

Attendance

It is very important that your child attend school every day. It is strongly recommended that families do not take vacations while school is in session as it may affect a student's overall performance at school. If your child is going to be absent, please call the Main Office. Please notify the school if your child is going to be absent for any extended period of time.



EXCUSED ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent, please call the Main Office. The school nurse will try to call you if you did not notify the school and your child is absent. New York State Law requires a written excuse or note from home stating the reason for absence, which is due on the first day back to school. According to New York State Law, the following are some examples of legally excused absences: sickness, death in the family, impassable roads, religious observances, and doctor's appointments. Absences for personal reasons are illegal

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LATE ARRIVALS

Students who arrive after 8:10 a.m. are considered tardy and must go to the Main Office to be marked present.

EARLY RELEASES

Only authorized persons may pick up your child from school. Each year you will designate, **in writing**, whom you authorize to pick up your child. Please notify the school in advance if you need to pick up your child during the school day for any reason, such as a doctor's appointment. You **must** come to the Main Office to sign him or her out. If you bring him or her back the same day you **must** come into the Main Office to sign in.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School closings, delayed openings and early dismissals resulting from weather conditions or other emergencies will be announced over radio stations as well as TV stations 6, 10, 13. Look for announcements regarding the *Guilderland Central School District*. Closing will usually be announced by 6:30.

A copy of the school calendar is available in the Main Office. The calendar will list school holidays and vacations when students are not required to come to school.

English as a Second Language

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a program that provides support for the diverse needs of students whose native language is not English. Direct instruction in English grammar and pronunciation as well as activities to promote listening, speaking, reading and writing is provided. The ESL teacher consults with teachers to facilitate students' social and cultural transitions and adaptation to the curriculum. Lessons are designed to meet the New York State ESL Learning Standards.

IDENTIFICATION TO ESL PROGRAM

1. Home Language Questionnaire
2. Initial Assessments (**LAB-R**)
3. Annual Assessment for continuation of services and measurement of progress (**NYSESLAT**)

* Once identified for services, a child may not be voluntarily removed from the ESL program.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STATE TESTING

- Time extension
- Separate location
- Bilingual dictionaries and glossaries
- Simultaneous use of English and Alternative Language Editions (when available)
- Oral translation for lower incidence languages
- Writing responses in the native language except on the 4th grade ELA
- Exemption from the ELA under certain circumstances

OPTIONS FOR PARENTS

- Translated progress reports and report cards
- Interpreters at Parent/Teacher Conferences

RESOURCES/LINKS

NYS Education Dept. Links

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/nysben.html>

BETAC QUESTAR III Parent Links

http://www.betac.org/parent_links.htm

Literacy Volunteers 452-3382

<http://www.lvamohawkhudson.org/>

ESL Web Resources

<http://www.albany.edu/lap/weblinks.htm>

Guilderland Central School District

WESTMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Guilderland Central School District
6076 State Farm Road
Guilderland, NY 12084-9533
Phone: (518) 456-6200
<http://www.guilderlandschools.org>

Westmere Elementary School

6270 Johnston Road
Albany, NY 12203
Main Office phone: (518) 456-3771
<http://www.guilderlandschools.org/westmere/Westhome.htm>

Administrators and ESL Teacher:

Deborah Drumm—Principal
Pat Smith—Assistant Principal
Jennifer Politano—ESL Teacher
politanoj@guilderlandschools.org

School hours:

Grades 1—5 8:10a.m.–1:55p.m.
A.M. Kindergarten 8:10a.m.-10:40a.m.
P.M. Kindergarten 11:25a.m.-1:55p.m.
Late Dismissal Gr. 1—5 2:50p.m.

Transportation (518)861-6434

The school district provides bus transportation for your child to and from school according to the schedule that is sent home to the parents. Late buses are provided for students staying for sponsored activities. Students are dropped off at the bus stop closest to their home unless parents notify the school that other arrangements have been made. You **must** write a note to the school if you want the bus to drop off your child at a place other than the normal drop-off point. Students should only carry items onto the bus that they can comfortably hold. Parents should make arrangements to transport large items such as school projects or large musical instruments. Please notify the school if you move during the school year.

After School Activities

Students may participate in a variety of activities which take place after school. Parents must give written permission for their child to attend an after school activity. Late buses take students home on the days of these activities if they are school sponsored. Parents must make transportation arrangements for non-school sponsored programs such as K-Care or Y-Time. Please contact the Main Office for more information about these programs.

Student Health and Safety

VISITORS & SECURITY

Visitors to the school are welcome. All visitors must come into the Main Office to sign in and put on a visitor's badge. We request that you make an appointment if you wish to visit any school staff members.

HEALTH ISSUES

Immunizations –

New York State law requires that all students be immunized against polio, diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella and hepatitis B before entering school. Immunization records must be provided to the school in English. If you have questions, the school nurse is available to assist you.

Emergency Health Cards –

These cards are sent home on the first day of each school year. Please return promptly. These are very important should we need to contact you in case of an emergency. If you move during the school year, please contact the Main Office and the ESL teacher.

Physical Examinations and Health Screening –

All new students and those in kindergarten, grades one and three are required by state law to have a physical examination. It is recommended that you have this completed by your family physician. The school nurse can give information about where a physical can be obtained. If a student has not had a documented physical, the school physician will perform a physical in the health office.

Medication Policy—

Students are not allowed to carry prescription or over-the-counter medications (including cold medications, aspirin, etc.) while in school or on the school bus. If your child needs to take medication during the school day, please contact the school nurse by calling the Main Office.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PROGRAM

Students are offered a healthy breakfast or lunch daily. The cost is listed in the monthly menu which is sent home with the students. If your family income falls below a federally designated level your child may be eligible for free or reduced breakfast or lunch. Forms for this program are available in the Main Office.

RECESS AND SNACK TIME

Students may bring a healthy snack for snack time. There is not a scheduled recess time for students, but many teachers offer their students a chance to play outside if their schedule and weather permits. Please make sure your child comes to school dressed appropriately for this type of activity. Some classes allow parents to bring in a special snack to share on special occasions. Please check with your child's teacher regarding his or her policy on celebrating birthdays.

SPECIAL AREAS

All students in first grade through fifth grade participate in these special areas: Art, Music, and Physical Education (PE). Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for PE on the days it is scheduled. This includes wearing appropriate clothing and sneakers.

WEAPONS/SCHOOL VIOLENCE

The district's policy strictly prohibits weapons of any kind on school grounds or buses. Failure to follow school policy will result in serious disciplinary consequences. Verbal threats of violence and violent acts will result in serious consequences as well. It is district procedure that staff members who become aware of threats or acts of violence share this information with an administrator who will proceed to take whatever action may be appropriate to guarantee the safety of students. Disciplinary action will be taken as well as referral to counseling.

Parent Involvement

Guilderland Central School District encourages parents to be meaningfully involved in their child's education.

Parent Conferences are one way teachers and parents work together to help children succeed by sharing information. Teachers not only discuss their expectations, but invite parents to share their own insight about their child as a learner. You will be contacted by your child's classroom teacher to set up an appointment for a parent conference. Parents are also welcome to schedule a parent conference with their child's mainstream or ESL teacher by calling the Main Office.

Progress Reports are sent home periodically with comments on how the child is doing in each class, including ESL.

In addition, parents can be kept informed through phone calls and e-mail. Parents should always feel free to contact the classroom teachers or the ESL teacher for feedback any time during the school year.

Parents are encouraged to:

- *Become involved in school organizations (such as the PTA), activities, and committees that strengthen the home-school connection*
- *Participate in or attend school activities*
- *Set up a study area for your child where uninterrupted studying and homework can be accomplished*
- *Encourage your child to read, either in the native language or in English*