

identification. Even though our staff will come to know you quickly, we often have substitute staff who will require proof that you are indeed authorized to pick-up your child. We hope you understand how important this is in our care of more than 4,000 children each school day.

There's Something Bothering Me

You are placing your baby in our care for almost six hours a day. We get that. If you feel as though your child is not adjusting quickly enough, or you're not seeing the work you thought you might ... Whatever your concern, speak with your child's teacher. This is a partnership and your openness with us will only help us serve your child better.

So Who Do I Contact?

Almost everything you will look for can be found on our District Website. That address is: www.mtlaurelschools.org. If you are not seeing something there that you need, call the Office of Communication Services at 856-235-3387 and we'll add it. Our individual school websites will provide you with your school's calendar of events and other information pertinent to your child's school.

But Here's A Secret, Just Between Us

Every one of your school's Parent-Teacher Organization officers and members has lived through the kindergarten year with at least one child. Many have been through this year a few times, and may still have more to go. They are involved in their organizations because they care deeply about our schools and want to support our staff, students, and you. Don't be afraid to reach out to them for help, direction or advice.

"Kindergarten children are confident in spirit, infinite in resources, and eager to learn. Everything is still possible." - Robert Fulgham



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Look for us on Facebook and Twitter

Kindergarten,



Here I Come!



A Guide to the Mount Laurel Schools
for the Parents of our Littlest Students

Welcome to Kindergarten!

This year marks the beginning of your child's educational career. Our goal is to provide a rich learning experience in an atmosphere where your child feels safe and supported each day and is free to experiment, invent, create and explore.



Superintendent
Dr. George J. Rafferty

So What Do You Need To Know?

In general, the basics. There's no need to feel overwhelmed by learning everything about our schools in the first month. Our staff members are excellent communicators and will keep you apprised every step of the way with reminders of special events and activities in the classroom. Our Parent Teacher Organizations will keep you posted on all school-wide happenings.

What you really need in the beginning of the Kindergarten year are those facts that most directly impact your family. So here we go ...

Catching the Bus To School

Once you have registered for Kindergarten, your child's information is added to our Student Information System called PowerSchool. That is our primary repository for all student data, and fills many roles. One of those is the generation of bus routes for each school. All of our kindergarten students are transported by bus. Each summer, our Transportation Supervisor plans the routes our fleet of buses will travel each day. Your child will be added to one of those routes for transportation. In August, you will receive your child's school bus assignment, complete with times for pick-up and drop-off and the location of your designated stop.

Some safety tips: All of our buses have seat

belts, which must be worn by law. An approved adult - either a parent or someone you have identified as an emergency contact - must meet kindergarten students at the bus stop. We must have written permission from you to release your child to anyone else. Otherwise, the bus driver must return to school and you will be required to pick your child up there.

Child Care Before or After School

We call this our Extended Day Care (EDC) Program. This is a fee-based program open to students attending our schools each morning and afternoon. EDC is offered at all six of our K-4 schools. Morning sessions begin at 7 a.m. and run until the start of the school day. Afternoon sessions begin immediately following the end of the school day and run until 6 p.m. You'll find much more information, along with online-registration on our website.

School Hours and Snow Days

Our six K-4 schools are divided into two sets of starting and ending times. That's because we have a four-tiered busing system. Our drivers begin their day with the Harrington and Hartford bus routes and then move on to Countryside and Fleetwood as our early schools with a start time of 8:30. Hillside, Larchmont, Parkway and Springville Schools start at 9 a.m., so they are the last wave in the morning routes. Early schools dismiss at 2:55 on a normal day and late schools are done at 3:25. The start times remain the same whenever we have an "early dismissal day" for something like staff in-service, but the dismissal times are 12:30 and 1 p.m.

If we have an unscheduled closure of schools for some reason - unsafe road conditions due to weather, for example - we will notify you as soon as such a decision is made. If we are unable to make a determination until that morning, calls begin at 5 a.m. so that parents who must work or have long commutes can make arrangements.

What About Other Emergencies?

We use School Messenger, an emergency notification system that can contact all of our 4,200 families within fourteen minutes by telephone, e-mail and text. We utilize the numbers and addresses that have been entered into PowerSchool for your child. So, if that information changes, be sure and let us know by contacting your school office.

School Messenger is sometimes used to advise you about occurrences that are not necessarily emergent, but rather just something you should know about your child's day. If the fire alarm is accidentally tripped, for example, or a classmate forgets to remove his lizard from his backpack before school. (*Not likely, but if it's unusual, we let you know.*)

Let's Talk About Lunch

Okay, so lunch is another of those areas where the convenience of parents has been considered. Our online Lunchtime Portal allows you to deposit funds, monitor and/or limit your child's purchases 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from your home or office. Students in need of assistance will be determined by the criteria issued by the state of New Jersey and the USDA. Eligibility requirements and an application for free and reduced-price meals are distributed to all households annually.

Security In Our Schools

Children who do not feel safe cannot learn. It's as simple as that. Mount Laurel has strived diligently to put strong security procedures and improvements in place in each of our schools. Every building features a security vestibule requiring two levels of entry to safeguard against someone entering our hallway, office and classroom areas without complete security clearance. So, please do not be offended if we remind you not to hold the door for someone walking in behind you, or if we ask for