

Deer Park Elementary



Parent Handbook 2009-2010

Carol A. Larsen, Principal

Toni Rose, Assistant Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome! We look forward to partnering with you as we strive to fulfill the mission, vision and core beliefs developed by our school community:

Mission

The Deer Park community develops the whole child to become productive citizens of the world. We give students the tools to reach their full potential and a passion for life-long learning.

Vision Statement

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: Deer Park will prepare students to lead responsible, productive, and respectful lives in an ever-changing and diverse society.

OPPORTUNITY AND SUPPORT: Staff will educate the whole child and encourage life long learning. Deer Park provides opportunities for staff to grow personally and professionally.

ACHIEVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY: Deer Park will improve the academic achievement of all students in an increasingly diverse community.

Core Beliefs

- As a school community, we will collaborate, communicate and be dedicated and consistent role models for our children.
- The students will respect self and others, be independent thinkers, be confident communicators and have a positive attitude in order to become life-long learners.
- We will provide a safe and non threatening learning environment through differentiation of instruction in order to accommodate different learning styles.

In this handbook, you will find many important pieces of information. Please read through this booklet carefully and refer to this resource as needed throughout your child's career at Deer Park.

We look forward to the many opportunities we will have to work together. If we can help you in any way, we encourage you to call us at 703-802-5000.

Sincerely,

The Deer Park Elementary Staff

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AMERICAN SYSTEMS PARTNERSHIP

Deer Park entered into a business partnership with Chantilly-based American Systems on October 15, 1998. Employees of AS serve as mentors for the STAR program and provide physical and financial support to many of our programs. Our students will provide artwork and musical programs at the AS facility.

We welcome community partnerships. If you own or work for a business that would be interested in partnering with our school, please contact Carol Larsen at 703-802-5000.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN/RADON TESTING PROGRAM

According to construction specifications, Deer Park Elementary School was constructed with materials that did not contain asbestos. Our building has been inspected for asbestos in accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). A copy of the Deer Park Management Plan is available in our school office for your review during normal school hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The site for our building was tested for radon. In accordance with State regulations, the interior of our building was tested for radon gas during March 1996. Radon levels were well below the EPA's prescribed levels. Our local education agency's designated person can provide additional information at (703) 764-2476.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is necessary to ensure the continuity of the academic program. In addition, punctuality and dependability in meeting assigned responsibilities are personal behavior habits valued in our society.

To assist in developing desirable behavior patterns for students, as well as maximizing classroom learning, FCPS requires that students be punctual and regular in school attendance. Official attendance is recorded at the beginning of each school day.

Each student who has been absent from school for any reason other than school business must, upon his/her return, present the teacher with a written note from the parent or guardian, which states the reason for absence. Parents should make every effort to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours or on Saturdays. Travel for vacations will be recorded as an unexcused absence. Please note that after 5 unexcused absences we are required to contact the attendance officer.

Parents are requested to contact the school office each morning when a child is to be absent or late for any reason. Please call the office using [703-802-5011](tel:703-802-5011) or email deerparkes.attendance@fcps.edu to report your child's absence. Both are available 24 hours a day.

BAND AND STRING INSTRUMENTS

Children in the fifth and sixth grades are eligible for instruction in some band instrument one day per week. Children in grades 4-6 are eligible for instruction in a string instrument. Children interested are interviewed and tested by the instructor and if they appear to have some potential

are then scheduled for instruction. Renting the instrument is encouraged until a child has demonstrated definite interest and ability in its use.

BICYCLE RIDERS

Students, grades 4-6, who live within our walking boundaries, are permitted to ride bicycles to school as long as traffic and safety regulations are followed. A bicycle contract will need to be completed each year for students planning to ride bikes to school. The school cannot assume the responsibility for missing or damaged bicycles. Students are reminded of the bike helmet law that went into effect July 1, 1993. For safety reasons, no skateboard, roller-blades, or scooters will be permitted. See Mr. Dillard to get a copy of the bicycle contract.

BIRTHDAYS

We love to help you celebrate your child's birthday. You are welcome to send in a special snack for each child in the class, preferably individually wrapped. Napkins to help with the mess are also welcome. Please do not send in whole cakes that need to be cut. We also are no longer able to distribute treat bags or handle distribution of other treat items. Due to safety issues and the disruption they cause, we can also not accept delivery of balloons. All birthday treats must be delivered to the office by 10:45 a.m. Tuesday-Friday and by 10 a.m. on Mondays. The treats will be enjoyed during your child's lunchtime. Mrs. Larsen and/or Mrs. Rose will deliver a special birthday pencil to the classroom sometime during the week of your child's birthday. We receive many requests to distribute invitations at school. If invitations are to be distributed at school there should be one for each child in the class to avoid hurt feelings. Teachers are not able to distribute invitations. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

CAFETERIA

Well-balanced lunches are served daily at a cost of \$2.65 to students and \$3.90 to adults. Free and reduced price lunches are available if the family qualifies. Applications are available from the Principal throughout the school year. Lunch menus are sent out monthly. The complete lunch consists of the main item, two choices from the fruits and vegetables of the day, and plain or chocolate milk. Ice cream is offered at additional cost. One ice cream may be purchased but not in lieu of lunch. A second entrée may be purchased a la carte with a full lunch for an additional charge.

Children may buy their lunch or bring it from home. If they bring it and want to buy only milk, they may do so at a cost of 60 cents per 1/2 pint. Vanilla soy milk is available upon request for 75 cents. Children are not allowed to bring any soft drinks in cans or bottles as part of lunch carried from home. Also, for safety sake, we do not encourage fruits or desserts in metal pull-top cans. Lunch and milk prices are reviewed and updated yearly. Prices listed here are for the 2009-2010 school year.

Boxed breakfast items are offered daily to students from 8:20 a.m. until 8:40 a.m. in the cafeteria. Students may go directly to the cafeteria to purchase breakfast and eat at designated tables in the Cafeteria. All students eating breakfast are expected to report to class by 8:45 a.m. Students may purchase breakfast for \$1.50. Adults may purchase breakfast for \$1.95.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

For grades 1-6, placement each year is made on an individual basis by the Principal in

consultation with previous classroom teachers and guidance counselors. It is intended that each child will be placed in a class containing a large heterogeneous group of students, but that he/she will find within that larger heterogeneous group, a flexible smaller group of students working at his/her own instructional level for particular skills and concepts. Other factors such as student's maturity level and his/her social and emotional needs are also carefully considered throughout this process.

While great care and consideration are given to your child's assignment at the beginning of the year, after careful diagnostic assessment, some changes may be needed to insure the best instructional placement. Growth or other factors may require a reorganization also resulting in class placement changes. When a change in class placement is necessary, it is vital that the home and school work together to support the change and make it as comfortable as possible.

COMBINATION CLASSES

A combination-grade class is composed of children from two consecutive grade levels. Combination-grade classes may be formed because enrollment in a school or at a given grade level may necessitate such organization. Combinations may also be established in order to facilitate children's appropriate placement in instructional groupings.

Students are selected for combination-grade classes based on the following criteria:

- As a group, students selected for the higher of the two grades shall be functioning in the basic skills above students selected for the lower grade.
- Individual students may have particular strengths or weaknesses and still be appropriately placed in a combination-grade class.
- Students shall be selected who can work effectively in independent and peer-group activities as well as in small and large groups with teacher-directed instruction.

Students should have the skills and work habits required to begin and complete tasks within agreed-upon time periods, listen attentively and follow directions, request assistance from the teacher or others at appropriate times, and use time constructively in independent and teacher-directed activities and group assignments.

The academic, social and emotional needs of each student are carefully considered when forming all classes.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

A Community Resource Book containing information on events for each month will be available for parent perusal in the school office. Organizations wishing to publicize information on community activities should call the school office to receive information regarding centralized FCPS approval procedures. Please refer to the section in this handbook on "fliers."

The community news bulletin board in the front office will also publicize some community events. Our events board located in the main lobby, lists school and PTA activities for each month.

CONFERENCES

Teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first reporting period and any other time during the year when either parent or teacher feels it is necessary. We discourage parents from just "dropping in" for a conference. Scheduling the conference in advance allows the teacher to

set aside adequate time for the conference. Conferences with the Principal can be arranged any time simply by calling the school office.

DAY CARE (School Age Child Care-SACC)

Day Care is offered in Fairfax County for children who are enrolled in grades K-6 in Fairfax County Public Schools. For further information, call the Office for Children at 703-449-8989. Deer Park has two SACC rooms.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

All students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia or clothing that contains threats such as gang symbols is prohibited.

Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative, is prohibited. Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to: sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, halter tops, backless blouses or blouses with only ties in the back, and clothing constructed of see-through materials.

For safety reasons shoes that tie or slip-on are preferred. All shoes should have a strap around the heel of the foot. Flip flops, cleats, and shoes with wheels in them are not permitted. Students not wearing appropriate foot wear may be required to sit out for PE, music class or recess for safety reasons.

Parents of students requiring accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other good causes should contact the principal. Students not complying with this code will be asked to cover the non-complying clothing, change clothes, or go home. Repeated infractions may result in disciplinary action. The current version of Regulation 2601 provides additional details.

EARLY DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

<u>GRADES K-6 STUDENTS</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY- FRIDAY</u>
2 Hours Delayed Opening	10:40-3:20	10:40-3:20
2 Hours Early Closing	8:40-1:20	8:40-1:20

Working parents are urged to arrange **NOW** for the care of their children when schedule changes are made. In every case of a schedule change, the news will be carried on the radio and television stations or sign up for Fairfax County Public Schools Keep in Touch program at www.fcps.edu.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

In the event of any emergency, such as extreme heat/cold or snow, the Division Superintendent may direct early closing of schools. In such instances, this action will be announced on all local TV and radio stations at frequent intervals.

If snow and ice occur during the night to the extent that bus travel is dangerous, the Superintendent may direct that:

- 1) Schools will open two hours later, or
- 2) Schools will not open that day.

Keep your radio tuned to local stations or watch cable Channel 21 between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. on such days. **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE OR THE SCHOOL.**

Parents should have a prearranged plan for their children to follow in case of an early or emergency closing. Each child should know whether he/she is to go home as usual or go to a neighbor's house. No one will be at school to assume responsibility for him/her beyond the usual 30 minutes after closing.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION (FLE) PROGRAM

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) provides a comprehensive, sequential Family Life Education (FLE) program for kindergarten through grade twelve. The FLE program is designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make healthy, responsible, respectful, and life-enhancing decisions related to human growth and development, relationships, substance abuse, and emotional and social health. Instruction is seen as a partnership among parents and guardians, the school, and the community in supporting the learning essential to the development of strong families, positive relationships, and a healthy community.

Parents/guardians may choose to opt **out** their child of all or part of the Family Life Education program. Students opted out are provided with age-appropriate, non-punitive alternative health instruction, and every effort is made to foster respect for family choices. If you wish to opt **out** your child of all or part of FLE for this school year or would like more detailed information about grade level programs, please access the opt out forms, opt out letter, and program descriptions for each grade level at <http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/OMSI/fle/index.htm>. If you want to opt **out** your child of any or all FLE instruction, please download the opt out form, fill in the appropriate information, and return it to your child's school by the end of September or prior to Family Life Education instruction. Paper copies of the form are available in the Deer Park office. FLE curriculum and media may be reviewed at your child's school. Instruction in human growth and development is taught in separate gender classes for 5th and 6th grade students only. A parent preview night of materials used in these classes is offered for interested parents. Program questions may be addressed at your child's school or by contacting Elizabeth Payne, Health and Physical Education Coordinator at 703-846-8666.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are conducted during the year as an extension of the instructional program. Our PTA provides transportation funding for field trip opportunities for all our students. Within the

framework of school board policy, the kinds of trips are determined by the teachers with the approval of the Principal. Parent chaperones are encouraged and invited to attend as space allows. For safety and insurance reasons, younger siblings may not accompany chaperoning parents on field trips.

All students must have written permission from parents before they are permitted to go on a field trip. Permission forms and any fees are due no later than the two days before the field trip. Students who do not have the forms and fees by the deadline will not be permitted to attend and will be provided alternate activities in a supervised location in the school. If you require financial assistance to cover the fees, please contact the Principal. Parents are always notified in advance regarding all upcoming field trips. In case of delayed school opening, field trips are automatically canceled.

FIRE DRILLS

An emergency drill for fire is held every week the first month of school and thereafter on a monthly basis. No advance notice is given to staff or students. Drills occur at different times during the day and are timed. Students receive feedback on their general performance. All adults in the building are expected to evacuate regardless of task. Children do not stop for coats but are returned to classrooms quickly. Parents are asked to help teachers train students to walk quickly with no talking. Home fire drills are encouraged so that there is continuity of experience.

FLIERS

FCPS has clearly described the situation under which children may carry announcements home to parents (Regulation 1367). Students may only carry fliers consistent with the mission of the school: education and the welfare of children. All non-profit organizations are eligible to submit fliers in accordance with the guidelines below. Charitable solicitations, partisan political organizations, and commercial or profit-making enterprises are excluded with the exception of school-business partnerships and events. Students may not carry advertisements. Non-profit organizations, such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, may only use the backpack system at designated times during the year. The fliers must be representative of something appropriate to the children and not violate any rules of decency, political campaigning, or marketing. These designated times are set by the school principal. At Deer Park Elementary, the five dates that Thursday envelopes may be used for carrying announcements for the 2009-10 school year from non-profit organizations are:

September 24 November 12 January 28 April 8 June 3

All announcements/fliers must carry the following disclaimer:

These materials are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Fairfax County School Board, the Superintendent, or this school.

HEALTH SERVICES

The school clinic (703-802-5010) operates for the care of sick and injured students, maintains health records, and coordinates the health-screening program. Children new to Fairfax County, as well as all children in kindergarten and Grade 3 will have their hearing and vision checked. If there is any question, parents are notified and advised to take their child to their own physician for a more thorough examination. Each child is expected to have a yearly dental examination;

any child new to the county and all children entering kindergarten must have a complete physical. The school provides forms for the physician or dentist to make his/her report. The school takes most seriously the health and welfare of our students. Children should never be sent to school when they are obviously ill. The Health Department requires that a child remain home fever free for 24 hours after an illness before returning to school. This is for the protection of the individual child as well as his/her classmates.

Parents are expected to come as quickly as possible when called to take home a sick or injured child. Working parents are not excluded from this expectation and should arrange beforehand for a neighbor or friend who can pick up their child. When a situation exists such that the Principal or designee considers emergency care to be needed quickly, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department will be called and the parent notified.

Health services are provided by the Fairfax County Public Health Department by a clinic aide (clinic aides are "lay" persons-not registered nurses). The clinic aide cannot administer medication unless proper forms have been completed (see "Medication at School"). The clinic aide provides a first aid service and contacts the home whenever there is a fever, vomiting, injury to the head, or moderate to bad cuts and bruises. Parents are also called to pick up their child when the health problem requires clinic care for over a half-hour. Deer Park receives the services of a Public Health Nurse for one-half day per two weeks.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Five hours of instruction per week in the home are available when it is anticipated that a child will be out of school for at least four weeks due to an injury or illness.

Parents should contact the school to obtain more specific information regarding regulations governing this service. Services are arranged through the school's social worker.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a natural extension of the classroom instructional program. Please refer to Deer Park's Homework Guidelines for more information.

ILLNESS/INJURY AT SCHOOL

When a child is ill or injured at school, the parent will be contacted by phone. When arriving for your child, please report to the office to sign him/her out. If the parent cannot be reached, the office will call the emergency number listed on the child's record. An EMERGENCY CARE CARD is sent home with each child the first day of school. It is very important that this card be completed and returned to the school promptly. The card gives the name of someone to contact if your child becomes ill at school and you cannot be contacted. Emergency forms must be kept up to date. Please notify the school of any changes that occur during the year, especially telephone numbers.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The curriculum of Fairfax County Public Schools is the Program of Studies and is available for parent review in the school library and online at www.fcps.edu/DIS/pos/index.htm.

In Fairfax County Public Schools, students gain reading and writing skills through an integrated

language arts program based on high-interest novels, trade books, and basal readers. Both phonics and sight word instruction enable teachers to address multiple learning styles.

Instruction in mathematics, accompanied by many manipulatives, begins in kindergarten and expands each year covering number concepts; operations; mental math and estimation; applications and problem-solving; data analysis, statistics and probability; geometry and spatial relationships; and measurement.

Research supports early writing of thoughts on paper, accepting phonetic (temporary) spelling in drafts, and using students' original stories to help teach many skills such as punctuation, capitalization, and sequencing of thoughts. As soon as students learn alphabet letters and their sounds, they are encouraged to express their thoughts in writing.

Comprehension is a major goal in reading. Reading begins the first day in kindergarten - recognizing one's name is a start - and continues in every subject. At Deer Park, Mondo and Harcourt Brace are the adopted basal reading series. Basic language skills are also taught using children's fiction and nonfiction, as well as science/social studies trade books.

Fairfax County uses the Elementary Science Study program designed to combine hands-on activities with reading resources.

In social studies, the program develops around four themes: history, geography, economics and civics.

Students in primary grades study famous Americans and learn about holidays and celebrations. They also study other cultures, make connections to their own lives, and begin a study of early exploration and settlement. In the middle grades, students learn about Ancient Civilizations and Virginia from 1607 to the present.

Studies of early societies through Middle Ages/Renaissance, the Age of Exploration, and United States history to 1877 are the core of the fifth and sixth grade programs.

Use of technology across all curriculum areas introduces students to the sophisticated skills required in an information age. Students gain experience in word processing, multi-media software, and other application software. Four computers are available in most classrooms and we have two computer labs.

INSURANCE FOR STUDENTS

Medical and dental insurance is available at the beginning of the school year. Information is sent home in the parent packet on the first day of school. Since it is a parent responsibility, all business concerning the student insurance program is handled by mail between the parent or guardian and the insuring company.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

A reader is not someone who can read; a reader is someone who does read.

The mission of the Library Media Program is to ensure that the students and staff are independent and effective users of information. The program fosters an appreciation for literature and encourages reading for pleasure.

The Deer Park Media Center is open to all students during school hours for circulation of materials, independent study, research, recreational reading, and media activities. The collection includes books, magazines, books on tape, CD-ROMs, and the Internet.

Kindergarten, First and Second grade classes have a weekly story time. During this time the students will be able to select books to take home. Kindergarten students may checkout one book at a time during the first semester and two books during the second semester. First and Second grade students may checkout three books. The check out period is for one week.

The Media Center provides instruction for classes as needed and scheduled with the teachers. A flexible schedule is provided for students in grades three through six. Students may come to the Media Center when their schedules permit either with the class or individually. These students may checkout for a two week period. There is no limit to the number of books students in grades 3 - 6 can check out as long as they continue to return the books on time.

The Library provides reading incentive programs such as Read Across America, Virginia Readers' Choice and a summer reading program.

The Media Center produces the morning news program with 5th & 6th grade students.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

A lockdown drill will be conducted at least once a year per county and state regulation. A lockdown is a well-established procedure designed to protect students and staff members in a case in which there might be threats of violence within a school. During a lockdown, students remain in their classrooms or are escorted to classrooms if they are in the halls, and all interior and exterior doors are closed and locked. Once the facility is rendered safe and students are accounted for, the school is returned to normal operation.

LOST AND FOUND

Unidentified articles found in the school are turned in to the office. Lost items are placed on hooks in the cafeteria. Eyeglasses and jewelry are not routinely placed with the other articles, so please inquire. The school cannot be responsible for any lost items.

All articles not claimed are given to charitable institutions at the close of school before the winter holidays and at the close of school in June.

LUNCH CARDS

Parents who wish to have the convenience of pre-paid school meals may send money for their child's account card. This computerized cash register system uses a personalized card with a bar-coded ID number for meal and a la carte purchases. To open an account, send a check (payable to Deer Park Food Services) or cash to the cafeteria manager.

Cards may be credited any day of the week before 10:00 a.m. Card use is flexible; it may be used daily, interspersed with lunch brought from home or as a "reserve" when lunch has been forgotten. Each student is expected to have at least \$5.30 (2 meals) on account to use when lunch or money is forgotten. Credit may not be extended to students or adults. Reminder notes are sent home when a child has three or fewer lunches on the debit card. The card can be used anytime during the school year. You may also pay online at the following website www.myLunchMoney.com.

In the event there are no other funds available and as a service to parents, the PTA has a lunch fund from which a child may obtain cereal and milk.

MAKE-UP OR HOMEWORK DURING ILLNESS

Although it is not always possible due to illness, consistent school attendance is very important in order for students to achieve in line with their potential. It is important for both students and parents to understand that many homework and almost all written classroom assignments are direct follow-ups of classroom instruction. Simply providing a student with a list of written assignments missed due to absence does not begin to cover the instruction missed. Teachers at Deer Park make every effort to provide the needed make-up instruction due to student absence, but it must be recognized that it is simply impossible to totally duplicate the instruction missed.

Make-Up Work for Grades 1-3:

If you would like make-up work for your child, please contact the school office in the morning giving us the name of a sibling or a neighbor student who can take the assignments to your child. A note brought in the morning serves the same purpose. Informing us early gives the teacher time to prepare the child's assignments, which will be ready at school dismissal.

Make-Up Work for Grades 4-6:

Each student in grades 4-6 should make arrangements with a specific classmate who will accept responsibility for providing this information to him/her any time during the year that absence is necessary. This relieves classroom teachers of a very time-consuming responsibility, which can easily and appropriately be assumed by the students themselves.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Whenever a child must be given medication while at school, an "Authorization for Medication" form is required. Forms are available online at www.fcps.edu/forms.htm or from the school office. Parents need to complete Part I, authorizing administration of the medication. Part II is to be completed by the physician. Students requiring over the counter medication for headaches, muscle aches, or menstrual cramps, do not require a physician's signature, the parent or guardian should complete Part II. Any other over the counter medication for conditions, other than those listed above can be left for a maximum of ten days without a physician's signature. Medications must be taken to and from school by a parent or guardian in a container appropriately labeled and dated. Most medication schedules can be worked around the child's school day once physician and parent are fully aware of the limitations of the public school environment.

Life and death allergy problems (e.g., bee stings) should be brought to the immediate attention of the Principal so that the staff can be alerted.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The mission of the Fairfax County Public Schools, a world-class school system, inspires, enables and empowers students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship.

PARENT LIAISON

Deer Park's Parent Liaison serves as a communication link between home and school. He or she will help you get the information and assistance you need to support your child at home and to ensure your child's academic success. The liaison welcomes and orients families to the schools and familiarizes the families with the school's culture, policies, procedures, and practices. Please call the school office if you would like to speak to the parent liaison.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Parents are invited and encouraged to join the PTA activities that are organized at Deer Park. One of the objectives of the PTA is to develop united efforts between school and community to provide quality educational opportunities for all students.

The PTA supports the school in a variety of ways, including a program of classroom and library aide volunteers, assistance in the health programs and provisions for room parents. They also provide funds for cultural arts programs and field trips, evening programs for parents and children, and enrichment items to aid in the creation of a more exciting learning environment. A regular newsletter is available online for parents to keep them informed of PTA and school activities. This newsletter is posted in FCPS 24-7 Learning and on our website.

The PTA Board is used as a steering committee. The principal and teachers present matters of concern to the Board and ask for input. Joining the Board or one of its committees is an excellent opportunity to get involved in the school. By paying your dues, you are helping us meet our obligations.

The PTA meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Library on the first Tuesday of most months. Parents/guardians are always welcome. Childcare is provided.

PATROLS

Under the leadership of a teacher-sponsor, the school has an active group of student patrols whose responsibility it is to help in the safety of all students. Patrols are stationed at school crossings to help children and are also assigned to the various buses and bus stops. All students are expected to obey the patrols' instructions at all times. Patrols report to the Patrol Sponsor any students they observe who are not following school safety procedures.

PERMANENT RECORDS

Each child has a cumulative record that continues with him/her while in school in Fairfax County. Basically, the record includes progress reports, health records, registration forms, and standardized and Standards of Learning (SOL) test results. Results of individual screening for special programs are kept in separate special services files with restricted access. Parents/guardians have the right of access to information in their child's permanent record. Please call to make an appointment if you wish to review the contents.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students and parents should carefully consider the types of property and the value of belongings that children bring to school. Fairfax County Public Schools provides desks, wardrobes, or locker storage for students' personal property. However, the school system does not assume

responsibility for students' personal property and does not insure or otherwise reimburse students for loss of or damage to their belongings. Since school is your child's work environment we ask that students to leave all toys at home.

PETS

Animals may not be brought to school unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher and the Principal. This policy was instituted by the Fairfax County Health Department as a safety measure. We realize that pets need exercise, but remember that children constantly use the playground and should not be subjected to your pet's habits. Please do not walk or exercise your pet on school property as this violates county ordinances.

REPORT CARDS

Elementary School Progress Reports (report cards) are issued every nine weeks at the end of the grading quarter.

For each subject the child has two marks, one for ACHIEVEMENT and one for EFFORT. The ACHIEVEMENT mark is based on but not limited to: daily work, classroom assignments, tests, and related activities. The EFFORT mark is based on the initiative and participation demonstrated by the child.

ACHIEVEMENT and EFFORT in grades 1-3 and EFFORT in grades 4-6 are indicated using the following marking system:

- O - Outstanding
- G - Good
- S - Satisfactory
- N - Needs Improvement

ACHIEVEMENT in grades 4-6 is indicated using the following marking system:

- A - Excellent
- B - Above Average
- C - Average
- D - Below Average
- U - Unsatisfactory

RETENTION

When it appears that a child will benefit from another year at the present grade placement, at the end of the second grading period or as soon as retention seems to be a possibility, parents will be informed of the child's specific academic needs. The possibility of retention shall be communicated in writing between the end of the third grading period or by the first half of the fourth grading period. Retention will be implemented after prior notification of and explanation to the parent.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. Tuesday-Friday. Monday hours for students are 8:40 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. with the afternoon reserved for teacher planning, conferences and in-services. Please plan students' arrival for 8:30 a.m. so that they may be properly supervised

upon arrival.

SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Certain services are available to the children who attend Fairfax County Public Schools. For questions regarding any of the following services, please call the school at 703-802-5000.

Counseling

The Elementary School Counseling Program supports and complements the efforts of the classroom teacher to facilitate your child's learning and social/emotional development. A school counselor is available to all children and helps them understand the process of growing up and the normal developmental problems they face. Please call the school office if you would like to speak to a counselor regarding your child.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

Identified students who are developing their English proficiency qualify for the ESOL program. The ESOL curriculum provides instruction in language arts for approximately two hours per day. The resource teacher provides one-on-one, small group, and whole group instruction. The goal of the program is to prepare students for the transition from ESOL into language arts classes alongside their native English-speaking peers.

Gifted and Talented Programs (G/T)/ Advance Academics

Fairfax County Public Schools provides advanced academic services to G/T students in four different programs. The K-3 program includes both response lessons for all students and differentiated services for identified students. The 4-6 program includes process lessons for all students. The school-based program, available in every school, includes instruction in an identified unit of study for approximately two hours per week. These programs are supported by an itinerant resource teacher in the local school. The full-time, center-based program is available to highly intellectually gifted students. A brochure describing these programs, including eligibility requirements, is available by calling the school.

Preschool Program

The Special Education Preschool Program identifies and serves two through four year-old children who have significant delays in one or more of the following areas: sensory, motor, cognitive, speech/language or social/emotional adjustment. Since it is difficult with many preschoolers to determine the primary cause of delays, services are provided through a non-categorical program. The Preschool Program has morning and afternoon sessions.

Psychological Services

Certified school psychologists provide psychological services. Services include consultation, evaluation, short-term counseling, and referrals for private therapeutic services. Referrals are made through the Principal and are carefully considered by the Local Screening Committee. Services are provided only with parental permission.

Reading Services

A Reading Resource Teacher works with classroom teachers to help plan and implement the Elementary Language Arts Program. The communication processes of: reading, writing,

speaking, and listening are emphasized in a literature rich school environment.

The Reading Teacher may extend instruction for individual or small groups of students upon recommendation from their teacher, with the approval of the Principal.

Social Work Services

Social work services are provided by certified school social workers and visiting teachers. Services include consultation, case work, short-term counseling, referrals for private services, and visitation in the home when necessary. Referrals are made through the principal.

Special Education Program

Fairfax County Public Schools strives to meet the educational needs of students with exceptional needs in their neighborhood schools. Deer Park provides special education services across a broad continuum of options to students with identified disabilities. Specialized instruction is provided to address deficits in academics, social skills, communication, language development, motor functioning and life skills based on an individualized education plan. Decisions regarding the evaluation and instruction of student with disabilities are made through a collaborative process that includes parents and school professionals in a process that upholds the principles of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). At Deer Park, students in Special Education receive services through the learning disabilities, non-categorical, or autism programs.

Speech and Language Program

Speech and language services are provided to students with communication disorders in oral language, articulation, voice, and fluency. Full program services include assessment, consultation, and direct instruction. Referrals to the speech and language clinician are made through the classroom teacher.

Vision and Hearing

Services are available to all children who have a severe sight problem and/or who have a moderate to profound hearing loss.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The following information is considered directory information by Fairfax County Public Schools:

- student's name
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- height and weight of a member of an athletic team
- dates of attendance
- awards and honors received
- student's picture

This information may be made available on an individual basis or printed in the school directory, team roster, class list, school yearbook, etc. without parental consent. In addition, the student's address and telephone number will be classified as "directory information" to be released only for school-related activities such as PTA and volunteer activities.

Parents who do not wish any or all of the directory information items to be released must notify the school in writing within 15 days of the child's first day of school each year.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All students are guaranteed a safe learning environment that stimulates intellectual curiosity and academic achievement, develops positive personal qualities and well-being, and fosters respect for individual differences. With these rights comes the responsibility of students to behave in a manner that will not infringe the rights or safety of other students.

To achieve the goal of providing education of the highest quality, the Fairfax County School Board has defined the responsibilities and rights of students in school (Regulation 2610). A booklet, Student Responsibilities and Rights, is available in the school office and is used in all Fairfax County Public Schools. For those students who do not behave in a manner consistent with school policy, the Principal is empowered to take action to ensure the safety and well being of all students. This action can range from counseling the student to expulsion from all Fairfax County Public Schools. Parents are asked to provide support and guidance for their children when asked by any member of the school staff. Parents and students are expected to know the school system's student disciplinary rules as set forth in Regulation 2610, which is distributed annually to every student.

STUDENT SAFETY

The greatest potential for serious accidents is at arrival and departure times. For this reason, we are alerting you and asking your cooperation regarding certain critical arrival and departure procedures that merit special attention for:

- Use of the parking lot in front of the school
- Use of the side parking lot and
- Walking students.

At those periods of the day when buses arrive and depart from the school, the drive immediately in front of the school will be closed to all vehicles except Fairfax County Public School buses.

Virginia State law forbids the passing of a school bus when loading or unloading children. This law applies while buses are on school grounds.

When children are brought to school by car, parents are asked to use our Kiss and Ride Area located in the top parking lot in front of the school anytime buses are arriving or departing. No U-turns are permitted on Carlbern Drive. Parents needing to park their car for a time should use the available space in the front parking lot or on Carlbern Drive. For safety reasons, students are not permitted to walk through the line of cars in the Kiss-N-Ride from Carlbern Drive even when accompanied by an adult.

Parents of walking students are encouraged to require their children to walk to school in groups and to discourage interaction with strangers. Students are expected to walk directly to and from school. Fairfax County Police Department provides an adult crossing guard at Carlbern Drive/Barrymore Road and Kamputa Drive/Cranoke Street to insure safety in crossing these busy intersections.

Parents must come into the office and sign out their children. Children will not be released during

the school day to anyone other than the parent/guardian or persons listed on the emergency care card. In the event that a parent must send another person to pick up the child, parental authorization will be required. Students may be released to either parent unless prohibited by court order. If restricted custody has been legally established, be sure to furnish a copy of the custody order to be kept on file in the school office.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The prevention of substance abuse is a major concern of the Fairfax County Public Schools. Efforts include the development of a comprehensive substance abuse curriculum, formation of school-based prevention teams, and the establishment of a network of active parent groups. Staff members have been trained to use appropriate instructional strategies, intervention techniques, and referral procedures.

The efforts of the school system in substance abuse prevention are coordinated with those of other community agencies. The School Board has established strong penalties for substance abuse. Students found guilty of substance abuse (use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco products) will be suspended or expelled from school and school-related activities, and the Fairfax County police department may be notified. Parents should help their children understand the seriousness of substance abuse violations and that expulsion is the permanent denial of access to the Fairfax County Public Schools.

SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

The guidelines listed below are used by Child Protective Services in determining whether a situation should be investigated for possible lack of supervision:

AGE (years)

- 0-7 A child should not be left alone for any period of time. This may include leaving children unattended in cars, playgrounds, and backyards. The determining consideration would be the dangers in the environment and ability of the caretaker to intervene.
- 8-10 Children should not be left alone for more than 1 1/2 hours and only during daylight and early evening hours.
- 11-12 A child may be left alone for up to 3 hours but not late at night or in circumstances requiring inappropriate responsibility.
- 13-15 May be left unsupervised, but not overnight.
- 16-17 May be left unsupervised (in some cases, for up to two consecutive overnight periods).

All children and/or babysitters should have emergency telephone numbers and a number to locate either a parent or designate responsible adult. By law, we are required to report to CPS anytime we suspect a child may be improperly supervised, based on these guidelines or any other situation which may endanger a child's safety or well-being.

TARDINESS

Formal instruction begins at 8:40 a.m. and children are tardy if they arrive after this time. When children are late for school, they are to report directly to the school office, with their note of explanation for being tardy. At this time, office records will be changed from absent to tardy.

The number of times a student is absent and/or tardy is recorded on the progress report.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided for students in the elementary school on a loan basis. It is important that the students accept responsibility for taking the very best care possible of textbooks and other materials. A charge will be made for lost and damaged books.

The Department of Instructional Services, within the established policy and regulations of the State Board of Education, has established continuous procedures for the examination, recommendation, and selection of materials coordinated with the instructional programs of Fairfax County Public Schools. Questions or concerns about any instructional material (basal, supplemental, or library) should be directed to the Principal.

THURSDAY FOLDERS

On Thursday each student will bring home a large envelope of important communications from the school and PTA. Samples of class work will be enclosed on a weekly basis. Please review the contents, sign and date the envelope, and ask your child to return the envelope to school the next day. This system has been instituted in cooperation with the PTA to help families manage the volume of information exchanged between home and school.

TORNADO DRILLS

An emergency drill for tornadoes is held three times a year. Advance notice is given in September and again in March to staff members. Prior to the drill, students practice the safe body position to be taken during the drill. Students and staff move quietly and quickly to designated areas of the building that provide the best available protection. Parents are encouraged to review a similar plan for their child in the home.

TRANSPORTATION & BUS BEHAVIOR

School bus transportation is provided for students who live more than a mile from school. You will be notified of the designated runs and stops for each bus.

Procedures for safe transportation by school bus riders are discussed with all bus riders at the beginning of the school year. However, it is also important that parents review with their children the information included in the brochure provided to all students. Parents' reinforcement of the rules for safe loading and unloading of buses and of standards for behavior on buses and at bus stops will promote safety.

Acceptable standards of conduct are expected of all bus passengers. There may be no eating, yelling, swearing, pushing, fighting, or harassment of other children.

A driver may recommend suspension of bus transportation for a student who will not heed the driver's warning as to behavior. The principal takes final action in such cases. During the period of suspension, the School Board is not responsible for transporting the student to school.

GOING HOME WITH ANOTHER STUDENT

A child may ride only the bus to which he/she is assigned according to Fairfax County policy. Exceptions to this policy, such as a walker riding home with a bus friend, may only be made by

the principal and must be requested in writing by the parents of both children.

Kindergarten students are only allowed off the bus with a parent or child-care provider present at the stop to meet the child or if they are accompanied by an older sibling.

TRAVEL HOME FROM SCHOOL AFTER HOURS

Students in grades 5 and 6 will be permitted to walk home from after school programs, with parent permission, provided the travel will occur during daylight hours and fair weather conditions. Students in grades K-4 will be permitted to walk home with an older sibling or adult under the same circumstances and others must be picked up by an adult.

VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

County policy requires that any child who is absent from school for 15 days or more be withdrawn officially from our rolls. Upon the child's return, the parent must again officially enroll him/her. All absences for vacation will be marked unexcused.

Long vacations taken during the school year can interrupt the sequential learning in many subject areas. It is impossible to expect a teacher to provide a complete and stimulating academic program for a child who is on vacation. It is the parent's responsibility to provide reinforcement, and learning activities while a child is on an extended trip. Advance work may not be provided. Students will be expected to read daily and complete a journal during their absence. Missed work will be provided to make-up upon return, as appropriate. Please note some assignments may be impossible to make-up.

VISITATION GUIDELINES

Parents are always welcome at Deer Park. We encourage you to spend time at our school; come to performances, join your child for lunch and participate in our volunteer program. If you would like to visit, please make arrangements at least 24 hours in advance with the teacher to visit the classroom (for not more than 30 minutes so that disruptions are kept to a minimum). Parents are limited to one 30 minute observation per month (this does not include volunteering). Persons observing will be accompanied by the principal, assistant principal or their designee.

VISITORS

Deer Park Elementary encourages parents to visit their child's classroom, assembly programs, and lunch programs. As a courtesy, we request that arrangements be made through the office in advance. Due to insurance regulations younger children, friends of children, or students from other schools' will not be permitted in classrooms. All visitors' must come to the office, sign-in, and obtain a visitor badge before going to any classroom.

VOLUNTEERS

Deer Park has a supportive volunteer program. Parents and community members are invited to participate. Volunteers typically contribute one or two hours a week working with students, helping in the library, helping with art project, performing clerical jobs, preparing instructional materials or working on PTA projects. All volunteers must meet screening requirements and agree to our confidentiality policy.

To assist volunteers with their various projects, events, and activities that foster and encourage student participation and achievement, Deer Park is equipped with a full service Production Center. Through the coordinated efforts of our volunteers, the center provides the valued support to meet the educational needs of all grade levels. We encourage our parents to share their time in the Production Center, as well as within the classrooms.

We appreciate "at home" help and use an envelope system and student couriers to facilitate getting materials to the volunteer and back to school again. A staff member and PTA Volunteer Coordinator coordinate volunteer efforts and support the work of volunteers with additional training or assistance as needed. We need you and appreciate your contribution of time and talent that multiplies what together we can do for children. To offer your help, please contact the school office or PTA President.

WEAPONS AND LOOK-ALIKES PROHIBITED AT SCHOOL

A clear "no weapons" in school message must begin in kindergarten and remain consistent throughout the child's school experience. Students may not possess or use any weapons or their look a-likes on school property or at school sponsored events. Refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities booklet for more information.

SAFETY AND SECURITY PLAN

The following is a list of security measures:

- All doors will be locked during the school day. Visitors may be requested to show a picture ID to gain entry to the building.
- All teachers are responsible for locking their door each afternoon. No student may return to the classroom after the entire class has left without being accompanied by a staff member. The boiler room and any classroom or office not in use during the day will be locked.
- Students will be required to go in pairs, small groups, or as a class when in the building or on school grounds. Supervision of students is the responsibility of all staff members at all times.
- Visitors and volunteers are required to sign-in with the main office. They will be required to wear the appropriate badge at all times during their visit. No unauthorized individuals will be permitted on school grounds. Office staff will question visitors regarding the purpose of their visit and ask to see photo identification.
- All staff members will wear an identification badge issued by the system. Badges will be clearly visible at all times. Badges will be worn during school hours by all non-Deer Park staff adults. Staff members are required to challenge any visitor without a badge and direct him/her to the office.
- For large attendance events during the day (example-Thanksgiving Luncheon, student performances), special visitor stickers will be provided.
- Teachers will greet and dismiss students from the classroom doorway.
- Signs directing visitors to the main office will be posted at strategic points.
- In the event of an incident that may endanger the safety and security of a person(s) at Deer Park, the main office shall be notified immediately.
- Periodic reminders to students about safety, strangers, and walking in pairs will be made over the morning news program announcements and by the classroom teacher.
- Articles and reminders will appear in Deer Tracks.
- Group bathroom doors will be locked until 8:15 a.m. and again at 3:45 p.m.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS HOTLINE (inclement weather information, School Board Meeting Dates) 1-800-839-3277

EMERGENCY SERVICE NUMBERS

Police/Fire/Rescue 911
Sully Station Police 703-814-7000
Non-Emergency Police 703-691-2131
Fire/Rescue 703-802-2806
Poison control 1-800-222-1222
School Vandalism and Security 703-764-2400

HOTLINES

Andromeda (Spanish Hotline) 202-291-4707
Centreville Regional Library 703-830-2223
Child Abuse-Child Protective Services 703-324-7400
Fairfax County Women's Shelter 703-435-4940
Northern Virginia General Hotline 703-527-4077
Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence
(Fairfax County Victim Assistance Network) 703-360-7273

INFORMATION

Adult & Community Education: Centreville 703-227-2200
Child Find Handicapped Preschool Diagnostic Ctr 703-446-2100
Fairfax County Government Center 703-Fairfax
Fairfax County Human Services 703-222-0880
Spanish line 703-631-3366
Fairfax County Community & Recreation Services 703-324-4386
Family & Early Childhood Education (FECEP)
(Serves 3-4 year olds from low income families) 703-846-8720
Northwest Mental Health: Chantilly 703-968-4000
Office for Children (Day Care-SACC) 703-449-8989
Social Security Information 1-800-772-1213
Special Education Parent Resource Ctr 703-204-3941
Student Safety and Wellness Office 571-423-4275