



ÉCOLE ST. JOHN PAUL II SCHOOL

Student-Parent Handbook 2025 - 2026

"In partnership with family, church and community, we provide Catholic Education of the highest quality to our students."

École St. John Paul II School

4802 Southlands Drive SE
Medicine Hat, Alberta T1B 0L6
Phone: 403-527-7333
www.stjohnpaul2mh.ca



OFFICE HOURS: 7:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.



WELCOME TO ÉCOLE ST. JOHN PAUL II SCHOOL

We take immense pride in creating an exceptional and inspiring learning environment for our students. As a dual-track school, we offer two distinct programming options, giving families the flexibility to choose the best fit for their children's education.

Every aspect of our school has been thoughtfully designed with modern furnishings, innovative programming, and dynamic learning spaces that foster engagement and growth. Each classroom is equipped with a balanced learning approach, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Beyond the classroom, students can explore and expand their learning in our state-of-the-art Learning Commons, which offers enrichment opportunities that spark curiosity and creativity. Our modern Sensory Room provides a calming space with specialized equipment to support self-regulation and well-being.

Outside, our playground is designed for both fun and safety, featuring modern play structures and a protective pour-in-place rubberized surface. Inside, our entire school is outfitted with the Front-Row speech amplification system, ensuring that every student can hear and engage fully in lessons, no matter where they are.

As a Catholic school, École St. John Paul II School is committed to:

- Teaching and reinforcing the values of the Catholic faith.
- Creating a caring, faith-filled environment where students can learn about their beliefs and apply them in everyday life.

To create the best possible learning experience for our students, we believe in the power of strong partnerships between home and school. We encourage parents to stay connected, communicate regularly with us, and take part in school events whenever possible.

At École St. John Paul II School, we are dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment where every child can thrive. By working closely with our families and community, we continue to build an engaging and enriching space that empowers students to reach their full potential. Together, we make learning an exciting and rewarding journey!

Sincerely,

Mr. Robert Dumanowski

Principal



Mrs. Edlyn Murphy

Vice Principal





ÉCOLE ST. JOHN PAUL II SCHOOL

Student-Parent Handbook

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Timetables

Morning ELP and English Kindergarten (AM)

8:25 AM.....Warning Bell
8:30 AM.....Classes Begin
11:15 AM.....Dismissal

Afternoon ELP and French Kindergarten (PM)

11:50 AM.....Classes Begin
2:40 PM.....Dismissal

Grades 1 - 5

8:25 AM.....Warning Bell
8:30 AM.....Classes Begin
11:15 - 11:33 AM.....Lunch (*Grades 1-3*)
.....Recess (*Grades 4-5*)
11:33 - 11:50 AM.....Lunch (*Grades 4-5*)
.....Recess (*Grades 1-3*)
1:20 - 1:30 PM.....Afternoon Recess (*Grades 1-5*)
2:40 PM.....Dismissal

Communication / The Right to Disconnect

The “right to disconnect” is defined as the right of an employee not to be expected to engage in business activity out of hours including: answering work calls, emails, or other work-related communications.

At École St. John Paul II School, we believe in addressing concerns promptly and collaboratively. **Should you have any questions or issues regarding your child’s classroom experience, we kindly ask that you first connect directly with your child’s teacher, who is best positioned to provide context and support.** If further assistance is required, please feel free to involve administration as needed. To uphold the highest standards of professionalism and clear communication, we also remind parents that **when emailing administration, it is an expectation that the classroom teacher is included in the correspondence.** This practice ensures transparency and allows us to work together effectively in the best interests of our students. All communication must be directed to the teachers and administrators, as Learning Assistants are not authorized to correspond with parents or disclose any information regarding students. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Our teachers are dedicated professionals and are not expected to respond to queries during “off” times when their attention should be directed to recharging and devoting time to their personal lives. **The Division has implemented the “6:00 p.m. - 6:00 a.m. rule” which means that messages/emails/phone calls to staff should not be made between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., as well as on weekends, unless it is an emergency.**

Expectations

Expectations of Parents

- To ensure regular and punctual attendance of their children, sending them fully prepared for their days work
- To encourage and support student growth by providing a home environment conducive to learning
- To support school staff as they attempt to foster the spiritual, intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural and moral development of each student
- To contact school personnel and discuss student progress at regular intervals
- To attend parent-teacher conferences as requested
- To support staff in having students follow through with their responsibilities

Expectations of Students

- To be responsible for their education and be actively involved
- To be prepared for learning and receptive to new ideas
- To exercise self-control
- To become a self-directed learner
- To possess a positive attitude
- To have respect for authority
- To treat others and their property with respect and dignity
- To work to the very best of their ability

Expectations of Teachers

- To foster effective relationships
- To engage in career-long learning
- To demonstrate a professional body of knowledge
- To establish inclusive learning environments
- To apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit
- To adhere to legal frameworks and policies

Expectations of the Parish

- To serve as a link between home, school and the Church
- To work toward the development of the spiritual growth of students, staff and families
- To provide sacramental programs for students and assist in the development of their lives within the church

Attendance and Arrivals

- Students are **NOT TO ARRIVE** to the school grounds **BEFORE 8:10 AM**.
- Supervision is provided in the mornings between 8:10 AM - 8:25 AM, during recess/lunch breaks, and after school (until the buses depart).

- **Please contact the OFFICE at 403-527-7333 no later than 8:45 AM when your child is going to be absent or late.**

- The office **MUST** be informed whenever a student is entering or leaving the school during the instructional day. Please notify the office in advance whenever you plan to take your child out of school during the day.

- Students are expected to attend all their classes and must make up missed schoolwork when they are absent. Repeated absences will be addressed by school administration.
- Students who do not normally take the bus at the end of the day **MUST BE PICKED UP** at the **2:40 PM** dismissal time unless they are registered in the Out of School Care Program.

1 or 2 days doesn't seem like much, but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 minutes per day	1 hr 40mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	3 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

EVERY DAY COUNTS

If you want your child to be successful at school, YES, attendance does matter!

Locked Doors

- It is a policy of the school to keep **ALL OUTSIDE DOORS locked** during the normal school day.
- The **FRONT DOOR will be open between the hours of 8:25 - 9:00 AM**.
- Parents can access the front office by pressing the doorbell/camera system (located on the side by the front door).
- All visitors to the school are required to check in at the front office.

Programming Options

The dual-track nature of École St. John Paul II School provides maximum opportunity for English and French Language programming. **French Immersion** is designed for families who have the desire to learn the French language, and is available for students in ELP to Grade 5. If you are interested in our French Immersion program, **no French language background is required**, and parents do not need to speak French.

Students may register for French Immersion as early as age 3 in our Early Learning Program or in Kindergarten. We do not permit later grade entry.

In French Immersion, French is the language of instruction for all subjects except Religion. Starting in Grade 3, students begin learning English Language Arts classes.

Our French Immersion program provides students with a wealth of experiences and advantages within the classroom walls and beyond. The program follows the regular [Alberta Education curriculum](#). Learning a second language teaches students about other cultures and broadens their perception of their own culture. In Canada, knowing both official languages opens doors to many exciting career opportunities.



Religious Instruction

As a Catholic school, our goal is to provide an environment where religious values are permeated throughout the entire school day. Periodically, we will have Masses and celebrations that mark the liturgical calendar. Parents are most welcome to attend these events. Dates and times are outlined in our digital monthly newsletter and school calendar.

Students in Grades 1 to 5 receive 150 minutes per week (or 30 minutes a day) of classroom instruction in Religion class.

Students in Grade 2 are candidates for preparation for the Sacraments of First Communion and Reconciliation. It is the responsibility of the parents to contact the Catholic churches in Medicine Hat to make arrangements for their child's sacramental preparation. Information will also be communicated through our School Newsletter at the beginning of each school year.



[Holy Family Parish](#) - 403-527-6933

[St. Patrick's Parish](#) - 403-526-2265



Counselling Services

Counselling services are provided at École St. John Paul II School by the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education. Parents will be contacted if the school recommends any students for counselling services.

Learning Services

We, at École St. John Paul II School, are committed to the philosophy of inclusion on the belief that all students should be educated in neighbourhood schools, in regular classrooms, and in age-appropriate settings to the maximum extent possible. Inclusion is not just about learners with special education codes. It is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and learner differences and promotes equitable opportunities for all learners.

Our Learning Services team, along with our Learning Support Teacher collaborates closely with classroom teachers to ensure that each child receives the most effective instruction possible. Additionally, we offer Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy services on a referral basis to further support students' needs.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Elementary Athletics

All elementary schools have formed an association to promote sports and inter-school activities. Many sporting activities are held throughout the year (e.g. floor hockey, volleyball and basketball events). Grade 5 students will also have the opportunity to participate in the annual Knights of Columbus Basketball Free Throw Competition.

Skating / Swimming

Our students will have access to the outdoor rink located behind our school. They will also have access to other city facilities that will provide them with the opportunity to skate or swim when possible.

Children's Art Exhibition

A selection of student artwork will be displayed at the Art Gallery Children's Art Show at the Esplanade.

Milk Program

The school operates a daily milk program. **Milk cards are purchased through School Cash Online ONLY.** All milk receipts must be emailed to the milk coordinator listed on the receipt in order to obtain a milk card. Milk is delivered to the classrooms during lunch time. Milk cards are not carried over from one year to the next.

Student Code of Conduct - [AP 351](#)



We are committed to providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for all students. Expectations for student conduct arise from the [Education Act](#) requirements and the school district's Catholic values.

Students, parents and the district share the responsibility for student conduct. Students must understand that they are responsible for their behaviour, and they must recognize that any behaviour that disrupts or detracts from the educational climate of the school is unacceptable whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means. Students are expected to conduct themselves properly and adhere to the student code of conduct at all times.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Students are expected to meet the requirements of the **Education Act (Section 31)** which states that **a student shall:**

- a) Attend school regularly and punctually
- b) Be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue their education
- c) Ensure that conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging
- d) Respect the rights of others in the school
- e) Refrain from, report and not tolerate **bullying*** or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school (in school or by electronic means)
- f) Comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board
- g) Cooperate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs/services
- h) Be accountable to the teachers and other school staff for their conduct
- i) Positively contribute to the school and community

***Definition of Bullying (Section 1.1 of the Education Act)**

- *Repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.*

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

The following are examples of unacceptable behaviours with regard to student conduct in schools that interfere with the establishment of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and a sense of belonging for students:

- Defiance and disrespect
- Inappropriate use of language
- Any behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions
- Open opposition to authority
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Breaches of digital online safety
- Physical harm/assault; personal and/or sexual harassment
- Possession or use of weapons
- Drug, tobacco, e-cigarette, alcohol use, possession or distribution
- Inappropriate student dress
- Inappropriate use of personal devices
- Theft and vandalism
- Threats or intimidation
- Extortion
- Discrimination
- Any other act deemed inappropriate by school staff

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PLAN

The school's discipline plan will outline the expectations, consequences, and the progression of actions to be taken depending on the severity and/or frequency of the occurrences and will consider the student's age, maturity and individual circumstances, and must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. As well, parental and district involvement may be requested to support school discipline procedures. At all times, teachers and administrators will use their professional judgement in applying consequences. A record will be kept of any disciplinary action taken with a student.

Consequences are intended to have a positive effect on the student's journey through reconciliation, either formally or informally, with the school community and those affected by the student's behaviour.

The following consequences are progressive in their degree of intervention and will be enacted depending on the frequency and severity of occurrences. They will be applied consistently and fairly to all students, notwithstanding the individual differences of children and the uniqueness of specific circumstances and situations.

Progressive Discipline is a whole school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, including:

Prevention Measures and Initiatives

- Early and ongoing intervention strategies
- Strategies to address unacceptable behaviour

Interventions and consequences will increase when:

- The concerning behaviour is persistent
- The concerning behaviour escalates
- There is a very serious infraction of the Code of Conduct

Interventions and Consequences

(may include, but are not limited to, the following):

- Student Redirection
- Informal consequences
- Restriction of privileges
- Parent conferences
- In School Suspensions (Education Act - Section 36 / [AP 357](#))
- Risk Assessment
- Out of School Suspensions (Education Act - Section 36 / [AP 357](#))
- Expulsion (Education Act - Section 37 / [AP 357](#))
- Safety and Regulation Support Plan (Learning Services)
- Individual Support Plan (Learning Services)
- Involvement of Learning Services (Division Level)
- Involvement of External Services and Supports



Police Involvement: Administration may involve police in disciplinary matters when criminal activity has become evident. When police are involved, administration will conduct a separate, parallel investigation at the school level and provide disciplinary action separate from any criminal charges that may be issued.

Student Support: Support will be offered to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. This is significant because while the Student Code of Conduct must address the consequences for inappropriate behaviour, it also ensures that support (not just consequences) is provided. This may include, but is not limited to: mentoring, restorative processes, regular check-ins with school staff, etc.

Student Evaluation

Assessment is integral to the teaching and learning process, facilitating student learning and improving instruction, and can take a variety of forms. Assessment data should be communicated regularly from your child's classroom teacher.

Assessment FOR Learning

Formative assessment is the ongoing assessment that allows teachers to monitor students on a day to day basis and modify their teaching based on what the students need to be successful. This assessment provides students with the timely, specific feedback that they need to make adjustments of their learning. Your child's teacher will communicate this information with you at regular intervals.

Assessment OF Learning

Summative assessment is the snapshot in time that lets the teacher, students and their parents know how well each student has completed the learning tasks and activities, and shows their mastery level of the curriculum. It provides information about student achievement.

Report Cards

Report cards are a summative assessment, and delivered electronically to parents three times per school year (November, March, June). Our schools use Outcome-Based Report Cards to communicate student achievement in each subject, for each reporting period.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are welcome to request a conference with the classroom teacher or administration at any time (with reasonable notice, and at a mutually agreed upon date and time).

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held around the first reporting period (October-November) and again around the second reporting period (March). Please utilize this time to meet with your child's teacher to celebrate their learning and discuss any concerns.

School (Parent) Council

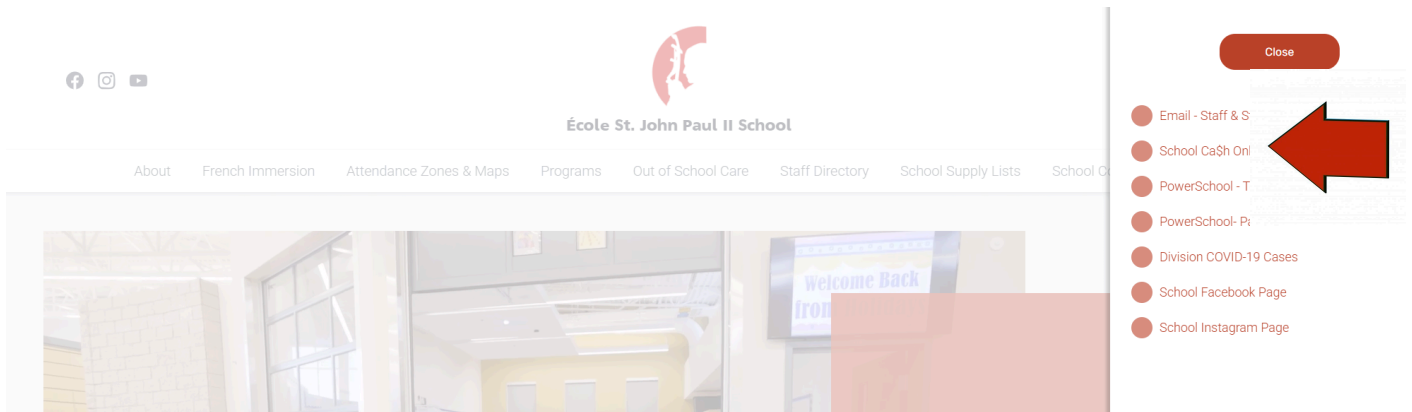
The School Council Annual General Meeting and elections are held each September. Meetings are scheduled approximately once per month. Parents are encouraged to become involved in our school community and participate in decisions that impact student learning.

Monthly Newsletter

Our school newsletter is sent out monthly by email, providing essential updates about our school and ongoing events. We ask that parents please sign up through the school website to stay informed. Staying up to date is crucial, as all key announcements, event details, and important school information are communicated through the newsletter—making it the primary source for staying connected with the school community.

School Fees and Payments

SchoolCashOnline is an online parent portal that offers a safe, fast, and convenient way to pay for all fees related to our school. **ALL PARENTS MUST CREATE AN ACCOUNT.** The link can be found on our website, under the “Quick Links” tab. You will require your child’s Student Identification Number to set up an account; this can be obtained by calling the front office.



Telephone Protocol

The telephone at the front office is available for use if a student is ill or if it is deemed an emergency by administration. Students who miss a bus at the end of the day should come back into the office and phone home - do not attempt to walk home before contacting parents. The phone cannot be used to arrange social events with friends.

Electronic Device Policy - AP 352



On June 17, 2024, the Government of Alberta issued a [Ministerial Order](#) to limit the use of personal digital devices in classrooms during instructional time, and social media on school networks/devices. These changes were announced to reduce distractions, maximize learning time, support student mental health, and reduce opportunities for cyberbullying during the school day. **The use of personal digital devices will be permitted for valid medical reasons.*

Personal Digital Device: any personal electronic devices that can be used to communicate or access the internet, a cellular network or other devices; such as a cell phone, computer, tablet, gaming device, electronic toy or smart watch.

In the event that an electronic device is brought on the bus or on campus, it must be stored in the students' backpack/locker in the off/silent position during the instructional day. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items under any circumstance.**

If a student is found in possession of an electronic device during any part of the school day, the student will be asked to turn it off and immediately surrender it to a staff member. It will then be stored at the front office until the end of the day. In some cases, the school may require that the parent come pick up the device from the office. The use of any electronic device for recording by students is strictly prohibited.

Visitors and Volunteers

Parents are most welcome at the school. ALL visitors MUST enter via the front office and sign in. Parents are not permitted to interrupt the learning environment and/or instruction at the school. Therefore, the school secretary will ensure any items left at the office are delivered to your child's classroom at the appropriate time.

If you are volunteering in a classroom or on a field trip, you MUST register at the front office and ensure that we have a **current Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education Police Information Check, Child Welfare Check and Administrative Policy 490 document on file**. You WILL be given all necessary forms to complete and turn back in. All record check documents must be requested and obtained directly through the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education. **Previously acquired or externally sourced record checks will not be accepted.**

Out of School Care Program

The Out of School Care Program (OSC) is available for students whose parents are working and require such a service. The program will be in operation during regular school attendance days between the hours of 7:00 am to 8:25 am and 2:40 pm to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. **Check the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education's website for PD Day OSC opportunities.** No PD care will be provided by École St. John Paul II School.

The program will be in place as long as a sufficient number of students are actively participating in such services. All fees **MUST** be paid on time (no exceptions), otherwise the student will be removed from the program. Information on how to register for this program is available at the office.

Parking (Parent Drop Off Zone/Bus Zone/Staff Parking Lot)

Parent Drop Off ("Kiss and Go" Zone): There is a new student drop off zone at École St. John Paul II School. This area is **identified with SIGNAGE**, and will be **dedicated to the dropping off of students IN THE MORNING ONLY during the peak times of 8:00 - 9:00 AM ONLY**. This zone is for **5 minute parking ONLY** and will fall under the City of Medicine Hat Bylaw 4346-25, 26 regarding restricted parking. Please respect the zone and utilize it for its intended purpose as school staff will be monitoring this zone and relaying feedback to Bylaw.



"Kiss and Go" Zone: ONLY from the sidewalk entering school grounds towards the driveway of the staff parking lot (as shown by the green arrow). This is meant to be a DROP AND GO zone (5 min. MAX). **The area marked with the RED X is a BUS ONLY ZONE.**

In the afternoon, the entirety of the bus zone will be utilized by the buses. Parents ARE NOT permitted to utilize the zone at the end of the day. Any vehicles parked in the bus zone will be in violation.

Staff Parking Lot: The school parking lot is designated exclusively for **staff use ONLY**. To ensure safety and smooth traffic flow, we kindly ask parents and all other visitors to refrain from entering this area for any reason, including parking, student drop-offs, or turning around. Alternative parking and drop-off areas should be used as designated. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and organized environment for our school community. **Students with mobility challenges whose family vehicle displays a valid disabled parking placard may use the staff parking lot for drop-off and pick-up.*

Lunch Policy

Students will eat lunch in their own classroom. Students are expected to finish eating their lunch between 11:15-11:33 AM (Gr. 1-3) and 11:33-11:50 AM (Gr. 4-5). Bag lunches should be sent to school with your child. **NO UTENSILS** will be provided and **NO MICROWAVES** available for students to use. Students are expected to clean up their desks after they have eaten, and place all disposable items in the garbage receptacles. Any student who abuses his/her lunchroom privileges may be asked to eat his/her lunch in an alternate area (e.g. front office).

Nut-Sensitive School: École St. John Paul II School is a nut-sensitive school - we take precautions to reduce the risk of exposure to nuts and nut products for our students with allergies. Therefore, we would ask that all student lunches, snacks, etc. be free of peanuts and/or peanut by-products. We would like to thank you in advance for your attention and cooperation with respect to this matter.

Homework

Although homework can take on various modes, its fundamental principles and purpose are to:

- Reinforce lessons taught during the school day
- Give students extra drill in an area where more practice or enrichment is required
- Teach students how to budget their time
- Facilitate the development of self-reliance and solid study habits
- Provide an opportunity for parent involvement and monitoring of their child's progress
- Strengthen the ties between school and home

Parents can help their child by:

- Providing a quiet place to work where they can monitor their child's progress
- Assist the child with their organization skills when it comes to assignment completion or study
- Taking an active part by being an "audience" for reading practice, spelling practice, math drills, etc.
- Helping the child access information for assignments on the internet or researching at the Public Library

HOMEWORK REQUESTS FROM PARENTS

Teachers often receive requests for student homework related to family vacations and/or illness absences. Understandably, we appreciate that getting your child caught up with missed work at home is important, however, taking time to rest is also important. Here is our Homework Policy:

Absent for 1-2 Days: No need to worry! Teachers will get students caught up when they return to school. Rest and get well!

Absent for 3+ Days Due to Illness: Work will be provided to the front office for pick up. Contact your child's teacher by email and arrange a pick up time at the office.

Absent Related to Vacation: Enjoy your holiday! From our experience, the majority of the time, work sent during holidays is rarely completed. Students can get caught up when they return or be excused from assignments. **Homework bundles will not be sent.** Encourage daily reading and a writing journal to share all of their wonderful experiences.

Administration of Medication to Students - [AP 316](#)



In accordance with Administrative Procedure 316, we are not authorized to administer any medications unless specifically requested and supplied by the parents. A special authorization form (available from the front office) must be completed and include the following:

- Name of the medication
- Specific amount to be administered (as indicated by the physician)
- Time to be administered
- Parent Signature for approval

The original medication container and the authorizing medical physician must be clearly displayed on the container.

Student Health Issues

Parents are requested to inform the school of any health problems that their child may have (e.g. allergies, bladder problems, asthma, etc.) at the BEGINNING of the school year or when first medically identified. Administration reserves the right to ask for a medical note and/or documentation to support the medical claim. This information will be kept confidential by the school (and kept on file).

Toys in School

Oh, the wonders of toys! Shiny, squishy, bouncy, and bright—truly the treasures of playtime! But alas, dear students, school is a land of learning, not a kingdom of stuffed dragons and beeping robots. To keep distractions at bay and pencils from becoming jousting lances, all toys must stay in their cozy homes, awaiting grand adventures after the final bell rings. So, let your imagination run wild—but leave the gadgets, gizmos, and plushy pals where they belong... at home! **Please refrain from allowing toys to be brought to school.**