

Parent - Student Handbook

2011-2012

Voorheesville Elementary School

129 Maple Avenue
Voorheesville, NY 12186
(518) 765-2382



VOORHEESVILLE ALMA MATER

Beside the Vly Creek flowing
Beneath the Helderbergs
Stands our Alma Mater
Which we cherish in our hearts.

The bullwork of democracy
The guide to future fame
With gratitude dear Voorheesville
We all salute your name.

Voorheesville, Voorheesville to you
We will be true
Voorheesville, Voorheesville our
Torch will burn for you.

Again we sing your praise on high
Remembering days of old
The honor and the glory
Of the PURPLE AND THE GOLD.

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A Message from the Principal

Dear Students and Parents:

It is my honor to welcome you to Voorheesville Elementary School! If you haven't already noticed, this is a very special place that is made even more special by having all of you as a part of our elementary family.

This handbook contains information about our elementary policies, programs, and procedures. Though lengthy, this by no means can summarize all of the wonderful things that take place in this building. The most important thing you can take from this booklet is to know that if you have questions or concerns, you should never hesitate to ask any member of the Voorheesville Elementary School staff, who will be more than happy to assist you. As your principal, it is my job to ensure your happiness and comfort in this building, and will do anything I can to help.

Have a wonderful school year. Let's make this our best one yet!

VOORHEESVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BILL OF RIGHTS

We the students of the Voorheesville Elementary School, as responsible school citizens, are entitled to the following rights:

1. The right to a school system where learning occurs and every student is important.
2. The right to respectfully express our opinions.
3. The right to a clean environment.
4. The right to be treated in a fair and impartial manner and have an opportunity to explain our actions.
5. The right to be free from all types of abuse.

-1989 (2006)

ABSENCES/EXCUSES

On any day your child is not attending school, parents are to call the elementary school office at 765-2382 x514 between 8:30-8:50 am. Your phone call will assure us that your child is safe at home. If we have not received notification from home, parent(s) of absent children will be contacted by the school for verification.

If a student needs to be absent from school, a written excuse is also required. Please provide the following information on a note and send to school on the day the student returns:

- 1-Student name
- 2-Date (s) of absence
- 3-Reason for absence (be specific)
- 4-Parents' or guardian's signature

The absences noted below are considered legal and will be excused by school authorities:

- 1-Illness or injury
- 2-Medical or dental appointment
- 3-Death in the immediate family
- 4-Religious observance
- 5-Court appearance

All other absences are considered illegal.

If a student is absent for two or more days, and is able to work at home, parents should make arrangements for work to be brought to them or picked up at school. Completing this work will enable the student to feel more successful and not as overwhelmed upon his/her return. This request can also be made at x 514.

Late arrivals and early dismissals must be signed in or out at the office. No student will be dismissed directly from a classroom. Students arriving after 10 am or leaving before 2 pm will be noted as a half day absent.

VISITORS

Parents coming to call for a child, delivering a child or bringing articles to their children during the school day must report to the office, not the classroom. The office staff will insure any items or message gets to the children. A parent reporting to a room without prior notice is a distraction and takes away from our work with all the children.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are an integral part of each student's educational program. The Humanities Program and Spirit Committee present a number of assemblies throughout the year. On occasion, individual classes also prepare and present performances that are viewed by appropriate grade levels and parents/guardians (if applicable). School age siblings of performers will not be permitted to attend unless their particular class is attending.

Please park only in the parking lot across the creek. Overflow parking is located at St. Matthew's Church.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is extremely important to the success of each child in school and the parents' role in attendance is vital. Whenever possible, outside appointments for children should be made during hours when school is not in session. We particularly discourage taking children on vacation during regular school days. Parents teach responsibility by insisting that children attend school when classes are in session. Although work can be made up, the classroom time itself can never be substituted.

BEHAVIOR

Philosophy

Most students attend school with the purpose of improving themselves academically and emotionally, while fulfilling their responsibility as students. The majority of students have a positive attitude toward their school, an understanding that they have a responsibility to behave in an orderly and respectful manner, and seldom have problems with school rules as indicated by demonstrating appropriate behavior.

The principal, teachers, guidance personnel, parents and students will work together in an effort to identify potential discipline problems as early as possible and seek solutions. It is our role to model appropriate behavior and use any student behavior difficulties as teachable moments. It is important that all students know and understand our school rules because this will give them a reason to support those rules.

Unfortunately there are times when there must be consequences for actions. Consequences will be applied in a firm, fair and consistent manner. The purpose of such actions is not necessarily meant to punish, but to redirect students so that their future behavior may improve.

These guidelines for behavior apply to all school programs before, during and after the school day. Students should become familiar with these guidelines. Those who understand and follow these rules will help create a school that has an academically and socially safe atmosphere.

General Rules

Students are expected:

- to be responsible for each other's safety by not pushing, shoving, fighting or throwing objects.
- to have respect for the personal property of others and for school property.
- to avoid bad language and verbal abuse (teasing, name calling etc.)
- to keep our classrooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria and playground free of litter, markings, etc.
- to not chew gum while in school.
- to behave in a polite manner.
- to not bring anything to school that could result in an injury (to oneself or others), or anything that serves as a weapon of any kind (including but not limited to: knives, firearms, sharp objects, dangerous substances).

In the Classroom

Students are expected:

- to obey teachers, aides and other adult supervisors.
- to behave in a way that does not interfere with the learning of others.
- to follow individual classroom rules.

In the Cafeteria

Students are expected:

- to eat with good table manners.
- to not throw food.
- to remain seated until given permission to leave their seat.
- to move through the lunch line in an orderly fashion.
- to clean up their table area when finished eating.
- to keep all lunch foods in the cafeteria.
- to talk quietly.
- to avoid bringing beverages in glass bottles as part of lunch.

In the Hallways and Stairwells

Students are expected:

- to respect the displays and hallway bulletin boards.
- to walk, not run, and to stay to the right while walking through the hallways.
- to move from place to place in an orderly, quiet manner.

At Assemblies

Students are expected:

- to listen and watch attentively to the programs presented.
- to show their appreciation in a polite manner.

At Recess

Students are expected:

- to include others in their games.
- to share playground equipment and use it properly and safely.
- to not interfere in the games of others.

Disciplinary Action

If a disciplinary problem does occur, it may be followed up by one or more of the following:

Teacher/Student Conference

The teacher and the student will meet at a time designated by the teacher in a private manner. The student will be informed of the penalties for present and future infractions.

Parent/Teacher Conference

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by telephone and /or letter. The conference may/may not include the student.

Detention

Detention may be assigned by the teacher or administrator. Detention is from 3:05-3:45 p.m. or during recess. This will be assigned at the administrator and/or teacher's discretion.

Meet with the Principal

The administrator will speak with the student, record the infraction and inform the student of the penalties involved for present and future infractions. Parents may be contacted.

Administrator/Parent Conference

The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted by telephone and /or letter. The conference may include: the student, his/her parent(s), appropriate school personnel, and any other necessary person(s).

Suspension

The principal may suspend a student from attendance at school for a maximum of five school days, in accordance with Section 32214 of the Education Law. Parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and/or letter. Some examples of violations are: use of obscene and threatening language to a staff member, violent, disruptive behavior that puts students at risk to themselves and others, obscene gestures, major destruction of property, and continued violations of previously addressed issues.

Superintendent's Hearing

If none of the above helps to solve the problem, a hearing may be held by the Superintendent of Schools. At that hearing, the future status of the student will be decided. This may include suspension or expulsion from school.

Board of Education

In extreme cases, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, the Board of Education may become involved in a disciplinary matter as a result of a violation of the code.

Alternative Education Program

In the event a student cannot benefit from regular instruction due to violations of the discipline code, it may be necessary to provide for an alternative education program. This could include: at home tutoring, education with cooperation with outside agencies, or out of class lessons.

BUS NOTES

If your child is riding home on a bus other than their own, they must bring in a note from home. The teacher then creates a pass for them to ride the alternate bus. Before you have a large number of students riding an alternate bus to come to your home (e.g. party, scouts), you must first clear it with Mr. Goyer, Director of Transportation, at 765-2382 Ext. 508.

BUS SAFETY

Bus safety is the responsibility of the student as well as the driver. Proper behavior is expected from all students riding school buses.

Students are expected:

- to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- to speak without being rowdy or boisterous.
- to act respectfully to the driver and fellow students.
- to keep the aisles clear.
- to listen and follow the driver's directions.

In addition, please be sure that:

1. No food or beverages be consumed on a bus.
2. Children bring no items larger than those they can place on their laps.
3. No glass, sharp or breakable items are brought on the bus.
4. Valuable items are left home.

Consequences

First Offense: A warning from the driver.

Second Offense: A bus referral is sent home to make parents aware of the situation.

Third offense: A second referral is sent home and the principal calls home to discuss the situation.

Fourth offense: Bus privileges are suspended for three days and a meeting is set up with the parents, the child, the principal and the driver.

Fifth offense: Bus privileges are suspended for five days and another meeting is held with all parties.

During a period of lost bus privileges, it will be the responsibility of the parent to transport the child.

While we strive for consistency and fairness, each driver must use their own discretion in dealing with offenses. In all cases the driver should investigate the matter with all students involved. If no resolution can be found, the matter will come to the principal's attention. Any case that involves physical action will be brought to the principal's attention and documented.

CLOSING SCHOOL

PLEASE SIGN UP FOR OUR SCHOOL NEWS NOTIFIER (SNN) or TWITTER TO RECEIVE INSTANT UPDATES TO YOUR PHONE OR EMAIL.

Before the school day begins, listen to the local radio stations for school closings beginning at 6:30 am on inclement weather days. Specific stations include AM: WGY (810) and FM: WRVE (99.5), WFLY (92.3), and WYJB (95.5). Local television stations also run school closings: Capital News 9 (9), WNYT (13), WRGB (6), WTEN (10), and WXXA (23). The best form of notification of this information would be to sign up for SNN (School News Notifier). You can do this by visiting the school district website. By signing up you will receive this information by an email or it can even be sent to your cell phone. During the school day, if you think the weather may cause an early dismissal, please listen for reports. With well over 500 students we need your help and cooperation to run the buses on schedule. Please work with your child to make sure he/she knows what to do if no one is at home or a door is locked. Making alternate arrangements early in the school year will enable your child to be aware of a safe place to go.

If the school is opening late or closing early, keep in mind that Kids Club will also be closed.

COMPUTER POLICY

The computer is a tool that is used daily in instruction. Although students are not given e-mail accounts, some of the instruction does involve the internet. The access to sites is strictly controlled in the primary grades. There is a bit more leeway in grades three through five, but

student work is closely monitored and the district does employ a filtering system. All students in grades three through five and their parents will be asked to sign a computer usage agreement. The computer teacher will review the usage policy with these grade levels.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

The following conditions will be in effect:

- Students may not have radios, tapes, CD players, iPods, gaming devices, cell phones, or other electronic media in their possession during school hours (8:30 – 3:00). If brought to school, these items should be left in backpacks and turned off.
- Electronic devices that are visible and/or in use by students during school hours will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- If chronic offenses are occurring, devices will be returned only to parents after being confiscated.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION OF STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

All students classified by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) are in general expected to follow the school's rules and regulations. However, students manifesting special and particular problems requiring particular treatment may have the treatment specified in his/her Individual Education Plan.

In the event a special education pupil violates the rules, the principal, along with the pupil's teacher, the special education teacher and/or the CSE chairperson shall determine if the behavior is:

- 1- the result of the pupil's inability to understand the rules for behavior, or
- 2- the result of the pupil's inability to control his/her inappropriate behavior.

If it is determined that the student is capable of understanding and following the school's rules, then he/she will be disciplined as is stated in the school's rules and regulations.

If it is determined that the student is unable to understand the rules or is incapable of controlling his/her behavior because of the handicapping condition, the student will be referred to the CSE.

The CSE can revise, modify, and determine alternatives for dealing with inappropriate behavior on the student's Individual Educational Plan. These modifications will be conveyed to the principal, teacher and any other school personnel who are involved with the student's educational plan.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

Bus riders who need to walk home, ride a different bus because of an emergency, or get off at a different stop, must have written permission from their parents with specific information including: student's name, resident's name and exact address of destination, and the date of requested change. A verbal request by a child will not be honored. Students are not allowed to make arrangements over the phone during the day except in cases of emergency.

EARLY DISMISSAL REQUESTS

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged not to pick up their children prior to dismissal unless an emergency arises or appointments (dentist, doctor) could not be arranged for after school hours. In such instances, parents are asked to come to the main office to meet their child.

EMERGENCIES

The school should have a record for each child with the following information:

- 1- The parent's or guardian's phone numbers, both at home and place(s) of employment.
- 2- The name and phone number of a person to be called in an emergency if the parent(s)/guardian(s) cannot be reached. Should the child become injured or ill at school, the nurse will first call the parent. If no response can be obtained, the emergency designate will then be called.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Students will practice a number of safety drills throughout the year. Our school is required by law to have twelve fire drills during each school year. Students are informed on the opening day of school of exit plans and proper behavior.

Other drills include bus drills, sheltering drills, evacuation drills, lock out drills and lockdown drills. Every attempt is made to treat these drills as a learning experience and is done in a non-threatening way.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips provide an alternative possible means of instruction for children. Whenever field trips are within a reasonable distance and are correlated with courses of study, arrangements are made to include them in instruction.

Prior to the trip, a permission slip will be sent home. This must be signed by the parent if the child is to be allowed to accompany the class on the trip. At times, parents are asked to accompany groups to ensure adequate supervision.

GUIDANCE

Guidance at the elementary level is a responsibility shared by our guidance counselor, the entire staff and parents. The elementary school guidance counselor meets with teachers, students and parents in order to improve a student's school performance, behavior and adjustment, self image, and social relationships. The guidance program also strives to make students more aware and knowledgeable of their strengths, talents and special aptitudes.

HEALTH SERVICES/REQUIREMENTS

The school nurse works with the school physician, parents, teachers and pupils in the prevention of health problems and in their correction where they already exist.

General duties:

- 1-First aid
- 2-Consultation of long term illnesses
- 3-Vision and hearing screening
- 4-Assistance of school physician
- 5-Emergency health care
- 6-Health liaison to home

If the child is required by his/her physician to take medicine during the day, the parent should present a written request from the physician to the nurse. Students may not carry over-the-counter (OTC) medicine to or from school, or with them while they are in school. A note from the parent must accompany any OTC medicine, and the parent must transport the medicine.

If a child is not allowed to go outside due to illness for more than one day, a physician's note is required.

New York State requires scoliosis screening and verification of updated immunization. Specific information will be sent home from the nurse's office.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

The home and school have a joint responsibility for a child's personal, social and educational development. Individual parent/teacher conferences can be one of the most productive means of assuring home/school planning. Opportunities for conferences are offered during the year as a regular procedure. Both parents and teachers are encouraged to maintain contact with each other in order to assess student progress.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are an extension of class work. They are intended to give necessary practice and to solidify skills. Parents' assistance is vital in seeing that this important aspect of school is accomplished satisfactorily. If your child is absent, you may request homework when calling the attendance clerk. It can be sent home with a sibling, friend, or it can be picked up at the end of the day.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Voorheesville Elementary School students use four-digit pin number to make purchases from the cafeteria. The students will enter their numbers on a key pad at the cash register; which will bring up their photo, confirming that the right account is being charged. This process helps lessen the time students wait in line for their meals. This system is also used in the middle/high school building.

The students will be given their lunch cards - with pin number - to bring to the cafeteria until they have the number memorized. The teacher will collect the cards back for safe keeping each day. Once the pin number is memorized, the card will not have to be brought to lunch. The teacher will have the cards should the student need a reminder.

As of last year, the district began using My NutriKids software as a means for parents to create and monitor food service accounts for their children. This web-based program can be used to put money on the account (using a debit or credit card), and track purchases. Please visit the My NutriKids tab on the Voorheesville Central School webpage (vcsdk12.org).

Borrowing of money is a difficult situation for the school and your child, and is strictly discouraged. Please write the student's full name and homeroom number on all bag lunches. There is a free lunch and reduced lunch program available. Eligibility is dependent upon family income. Interested families may call the main office or our kitchen manager (Tim Mulligan) at 765-3314- Ext. 120 for more information.

The current price for a lunch is \$2.25. Milk purchased separately is \$.40

LUNCH/RECESS

Students have a 40 minute lunch period, of which about 20 minutes is used for eating. First grade students receive an extra 5 minutes for eating (45 minute period). The remaining time is used for recreational purposes. On the vast majority of days students go outdoors for recess. Children should dress accordingly. When weather does not permit going outdoors, recreational play will be in the gyms.

PARENT NIGHTS

Each fall, parents are invited to participate in a parents' night. Meetings are scheduled by class and grade level in order for parents to have the opportunity to meet with the children's teachers, more clearly understand the curriculum, and receive a general overview of the programs. Specific conferences are encouraged but should be scheduled for another time.

PARENTS DRIVING STUDENTS TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Bringing to school:

Students should be dropped off by the bridge in the parking lot. An adult is on duty from 8:30-8:50 to walk students safely to the building. There is also an adult on duty by the crosswalk near the front sign.

Except for specifically arranged circumstances, children cannot enter school before 8:30. Students arriving past 8:50 are considered tardy and must report to the office with their parents to be signed in.

Picking up from school:

When picking up a student, parents should park in the parking lot across the creek and report to the main office. The secretary will contact the student who will meet the parent in the office. If a note has been sent with the student we will make every effort to have the child in the office at the prearranged time. No students may be dismissed from the classroom. For end-of-the-day dismissal, there will be a sign out sheet by the main office. A call is done at 3:00 for all students being picked up. Busses are called at 3:05.

PARKING

All visitors, parents and teachers should park in the parking lot across the creek. The blacktop area in front of the school is a fire lane and must be kept clear in case of emergency situations. For safety reasons, it is imperative that no cars be parked in this area. There is very limited parking on the side of the building and during the school day. This should be used for short-term visits.

On days when there are a lot of visitors in the building, overflow parking is right up the street at St. Matthews Church.

PERSONAL DATA

The accuracy of your child's personal data is very important. For example, it may be necessary to reach the parent during the school day in an emergency. Please notify the office of any changes in your phone number, address, place of employment, physician and person to call in an emergency if you are not available.

PHOTO POLICY

There are a number of instances throughout the school year where there are opportunities for photographs of school events. They may be taken by a student teacher who is working on a portfolio or a classroom teacher documenting projects or field trips. They may be of children working through a process with a visiting artist or children participating in a school day activity.

At times we may use these photos for educational purposes to highlight the many wonderful things that go on in our school. We will not specifically identify students in the photographs (e.g. Bugler, Inside Track) or on the district web site. On occasion a photographer from a newspaper may be here for an event. Where they would like to identify students for the newspaper, we will ask for permission specific to the instance.

If you have objections to having your child's picture in publications or on the web site, you will be given the opportunity to **opt out** of having photos used in that way.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

The following is designed to give a brief description of the many programs offered at school. If you are interested in greater detail in any of the areas please contact the appropriate teacher or the principal. More in depth information is also available at Parents' Night.

After School

On Tuesdays through Thursdays there are after school late buses that leave the building between 3:40 and 3:45. This additional afternoon time provides students with opportunities to stay for such things as Drama Club, intramurals, Art Club, and homework assistance.

Art

The elementary art program is a comprehensive sequential art curriculum, and is based on the state education department's art curriculum for elementary schools. The program encourages students to experience and explore a variety of art forms and media. Its objectives are:

1. to design skills and concepts through drawing, painting, and sculpture.
2. to develop creative and critical thinking through personal expression.
3. to promote esthetic awareness of color, texture and shapes.
4. to further students' knowledge of individual artists past and present through their study of sides and prints of great artists' works.

Students meet each week with the art teacher for a 45 minute period (30 minutes for Kindergarten). Students are expected to wear a smock of some type to protect their clothing from being damaged.

Chorus

The chorus program is available to all fifth grade students. It begins in early September and continues through the middle of May. Fifth grade chorus meets twice per six-day cycle during the school day. Chorus performances consist of a winter and a spring concert which are both held at the elementary school.

Community Resources

- New Scotland Kiwanis offers baseball and soccer.
- CYO offers basketball.
- There is an active scouts program for both boys and girls.
- Any questions on outside health services can be directed to the school nurse, and questions on counseling services can be directed to the school counselor.

Computers/Technology

Students in grades kindergarten through grade five are given opportunities to work with computers both in the lab and in the classrooms. A laptop cart has been added to the available computers.

Extra-curricular

Art Club – grade 5

Chess Club– grades K-5

Drama Club– grade 5

Fun Fest – grades K-5

Intramural Sports – grades 4-5

Odyssey of the Mind – grades K-5

Science Fair – grades K-5

Student Council – grades 4-5

Go Beyond Programs – grades K-5

Guidance

The elementary school has a full time counselor on staff who works with the children in a variety of ways. Teaching is done within all classrooms and small group meetings (Banana Splits and Friendship Club) and individual counseling is also done addressing a variety of needs.

Human Sexuality Program

Each year the school nurse addresses human sexuality with the fifth grade students. Parents are invited to view the program, materials, films etc. and ask any questions.

Instrumental Program/Band

An instrumental program is offered to any interested student in grade five. Students can select to study one of various percussion, brass or woodwind instruments. Lessons are given once a week and are scheduled during the school day. Upon completion of a specific level of proficiency, students are eligible to enter the band. The band rehearses twice per six day cycle (Days 3 and 5) before the school day. Toward the end of the year, fourth grade students attend an informational session to choose an instrument.

Intramurals

The intramural program is opened to all boys and girls in grades four and five. Intramural activities are held two days per week from 3:00-3:45 pm. Programs include: soccer, flag football, basketball, cross country, and other team based activities. All students are required to wear proper clothing while playing in this program.

Kids Club

Kids Club is a before/after school program that is housed in the building, but is owned and operated independently from the district. For information, please call 765-2043.

Library Media Center

The Voorheesville Elementary School Library Media Center program supports 21st Century learners through encouraging each and every student to use our electronic and print resources to:

- Investigate research projects that support classroom learning
- Cultivate curiosity and discover interesting things about our world
 - *Create* new ideas and products

And...

- Develop a lifetime love of literature!

Students, staff, faculty and parents are all encouraged to come to the media center to use our resources, check out books, seek research and media and assistance, or simply ... READ!

Library Hours and Staff

The Library Media Center is open from 8:30 a.m. – 3:40 p.m.. Our staff consists of Ms. Rappoccio, the Library Media Specialist, Tamara Yingling and Kim Becker, the Library Assistants.

Regularly scheduled classes are taught by the Library Media Specialist during the majority of each school day. However, students may come to the library individually during the school day for research or book selection if arrangements have been made between the Library Staff and classroom teacher in advance.

Please feel free to contact us by phone at (518) 765-2382, Ext. 520 or by email at

Arappoccio@vcsdk12.org.

We will make sure to get back to you in a timely manner.

We look forward to seeing you in the library!

Loan Policy

Students are allotted 10 minutes at the end of each library class to browse books and check-out.

Students in **Kindergarten** may check out one book each week.

Students in **First through Fourth Grade** may check out two books each week.

Students in **Fifth Grade** may check out up to three books each week.

Mathematics

Our mathematics program follows the scope and sequence of the skills recommended by New York State and the common core. Our main text is a series by Houghton-Mifflin. A variety of other materials are used to introduce, supplement, reinforce and enrich concepts.

Music

At each level the music program meets the four standards: creating, performing, and participating in the arts, knowing and using arts materials and resources, responding to and analyzing works of art, and understanding cultural dimensions and contributions of the arts. Tonal and rhythm work are key components of the program.

Health/Safety Program

The goals of our health program are to develop an appreciation for mental, physical, social and emotional health, to develop an understanding of the human body and to promote an understanding of personality development and the influence this development has on behavior. Topics presented at K-5 include: development and maintenance of a healthy body, development of a healthy personality, bullying (and effective anti-bullying strategies), bicycle and fire safety, the human body and its systems, dental health, personal safety, nutrition, substance abuse, and first aid.

Physical Education

The physical education department offers a much diversified program. Each student develops wide and varied interests. Competitive, lifetime and team building activities are incorporated into the program.

The focus is based not only on skills and fitness but attitude, preparation, cooperation, leadership, conflict resolution and sportsmanship.

Some of the activities included are: the mile run, beep test, fitness building games; variations of dodge ball and capture the flag activities, circus arts, obstacle course, Project Adventure and rhythms and dance. Traditional competitive sports are also included.

To be excused from physical education for medical reasons for any extended period, the student must supply a signed note from the physicians to be given to the school nurse. This note should include the reason and length of time the child will be excused and when he/she can return to full activity. A parental request for excuse from physical education class for up to one week will be honored.

OT/PT

The occupational and physical therapists identify those children with fine and gross motor needs in order to provide therapy for them. The therapists will contact parents of those students. Periodic communications with parents are made to apprise them of their child's progress in the program.

Reading

The Voorheesville Central School District uses a Balanced Literacy approach to teach reading and writing. Instruction occurs in whole class, small group, and one-on-one settings. Instruction is based upon continual assessments throughout the year. Such assessments include but are not limited to: New York State Assessments, Reading Running Records, and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills).

Speech

The speech and language pathologist identifies those children with speech and hearing needs in order to provide therapy. The speech pathologist will contact parents of those students. Periodic communications with parents are made to apprise them of their child's progress in the program.

Writing

Of the many skills learned in school, writing is one of the most vital. It is a communication skill that is very useful in a great many careers and in personal life. Writing is an integral part of the total program of every classroom. From writing words and simple sentences at the primary level to letters, outlines, reports, and stories at the intermediate level, the process becomes increasingly complex.

Writing involves thinking, planning, drafting, revising, and a final product. Within this process punctuation, grammar and spelling are also emphasized.

Remediation

Additional instruction in all subject areas is available for students who need help mastering the material. These needs may be determined through assessments or through teacher recommendation. If your child is selected for one of these programs, you will be given detailed information.

Resource Room

The resource room provides services for students with specific learning disabilities. Students who attend the resource room have been identified by the CSE (Committee on Special Education). The resource room concept allows children to receive the major part of their education in the regular classroom, yet spend some instructional time in a setting where specialized individualized help can be provided. Curriculum modifications and alternative testing strategies are available to assist each student in reaching his/her potential. The resource room teacher is trained and certified in special education.

School Psychologist

The school psychologist provides psychological and testing services to students. Services include:

- Assessment of individual children who are thought to be experiencing learning, behavioral, social, and/or emotional difficulties that interfere with school success.

- Counseling, behavioral consultation with teachers and parents, interviewing, etc.
- Consultation with school personnel and parents through conferences and committee involvement.

A child can be referred to the school psychologist by a parent, teacher, guidance counselor or administrator. Parental permission is obtained before formal services are begun. If parents wish to refer their child, they can contact the school psychologist directly. Informal discussions are often helpful in determining the nature of the referral.

If significant concerns exist about the development of a pre-school child, the school psychologist can serve as a resource in securing appropriate services.

Science

The goals of our Science program are to develop an awareness of science in our society, foster scientific literacy and curiosity, provide awareness of career opportunities in science related areas, and to foster an appreciation for the qualities of nature. Topics explored during the elementary school experience include: weather, solar system, rocks and minerals, electricity, our five senses, magnetism, and ecology. The science learning lab is used by all students throughout the 6 day cycle. This experience further reinforces concepts taught in class.

Social Studies

The content of our social studies program at Voorheesville is based upon the scope and sequence of the K-12 social studies program in New York State. Ten key concept goals are stressed throughout the K-5 curriculum. The standards include: change, citizenship, culture, empathy, environment, identity, interdependence, nation, state, scarcity, and technology.

As each child progresses through the grade levels, the curriculum presented begins with the development of the child as an individual and spirals to encompass global understanding of all cultures.

**More information about state standards can be found at www.nysed.gov. **

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTING

All students in grades K-5 will receive three (3) report cards. Parents will have the opportunity for two parent conference. Conferences will be scheduled for November and March.

PTA

The Voorheesville Parent Teacher Association is a local unit affiliated with the New York State and National PTA. It has focused on the areas of advocacy, service, and education. Along with numerous other special programs and activities, PTA regularly sponsors Parents as Reading Partners Program, homeroom parent services, school photographs, book fairs, Campbell soup labels collection, registration for Target, hospitality committees, and scholarship awards. Please contact Jennifer Hampston, PTA President, for more information.

Because public education is a joint effort of teachers, students, school board members, parents, and school administrators, there is great value in this organization which brings these people together regularly. Your participation is encouraged. Call 765-2382 for more information!

VOLUNTEERS

The Voorheesville Elementary School has an active volunteer program and your participation is encouraged. Parents and community members of all ages are serving as volunteers giving time and talent to help children. Volunteers help to improve instruction by giving individual help to students under the direction of a teacher, and they enrich the curriculum by adding their experiences, interests, and talents to those of the teachers. Volunteers can help in non-teaching jobs as well. Some of these activities may include typing, making charts, checking library books, making phone calls and working on special projects. Please join us!

REGISTRATION

All new resident school-aged children and kindergarten children must be registered for school. A new pupil's immunization records must be submitted and students entering grades 1-5 should have their records from the previous school forwarded.

ROLES

Voorheesville Elementary School aims to develop the curiosity, the desire, and the skills necessary for learning in an atmosphere which reflects and fosters a belief in the worth of each individual. We believe that all students, regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, handicapping condition or economic and social circumstances, have the right to a quality education. We strive to provide a setting that is positive and challenging and that takes into consideration each individual's interest, goals, present abilities, and future needs.

It is our hope that each individual student experiences a successful school career where he/she can develop to his/her fullest. However, the school cannot reach this goal alone. Students, parents, teachers and other school personnel have a joint responsibility for educating our students and have specific roles to play in this development.

The Role of the Students

- Accept responsibility for their actions.
- Respect the rights of others, including the right to an education in a place that is orderly and disciplined.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Take advantage of the academic opportunities offered at school.
- Support and participate in school activities.
- Maintain habits of personal cleanliness.
- Respect school property.
- Maintain respectful relationships with teachers and administrators.
- Contribute to keeping an atmosphere that creates mutual respect for all.
- Be informed about their rights and responsibilities, follow all rules and regulations of this policy, and report any infractions to the proper authorities.

The Role of the Parent or Guardian

- Send their child to school as required by New York State law.
- Insist on prompt and regular attendance.
- Make certain that all absences are properly excused.
- Provide for their child's health, personal cleanliness, acceptable grooming, and suitable dress.

TEXTBOOKS/SUPPLIES

All textbooks, workbooks and supplies directly related to instruction are furnished by the school. Pupils are expected to supply their own paper, pencils and crayons. Families in need should contact the principal. Students should use covers for their textbooks to ensure safe keeping. Replacement costs will be charged for textbooks that are damaged, excessively worn, or lost.

TRANSFERS

Parents moving from the Voorheesville area should notify both the school secretary and the teacher as soon as possible. The school needs to prepare information for the new school. This information will be mailed to the child's new school upon written request by the parents and request from the new school.

TRANSPORTATION

Each student is expected to ride his/her assigned bus each day. If, however, a student needs to ride a bus other than his/her own, a note must be sent to the homeroom teacher. The note should include:

- The address of the destination and the name of the person responsible for the child's safekeeping.
- Date.

Please do not invite a number of children to ride a certain bus to your home without consulting the office at least a day in advance. We will check the availability of bus seats with the transportation supervisor.

Late buses run from the elementary school each Tuesday through Thursday, typically for students in grades 4 and 5. These buses leave the school at 3:45 pm. These are provided for those students participating in extra-curricular activities or clubs, or for students meeting with teachers for academic assistance. Parental permission must be given for students remaining for late buses.

Bus safety is the responsibility of the driver as well as the student. Proper behavior is expected from all students riding school buses. Students are to remain seated without rowdiness or boisterous talking while the bus is in motion and are expected to show respect to the bus driver as well as to their fellow students. In addition, please be sure that:

- No food or beverage be consumed on a bus.
- Children bring no items larger than they can place on their laps.
- Glass, breakable or valuable items as well as radios, iPods and other potential distractions should not be carried on the bus.

Morning kindergarten students ride the regular K-5 buses to school and PM kindergarten students ride the regular bus home from school. Special buses are provided at noon for take home and pick up. Postcards with bus routes are mailed in August.