

**Chestnut
Ridge
Elementary
Schools**

(Pre-K to Grade 2)

**Student-Parent
Handbook**



"Mastering Our Fundamentals"

2018 - 2019

Central Elementary

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The Mission

The mission of the Chestnut Ridge School District is to create a learning environment where every student will achieve their highest level of proficiency of academic standards, skills, concepts, and knowledge necessary to become responsible, productive, and competitive members of society.

The Vision

The Chestnut Ridge School District envisions an effective learning environment for all children. An environment where leadership, professional development, technology integration, community connectedness, academic excellence, pride, respect, and cooperation all connect to enrich the learning climate.

Welcome to the elementary school. The Chestnut Ridge School

District has served the families of our community for over 50 years.

Founded in 1952, the district has a history of community-based, quality education. Our elementary student body of around 450 students with an average class size of 22 allows our teachers to connect individually with each student, and makes every family part of a true school community.

Central Elementary is our primary school with pre-kindergarten through second grade students. A dedicated faculty provides our children with an academically rich and demanding instructional program. The PTO actively supports all student and staff endeavors. Parents can be counted upon to join in our many activities. Our students flourish because of this strong sense of community that is shared by our students, parents, staff, and neighbors.

SECURITY NOTIFICATION

All persons having any reason to enter our elementary school buildings must report to the main office. If you have an appointment to visit a classroom during instruction time, you must first sign the school register in the office where you will be given a visitor's badge to wear during your visit. Before leaving, you will need to return to the office to sign out. You will not need a visitor's badge if you are visiting the office area only. Teachers and staff members are instructed to question any non-employee without a visitor's badge.

Parents are encouraged to visit school and actively participate in the education of their children. We request that parents avoid conferences with the teacher during such visits, but rather schedule conferences for a mutually convenient time.

If you need to give your child a message, medication, homework, lunch money, supplies, etc., the office staff will take care of this for you in order to limit classroom interruptions and compromise security.

If you are going to pick up your child during school hours, please wait in the office. The office staff will call for your child. The teaching staff will not release a student to anyone other than office personnel.

We are taking these steps only to protect the safety and welfare of your children. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The students in our school deserve to learn and play in the safest and finest education environment we can provide. Accordingly, all staff and students must make every effort to observe that students in our school have the right to:

- learn in a disruption-free environment;
- know what is expected of them at all times in every area of the school;
- be protected from physical harm;
- be protected from verbal abuse;
- have their positive behavior recognized;
- have their personal property protected;
- have their concerns heard;
- and be treated with kindness and caring.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP THEIR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

Parents can help make school a successful experience for their children. Consider the following recommendations to help your child have a good school year.

- 1) Start each school day right. A calm beginning at home makes the school day much better.
- 2) Be sure that your child gets at least eight hours of sleep and provide him or her with a good breakfast. A child cannot concentrate on what the teacher is trying to teach if he or she is tired or hungry.
- 3) Praise your child each day for something he or she has done. Have a special place to display work or other papers your child brings home from school.
- 4) Encourage your child to think of school as exciting and important. Attitudes developed during the elementary school years will set the tone for your child's entire school experience.
- 5) Listen attentively to your child as he or she talks about school experiences.
- 6) Keep the lines of communication open between you and your child's teacher. Inform the teacher of any family situations which could affect your child's behavior or performance.
- 7) Do not compare your child's progress with that of brothers and sisters or other children. Each child's abilities are different, and each has different strengths and weaknesses.

8) Show an interest in school through visiting and participating in PTO activities.

9) See that your child attends school regularly and arrives on time each day.

ADDRESS CHANGES

In the interest of students, it is critical that the school is able to contact parents at any time the child is at school. Therefore, it is essential that the school have on file parents' current address and home and business telephone numbers. Emergency contacts with telephone numbers are needed in case a parent cannot be reached. If parents move or change jobs, they should contact the school immediately to update this important information.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR "SCHOOL AGE STUDENTS"

Age: Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1. First grade students must be 6 years old on or before September 1. A copy of the child's proof of age must be supplied at the time of enrollment.

Custody: If any person other than a natural parent has custody of a child, proof of legal custody or guardianship must be provided before the child may be enrolled in a Chestnut Ridge school.

Proof of Residence: Proof of residence **must** be furnished at the time of registration. Examples of proof of residence are home mortgage or warranty deed documents, vehicle tag transfer receipts, utility bills, bank statements, charge account statements, moving company receipts, health insurance documents, federal/state tax returns, documents from a governmental agency, driver's license, and voter registration information. A notarized statement from another adult living at this residence is not ordinarily sufficient evidence. Proof of residence is subject to investigation and may be required at any time.

Homeless Students: In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Chestnut Ridge School District is attempting to identify all children within the district that may be experiencing homelessness. The term homeless children and youth is defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes individuals:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
- Living in a motel, hotel, trailer park or campground due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings;

- Living in substandard housing (no running water or working utilities, infestations, etc.).

Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance with free school lunch, school supplies/materials, tutoring and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin throughout the duration of their homeless episode.

If you believe your child(ren) may qualify for this service, please contact Sandy Miller at extension 2001. If your living situation changes during the school year, and you and your children become homeless, please be sure to contact the school. We will work with you so that your child(ren)'s education is disrupted as little as possible.

For Pre-K information about admission requirements call 839-3077

ARRIVING AT SCHOOL

DO NOT DROP OFF STUDENTS BEFORE 7:30 - Building doors are unlocked at 7:30 A.M.

Students who are brought to school by transportation other than the school bus should not arrive earlier than 7:30 a.m. There is no adult supervision until this time. No students will be admitted.

At Central Elementary: After 7:30 a.m. parents should drop students off by the cafeteria door on the High School side of the building. Use the road that has been extended completely around Central. Please enter at the modular classroom parking lot entrance, drive slowly around to the back of the school. Drop off your student(s) and exit back to route 56 near the High School. The road around Central is one lane. Please take your turn and do not pass other parents unloading students. If you want to park in the rear of the building, be sure your car is out of the normal traffic flow so other parents can safely drop off their children. **DO NOT DROP OFF STUDENTS IN FRONT OF CENTRAL ELEMENTARY BEFORE 8:15. THIS AREA IS RESERVED FOR BUS AND EMPLOYEE TRAFFIC ONLY.** After 8:15 you may drop off you child in front of the school.

Preschool arrival: Preschool students are to follow the procedures above. Preschool students are greeted in the lobby by a preschool staff member. (See the section for student dismissal for pick up procedures.)

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

In accordance with EPA regulations, this school has been inspected for friable (easily crumbled) materials that contain asbestos. Friable asbestos containing material may cause health problems.

Friable asbestos containing material is present in Chestnut Ridge Elementary Schools. A record of the inspection, a diagram of the locations of friable asbestos containing

materials, and a copy of relevant EPA regulations are available in Chestnut Ridge Central Elementary School, office of the Director of Elementary Education.

NOTE: All asbestos except for that in the floor tile has been removed from the elementary schools.

ATTENDANCE

There is a high correlation between student attendance and student achievement. The assumption is that the student must have a consistently high level of attendance for learning to occur. Chestnut Ridge School District has developed a set of procedures to be followed. Each time a child is absent from school, the parents must send in a written excuse explaining why the child was absent. The absence must be for a legal reason such as illness, quarantine, recovery from an accident, court attendance, death in the family, and approved family educational trips. Absences are generally recognized as cumulative or non-cumulative. Cumulative absences refer to days that contribute to the allotted number of days a student may be absent, which is ten. Non-cumulative absences are absences that do not contribute to the specified ten days.

Cumulative Absences:

Excused Absences Include:

Parent Excused Absences:

1. Ten (10) parent excuses are permitted per year, after which a doctor's excuse is required.
2. Make up work must be completed in the same amount of days missed (if a student missed two (2) school days, he/she has two (2) school days to complete missed work.)

Medical Excused Absences:

1. Allowable, but once twenty-five (25) days have been missed, Student Support Team *will meet to establish the future educational plans for the student. **Student Support Team Meetings may consist of any or all of the following members: building administrator, guidance counselor, school nurse, teacher(s), health and social services coordinator, local outside agencies, student, and parent(s)/guardian(s).*
2. Homework and school work may be made up. It is the student's responsibility to make up the work. It must be made up in the same amount of time as the absence.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absences Include:

Illegal Absences:

1. Any day for which the school does not receive a written excuse
2. Any day not excused by a doctor after the initial ten days of absence
3. Any day a student misses school for a reason other than the legal reasons listed above
4. On 3rd illegal absence, a Student Attendance Improvement (SAI) Conference is scheduled to develop a School Attendance Improvement (SAI) Plan. **SAI Plans and conferences may consist of any or all of the following members: building administrator, guidance counselor, school nurse, teacher(s), health and social services coordinator, local outside agencies, students, and parent(s)/guardian(s).*
5. NO MAKE UP WORK ALLOWED. FAILURE FOR ASSIGNMENTS DUE ON THESE DAYS.
6. Remember all absences count toward the twenty-five (25) day count. Students may be in jeopardy of being retained or losing credits for the year.
 - A. For high school students, after twenty (20) days, time missed will need to be remediated in order to retain credits for the year. At twenty-five (25) days, credits will be lost for the year.
 - B. For middle and elementary school students, meetings may be held to determine retention status.

Non-Cumulative Absences:

1. Suspensions from school
2. Illness verified by a doctor's note submitted within three days of a student's return
3. Death in the family (from date of death until two days after the funeral, unless otherwise authorized by building administrator)
4. Religious release time/holidays
5. School sponsored activities
6. Pre-approved college visits (up to three days)
7. Family emergencies during which a student must be with a parent away from the school district
8. **Educational Field Trip/Vacation: (see policy below)**

Educational Trips:

Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule family vacations with the School District Calendar in mind to ensure that students attend school a maximum number of days.

1. **Students at the elementary level will be permitted to take educational trips not to exceed five (5) days per year.**
2. The application for permission for student excusal due to an educational trip must be submitted to the principal ten (10) school days prior to the trip. The form can be obtained from the District web page or at the school's office. The principal may grant an excused absent for a request that comes in after the trip if there are unexpected factors.
3. Any days taken beyond the maximum of five (5) days permitted for educational trips in a given year may be considered unexcused and unlawful for students under the age of seventeen (17) and unexcused for students seventeen (17) years of age and over. **Appropriate legal action may be taken where applicable.**
4. The following will be taken into consideration by the principal in granting permission for the trip:
 - a. The student's academic standing
 - b. The student's attendance record
 - c. The effect the absence will have on the student's educational welfare
 - d. Exceptionality of the request
5. **Parental requests which go beyond the numbers of days allowed must first be approved by the building principal and then receive approval of the Superintendent.**
6. It will be the parent/student's responsibility to contact teachers and make up assignments missed.
7. Parents/guardians are discouraged from taking trips during the state's testing periods. (see family vacations)

For further clarification of the state and school district's policy regarding attendance, please visit our website and review policy #204 student attendance.

Calculating Attendance

Students and their parents/guardians hold the primary responsibility for school attendance and for following the attendance policy. We ask for the cooperation of both students and parents/guardians in these matters so that the student can receive the best education possible.

Regular attendance shall be defined as attending school for the full day on each day during which school is in session. Students are expected to attend all sessions unless properly excused by school authorities. The first academic classes start at 8:30. The

official school day will be from **8:15 AM until 3:00 PM**. The school day will be divided into ten periods. The periods are as follows:

Period 1 8:30 9:09 -- Period 2 9:09 9:48 -- Period 3 9:48 10:27 -- Period 4 10:27 11:06

Period 5 11:06 11:45 -- Period 6 11:45 12:24 -- Period 7 12:24 1:03 -- Period 8 1:03 1:42

Period 9 1:42 2:21 -- Period 10 2:21 3:00

Attendance will be calculated to the tenth of a day. If a student would arrive at school at 9:23 he/she would be absent two periods. If this would occur four more times this would be ten periods or one full day. If a student would leave school at 2:25 he/she would be absent one period. If this would occur nine more times this would be ten periods or one full day. A written excuse must be turned in when a student arrives after 8:30 AM or leaves before the first bus call in the afternoon.

Outstanding Attendance Certificates will be awarded to those students who have less than one full day (9 periods or less) of absence, *for any reason*, in a school year.

Perfect Attendance Certificates will be awarded to those students who have been in attendance for every minute or the year.

The first step to success in school is getting there. It is an obligation of student, parent and school authorities to insist upon good attendance. It is also the LAW.

PRESCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Preschool students are expected to maintain an 85% attendance rate. Excuses need to be returned after an absence and will be considered either a legal absence or an illegal absence. Failure to maintain an average attendance of 85% could jeopardize your child's preschool enrollment.

BIRTHDAYS

Kindergarten and Pre-K may have a birthday celebration once each month for the students that have birthdays within the month. These parties must follow the District's board policy #246 school wellness.

BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Incredible Years program (Central Elementary) is used as an anti-bullying curriculum.

Students are exposed to many different classroom activities and discussions to inform students on how to properly and effectively eliminate and prevent instances of bullying

from occurring. Open-ended conversations and teaching decision making skills are among the different methods utilized to combat bullying.

Nationally these programs have shown significant reductions in reports of students being bullied and bullying others, and have been awarded recognition as positive pro social instruments.

BUS BEHAVIOR

Student behavior before boarding or leaving the bus is the responsibility of the student, parents or legal guardians. Students are encouraged to arrive at their bus stop just prior to the bus arriving. Preschool parents are asked to accompany their child while waiting for the school bus. Arriving too early invites problems to occur. Riding the bus is a privilege. The head teacher or Director of Elementary Education may choose to suspend a student from riding the bus when any of the bus rules have been violated. Parents will be notified when a student has been suspended. In the event of a bus suspension, students are still required to attend school. Failure to attend school will result in an unexcused absence. All bus drivers will enforce the following rules:

1. Students should be seated in their assigned seats immediately upon entering the bus.
2. No pupil shall stand or move from one seat to another while the bus is moving or without authorization from the bus driver when the bus is stopped.
3. Loud, boisterous profane language and indecent conduct will not be tolerated.
4. Students are not allowed to tease and bother each other.
5. Students are not allowed to open doors and windows without permission.
6. All students are to be at their pick-up spots on time and should not keep the bus waiting.
7. Students are not allowed to throw any objects in or out of the school bus.
8. No eating or drinking allowed on the bus. Exceptions may be allowed on field trips.
9. Radios, noisemakers and toys may not be used by students while riding the bus.
10. General school rules apply to the students while riding the bus.
11. Disrespect to the bus driver will not be tolerated.

Any student who plans to go home on a different bus MUST bring a note from his/her parent or guardian to the office for approval. Approval is not automatic because many busses are filled to legal capacity. If there is no note, the student will be sent home on their regular bus. **If you call our office to make a change to your child's already scheduled dismissal procedure, you MUST call by 1:00PM. Any bus passes or pickup room changes may not be honored after this time.**

Preschool children are expected to follow the directions and requests of the bus driver and to comply with the rules listed above.

*Please read with your child the discipline section in this handbook.

We must all work hard to make the trips to and from school as safe as possible.

CHILD ABUSE

Pennsylvania law requires that school employees report to the Children Services any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in prosecution of the school employee. Once a report has been made, official representatives of Children Services have the right to and may come to the school to interview the child. Parental permission need not be obtained by the department.

COMPUTERS

Parents/guardians must sign and return the computer usage agreement form before students are allowed to use the Internet. The Internet is a valuable instructional tool. Students will follow the computer usage policy. Failure to do so will result in restricted usage or complete denial of computer privileges. Our school operates a Facebook page which we ask for your separate signed permission prior to posting information or photos. This page is primarily used for announcements and positive recognition of our staff and students.

COUNSELOR

Chestnut Ridge elementary school has an elementary school counselor. The counselor works with individual students, small groups, and classes. A student may be referred to the counselor by a teacher, parent, or by self-referral. If a parent would like their child to talk to the counselor, they should call the school or send a note to the teacher, the counselor, or the principal.

Parental permission is not required in order to see the counselor or to participate in classroom guidance activities. Please call the school counselor or Director of Elementary Education for more information regarding school counseling services.

CUSTODY If custody changes after enrollment, documents should be provided to the school as soon as possible after the change. Students cannot be withdrawn without this information.

Court orders that specifically authorize or direct the release of custody by the school system will be followed. The school system will not interject itself in a custody or visitation dispute between two parents. The school system will give to non-custodial parents, upon request, all information required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act unless there is a valid court order directing the school system not to divulge such information. If such an order exists, a certified copy must be delivered to the Office of the Director of Elementary Education.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

A parent requesting an early dismissal for a student must send a note to the school in the morning of the requested dismissal. The note should state the reason and time of the requested dismissal as well as the person picking up the student. Following this procedure should be a time saver for parents.

Check - Out Procedures During School Hours:

- If a student leaves during the school day, **parents must check him/her out in the office** . The student will then be summoned to the office via the intercom.
- The parent or guardian must have **some form of identification**.
- Please do not go directly to the classroom or remove your child from the playground during recess.

If a student is only to be released in the custody of a certain parent or guardian, a court order document must be on file with the school office.

Parents Picking Up Students After School

Parents picking up students after school must send a note to the school in the morning stating that the student will not be riding the bus and will be picked up. The note should also state the name of the person coming for the student. **If you call our office to make a change to your child's already scheduled dismissal procedure, you MUST call by 1:00PM. Any bus passes or pickup room changes may not be honored after this time.**

Central Elementary students **may not be picked up between 2:30 and 3:00** because of the buses loading in front of the building. If you need to pick up a student before 2:30 please park in front of the building and come to the office. After school pick up begins

at 3:00. Parents must use the parking lot behind the modular classroom. Enter the parking lot from route 56 and exit the same way. **Do not drive around the building. Children riding school vans are being loaded in the rear of the school by the cafeteria doors. Do not enter the flow of bus traffic in the parking lot in front of Central Elementary. Do not park in the large parking lot at the front of the school and walk through the bus traffic.** Please form a line at the right hand door (the one up the ramp) of the modular classroom. Students will be supervised in the modular classroom until they are signed out. Parents must sign their child out with the teachers on duty in that room. Children not picked up by 3:28 will be in the office.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

1ST Offense for drugs and alcohol on the property and used on the property:

- ** 5 days out of school suspension
- ** Referral to the school guidance counselor.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

The safety of your child is one of our greatest concerns. The school holds regular drills to teach pupils to respond calmly in the event of an emergency. Fire drills are conducted once each month, and a tornado drill is conducted once each year. Detailed escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. Each class has an escape route to an outside area a safe distance from the building.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

School will be in session unless the weather makes it dangerous for school buses to run.

Early Dismissal: If weather conditions become severe enough during the day to require buses to make their runs before the regularly scheduled time, each local radio and television station will be notified. Parents need to discuss in advance with their children what to do if an early dismissal requires procedures for arrival at home or pick up to be different than normal.

Cancellation: In the event school is to be canceled due to inclement weather or other emergencies, announcements will be made over radio and television.

If the decision to cancel school is made by 11 p.m., this announcement will be broadcast on the 11 p.m. television news. If the decision is made later than 11 p.m., then this information will be broadcast at or before 7 a.m. over WBFD-AM, WRAX-FM, and WAYC-AM in Bedford; WSKE-AM in Everett, WJAC-TV Channel 6 in Johnstown; and WTAJ-TV Channel 10 in Altoona. The television station in Johnstown is no longer connected with the radio station, and people who live near the Johnstown area should listen to WJAC-AM (850) or WKYE-FM (95) radio. We will also post this information on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/centralelementarylions.

You should also receive a phone call from the superintendent's office if school is canceled or delayed.

PRESCHOOL AND WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

Preschool students are to follow the announced schedule changes.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

The school must always be informed as to a parent/guardian's work telephone number or emergency number in the event a child becomes ill or is injured at school. Please remember to notify the school of any change of address or telephone number. **This is important. Please return the EMERGENCY CARD during the first week of school.**

FIELD TRIPS

Educational field trips to Central Pennsylvania locations are scheduled in conjunction with the PTO. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community and our state. Parents will receive notices of field trips well in advance of the scheduled trip and will be asked to sign a field trip permission form. Sometimes a small contribution may be requested to help defray costs. No student will be denied the opportunity to go on the field trip or penalized in any manner for economic reasons. However, a poor school discipline record could jeopardize field trip participation.

Field Trips Chaperones "Kindergarten to 2nd grade"

All chaperones must have PA Act 34 clearance, PA Act 151 clearance and FBI Act 114 clearance registered with the District Office at the Middle School. Obtaining clearances, including all costs, are the responsibility of the parent. **There must be one chaperone per every 10 children. All chaperones must ride the bus with the children. There must be at least one male to serve as a chaperone on each field trip. Standard field trip rules will be followed and enforced by all chaperones per applicable CRSD policies and guidelines.**

Grade level classroom teachers will serve as chaperones. There must be a District teacher/employee for each homeroom attending the field trip. Additional chaperones needed to meet the minimum requirement will be “parent chaperones” as selected per item 2 below. In the event there are not enough “parent chaperones” available to meet the minimum requirement, additional chaperones will be added on to as necessary in relationship to the circumstances, as designated by the Principal.

All “parent chaperones” must have state clearances registered with the Chestnut Ridge School District and will be assigned a group of specific students.

“Special chaperones” will be parents that have students with health concerns and may not necessarily have clearances. These parents will be with their child only and will not be assigned a group of students. These parents must provide their own transportation. Permission must be given by the Principal to be designated as a “special chaperone.”

If applicable, parent guests may accompany elementary field trips if tickets/seats are available and the venue is appropriate. Parent guests may be with their children only.

Parent Guests will not be able to ride the school bus with the children and chaperones

Any field trip that does not follow these guidelines must have prior approval of the Elementary Principal or the Superintendent of Schools.

FAMILY VACATIONS: SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTENDANCE CORRELATION

Sharing a family vacation is a great experience for students. However, parents and guardians should be aware that, when children miss school for vacations, the impact of lost classroom time cannot truly be measured - even if students take along books and complete assignments.

The faculty and administration encourage family closeness, and we support weekend excursions because they are excellent learning opportunities. We wish to ask your cooperation, however, in planning trips so that students do not miss school. Requests for and approval of vacations during the school year suggest that the issue of school absence for trips is acceptable. In fact, we discourage it and ask parents to plan vacations, if at all possible, so that children do not miss school.

GRADING SYSTEM

The school district uses nine week grading periods. Students will be graded based on their performance on the following: (1) class participation; (2) class assignments; (3) homework assignments; (4) tests and quizzes; and (5) special projects. More and more schools are moving to a skills based report card for the early elementary years. We are

looking at moving in that direction for our report card. This type of report card is sometimes called a “standards based report card.”

Pre K-4 report cards tell what skills a student has mastered. The report card is based on the Early Learning Standards. No letter grades are given to Pre K 4 students. The first report card of the year is reviewed at Parent Teacher Conferences in November.

Kindergarten report cards tell what skills a student has learned. A skills checklist is completed and sent home. No numerical grades are given to kindergarten students. Kindergarten has used a “standards-based” report card since the 2007-2008 school year.

First grade A standards-based report card is used in first grade. The skills reported will be aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. First grade students will also receive a traditional letter grade along with the standards-based report.

Second grade students receive a numerical grade in Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science & Health. Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education are graded with "O", "G", "S", or "U". Second grade students have their grades reported in the traditional way. They also have their skills evaluated as they relate to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards in Reading and Mathematics.

Numerical grades are equal to the following letter grades:

A+ = 99-100; A = 96-98; A- = 94-95; B+ = 92-93; B = 89-91; B- = 86-88;

C+ = 83-85; C = 79-82 C - = 76-78 D+ = 73-75; D = 69-72; D- = 65-68; F = 0-64

Parents of students in grades 1 through 4 may access their child's grades online. An access code and directions will be sent to parents. This code will allow parents to access their child's grades on “PowerSchool”. Parents will also be able to access attendance and lunch account information.

GUM CHEWING

The school has a NO GUM policy. Students are expected to follow this policy.

HEAD LICE

Because head lice are so easily spread from one child to another, children with head lice cannot remain at school. If a child has head lice, a parent will be asked to come to the school to get the child. The school nurse will provide information to the parent/guardian

regarding treatment. After treatment has been completed and head lice and nits have been removed from the head, the following procedures shall be implemented:

The students shall not attend classes or ride the bus until examined by the school nurse. After contacting the school nurse for an appointment, the parent/guardian shall accompany the student to school. If upon examination the student is found to have head lice or excessive nits, the student will be denied admission.

HEALTH SERVICES

The nurse is on duty during the regular school day. Unless there is an emergency, the student must be excused by the teacher to go to the nurse's office.

The nurse will decide if it is necessary for a student to be excused from school. If so, she will make the necessary arrangements to go home.

Parents will be contacted to pick up students who have:

- symptoms of a contagious condition
- head lice
- fever of 100 F or higher
- been to health room previously that day and has no improvement in symptoms
- vomited

The nurse will provide emergency first aid only. She will not diagnose or administer medication unless prescribed by a physician. For minor complaints of headache, stomachache, or nausea the condition will be assessed, temperature checked, and a trial rest period given. Tylenol may be administered as needed only with signed permission on the medication policy. * Requirements may vary for Pre-K students*

When it becomes necessary for a prescription medication to be given during school hours, the student must obtain an authorization form from the nurse or office. This form is to be signed by the parent or physician and must accompany the medication to the health room where the medication will be kept until it is time for it to be administered. Please see MEDICINE AT SCHOOL in this handbook.

Medications will be administered only if:

- medication policy and/or consent form is properly signed
- medicine is medically indicated
- medicine is in the original container and clearly marked

HOMEWORK

The educational philosophy of the elementary school is to teach the fundamentals of reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics and their application in all subject areas. Teachers provide instruction to each student so that mastery of the subject matter can occur. However, homework is a vital part of this learning process since instruction often needs to be reinforced with additional practice outside the classroom.

Understanding that the nature of the subject matter being taught lends itself to different "types" of homework, the following are examples of homework assignments given to students at Chestnut Ridge Elementary:

1. independent practice of newly learned skills
2. expansion activities beyond the subject matter presented in class
3. introduction of new materials (such as the reading of a number of pages in the text with a stated purpose for the reading)
4. independent student projects that are approved by the teacher

The learning process is a joint effort. Teachers, students and their parents/guardians share in the responsibility for the students' mastery of the subject matter. Homework and/or individual study units will be discussed fully in the classroom so that parents are not required to give instruction. The teacher will provide the instruction. However, parents should establish a learning environment in the home by:

- showing a positive attitude toward education;
- taking an interest in your child's school work;
- establishing good study conditions;
- monitoring your child's study habits;
- and exercising patience as you encourage your child.

Learning is not merely the completion of assignments, but it is the understanding of ideas and the ability to utilize the materials covered in the assignment. Since the educational process is a cooperative effort, parents should encourage and support good study habits and the daily completion of homework assignments. Students must assume responsibility for their homework just as they will assume job responsibility in the future.

INSURANCE

The Chestnut Ridge Board of Education does not provide accident or medical insurance coverage for students. School accident insurance is available at the beginning of the school year for a reasonable fee. Both school day coverage and 24-hour coverage are

available. Accident claim forms may be obtained from the school office for this insurance, but the parent is responsible for filing claims.

LOST AND FOUND

Each school has a "Lost and Found" area where lost items are turned in and may be claimed. Coats, sweaters, and caps should be labeled with student's name. Any items in the "Lost and Found" which are not claimed by the end of the school year will be discarded.

LUNCH TIME

Dining Room Discipline: Life-long social skills are stressed in the dining room as they are throughout the school. Conversational talking will be permitted with those seated next to or across from the student. Simple rules of respect and manners will be observed. This would include walking to and from the table, staying seated while eating, cleaning up after yourself, etc. There is to be no pop or soft drinks brought from home. Fruit drinks are acceptable. Trading food from child to child has proven to be unsanitary and will not be allowed.

Peanut Allergies

In the interest of safety, we are requesting that parents not provide their children with snack time and lunch items containing peanut butter or peanut products. Please read package labels carefully to work at protecting the health of the students with allergies. We have a number of students who because of an allergy to peanuts, are placed at serious risk by being exposed to these products. Keep in mind that some students may be allergic to foods containing nuts. Please consult your child's teacher before bringing any food items to share with the class.

Peanut allergy is one of the most severe food allergies often causing a life-threatening reaction called anaphylactic shock. Anaphylactic shock involves sudden low blood pressure, extreme swelling and difficulty breathing which can be fatal. If your child is extremely sensitive to these foods please let us know and provide the school with the necessary medication that is needed to counteract a reaction.

LUNCH PROGRAM

The Chestnut Ridge School District operates a lunch program in each school. A hot meal is served daily, and all meals are nutritionally balanced.

Meal Prices Grades K – 2

Student Breakfast \$ 1.25

Reduced Price Student Breakfast \$.30

Adult Breakfast is \$ 2.35

Student Lunch \$1.90

Reduced Price Student Lunches \$.40

Adult Lunch is \$3.40

(Paying for Lunch)

Chestnut Ridge elementary school cafeterias use a computerized Point of Sale (POS) system to purchase meals and ala carte. Every student has an account in the cafeteria that can be accessed by their student PIN (Personal Identification Number).

Students are encouraged to bring a check made payable to: CRSD

Cash is acceptable but CHECKS are preferred. All deposits are to be taken to the cafeteria and given to the cashier. Prepayment then will be entered into the student's account. Money can be deposited anytime for any amount—weekly, monthly or annually. The cancelled check will serve as your receipt. Deposit envelopes are available at each cashier station for cafeteria staff to properly credit your child's account.

Students are permitted to pay cash in line at the time of the purchase.

All elementary school students will always be provided a meal during scheduled meal service times.

Free and reduced price lunches are provided for those students who qualify. Applications for the free/reduced price lunch program are sent home with every student at the beginning of the school year and are available from the school office at any time.

Within the first 20 days of each new school year, new meal applications for free or reduced meal eligibility are required to be submitted to the school district's food service office. They can be submitted any time throughout the school year, if there is a change in household income that may change the eligibility status for free or reduced meals.

Parents are invited to join us for lunch anytime!

If parents would like to eat lunch with their child at school, they **must notify the school office by 9:00 a.m.** so that the lunch count can be increased. However, on special days there may be more requests than the cafeteria can handle. On these days we may have to turn down requests for lunch. A guest table will be set up for any parent wishing to eat lunch with their child.

MAKE-UP WORK

Make-up tests or class work are the responsibility of the student and the teacher. Generally, the teacher should allow the student as much time to make up work as the time the student was absent. Make-up work is not given to students who are illegally absent.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

All medications, prescription and non-prescription (over-the-counter or OTC), must be brought to school by parents or responsible adult and given to the school nursing staff or office staff to be kept in the nurse's office and dispensed by nursing staff or staff designated by the Director of Elementary Education.

Prescription medicine must have the pharmacy label on the container. OTC meds must be in the original container. All medicines (prescription and OTC) must be accompanied by a written order from the physician and parent. Any changes in dosage or schedule of a prescription medicine must be accompanied by an order from the physician.

Unused medication must be picked up at the end of the school year by a parent. Any medicine not picked up will be discarded.

Non prescription medicine supplied by the school will only be given if necessary, but only if circled on the Emergency Card and signed and dated by a parent or guardian. The Emergency Card is only valid for one year.

PRESCHOOL STUDENTS AND MEDICATION

Prescription medicines will only be given to Pre-K students with a physician and parent authorization. NO over-the-counter (OTC) medicine will be given to Pre-K students without a written physicians order.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY 03/24/98 (REVISED)

Chestnut Ridge School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability and/or possession of a GED as opposed to a high school education in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans With Disabilities Act. For information regarding Civil Rights or grievance procedures, contact the appropriate building principal or the Civil Rights Coordinator for Title IX, Chestnut Ridge School District, (814) 839-4195. For information regarding services, activities and facilities that are accessible to

and usable by disabled persons, contact the Office of the Superintendent, Chestnut Ridge School District, (814) 839-4195.

NOTIFICATION OF PICTURES OF STUDENTS

Unless the parent or legal guardian request otherwise, the news media may take pictures and/or make audio-visual recordings of students during sporting events, awards ceremonies, and general interest events. Pictures and/or audio-visual presentations of students may appear in the school's newsletter or on the school web site. If the parent or legal guardian wishes to prohibit the taking of any picture or the making of any audio-visual recording of their child by the news media or school system, notification must be filed, in writing, within 30 days of the date of enrollment or the beginning of the school year. A notification form is placed inside of the back cover of this handbook. **Return this form only if you do not want your child's name or picture given to the media or placed on the school's web site. If you do not return this form, it is assumed that you give permission for your child's picture and/or media release to be taken.** Pictures and/or audio-visual recording that identify students as receiving special education instruction will not be allowed without prior approval. **Pre-K will have a more detailed photo release form to sign and return.**

PAPERS SENT HOME

Check daily with your child to see if any information has been sent home by either the office or classroom teacher. Even if your child has no homework, the teacher or the office may have sent a memo or an announcement that should be read by parents. It is especially important to check book bags on the weekend even if your child has not received any homework assignments. You may be requested to sign papers for prompt return to the teacher. Your signature does not indicate approval of the quality of the work or grade given, but merely that you have seen the papers and are aware of your child's performance. If you have questions, please contact your child's teacher who will be happy to answer them.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to contact the school to arrange a parent-teacher conference when the parent would like more information on his or her child's school performance or when the child is experiencing problems at school. Parent-teacher conferences can be a productive way of helping to improve student performance. If there is any major change in a student's home environment that may affect his or her school performance, parents should notify the child's teacher by sending a note or scheduling a conference. To schedule conferences, parents should contact the school office or the teacher.

Teachers are not available for parent-teacher conferences during instructional time.

Teachers typically have a half-hour planning/conference time each day, and conferences may be scheduled for this time.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) at their child's school. These organizations provide opportunities for parents and teachers to plan and work together for the betterment of the school and for the benefit of students. Parent-teacher groups hold regular meetings in the schools.

PARTIES

""Classroom Parties and Celebrations:

Parent/Guardians shall be informed through newsletters or other efficient communication methods that foods/beverages should only be brought in when requested for scheduled parties.

Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods (maximum 2-3 items) containing added sugar as the primary ingredient (e.g. cupcakes, cookies) and will provide the following:

- Fresh fruits/vegetables: and
- Water, 100 percent juice, 100 percent juice diluted with water, low-fat milk or nonfat milk.

When possible, foods/beverages for parties and celebrations shall be provided by the food service department to help prevent food safety and allergy concerns.

Food celebrations shall not occur until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the last lunch period.

Shared Classroom Snacks:

Students are encouraged to bring a USDA Smart Snack.

The district shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverage alternatives to parents/guardian and staff, which may be posted via the district website, student handbooks, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.""

All classroom parties must comply with the school district's board policy #246 School Wellness.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

While school accommodates a wide variety of individual tastes, appropriate dress helps promote a positive school atmosphere and is encouraged. Students, with the assistance and guidance of their parents, have the responsibility to keep themselves, hair, and clothes neat and clean.

Guidelines for School Dress:

Short shorts, halter tops, muscle shirts, cut-off tee shirts with inappropriate messages and any other revealing articles of clothing will not be permitted. The following types of messages, symbols and types of clothing will be excluded from what is considered acceptable:

- Articles displaying indecent messages, pictures, slogans or advertisements.
- Articles promoting drugs, tobacco, alcohol or other dangerous chemical products.
- Articles displaying violence.
- Articles which could be dangerous to students or property.
- Articles displaying symbols of death.

If any of these are worn to school, parents will be notified and asked to bring a suitable change of clothes to school.

The use of make-up, perfume, and temporary hair dye is discouraged at the elementary level.

In addition, common courtesy dictates that students will remove all hats upon entering the building and those hats will remain off until they have left the building. Exceptions will be made for special theme days such as "Hat Day".

We would like to remind you that children need proper footwear to get the most out of scheduled gym activities and recess periods. It is impractical for them to play and participate safely in sandals, clogs, leather-soled dress shoes, and heels. Flip flops are discouraged.

Unless weather is unusually severe, children will be outside for recess. Therefore, it is your responsibility to dress them appropriately. This includes hats, gloves/mittens, boots, etc. **Pre-K has an outdoor temperature guideline for both hot and cold days. They will be outside twice a day for a ½ hour weather permitting. **

Thank you for helping maintain a positive school climate.

PETS

No pets of any kind are allowed at school without permission from the principal or head teacher. Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or activity if this has been approved by the principal or head teacher. Under no circumstance is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school. Animals wild or tame are not allowed on the school bus.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Students will be given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America during each school day. If a parent does not wish their child to participate in reciting the Pledge, they should send a note to the teacher. If a student does not participate, he/she may either stand or remain seated respectfully.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

The Chestnut Ridge Board of Education has established requirements for promotion from one grade level to the next. At any time during the school year when it is determined that a student may not be promoted, the teacher will notify the student's parents. The teacher will schedule a parent-teacher or parent-teacher-principal conference and/or request an SST meeting. ***(please see STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM in this handbook)***

If parents would like more information about promotion criteria or about retention, they should contact the Office of the Principal at 839-4195 ext. 4442.

RECESS

Whenever weather permits, recess will be held outdoors. Make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

RECESS RULES

*Outside Recess

1. Student must play on designated areas.
2. Only one student per swing at a time.
3. Students must stay off the top of cross bars.
4. Students must sit down to slide. Walking up the slide is not permitted. No sliding down the brace poles.

5. No playing in water or mud.
6. Games may be played on the grass fields with supervisor's permission.
7. ABSOLUTELY NO WRESTLING, ROUGH PLAYING. Students are to keep their hands to themselves.
8. Students are not allowed to pick up, kick or throw rocks or snowballs.
9. No snacks, candy, gum or food on the playground.
10. No standing by doorways without permission. No jumping over bushes or hanging/climbing on trees.
11. When the bell rings, playing is to stop. All students are to line up in their designated area.

REPORT CARDS

The report card is a record of progress in each subject area. The school year is divided into nine (9) week reporting periods. At the end of each nine week period, a report card is issued to the student to take home.

Pre-K 4, and Kindergarten students take report cards home at the end of each nine week period. The first report card will come with Parent Conference Day. The kindergarten report card is a record of the skills the student has learned. It does not report grades, but identifies the skills taught and the progress made toward mastering those skills.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Inappropriate oral, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature may be defined as sexual harassment and, as such, shall be fully investigated. A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.

It is important for parents to help the school explain to young students the importance of reporting all incidents that may relate to sexual harassment. It is equally important that parents help the school system explain to students the absolute prohibition against such acts and the consequences for acting in any manner that may be interpreted as harassing. Any student or parent who alleges sexual harassment may complain directly to the principal, head teacher, guidance counselor, or teacher.

SOLICITATION OF STUDENTS OR EMPLOYEES

Solicitation of students or employees on the part of a business, industry, organization, or individual for the purpose of selling a product, service, or membership to students, their parents, or employees is prohibited on school grounds. The selling of any article or subscription or any other activity undertaken for the purpose of raising funds or collecting monies in or through the school is prohibited unless the particular activity is approved by the Director of Elementary Education. **Please do not allow your child to bring articles to school to be sold to students or employees.**

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education services are provided by the Chestnut Ridge School District to meet the needs of students with disabilities with specialized instruction. Programs are provided for elementary students in all areas of disability: intellectual disabilities, specific learning disability, emotional/behavioral disorders, severe emotional/behavioral disorders, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, visual impairment, hearing impairment, speech/language impairment, and autism. Resource and self-contained programs are available and provided based on the identified needs of each student. For more information regarding special education programs, contact the Director of Special Education at 839-4195 ext 3334. **Special Education services for Pre-K students are provided by Early Intervention. Services are delivered at school during the preschool day.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

Students who experience academic or behavior/social difficulties have access to support in regular education. The Chestnut Ridge Elementary Student Support Team (SST) assists parents and classroom teachers in assessing a child's difficulties, planning interventions to help the student succeed at school. The team assists in implementing strategies that are designed to produce successful results for the identified student. Referrals may be made by classroom teachers or parents. If you have any questions about the SST program, please contact the **Elementary Counselor at ext. 4444.**

TELEPHONE CALLS

Parents are requested to give their child all instructions prior to coming to school. In the event of an emergency, the school office will relay messages to students.

Students are restricted from using the telephone unless it is of **EXTREME** importance. Students will not be permitted to call home if they have forgotten to bring their homework assignments to school.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are the property of the school and are loaned for student use during the school year. Students are expected to handle books carefully and to keep them in good

condition. Students will be required to pay the cost of any textbooks which are lost or damaged.

TOYS AND OTHER PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Toys or personal belongings such as radios, tape players, electronic games, trading cards, and cameras may not be brought to school or transported on the bus unless they have been approved by the head teacher in consultation with the parents. If such items are brought to school, they may be collected and kept in the school office until parents come to claim them. The primary reason for not allowing electronic items is because of the cost of the items.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Parents requesting student transportation changes to day care or a sitter on a routine basis must make arrangements with the elementary office and have final approval from the Building Principal. Some buses will fill to capacity therefore not all request will be granted.

Daily bus changes will be accepted only for emergency situations. It is the parent responsibility to transport their child to routine family or social functions.

VISITORS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school for conferences and school activities. Please remember that all visitors to the school must report to the school office when they arrive. Students may not bring relatives or friends to school as "spend-the-day" visitors without special permission from the Building Principal.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

Any student who possesses, uses, or threatens use of a real, look-alike weapon, explosive, or flammable material in a school building, in a school vehicle, on district property **may be expelled for one year**, unless determined otherwise by the Superintendent of Schools. Objects that may be considered weapons include, but are not limited to: firearms, guns, explosives, bombs, **knives**, chains, needles and clubs.

PLEASE CAUTION YOUR CHILD CONCERNING WEAPONS AND TOYS THAT RESEMBLE WEAPONS. POSSESSION OF THESE ITEMS WILL RESULT IN SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL. PLEASE READ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CODE WITH YOUR CHILD.

WITHDRAWALS

When a student is withdrawn from school during the school year, a parent or guardian must complete withdrawal procedures through the school office. At the time of withdrawal, students must return all books and other school-owned items. Those items not returned must be paid for. Payment of school-related expenses, such as lunch charges, for which the student is responsible, must be completed at the time of withdrawal. When possible, the school should be given a minimum of two days notice prior to the student's withdrawal.

Chestnut Ridge School District

3281 Valley Road
Fishertown, Pa 15539
Phone: 814-839-4195

Student Media/Material Release Form

Dear Parents:

To publicize the achievements of our students and the great work they perform, we may on occasion publish students' names, photographs, or achievements in our school publications or release the same information to local media (newspapers and television). In some instances, students may even be interviewed and televised on local stations or images could be posted on the schools web site.

Please complete the lower portion of this form and return it to the office of the school where your child is attending. We are asking you to consent to and authorize the Chestnut Ridge School District, or its' authorized agent(s), to take audio/video footage and print images of your child. You will also give the Chestnut Ridge School District permission to use, modify, reproduce, distribute, and publicly perform and display any and all portions of any such audio/video footage and print images taken of your child, and any stories, letters or other writings, artwork, projects, or other materials produced through curricular and extracurricular activities in any manner and media now known or developed in the future.

You may rescind this permission at any time in writing, addressed to the building principal of the school where your child attends. This action will not affect any prior use of material as outlined above.

Cut along this line and return form to your child's teacher

Today's Date _____

Students Name _____ Grade _____

Please check one

_____ **I do not** want my child's photo, name, and/or achievements published in school or local newspapers, television, and/or posed on the schools web site as stated above.

_____ **I do** give permission for my child's photo, name, and/or achievements to be published in school and/or local newspapers, television, and/or posted on the school's web site as stated above. This includes our district's facebook page which is solely used for positive recognition of our students and staff.

_____ **I do** give permission to have my child's picture in the Elementary Yearbook.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____