Kindergarten Handbook 2020-2021



Baldwin-Whitehall School District





Dear Parent/Guardian:

Life has no event comparable to a child's first day in school. Both the child and parent have looked forward to this historic day with great anticipation. Certainly, the day is a special one for everyone.

This kindergarten handbook has been prepared especially for you and your child. We are confident that it will provide a great deal of information regarding the questions most frequently asked by parents concerning the kindergarten program. Should you be unable to find the answers in this handbook, please feel free to call the principal of the school in which your child is enrolled.

We know the great responsibility of providing the best possible educational program for your child. We acknowledge the importance of developing a receptive climate that will stimulate your child to learn. We are anxious that your child receives the best possible education and that both the school and the parents work cooperatively to achieve these mutual goals.

Welcome!

Andra Huffina

Andrea Huffman Director of Elementary Education

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Program Overview

Baldwin-Whitehall School District provides a full day kindergarten schedule for all children.

The program provides rich learning experiences within the core curriculum areas together with the fine and practical arts.

The full day schedule allows teachers and students to more fully explore areas of study, as well as provide enrichment and re-teaching opportunities.

Children are actively engaged in learning experiences throughout the school day. The curriculum utilizes experiential, hands-on learning. Teachers are better able to address the varying learning styles of each student.



Aims of Kindergarten

What Kindergarten Means to Your Child

Kindergarten is a place where children:

- feel good and comfortable about themselves and others;
- learn to work and play with many new friends;
- feel safe and secure;
- learn important and exciting new concepts;
- meet success in many activities and learning situations;
- discover that learning is fun;
- develop responsibility;
- express themselves creatively;
- learn to respect authority while looking to the teacher for help and guidance;
- work in a classroom atmosphere of helpfulness and cooperation;
- have opportunities to play and share;
- have a wonderful day!



Skills Children Should Bring to Kindergarten

- Say first and last name;
- Recognize his/her name in print;
- Say birthday and age;
- Recognize some letters and numbers (0-10);
- Recognize and name some colors;
- Count to 10;
- Count five objects;
- Recite the ABCs;
- Tell a story about a picture;
- Communicate needs in a simple sentence;
- Able to wait his/her turn and shares;
- Follow two-step instructions;
- Listen to others;
- Attend to a story being read aloud;
- Snap, zip and button jacket (and other clothing items);
- Care for toilet needs independently;
- Experience drawing with crayons and pencils;
- Experience using scissors;
- Bounce and catch a large ball.



Attendance

Consistent attendance in school plays a critical part in a child's academic and social education. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that children are not late for school or have unexcused absences. Attendance is required of all students enrolled in school during the days and hours that school is in session.

Attendance Tips:

- > Help your child establish good attendance habits.
- > Make sure your child gets plenty of rest each night at least 8 hours.
- > Send a note to your child's teacher when special attention is needed.
- > A note to your child's teacher is required for the following reasons:
 - o Early dismissal
 - Absence from school
 - o Tardy to school
 - Change in mode of transportation and/or destination from school
 - Any change in your child's normal routine

A building principal may refuse to release a child if the proper arrangements have not been made or if the child does not know the adult calling for the child. This procedure is aimed at protecting the child.

Absences

Students may be excused from school for illness, a death in the family, religious holidays, and health care of the student that cannot be arranged at another time. Baldwin-Whitehall School District utilizes an automated telephone calling system to notify parents of a child's absence. Automated calls are made daily to homes of absent students. Parents are able to modify the information in the call system to include several phone numbers and email. All student absences require a written excuse upon return to school. Failure to provide an excuse will result in the absence being considered as unexcused.

Early Dismissals

If the need should arise to have a child released early from school, parents/guardians must send a note to school with the child the day of the early dismissal. Parents/guardians must sign their child out of school. Children will only be released to parents/guardians from the school office.

Parent Excuse Form

For your convenience, parent excuse forms may be found at the end of this booklet and on the district website (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>), Our Schools; select school; Parents; Forms.

Book Bags & Folders

Starting the first day, your child will need to bring a <u>full size</u> book bag (**no** wheels) and a folder to school every day. The book bag should be large enough to accommodate the folder. Please label both with your child's name.

The folder is our way of communicating with you. Please send all notes and papers to school in your child's folder. Please also check the folder every day for your child's work and important notices.





Building Contact Information

McAnnulty Elementary School

5151 McAnnulty Road Pittsburgh, PA 15236 Office – 412.714.2020 Nurse – 412.714.2020, Ext. 2050 Cafeteria – 412.714.2020, Ext. 2081



129 Windvale Drive Pittsburgh, PA 15236 Office – 412.885.7535 Nurse – 412.885.7535, Ext. 3050 Cafeteria – 412.885.7535, Ext. 3081





Building Security

The safety of all children is a priority of the entire staff of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District. To assist in providing a secure learning environment, several precautions are taken. All outside doors are secured and locked after the school day begins. Visitors to the school are required to use an intercom system to gain access to the building. All visitors must have a photo I.D. to enter the building. Staff members and visitors wear identification badges. In addition, staff members are trained in crisis prevention, conflict resolution, and peer mediation. Each school has a Crisis Response Plan in place that is reviewed routinely throughout the school year with staff members.

Cafeteria

www.bwschools.net, Menus

As part of the full-day kindergarten schedule, all students will eat lunch daily in the school cafeteria. Parents have the option of providing a lunch from home or purchasing a lunch from the cafeteria. Breakfast is also offered. Menus are posted on the district website (www.bwschools.net, select Menus). Electronic cafeteria accounts are created for all children. Parents are required to maintain a positive account balance at all times. Account balances may be viewed online in Skyward Family Access. Online payments can be made at e~Funds for Schools, linked through the district website. Free and Reduced Lunch Applications and instructions are available on the district website (www.bwschools.net, select Menus, Free and Reduced Meals).

Meal Applications – Meal applications for Free/Reduced prices are only good for the school year applied in. Parents must reapply each year after July 1. Complete only one application per household. To apply online, visit <u>www.schoolcafe.com</u> or from the district website, (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>, select Menus, Free and Reduced Meals).

Meal Payments – Parents are encouraged to make payments at least one week in advance of intended purchases.

To make an online payment with e-funds: Best Option

Go to the district website, click Menus to reach the food service webpage, and select *Payment*.

To make a payment at the cafeteria – Payments are to be sent inside a sealed envelope with the child's full name, homeroom number, and dollar amount written on the envelope. Envelopes are to be given to the homeroom teacher. Parents are encouraged to send in checks or money orders *made payable to* 'Baldwin-Whitehall School District.'

Student Access – Students will be asked to enter their pin number (student ID number) on the keypad at the register to access their food service accounts to pay for their meals, ala carte meal purchases, and/or accept their free meal benefits. **Kindergarten students** will be provided with an ID card to use in place of the pin number.

Board Policy – Visit the district website and review the School Board Policy 808.1 – Lunch Accounts. Delinquent accounts will receive daily notices from the district via phone/text messages/emails until the account is paid in full.

Menus – Lunch menus are updated on a regular basis during the school year on our website (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>, select Menus).

Treat Day – Treat Day is held every Friday and published on the menu. Treats are sold separately from meals and are to be purchased with cash at the time of sale. (No prepayments accepted or credit extended for treats.)

Special Diet Requests – Please contact Joyce Weber, Food Service Director, at <u>jweber@bwschools.net</u> or by phone, 412-884-6300 x7441. Special diet forms and instructions are posted on the district website (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>, select Menus, Special Dietary Needs).

Curriculum

What Is Kindergarten?

Kindergarten is learning to LISTEN and SPEAK . . .

Your child will:

- construct interesting and complex sentences;
- listen to stories and look at books;
- dramatize;
- converse and discuss;
- learn to listen carefully and follow directions;
- learn fingerplays;
- use appropriate vocabulary.

Kindergarten is learning to LISTEN and SPEAK . . .

As parents, you can help by:

- talking with your child about in-school activities as well as out-of-school interests;
- selecting, watching and discussing appropriate television programs with your child;
- monitoring appropriateness of electronic, video, and Internet programs;
- expecting your child to listen carefully and waiting their turn;
- encouraging your child to share thoughts and ideas;
- speaking plainly to your child, using correct vocabulary;
- modeling.

Kindergarten is learning to WRITE . . .

Your child will:

- learn to print their name correctly;
- observe the writing of others;
- print the letters of the alphabet;
- match capital and lower case letters;
- write words and sentences using invented spelling.

As parents, you can help by:

- using the alphabet chart to help your child form letters correctly;
- having your child print their name correctly with capital and lower case letters;
- assisting your child in printing words.







Kindergarten is learning about LANGUAGE ARTS . . .

Kindergarten children will have opportunities to:

- recognize high frequency words;
- arrange events in a logical sequence;
- develop rhyming skills;
- identify upper and lower case letters;
- associate sounds with corresponding letters;
- read simple words found at school and home;
- recall details of a story;
- retell a story;
- predict the outcome of a story;
- learn to identify and manipulate sounds in words;
- read and decode short stories.

As parents, you can help by:

- reading to your child;
- taking your child to the library;
- giving your child the opportunity to learn about the world by providing as many experiences as possible;
- Having your child read decodable books to you.

Kindergarten is learning about MATH . . .

Kindergarten children will have opportunities to:

- count;
- group and make sets;
- identify coins;
- learn basic forms and shapes.

As parents, you can help by:

- counting household objects;
- marking important days of the calendar;
- giving children objects to play number games;
- measuring how tall your child is.









Kindergarten is learning about SCIENCE . . .

Kindergarten children will have opportunities to:

- learn to experiment with a variety of materials to excite and to satisfy natural curiosity;
- learn to think and investigate the immediate world;
- use a program which teaches observing, identifying shapes, comparing sizes, and classifying.

As parents, you can help by:

- providing opportunities for your children to observe, identify shapes, compare, and classify;
- encouraging your children to ask questions and helping them find the answers;
- observing the environment around your home with your children.

Kindergarten is learning about ART and MUSIC . . .

Your child will:

- use tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors, glue;
- make things that encourage creativity;
- listen to music;
- sing songs;
- play singing games;
- keep time to music;
- use simple rhythmic instruments;
- dance/perform movements.

As parents, you can help by:

- encouraging your child to listen to music at home;
- encouraging your child to listen and sing to a variety of music;
- showing an interest in your child's work;
- encouraging your child to use glue, crayons, paint and scissors at home.







Kindergarten is learning about SOCIAL INTERACTIONS . . .

Kindergarten children will have opportunities to:

- work and play with others;
- share, take turns;
- accept the authority of adults;
- respect the rights and property of others;
- talk about family activities;
- discuss the holidays and seasons;
- discuss the community, the country, and the world in which we live.

As parents, you can help by:

- having friends visit and play;
- encouraging discussions about timely topics;
- encouraging and reinforcing good manners.







STAR Early Literacy Test

This screening tool is used to assess general readiness, phonemic awareness, phonics, and other early reading skills to provide more effective instruction during the most critical years of your early readers' literacy development. The test also provides diagnostic data to make instructional decisions and to help identify gaps in knowledge for students experiencing reading difficulties. Kindergarten students take this screening test at least three times per year, in the computer labs, at each elementary school.



Health and Dental Program

www.bwschools.net, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services

Physical and dental exams are required upon admission for all students entering kindergarten. Forms can be picked up at the schools or are available on the district website (www.bwschools.net, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services, Forms). These forms should be submitted by the first day of school.

The following immunizations are required and should be submitted by the first day of school:

- Diphtheria and Tetanus four properly spaced doses of DTP, TD, or DT fourth dose must be after the fourth birthday;
- Polio four (4) properly spaced doses. The fourth dose must be given after the fourth birthday;
- Measles two (2) properly spaced doses of measles-containing vaccine, usually given as Measles, Mumps, Rubella;
- Hepatitis B three (3) properly spaced doses;
- Chicken Pox two (2) properly spaced doses varicella vaccine (chicken pox vaccine) on or after first birthday or written statement from physician/ designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity
- Blood lead level tested prior to entry into Kindergarten or before they are six years old, whichever is sooner. Proof must be provided.

Per Pennsylvania state law, proof of complete immunizations must be submitted to the school nurse by the fifth day of school or the child will be excluded from school until proof is obtained. If a child does not have all of the doses of immunizations listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is not medically appropriate, the child must provide a medical plan written by the physician within the first five days of school or risk exclusion from school.

- 1. A school health record is initiated at the time of school admission and will follow the student through graduation.
- 2. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school nurse of any changes in the student's health. All medications that the student is taking at home should be reported to the school nurse.
- 3. The school requires parents/guardians to complete student information forms each year on the district website (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services, Forms). Phone numbers should be provided to the school in order to notify the parent/guardian of any illnesses or injuries requiring immediate attention. Emergency numbers of local family members or friends should also be provided. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any telephone number changes.
- 4. Pennsylvania school law requires children to have completed immunizations for Diphtheria, Tetanus, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, and Chicken Pox (Varicella).
- 5. Effective January 1, 2018 All children are required to have their blood lead level tested prior to entry into Kindergarten or before they are six years old, whichever is sooner. **Proof must be provided.**
- 6. Pennsylvania school law requires physical examinations on all students entering school for the first time (kindergarten or first grade) and students in the sixth and eleventh grades. Examinations may be completed by the student's private physician at the family's expense or by the school physician free of charge. Private physical forms and permission forms to have the physical completed by the school physician will be provided by the school nurse. These forms are also on the district website (www.bwschools.net, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services, Forms). Completed forms should be returned to the health office.
- 7. Pennsylvania school law requires dental examinations to be completed on all students in kindergarten, grade three, and grade seven. Examinations may be completed by the student's private dentist at the family's expense or by the school dentist free of charge. Private dental forms and permission forms to have the school dentist do the examination will be provided by the school nurse. These forms are also on the district website (www.bwschools.net, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services, Forms). Completed forms should be returned to the health office.

- 8. Pennsylvania school law requires scoliosis screening on all students in grades six and seven. Screenings may be provided by the student's private physician at the family's expense or by the school physician free of charge. Private scoliosis screening forms and permission forms for the school physician will be provided by the school nurse. Completed forms should be returned to the health office.
- Distant and near vision screening will be completed on all students annually. Color vision and stereo/depth perception screening will be completed on all students in grade one. Vision referrals will be sent home per Pennsylvania State guidelines.
- 10. Hearing screenings will be completed on all students in kindergarten and grades one, two, three, seven, and eleven. Hearing referrals will be sent home according to Pennsylvania State guidelines.
- 11. Measurements of the student's height and weight will be completed annually. BMI's will be calculated and released to parents according to Pennsylvania State Guidelines.
- 12. Parents are responsible to report communicable diseases to the school nurse such as chicken pox, whooping cough, meningitis, scarlet fever, lice, scabies, ringworm, and pink eye.
- 13. In order to receive medication during the school day, a student is required to submit written permission from the parent/guardian yearly for all over-thecounter medications. Any medication prescribed by a physician requires a signed release from the ordering physician and the parent/guardian. Medication forms may be obtained from the school nurse or the district website (www.bwschools.net, District Departments, Student Services, Health Services, Forms).



Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are scheduled in the fall. However, feel free to contact the school for an appointment with the teacher or principal whenever you feel there is such a need.



Report Cards

Kindergarten report cards are completed for each child at the end of each nineweek period.



School Schedule

Kindergarten Schedule

Full Day

Classes in Kindergarten

English Language Arts (ELA) Mathematics Science Social Development Fine & Practical Arts (Art, Music, Physical Education, Library, Computer)







Staggered Start in Kindergarten

Staggered Start brings one-third of the kindergarten students to school each of the first three days of kindergarten. Activities are planned at each school to provide an exciting and meaningful 'first day' of school for each child, no matter which day they enter school. Then on the fourth day, all of the kindergarten children attend. When all students come together for the first time, additional activities are planned.

Staggered Start provides:

- Improved personal approach for a child's initial experience in a public school;
- Opportunity to teach classroom and school procedures and expectations in a small group setting;
- Tours of school including important areas such as cafeteria, gymnasium, and entrance and exit areas of the building;
- Ability to conduct baseline assessment of children designed to demonstrate growth from September to November, when parent conferences are scheduled;
- Introduction of small group activities and familiarization of students with small group procedures;
- Additional screening processes.





Snow Delay/Cancellation Procedures

Occasionally, weather conditions require delaying the opening of school for two hours. On such days:

Kindergarten 2-Hour Delay Schedule

Kindergarten

Students should report to their bus stop 2 hours later than their designated times.

Walkers: Kindergarten students who are walkers and those who are dropped off at school are not to arrive more than 20 minutes early.

In the event of a delay or cancellation of school, an announcement will be made over the following television and radio stations:

Television Stations: KDKA – <u>www.kdka.com</u> WPXI – <u>www.wpxi.com</u> WTAE – <u>www.thepittsburghchannel.com</u>

Parents may access school closing information on the district website (<u>www.bwschools.net</u>). Parents may also be notified through Skylert (see page 16).

It is requested that parents listen to the television for information concerning closings and delays rather than call the school or Central Administration. We request that working parents make other arrangements for their children if an unexpected delay or emergency closing occurs. Children should know which neighbor or relative to report to when parents are not at home.



Skylert

www.bwschools.net, Our Schools; select school; Parents; Skyward Family Access

Baldwin-Whitehall School District utilizes a district-wide notification system called Skylert. Skylert allows Administrators the ability to send instant communication via phone, SMS text message, and e-mail to parents and staff. This notification system permits parents the opportunity to identify their notification preferences and opt in/out of specific message types through their Skyward Family Access account. **Every parent/guardian in the Baldwin-Whitehall School District will be registered in the Skylert notification system.** Parents may change their contact information via Skyward Family Access (accessed through <u>www.bwschools.net</u>) or by contacting their child's school.

Note: Only Primary Guardians are able to update the Skylert primary contact information via Family Access.

The Skylert notification system allows the ability to disseminate information to parents and staff by way of three notification types: Emergency, General, and Attendance.

Emergency notifications will reference events such as safety-related incidents and other emergency notifications determined by district administrators. Emergency notifications will be sent only as needed.

General notifications are for informational purposes only and will reference various district and campus events and information. In addition, General notifications will be utilized to alert parents of a school delay and/or closure due to inclement weather.

Attendance notifications will only be generated if your child has an unexcused absence for more than one period during an instructional day. If your child is marked absent, a system-generated attendance phone call will be sent between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., depending on the child's grade level.



Social Work Services

A social worker is assigned to each school building within the school district. The elementary social work services program focuses on the emotional, developmental, and educational needs of each child. The school social worker is able to act as a liaison between the home and school, facilitate communication between parents and school staff, intervene in problem situations, and find services to prevent more serious problems from developing. Parents/guardians are able to contact the social workers in each building directly by calling:

McAnnulty Elementary School Social Worker's Office	412.714.2020
Harrison Educational Center Social Worker's Office	412.885.7535



Transportation

The Baldwin-Whitehall School District provides transportation for kindergarten both to and from school. It is recommended that children use their regular form of transportation on the first day of school, allowing the children to develop routines and to decrease future confusion.

Children will receive their bus assignments and bus stop times in the mail approximately one week prior to the start of school. Parents should plan to have children at the bus stop ten (10) minutes prior to the designated time. Questions or concerns about school bus schedules, bus stops, or school bus behavior should be directed to the Transportation Office at 412.885.7595.

Each kindergarten student will receive a transportation tag complete with bus number and stop location. It is extremely important that he/she wear the tag during the first week of school. Wearing the tag assists the bus drivers in learning your child's name and bus stop information.

Baldwin-Whitehall School District Attendance Excuse Form				
Student Name:	Grade:	Date:		
Is late due to:	Was absent on:	due to:		
illness doctor appointment dental appoint other		dental appointment		
Early Dismissal – will be picked up by	ata	a.m./p.m. due to:		
doctor appointment dental appoint family emergency	tment BHS Parents/Guardians must also ca BHS Attendance Office: 41			
other	Will return to school?	Yes No		
Parent/Guardian Name (print):				
Signature:				
Phone number where you can be reached if we need	d to contactyou:			

Baldwin-Whitehall School District Attendance Excuse Form				
Baldwin High SchoolHarrison Educational Center412-885-7500, Ext. 1412-885-7535, Ext. 1	McAnnulty Elementary School 412-714-2020, Ext. 1	Whitehall Elementary School 412-885-7525, Ext. 1		
Student Name:	Grade:	Date:		
Is late due to: illness doctor appointment other Early Dismissal – will be picked up by doctor appointment doctor appointment doctor appointment doctor appointment other	illness doctor appointment other	a.m./p.m. due to:		
Parent/Guardian Name (print): Signature: Phone number where you can be reached if we need to conta				

Baldwin-Whitehall School District

Board of School Directors

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District Administration

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Randy G. Huddart, Facilities Manager Joyce E. Weber, Food Service Director

Building Administration

Baldwin High School (9-12) 412-885-7500

Shaun A. Tomaszewski, Principal Candee A. Morris, Assistant Principal Jonathan W. Peebles, Assistant Principal John M. Saras, Assistant Principal/Athletic Coord.

J.E. Harrison Middle School (6-8) 412-885-7530

Scott D. Ross, Interim Principal Alicia N. Johnson, Assistant Principal Denise Wells, Assistant to the Secondary Principal McAnnulty Elementary School (K-1) 412-714-2020 Heatherlyn D. Wessel, Principal

W.R. Paynter Elementary School (K-5) 412-885-7535

Patricia J. Fusco, Principal Adam Foote, Assistant to the Elementary Principal

Whitehall Elementary School (2-5) 412-885-7525 Jennifer R. Marsteller, Principal

Laurel Newberry, Assistant Principal



It is the policy of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, age, handicap or disability, or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, including the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, and the Pennsylvania Equal Pay Act. For information about your rights or grievance procedures contact the Superintendent of Schools, 4900 Curry Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15236, or call 412-884-6300 x7241.

