our approach to clothing and proper dress is a common sense approach designed for the comfort and well-being of the student. We expect a child to be dressed warmly in the winter. This extends to the wearing of sweaters or light jackets on cool mornings that begin in mid-September and last into May. Shorts may be worn on very warm days if they are not extremely short, tight, and/or binding. Bare midriffs are not permitted for boys or girls. T-shirts and sweatshirts with messages and/or pictures that are in good taste are permitted. The remainder of our clothing expectations are founded in the hope that all involved will use good taste, cleanliness, neatness, and care for the

child's well-being as guidelines. PARENTS: Do not let your child be the interpreter of these procedures. Please inspect clothing before your child leaves for school. This will help to prevent surprising or embarrassing situations.

### **DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Our buildings, books, materials, and facilities are paid for by the people of the community. We feel a very strong obligation to protect and preserve our resources. Therefore, our policy is to instill in all students responsible behavior through a feeling of pride for their schools and a knowledge that their irresponsible actions will lead to their paying the consequences. Students are expected to return school library books and textbooks in similar condition to when they were first loaned (normal wear and tear are accounted for). Books that need to be rebound or replaced due to student negligence or abuse will be done so at the student's expense. Damaging and/or abusing school materials, equipment, etc. will result in the student being held responsible to repair and/or replace the damaged item.

### **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIMARY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- 1) The right to inspect and review the student's education record with 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access
- 2) The right to request an amendment to the student's records if it is believed inaccurate
- 3) The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records (except where allowed by FERPA)

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U. S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605