

Castleton Elementary School
Parent Handbook

2026-2027

80 Scott Ave
Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033
(518) 732-7755

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Welcome to Castleton Elementary School!

Dear Castleton Elementary Families,

It is my absolute honor and joy to welcome you to the 2026 - 2027 school year at Castleton Elementary School! As we begin this new year together, we are excited to nurture your child's natural curiosity, celebrate who they are, and build a strong, joyful foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Our district's mission is simple and powerful: Educate. Support. Unite. We believe in creating opportunities for innovative learning while prioritizing the safety and well-being of every child. We value inclusive connections and communication with purpose, knowing that when we work together, we empower our students to succeed and help our communities grow stronger.

At Castleton Elementary, we are fortunate to have a team of talented, caring, and dedicated educators who are deeply committed to our students. Together, we help children grow as creative innovators, critical thinkers, and effective communicators who listen, lead, and share their ideas with purpose. We encourage our students to be reflective and future-focused learners who understand themselves, recognize their strengths, and embrace opportunities to grow. Most importantly, we nurture empathy, kindness, and a sense of belonging so that our students grow into caring citizens who make a meaningful difference in the world around them.

We know that the elementary years are so much more than preparation for the next grade - they are the building blocks for a lifetime of learning, relationships, confidence, and success. Our goal is to make each day one filled with meaningful experiences, engaging learning, laughter, discovery, and opportunities for every child to shine.

We also believe that the best schools are built through partnership. The encouragement, support, and love you provide at home are an invaluable part of your child's success. From our Monthly Morning Assemblies to enrichment opportunities and special school events, we hope you will join us, share in the excitement, and be an active part of your child's elementary school experience.

We are incredibly excited about the year ahead and all that we will accomplish together. Thank you for entrusting us with your children and for being such an important part of our Castleton Elementary family.

Here's to a wonderful year of learning, growing, connecting, and celebrating our Wildcats!
Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat.
#WILDCATPRIDE

Best,



Megan Sullivan
Principal
Castleton Elementary School

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for your child's success. Please ensure that your child attends school daily unless they are ill or there is an emergency. If your child will be absent, notify the school office by 8:00 AM. For planned absences, such as vacations, please inform the teacher and office in advance. Please use the email address CES-Attendance@Schodack.k12.ny.us to report an absence. Again, regular attendance is important. A student who misses 20% or more is considered chronically absent. If your child is having attendance issues, please contact the school nurse or our school counselor.

Arrival, Dismissal and Transportation

Arrival/Dismissal

Students may arrive at school starting at 7:55 AM. The school day begins at 8:05 AM. If your student arrives at school after 8:05, they will be documented as late. In addition, you will need to come into the building to sign your child into school.

Dismissal begins at 2:25 PM. Students will be dismissed to buses, the YMCA program, or parent pick-up areas beginning at this time.

Parent Drop-Off

Students being dropped off by their parents should arrive at school prior to 8:05. The school uses the loop in front of the building on Campbell Ave for parent drop-off. In the morning, please keep your child in your car until the staff comes out to greet students on the sidewalk at 7:55 AM. The school will have plenty of staff to assist and direct students.

Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 2:25 PM. Parents picking up their children should wait in their cars in the loop in front of the building on Campbell Ave. Cars should begin lining up at the end of the loop closest to the gym, but do not block the crosswalk. At CES, we use Pikmykid for our dismissal procedures. If you do not have the Pikmykid app, please visit our school website or contact the main office at 518-732-7755 for assistance.

Bus Transportation

Every student can ride the bus. Bus routes will be assigned over the summer and communicated to families. Students cannot change their district transportation pick-up/drop-off locations on a day-to-day or week-to-week basis. For instance, if there is a day of the week that your student needs to be picked up or dropped off at a location that is different from their official designated pick-up/ drop-off location, you will need to make your own transportation arrangement. If you have transportation questions, please contact our bus garage at 518-732-2070.

Student Discipline

We believe in fostering a positive and respectful school environment. Our discipline policy is based on the principles of restorative practices, encouraging students to reflect on their behavior and make amends along with traditional consequences to behavior. Serious or repeated infractions will be addressed with parents, and appropriate consequences will be implemented.

Food Services: Breakfast and Lunch Program

Our school offers nutritious breakfast and lunch options daily. Breakfast is served from 7:55 AM to 8:05 AM. Breakfast and Lunch menus can be found on our school website. Our school website also offers information for Free and reduced-price meals for qualifying families; application forms are available on the website or may be requested from our main office or school social worker. For questions about school lunches, please contact our food service director at 518-732-4269.

Emergency Closings

If the district needs to close before the start of the school day because of an emergency or weather, announcements will be made using text/email alerts, the district website, district social media, and on local television & radio stations.

If the district needs to close school early during the school day, an automated phone call will also be made to all designated student emergency contacts. Please ensure your Emergency Contact Information is up to date with your school's main office so you can receive these communications.

Schodack CSD uses text messages and email alerts as its primary methods of communication with school families. These are used to communicate school delays/closings, reminders about upcoming events, and other important information. Text alerts are optional but encouraged. To opt in for them, text the letter "Y" to Schodack's SchoolMessenger short code number: 67587. You should receive a confirmation message back confirming you have opted in. Your cell phone number must be registered with the school as a primary contact number for you to opt into and receive district text alerts. If you are unsure of this, please check we have your correct contact information on file by calling your school's main office.

Personal Communication Devices and Cell Phones

Personal Communication Devices are not allowed for use at Castleton Elementary School. Cell phones must be turned off and stored in a secure classroom locker for the day. If a student needs to contact a parent, they may use the phone in the school office. Unauthorized use of cell phones during school hours will result in the phone being confiscated and returned at the end of the day or being picked up by a parent. Personal Communication Devices such as watches and iPads are not allowed either. If your child has a device and you have questions about its use, please contact your child's teachers or the main office to speak to the principal. Our cell phone policy is also available, upon request.

Homework and Reading Every Night

Homework folders are provided to help students keep track of their assignments. Please check your child's folder daily to stay informed about their homework and any important notices from the school.

Reading at home is a crucial part of your child's education. We encourage all students to read for at least 20 minutes every night. This practice helps build literacy skills and fosters a love for reading.

Information from the School Nurse

Our school nurse is available to support your child's health needs. Please ensure that the nurse is informed of any medical conditions, allergies, or medications your child may require. For illness or injury during school hours, the nurse will contact you if your child needs to go home or requires further medical attention. Students need to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Again, if you have questions, please contact the school nurse.

Extended Student Vacations

Vacation days outside of the official school calendar are not legal absences under state law. If your family plans an extended vacation during the school year, please inform the teacher and office as early as possible. Schoolwork will not be provided in advance. Work that is missed will be provided to your child upon return to school.

Water Bottles and Healthy Snacks

Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to stay hydrated throughout the day. Clear reusable water bottles are preferred and can be filled using our bottle fillers located on the first and second floors of the school. Sugary and or caffeinated drinks are not permitted at CES. **Do not send your child to school with coffee or energy drinks (Coffee, Coffee Drinks, Monster, Redbull, etc.)**.

Please send your child to school with a healthy snack each day. We encourage healthy snacks such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains for snack time. Please avoid sending sugary snacks or bags of chips.

If you need assistance with providing your child with a snack, please contact our school social worker.

Birthday Invitations

To ensure inclusivity and avoid hurt feelings, birthday invitations should not be distributed at school unless every child in the class is invited. We encourage you to use other methods such as email or regular mail to send invitations to families. The PTO hosts a page on their website where families can choose to have their contact information shared.

Monthly Morning Assemblies

We hold Monthly Morning Assemblies to celebrate student achievements, recognize our character trait of the month, and to build school spirit. Parents are welcome to attend these assemblies, which are usually held toward the end of each month at 8:20 AM in the school gymnasium. Please keep an eye out for more information as assemblies are planned.

Recess
Recess is a vital part of our students' day, providing them with time to play, socialize, and recharge. At CES we pride ourselves in getting students outside for recess. Outside recess will move indoors if we have steady/heavy rain or cold weather below 20 degrees. Otherwise, we will be going outside. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. We encourage you to send in winter items (snow pants, boots, gloves) that you can leave at school in a bag.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
Our PTO plays a crucial role in supporting our school community. All parents are members and we encourage you to get involved. PTO meetings are held monthly, and details are shared on the PTO Facebook page. Your participation helps enhance our school programs and student experiences are successful.

Communication
Effective communication between home and school is key to student success. Our primary methods of communication include our school website and Parent Square. Please make every effort to check Parent Square regularly for posts, messages, and important information about upcoming events. The most effective way to reach someone here at school is via phone. Please call the main office at 518-732-7755 for assistance. Teachers are also available via messaging on Parent Square for any classroom-specific questions or concerns.

Contact Information

Castleton Elementary School

Castleton Elementary School Main Office 518-732-7755
Principal, Megan Sullivan (518) 732-7755, option 2
Assistant Principal, Alyssa Stolarcyk (518) 732-7755, option 2
School Nurse, Heather Brewer (518) 732-7755, option 1
Social Worker, Jennifer Sober (518) 732-7755, option 3
School Counselor, Tara O'Grady-Day (518) 732-7755, option 3

Schodack Central School District

Superintendent of Schools, Jason Chevrier (518) 732-2297, option 1
Director of Student Services, Jacqueline Hill (518) 732-2523
Director of Teaching and Learning, Mary Sheedy (518) 732-2523
Transportation, Rhonda Greenway (518) 732-2070
Food Service, Tom McNay (518) 732-4269