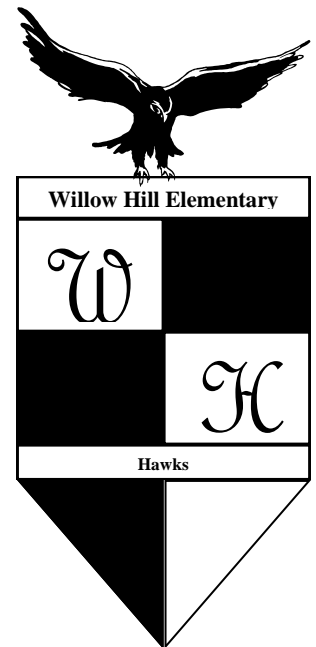


*Willow Hill Elementary School
1700 Coolidge Avenue
Willow Grove, PA 19090*



Willow Hill Elementary School Handbook

September 2009



Our Vision

The vision of Willow Hill Elementary School is to facilitate a challenging, standards-based educational system wherein all students who enter our learning environment leave to continue their academic path having acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to complete proficient or advanced work on grade level. In partnership with families and community, we will create a stimulating atmosphere in which strengths are enriched; deficiencies are addressed; new concepts are introduced; strong, compassionate character is developed; and all children are connected, accepted, and valued. Relationships among staff, students, and families are enhanced through actions of mutual respect, cooperation, and understanding.

“We must speak for the vision until the vision can speak for itself.” - Banks

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ABOUT WILLOW HILL

Welcome to Willow Hill Elementary School

We are a dynamic and culturally diverse learning community located approximately 5 miles from Philadelphia in a suburban residential area. Originally constructed in 1965, and renovated in 2004 – 2006, Willow Hill is home to more than 330 students in grades K-6 from various cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds.

At Willow Hill, we have dedicated teachers, specialists, support staff, and administrators who possess a sincere faith in student achievement and public education. In a quest to ensure that all students receive equitable opportunities to learn and excel, we work progressively to support our children academically, socially, and emotionally.

Additionally, Willow Hill is truly fortunate to have proactive and dedicated parents who work diligently to support Willow Hill's vision. They help to maintain a framework and an environment that enables our diverse community to continually prosper, evolve, and flourish.

Willow Hill offers an intense and rigorous curriculum. Our programs are research-based and scientifically sound. Furthermore, our curriculum reflects the standards and assessment anchors outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Our continuous use of research-based tools to identify what students know and what students do not know, enables us to maximize instructional time by making informed instructional decisions. We carefully monitor student progress and, when necessary, implement targeted, data-driven adjustments to help students achieve. With this mission in mind, coupled with continued parental support, we look forward to another successful year!

2009-2010 STAFF ASSIGNMENTS

MR. DAMON JORDAN	PRINCIPAL	<u>OFFICE (101 M)</u>
MS. CHERYL ALEXION	ECS	123
DR. SUZANNE GRIM	PSYCHOLOGIST	124
MS. LINDA DEBOW	KINDERGARTEN	149
MS. BITNA LEE	KINDERGARTEN	151
MS. SHALON DOCTOR	GRADE 1	153
MS. ERIN MCGINLEY	GRADE 1	154
MS. SUSANNE SHORDAY	GRADE 2	158
MS. SUSAN HERRMANN	GRADE 2	157

MS. GENINA ETLEN	GRADE 3	146
MS. A.WHITE-BURROUGHS	GRADE 3	147
MR. RICHARD WELSH	GRADE 4	112
MS. SUSAN SKILTON	GRADE 4	114
MS. LIDUINA MCDEVITT	GRADE 5	129
MS. ARLENE THOMAS	GRADE 5	128
MR. JAMES LESHER	GRADE 6	135
MS. JEAN SNEADE	GRADE 6	136
MS. DONNA WURTZEL	LS	145
MS. MELANIE GRUBB	LS	115
MS. JANICE JEDLINSKI	LS	133
MS. KIMBERLY SESLOW	LS	148
MS. MERLE HUGHES	LS	119
MS. JULIE SUDLER	LS	119
MS. MAURA O'CONNELL	SPEECH	103B
MS. JOYCE SZAYNA	READING	137
MS. ROBIN WATTS	READING	156
MS. LINDA PAGE	READING	117
MS. ALICE ELDREDGE	NURSE	102
MS. MEGAN CONDON	GYM	127
MR. DENNIS WARD	GYM	127
MS. M. JOHNSON	ART	159
MS. PATRICIA FORREST	ART	159
MR. SETH SHIRK	MUSIC	110
MS. JESSICA WELDON MS. NANCY RAKUS	OFFICE	101-A

MS. MARYANNE ROSS	COMPASS COMPUTER LAB	113
MAIN COMPUTER LAB		134
MS. PATRICE HARRIS	LIBRARY	120
OT/PT		104B
SGI		119
PTO		118
MS. BARBARA ERDMANIS - MCIU - AS		155

ABINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIST SERV

Abington School District has created a list serv notification for which you can sign up if you have access to a computer. The list serv will send you summaries of school board meetings, weather updates, closing information, communications from the Superintendent, as well as specific Willow Hill Elementary School information.

Signing up is easy and a notification message will be sent to you via email. To sign up, please follow the instructions below:

- Go to the Abington School District web site (www.abington.k12.pa.us).
- In the top red banner click "Our Schools."
- Select "Willow Hill;" this will take you to the Willow Hill home page.
- Select the "Subscribe to E-Mail List" link.
- Select the <mailto:wh-subscribe@lists.abington.k12.pa.us> link.
- Send the subscription email.
- Reply to the confirmation email that you are sent. Your subscription is complete.

Please consider taking advantage of this form of communication as it will keep you informed and updated on the latest information. **Every Friday, activities for the following week are listed and sent to all subscribers.**

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

Response to Intervention (Rtl) refers to a process which emphasizes how well students respond to specific teaching strategies and subsequent redirection of instruction. Targeted services and multi-leveled interventions are implemented early and regularly to help students make progress. The Rtl approach eliminates a "wait-to-fail" situation because students receive assistance promptly within the general education setting. Willow Hill began full implementation in January 2009 and we look forward to our first full year of integrating the Rtl model in the area of communication arts. Please visit our website for additional information.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between home and school is essential to the success of each child. Read carefully the advice and information provided over the next few pages. As situations or needs occur, please refer to these positive communication strategies.

Talking with your child's teacher is important.

Teachers are always happy to talk with you. When you wish to talk with your child's teacher, please call or make an appointment. The best times to contact teachers are before school and after school. Please feel free to leave a voice mail message. All calls will be returned within a reasonable amount of time.

When the bell rings at 8:50 AM, teachers have a responsibility to focus their attention on the children. This is not a time for parents to visit. Even a "brief" talk with a parent interferes with this responsibility. If there is something that cannot wait, please send a note with your child or visit the office. We will ensure that the teacher receives your message or request.

Communicating to the Staff:

Many of your messages involve transportation, homework completion, questions related to classroom events, or a "heads up" on family matters. Listed below are the forms of communication available to you.

- *Note* – Sending a brief note is a good way to communicate with your child's teacher. Teachers usually ask the children at the beginning of the day for any "notes to the teacher." Having your note early in the day assures prompt action or response.
- *Email* – Teachers check their email usually once a day (before or after school). Please recognize that teachers have been directed to not check or respond to email during instructional time! If you need a response or action within a school day, do not rely on email. Teachers will try to respond within 24 hours of an email.
- *Phone call* – The secretaries at Willow Hill will be glad to take a message for your child's teacher. Please note: Secretaries will not interrupt a teacher during instructional time. Your child's teacher will return a phone call within 24 hours (providing he/she is in school). If your message to the teacher requests a call back prior to the end of the school day, please inform the secretary of the urgency. If you have not heard from the teacher after 24 hours, please call the office and notify the secretary to remind the teacher.
- *Voicemail* – If you dial a teacher's extension during instructional time, you will be directed to his/her voice mail. The teacher will try to respond within 24 hours of your message.

Communicating Concerns to the Staff:

Get the details! Take a few minutes to discuss the situation with your child before calling the school. Ask questions such as:

- ❖ Who was involved in the situation?
- ❖ Where and when did it occur?
- ❖ Who was the closest adult to the situation?
- ❖ Were there any witnesses? Who are they?
- ❖ What happened prior to the situation?
- ❖ Is there something you could have done to prevent the situation?
- ❖ Did you tell an adult? If so, whom?
- ❖ Did you visit the nurse?

Once you have the details, call the school. The secretary will record for the school administrators all the information you provide. The situation will be investigated promptly. You will receive a return phone call from either the classroom teacher or an administrator.

Communication from the School:

News and Events – Parent Information Bulletins will be sent home approximately every six weeks. They will highlight important dates, curriculum issues and student accomplishments. In addition, please occasionally check the school's website for revisions to the calendar of events.

Curriculum Information

- “Family Letters” are the communication tools of our Everyday Mathematics Program. Teachers send these correspondences home at the beginning of each new unit of study. The letters include the skills and algorithms introduced in the math unit and the answers to the Home/Study Links (homework sheets) for the unit. Another helpful resource for parents is the Student Reference Book which is available in Grades 1-6. Students may take them home regularly to assist with homework.
- “Home School Connection Letters” are integrated within our new communication arts program. Additional information concerning the distribution of these materials is forthcoming.

If you have any questions related to the curriculum or assessments administered to your child, please contact his/her teacher. In some cases the teacher will refer your questions or concerns to our Curriculum Specialist. In these rare instances, you will receive a response directly from her.

CURRICULUM

- The Macmillan McGraw Hill Reading Program is used in Grades Kindergarten to Six. Reading and writing skills are developed as part of an integrated approach to communication arts. Willow Hill enjoys the services of reading specialists who work with students and teachers to promote student success in reading and writing.
- The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, Everyday Mathematics, is used for mathematics instruction in Grades Kindergarten through Six. This program is among the best of the new generation of mathematics programs developed to address the standards and curriculum guidelines established by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- The Science and Technology for Children Program, developed by the National Science Resource Center at the Smithsonian with the support of the National Science Foundation, is used in Grades One through Six. Kindergarten will use curriculum developed by FOSS. These hands-on science programs are articulated with national science standards and Project 2061 standards.
- The Macmillan McGraw Hill social studies program is a textbook based program that offers instruction in culture, civics, economics, geography, and history. It focuses on people and places from across Pennsylvania, the United States, and the World.
- Library and information services are provided through our school librarian, programs, and dedicated facilities for all students at Willow Hill. Online sources and the internet are available.
- Computer instruction is provided through fully equipped, networked computer labs and computers in our classrooms. Willow Hill's technology also includes sets of mobile laptops and a Smart Board located in the computer lab. In addition, each classroom is equipped with an interactive Promethean Board.
- Health education is taught in all elementary grades and includes age appropriate instruction on the consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol abuse. The DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program and AIDS instruction are offered to students in Grade six.
- The School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) Program and Character Education Curriculum are designed to enable students to make good choices and to develop positive character traits.
- Instruction in art, general music, library and physical education is provided on a weekly basis through instructional specialists. A choral music program is offered to students in Grades Five and Six.
- A developmental program of instrumental music instruction is offered to elementary students. Instruction on string instruments begins in Grade three and instruction on brass, percussion, and woodwind instruments begins in Grade four.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students are evaluated by teachers in various subject areas. Teachers establish their expectations for the lessons taught and determine the evaluation that students receive for their work. Students are usually graded on competency, productivity, and demonstrated performance of newly acquired skills.

The State of Pennsylvania reports progress in mastery of academic standards using the descriptors Advanced, Proficient, Basic, and Below Basic. Improving academic performance for all children is an essential part of Pennsylvania’s standards. Similar to Pennsylvania’s academic standards, Abington School District has established academic standards that define what students should know and be able to demonstrate at specific grade levels. The four performance levels illustrate students’ achievement of the Academic Standards. The state descriptors are defined as follows:

Level	Description of Academic Performance for this Level
Advanced	The Advanced Level reflects superior academic performance. Advanced work indicates an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. Students working at the advanced level are functioning above the expectations for the grade level.
Proficient	The Proficient Level reflects satisfactory academic performance. Proficient work indicates a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. Students working at the proficient level are functioning at the expectations for the grade level.
Basic	Basic work indicates a partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. This work is approaching, but has not reached, satisfactory performance. There is a need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. Students working at a basic level have made some progress but have not yet met the expectations for the grade level.
Below Basic	Below Basic work indicates little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. There is a major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. Students working at a below basic level are working significantly below expectations for the grade level.
N/A	Not assessed during the present marking period.

ACADEMIC SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND THE CURRICULUM

Willow Hill’s “core team” meets weekly to review and analyze all curriculum-based and formative assessments in reading and mathematics. Classroom teachers also keep the team abreast of behavioral concerns, attendance/tardiness issues, and parent requests.

Using all available data, the core team determines those students in need of remediation, enrichment, and/or acceleration. Core team members include the principal, curriculum specialist, school psychologist, reading specialist, school nurse, and the speech and language teacher.

Grade levels meet every six weeks with the “core team” to review DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) and other pertinent assessment results regarding progress monitoring and benchmarks.

Extra-curricular activities are offered throughout the year. Below are some of the activities that are traditionally available to our students. However, grade level restrictions may apply and the implementation of clubs/activities are subject to change.

- ❖ Reading Olympics
- ❖ Willow Hill Stompers
- ❖ Student Council
- ❖ Hip-Hop Club
- ❖ Knitting Club
- ❖ PSSA Prep Club
- ❖ Intramural Basketball
- ❖ Hand Bell Choir
- ❖ Art Club
- ❖ FOCUS (Focus On Curriculum Using Strategies) Club
- ❖ Book Club
- ❖ School Play
- ❖ Service Learning
- ❖ Student Council
- ❖ Track and Field
- ❖ Nutrition Club
- ❖ Study Buddies

ENRICHMENT

First and foremost, opportunities for enrichment are offered on a continual basis within each classroom as a part of effective instructional practices. Additionally, outlined below are some specific enrichment programs offered throughout the year.

Grades 1 and 2

Willow Hill Elementary enrichment students in Grades 1 and 2 participate in the Pennsylvania Statistics Poster Contest. They review basic math skills and are introduced to ways to enrich their mental math abilities. Geometry and measurement are also emphasized throughout the program. Students learn about ways to collect and graph data and to provide summaries of their data using Microsoft PowerPoint.

To obtain additional information about the Pennsylvania Statistics Poster Contest, feel free to view <http://www.math.iup.edu/paposters/> for more information.

Grade 3

Willow Hill Elementary's third grade enrichment groups participate in a math contest called Mathfax. Mathfax was created for one primary purpose: to sharpen the participating students' test-taking math skills that are needed to do well on college entrance exams. Additional information about Mathfax can be obtained by visiting www.Educontest.com.

Grades 4-6

Willow Hill Elementary's enrichment students in Grades 4-6 participate in the Math Olympiad competition. This world-wide competition consists of 5 monthly timed tests starting in November. The math problems are designed to help students develop the ability to think mathematically, rather than to introduce more advanced or unusual topics.

Math Olympiad was created to stimulate enthusiasm and a love for mathematics as well as:

- To introduce important mathematical concepts
- To teach major strategies for problem solving
- To develop mathematical flexibility
- To foster mathematical creativity and ingenuity
- To provide for the satisfaction, joy, and thrill of meeting challenges

Grade 6

Willow Hill's Grade 6 students often participate in the Pennsylvania Math League contest as well. Students in each league compete for the highest scores, while schools compete for the highest team score: the total of the top 5 scores in each school. Questions may cover: basic topics, exponents, fractions, reciprocals, decimals, rates, ratios, percents, angle measurement, perimeter, area, circumference, basic roots, patterns, sequences, integers, triangles, right angles, and other topics, depending on the grade level. These contests encourage a variety of problem-solving skills and methods to improve students' abilities and understanding of mathematical connections while having fun.

Contest Format: Each contest consists of 40 multiple-choice questions to be completed in 30 minutes. On each 3-page contest, the questions on the first page are generally straightforward, those on the second page are moderate in difficulty, and those on the third page are more difficult.

Additional information about the Pennsylvania Math League can be obtained by visiting <http://www.mathleague.com/contests.htm>.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Safety is our #1 priority during arrival and dismissal. To ensure that every child is safe, support staff is assigned to monitor areas and to escort students off school grounds. Please review the procedures carefully with your child and reinforce the importance of

following the procedures on a daily basis. Any change in your child's arrival/dismissal procedures must be indicated in writing and delivered to the office staff.

Walker – Any child who walks off school grounds to either

- A. Go home
- B. To meet a parent parked off school grounds

Buser – Any child who takes the bus home is considered a buser. If your child is assigned to a bus, please have him/her use this mode of transportation. A small percentage of our students are assigned to bus transportation, and this is a safe and efficient means of dismissal. Students may be assigned bus seats at **ANY** point during the school year. A student may not ride a bus unless so assigned by Transportation. A buser may not decide to not ride a bus unless there is a note from a parent to that effect.

Students who have been assigned bussing are urged to ride their assigned bus to and from school to help minimize car traffic around the school. Walkers are to stay on sidewalk areas and obey school and crossing guard personnel.

- ALL bus students will unload and load in the front loop of the school.
- Absolutely no car traffic is permitted in the bus zone at arrival/dismissal times. No vehicles will be permitted in this area during the school day.
- Supervisory personnel will be on duty in the bus zone to assist students when unloading the buses and to ensure their safety into the building.
- At dismissal, school personnel will be on duty throughout the hallways and in the bus loading area to assist students and ensure their safety.
- For safety and security reasons, parents and guardians, and visitors are not permitted in the hallways or in the bus loading zone at any time.

Parent Pickup – For your child to be considered a parent pickup, you must drive to or walk on school grounds. Remember: If you wait off school grounds for your child, he/she is a walker, not a parent pickup.

ARRIVAL: 8:30 – 8:50 a.m. – Supervision of the children by support staff begins at 8:30 a.m. Children should not arrive at school prior to 8:30 a.m.

Fair Weather Arrival

BUS STUDENTS

All bus students unload in the front the building at the main entrance. Breakfast students enter the cafeteria through the main entrance. All remaining bus students proceed to the playground using the sidewalk parallel to the primary wing. Students are not allowed to proceed to the playground via the main staff parking lot. Support staff and the Elementary Curriculum Specialist provide supervision during arrival.

PARENT DROP OFF

Parents must either park their vehicle in the designated spaces on Coolidge Avenue and escort their child to the playground area or use the drop-off circle to deliver students to the playground. **Please do not park your car along the drop-off circle as this poses a safety hazard.** In addition, parent drop-off is prohibited in the main staff parking lot due to safety regulations.

Classroom teachers escort students to their respective classrooms at 8:50 a.m. If you arrive after 8:50 a.m. you must sign in your child at the office. Your child will receive a late pass indicating reason for tardiness.

Students in grades K-3 will line up on the primary playground (playground closest to Coolidge Avenue). Students in grades 4-6 will line up on the intermediate playground.

Inclement Weather Arrival

All students should enter through the main entrance and proceed to the gymnasium. There is additional supervision provided in the gymnasium by the ECS and support staff.

DISMISSAL

KINDERGARTEN and GRADE ONE

All kindergarten classrooms have direct access to the primary playground. Kindergarten teachers are instructed to ensure that each student is received by the appropriate adult. First grade teachers dismiss their students via the primary playground, and they ensure that students are received by the appropriate adult as well. Please arrive on time to pick up your child from school. Staff members escort kindergarten and first grade busers to the gym to wait in assigned areas.

ALL STUDENTS

1. Students will remain in their classrooms until the 3:20 p.m. dismissal bell.
2. Teachers will escort their students to the primary and intermediate playgrounds.
3. If you are picking up your child, please meet him/her on the primary playground.
4. Walkers should go directly home. Students are not permitted to remain on school grounds to play unless supervised by a parent or involved in an after school activity.
5. There should be no eating of food/candy while waiting for or riding the bus.
6. Students waiting for a bus will sit in the correct bus line and follow proper bus dismissal procedures.
7. Only in the case of an emergency may a walker ride a bus or a buser walk home with another student. The Parents must provide a note or call the office prior to dismissal to inform the school of the emergency circumstances and then the change must be approved by the Transportation Department. Please do not send an email! Buses cannot be used to transport children to play dates.

SAFETY

Please do **NOT** walk your child to his/her classroom. The safety of all children attending our school is of the utmost importance. When parents enter the building to drop off or pick up their children, it is difficult for staff to easily distinguish between who is and who is not a legitimate caregiver. This could present a safety risk for children. When the only adults in the hallways are staff, we can immediately respond to unauthorized visitors. Therefore, in the interests of safety and security all exterior doors are locked.

Our safety and traffic procedures will be carefully monitored and adjusted, if necessary. They have been established for the safety of our students – not for convenience. We thank our families in advance for their cooperation, support, and patience in helping to provide safe, orderly arrival and dismissal procedures for our students.

MORNING AND AFTERCARE

Morning and Aftercare is provided by the Abington YMCA at Willow Hill. The school personnel do not make arrangements for a child's participation. Parents interested in the service should contact the YMCA at (215) 884-9622. ext.1853.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is required of all students enrolled in the school during the days and hours that the school is in session. The following conditions constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Personal illness
2. Quarantine of the individual or home
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Exceptional, urgent reasons – must pertain to student
5. Religious holiday
6. Suspension from school
7. Required court appearance
8. In the case of the exceptional student (Special Education), where absence is caused by or directly related to the student's exceptionality.
9. Religious instruction – at the written request of a parent, students may be excused for up to 36 hours of religious instruction per school year.

Parents must report their child's absence. When reporting your child's absence, please call Willow Hill before 9:15 a.m. at (215) 657-3800, select the Child Check Menu and leave the following information on the tape: child's name, your name, teacher's name, date(s) of absence, and the reason for the absence. If you do not report your child's absence, a member of our staff will use the telephone numbers you provided on the emergency card to locate your child. This is a procedure designed for your child's safety. If a telephone call has not been received for a child recorded as absent by the teacher, the school will attempt to locate the child through telephone calls to numbers previously secured from the parent.

Should you have the Call Intercept/Block function on your telephone, please make sure that it recognizes the school numbers. It is hoped that, should a child not reach school for some reason, an early determination of his or her whereabouts can be made. Keep the office updated with any telephone number changes.

Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments for their children outside of the instructional day. The district firmly believes that there is a high correlation between class attendance and student achievement. The majority of what is learned in school involves direct instruction by a teacher; the interaction between teacher and student, and the interaction among students. These activities occur in school and are missed by a student who is absent from school. What is missed cannot be made up through homework or extra assignments. Therefore, if a student is absent three consecutive days or has absences exceeding 15% of the class time, the teacher will refer the student's name to the office for further investigation. Following each absence, parents are to provide a written excuse note indicating the reason for the child's absence (this is in addition to calling the school on the day of the absence). The school district also supplies Excuse for Absence cards which are available in the office. Unexcused absences include such reasons as missing the bus, family vacations, or failure to provide a written excuse note upon the student's return to school. After three days of unexcused absence, a warning notice will be sent to the parents or guardian. With the next unexcused absence, a criminal complaint will be filed without warning with the District Justice for court action.

Parents may request assignments for students who are absent by calling the school no later than 10:00 a.m. for same day pick up. Homework may be picked up at 2:45 p.m.

BIRTHDAYS

Parents may send a small treat to be distributed at 2:45 p.m. **No sheet cakes, ice cream, balloons, treat bags, candles, or flowers are to be delivered to school.** We request that deliveries be made to the office before 9:00 a.m. to avoid disruption to the educational program. If you plan to send a small treat, please arrange a specific date with your child's teacher. **Additionally, parents must check with their child's teacher about specific food allergies prior to sending any treats to school.** Birthday celebrations may only occur between 2:45 and 3:15 p.m. Birthday invitations are not to be distributed during school time.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Children who ride buses are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner as not to endanger themselves, their peers, or the safe operation of the bus. A student may be suspended from bus transportation by the principal for disciplinary reasons. In that case the parents would be responsible for the pupil's transportation.

All students must ride the bus to which they have been assigned, both to and from school daily. Due to busing capacity, we are unable to grant any requests for students to ride another bus. No student assigned to a bus is permitted to

walk home. A written request from a parent or guardian is required before a child will be allowed to walk to a friend's house.

CAFETERIA

The Abington School District provides a nutritious lunch in each cafeteria. Menus are planned by the district's Food Services Manager to fulfill nutritional requirements as specified by federal regulations. Each month the children are given a printed menu to take home which lists the offerings for the month. These menus are also available on our website.

The price of a complete lunch, which includes white milk, is \$2.25; milk alone is \$.55. Other items such as pretzel rods, cookies, ice cream, etc. are available during lunch at an additional cost. Eligibility forms for free/reduced lunch are included in a mailing. Please submit these as soon as possible as these requests must be processed. Anyone receiving this benefit in the past year stays on automatically through September. **Unless an application is received, your child loses eligibility on September 30.** Please note it may take as long as 5 days to process an application. Should your circumstances change during the year, simply contact the office for another form. The regular cost of breakfast is \$1.00. Breakfast is served from 8:30 – 8:50 a.m. Free or reduced rates also pertain to our breakfast program.

Recess teachers supervise the cafeteria. Students will be directed by the staff in manners pertaining to: traffic, clean-up operations, disposal of trash, general behavior, and dismissals. Children are expected to conduct themselves in the same manner as would reasonably be expected of them in the dining room of their home. Failure to obey rules will result in the loss of cafeteria privileges. The rules related to student behavior in the cafeteria are included in the back section of this Handbook. It is important for parents to take the time to review them with their children.

We will also continue implementing the new computerized debit system in the cafeteria.

This system benefits you, your child, and the district in the following ways:

- ✚ Assures parents that money given to the student is used for a food purchase.
- ✚ Eliminates the need for students to carry cash on a daily basis.
- ✚ Increases the speed of the serving lines and gives students more time to eat and enjoy their lunch break.

Each student will have a personal identification number (PIN) and a picture identification assigned to him or her. The PIN number will be the same number the student uses in school at the library. When a student enters his or her PIN number at the PIN pad located on the serving line, his/her information, including picture, appears on the screen for the cashier to view. The picture will prevent another student from using your child's account.

All students will have an established debit account, although you will not be required to make advance payments. The system will also have the ability to act as a cash register and can accept cash payments on a daily basis.

If a student wishes to put money on the account in advance, the cost of the food purchase will automatically be deducted from the account without the need for cash. When there is a low balance, a memo will be given to students reminding them that the account needs to be replenished.

Please note that this system is very confidential. Every student will be required to enter his/her PIN number when making a purchase, regardless of meal status, thus insuring your child's privacy. In addition, dietary restrictions can be entered into the system, which will be displayed when the student enters the PIN number. You may also designate an amount your child is allowed to spend on snack items.

There is no limit on the amount of money that can be deposited into a debit account. We recommend that advance payments be made with a check payable to "Abington School District Food Service Fund." We also recommend a minimum payment to cover two weeks of meal or snack purchases.

CALENDAR

Each family should receive a district calendar before the first week of school. Please note the schedule of holidays and special events listed on the calendar. Important school events are also included in our Parent Information Bulletins. Please check the website for any changes to the school and/or district calendar.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School Board entrusts each student in the schools of this district with responsibility for the proper care of school property, school supplies, and necessary equipment. Students who willfully cause damage to school property will be subject to disciplinary measures. Students and others who damage or deface school property will be prosecuted and punished under law. Parents and guardians of students will be held accountable for students' actions.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS – WITHDRAWAL

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school office of any change in address or telephone numbers. In the event a child is moving out of the community, a note must be submitted to the office stating the reason for the withdrawal and when the anticipated move will transpire. In order for school records to be forwarded to the new school, it is necessary for parents to sign a release form in the school office prior to withdrawal. When a family moves out of the district, the child is considered a nonresident and is no longer eligible to attend the schools of Abington School District. If it is determined that a student is a nonresident, the child will not be allowed to return to school, and a bill will be issued for those days as a nonresident.

CHILD ABUSE

All Abington School District employees are required by law to report any suspicion of physical, mental, or sexual abuse. We will contact appropriate agencies and cooperate with them in accordance with the law.

DISMISSAL OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments for their children outside of the instructional day. In the rare event when students must be excused from school during school hours, students must present their teacher with a written request upon arrival at school. Students will only be released to parents or guardians of those individuals whose names appear on the Emergency Card on file in the school office. Any other person who wishes to take a child with them will have to wait for telephone verification by the parent or guardian. Students will be dismissed from the office only. **A parent who has sole custody of his or her children must have the appropriate court order on file in the school office.** When a parent or designee comes to pick up a child, the parent must show proper identification and sign the child out in the log located in office. The secretary will call for the student. Children will not be dismissed directly from the classroom. If the child later returns to school, please check in at the office in order to make school officials aware of the student's return. **This procedure is designed for the safety of our students and will be strictly enforced.**

EMERGENCY CARDS

Emergency cards are kept for each child, providing information to assist in locating parents, the family physician, or an emergency contact person. **Please be sure to provide a local number (i.e. a friend, neighbor nearby, etc.). It is important for you to keep this information up-to-date in the school.**

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Annually, parents or guardians are asked to complete the Weather Emergency Closing – Student Procedures card. You are asked to describe your family emergency plan in case of an early dismissal. Please recognize that the plan **CANNOT** be to call home or wait at school! When Abington schools are closed for inclement weather, parents will be contacted by telephone using the district's new Global Connect System. Announcements on KYW radio (1060 AM) will operate when adverse conditions such as severe storms, snow and ice cause the interruption or cancellation of classes. Abington School District's code number is **301**. When school is closed only "301" is announced. If there is a delayed opening, the announcement will indicate "301 – two hours late". Weather related closing or delayed opening information is also transmitted via cable television Channel 43 and AMP – 850. Television stations WPVI (Channel 6), WCAU (NBC 10) and Fox 29 have also implemented school closing alerts.

FIELD TRIPS

Teachers may schedule field trips during the school day from October through May when such a trip enhances the instructional program. Children must have a signed permission slip in order to participate in the activity. In the event a child does not go on the trip, he/she is required to attend school. Provisions will be made for the child to be placed in another class for the length of the trip.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS

Once a month during the school year in accordance to the law we will hold a fire drill. Other emergency and weather related drills are conducted as well. Children are expected to follow the directions of the principal and teachers during these drills. District and building safety plans have been developed to ensure student and staff safety.

HEALTH SERVICES

School nurses work under written order of the school physician for first aid. **School nurses are prohibited by law to diagnose injuries or illness. Please do not send your child to the nurse for a diagnosis.** She will only observe the condition and refer the child to a physician for medical advice. Decisions regarding the need for medical care rest with parents: therefore, parents are always contacted to take the child home or to the doctor as the need arises.

When a child shows signs of illness, he or she should remain at home. **The child should be kept at home for at least 24 hours after a temperature elevation has subsided.** Upon returning to school, the student must present a note from the parents or guardians stating the dates of and the reason for absence. A doctor's note is required after an absence of three days or more. If a child has had a communicable disease, please consult the district policy for readmission. Parents are urged to protect their children with the school insurance group plan. It is important that injuries and accidents in school, or on the way to and from school, are reported promptly to the nurse or school office. Athletic injuries, which occur during physical education classes, should be reported to the physical education teacher immediately. Parents can help with their children's health by establishing daily routines of cleanliness which should include checking for ticks and head lice.

Emergency cards are kept for each child in the nurse's office, providing information to assist in locating parents, the family physician, or an emergency contact person. Please provide telephone numbers for two local emergency contact persons. These contacts must be aware that they would need to be available to come and pick up your child in the event of illness/injury. It is important for parents to keep this information up-to-date in the school records. Children will only be sent home with people who have been listed as emergency contacts unless parents verify on the telephone that another designee will pick up the student on that day. **Should you have the Call Intercept/Block function on your telephone, please make sure that it recognizes the school numbers (215 and a 4 digit extension will come up).**

Medicines

The administration of medicine to students by the nurse may be authorized only in emergency cases and only upon the completion and filing of the forms giving permission to administer the medicine, as noted by the physician's and parent's instructions. **All medicines must come to school in the original container and be kept in the nurse's office.**

No medication is to be sent to school unless it is a prescription for special medical conditions. These emergency medications may be sent to school if the following conditions are met:

- A note from a doctor stating the name of the medication and how it is to be given (dosage, time to be given, reason for medication, length of time medication is to be administered). The medication must have the prescription label on the container.
- A note from the parent or guardian giving approval for the medication to be administered at the school.
- The medication will be kept in the nurse's office. Please notify the nurse of any changes in the medication.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITY DAYS

Four holiday activity days are scheduled for each grade level during the year. Special classroom events are scheduled for Halloween, Winter Party, Valentine's Day Party and end-of-the year picnic.

Parents organize the classroom activity. Parents interested in serving as room parents should attend the PTO organizational meeting. Supervised arrangements will be made for any student not celebrating a particular holiday for religious or personal reasons.

PTO

The Willow Hill PTO is sincerely interested in supporting the work of the school and its total program. All parents and guardians are encouraged to become members of the PTO and are invited to attend monthly meetings. These meetings are listed on the school calendar and are open to all parents and guardians. The Executive Board is the nucleus of the organization and consists of all officers and chairpersons of standing committees. The PTO sponsors many activities for students and their families throughout the year.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are designed to: enrich or extend what has been learned in the classroom; practice skills already learned; read for enrichment or enjoyment; conduct research as an outgrowth of classroom activities; and/or learn how to work independently. It is the student's responsibility to complete and submit all homework on

time. An established place in your home should be determined for completion of homework assignments and projects.

A good rule of thumb to use for the length of student homework assignments is 30-40 minutes for Grade Three, 40-50 minutes for Grade Four, and 50-60 minutes for Grades Five and Six. Teachers may, however, assign long-range projects throughout the year. Please check your child's homework assignment book daily.

LIBRARY-MEDIA CENTER

The Abington School District maintains comprehensive collections of print and non-print materials to enhance the children's instructional program. The schools have a modern library for student use that also has opportunities for students to use technology to obtain information from the Internet. Children are scheduled to visit the library on a weekly basis to be instructed in library science and/or to do research on special projects. Pupils will be encouraged to use the library for their own use as well as for resources relevant to classroom studies.

LOST AND FOUND

Willow Hill has a "Lost and Found" area located in the cafeteria. It is **strongly recommended** that all garments, instruments, lunch boxes, book bags, umbrellas and other personal items be **labeled with your child's name**. This insures a speedy return of valuable items.

PERSONAL ITEMS OF VALUE

Parents are urged to help their children understand that they are encouraged **NOT** to bring items of value (either monetary or sentimental) to school. **Although items such as cellular phones, cameras, etc. are allowed on school grounds, administration shall have the right to regulate the use of all electronic devices.** In addition, electronic devices must be turned off and stored when students are in classrooms and other locations where instruction is taking place. This includes restrooms, school vehicles, and in other areas where individuals would have a similar expectation of privacy.

PHOTOGRAPH POLICY

Each year a photo is taken of your child for our school records. We realize that there are reasons why a family might not want their child's picture published or shared with the public. As student pictures are included on district publications, our website, Channel 43, AMP850, and other visual transmission systems, photo release forms will be sent home during the first week of school. Please fill these forms out accordingly indicating whether or not you wish your child's photograph to be published by the school or district.

RECESS

Supervision is provided by recess staff. **As a matter of safety and for legal reasons parents are not to join students on the recess yard.**

A copy of the guidelines related to student behavior during playground and indoor recess is included in this Handbook. It is important for parents to take the time to review these guidelines with their children. Students cannot bring in their own toys, balls, or electronic devices.

REPORT CARDS AND CONFERENCES

Since the education of the child is of mutual concern to the parent and the school, open lines of communication are encouraged. Times are scheduled in the fall and in the spring for parents to have conferences with teachers. These conferences are designed to review student progress, discuss social and emotional issues, and set goals for continued growth (see dates below). Communication with parents throughout the year is essential to student success in school. To arrange to meet with a teacher other than during conference days, please write a note or call the school to set up an appointment. **There are to be no “corridor conferences” or telephone conversations expected during supervisory or instructional time, which begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m.**

Report Card Conference Schedule

DATE	TIME
Tuesday, December 8	12:30-3:30 PM
Wednesday, December 9	12:30-3:30 PM
Thursday, December 10	12:30-3:30 PM
Tuesday, March 16	12:30-3:30 PM
Wednesday, March 17	12:30-3:30 PM
Thursday, March 18	12:30-3:30 PM

SCHOOL HOURS

Children may arrive at school between 8:30 and 8:50 a.m. **Parents are reminded that there is no supervision provided until 8:30 a.m.** The instructional day begins at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. Each student, however, is expected to demonstrate cleanliness, propriety, modesty, and a good sense of attire and appearance. Clothes bearing offensive and inappropriate pictures, slogans, messages, or language will not be permitted as they create disorder and disrupt the educational program. Shoulders must be covered at all times and spaghetti strap tops are not appropriate. Additionally, flip flops should not be worn as they present a hazard when students are running in the gymnasium or playground.

VISITING THE SCHOOL

Parents and community members are invited to visit Willow Hill School during Open House, American Education Week, for Parent/Teacher Conferences, special events, and informally throughout the school year. Please contact administration to schedule additional visits.

For the protection of our children all parents and visitors must use the front main entrance to enter/exit the building and follow these procedures:

- Report immediately to the office upon entering. Be sure that anyone who may have entered with you comes to the office as well.
- **Ask permission, sign in, and receive a Visitor's Badge to go into any area of the building.**
- Always wear the Visitor's Badge and be sure it is visible.
- Go only to the areas where permission is granted.
- Sign out and return Visitor's Badge when leaving the building.

Unnecessary interruptions disturb the learning process for all of the children. Therefore, forgotten items should be brought to the office. **Please do not ask office personnel to interrupt the teacher to indicate that a forgotten item has been delivered to the office.** These items will be taken to the child at a time when it does not disturb the class. In the event that a parent-teacher conference is desired, the office personnel will assist in arranging a mutually convenient time for both teacher and parent.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in our library, school store, publishing center, and other areas. Numerous opportunities exist through active involvement in our Parent Teacher Organization.

SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

Our teachers and staff believe that an orderly school climate is necessary to ensure that students are afforded the best opportunities to excel academically, socially, and emotionally. Good behavior is important to the educational process not only in the

classroom, but also in the cafeteria, in the hallways and bathrooms, on the playground, during assemblies, and on field trips.

The Willow Hill staff has developed a School-Wide Positive Behavior Support program (SWPBS) to teach our students positive behaviors. Our school-wide expectations are integrated within the theme of respect. At Willow Hill:

Respect is ...

Being **Responsible** by taking care of myself, others, and our school.

Being **Cooperative** by listening to and working with others.

Being **Kind** by using positive words and actions.

Putting forth **Effort** by always doing my best and never giving up.

All students will learn these expectations and the guidelines for their application in all school settings. Students will be recognized for positive behavior with both verbal and tangible reinforcements. Tangible reinforcements will be Willow Hill "Think First" tickets distributed by teachers and staff as rewards for positive behavior. Students may use their accumulated tickets to participate in universal reward opportunities such as Open Gym, Terrific Tuesday, Think First School Store, and School Raffles.

Students who do not follow rules will be given consequences as outlined by the School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Program:

- ❖ Verbal warning
- ❖ Time out
- ❖ Detention
- ❖ Loss of privileges
- ❖ Parent contact
- ❖ Referral to Principal

For severe violations, students will be sent to the Principal immediately. The following are considered severe violations:

- ❖ Fighting
- ❖ Possession of weapons
- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Endangerment to oneself or others
- ❖ Severe vandalism
- ❖ Non-compliance that severely disrupts instruction
- ❖ Other

Should a student be referred to the Principal, any of the following actions will be taken:

- ❖ Principal meets with student; incident referral sent home to parents
- ❖ Incident form sent home; phone contact by principal
- ❖ Incident form sent home; phone contact/school conference
- ❖ All of the above and evaluation through an Informal Behavioral Assessment
- ❖ Parents will be contacted immediately for serious infractions or at the discretion of the Principal.
- ❖ Student will be suspended when deemed appropriate by the principal.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

I will be responsible by taking care of myself, others, and our school.

- **Follow** directions the first time they are given.
- **Keep** track of my own money.
- **Use** time wisely.
- **Use** inside voices (whisper).
- **Respond** quickly to “Give Me 5” signal.

I will be cooperative by listening to and working with others.

- **Work** with class to clean up our area,
- **Resolve** conflicts peacefully,

I will be kind by using positive words and actions.

- **Use** inside voices (whisper).
- **Say** only nice things to others.
- **Be** helpful to others.
- **Use** appropriate language.

I will put forth effort by always doing my best and never giving up.

- **Listen** to any adult in charge.
- **Say** “Please” and “Thank You”.
- **Keep** hands and feet to self.
- **Touch** only my food.
- **Talk** quietly.
- **Stay** in seat.
- **Walk** at all times in cafeteria.

RECESS EXPECTATIONS

I will be responsible by taking care of myself, others, and our school.

- **Use** playground equipment properly.
- **Return** materials and equipment to proper place.
- **Line up** quietly and orderly when given signal.
- **Ask** permission to enter the building.
- **Stay** in designated area.

I will be cooperative by listening to and working with others.

- **Take** turns.
- **Play** safely.
- **Share** with others.

I will be kind by using positive words and actions.

- **Help** others.
- **Include** everyone.
- **Play** safely.

- **Use** appropriate language.

I will put forth effort by always doing my best and never giving up.

- **Listen** to any adult in charge.
- **Take** turns on equipment.
- **Include** many others in play activities.

We appreciate your commitment to your children and believe that a strong partnership between home and school is essential for student success. Please help us to maintain a safe environment in which students can become responsible and independent learners. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Please DETACH and return this slip to the classroom teacher by September 14, 2009

WILLOW HILL ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK

I have read and understand the Willow Hill Handbook.

Parent Signature

Student Signature