

August 24, 2009



Black Bear Tracks & Facts

Patricia J. Blattman Elementary

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Carin Adermann, Principal
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Message from the Principal

Dear Blattman Families,

Welcome to the 2009-10 school year! Each year our excitement and energy builds as we get closer to the children's first day of school. Your Blattman faculty and staff have been working throughout the summer to prepare ourselves and our facility to welcome children to a new year of learning. Since opening in 2003, Blattman Elementary has enjoyed a reputation for excellence which can be attributed to caring teachers, involved parents and motivated students. We enjoy the partnership between home and school, and value the friendships and relationships that have been established. Please know that we consider it a privilege to serve your children, as well as a responsibility that we do not take lightly. This newsletter contains information to help get the new school year off to a smooth start. Please take a few minutes to read each item as some policies and procedures (such as visitor check-in) have changed. Thanks for your continued support. We look forward to our year together!

Sincerely,

Carin Adermann

Principal

School Policies & Procedures

RAPTOR SIGN-IN:

We welcome parents and guests on our campus. For the safety of our students, all parents, visitors and volunteers must register through the main office using the Raptor Visitor Tracking System. **ID is required** to be scanned by our office staff; then a photo ID will be generated that must be worn while on campus and turned in upon exiting the campus. The process takes a matter of seconds. Entrance and exit is through the front doors adjacent to the main office.

All other doors are locked during the school day and are not to be used. Full implementation of the Raptor system will begin on August 31st. Exceptions to these new check-in procedures will not be made to better ensure the integrity of the system in monitoring adults on campus. We thank you for your cooperation as we implement this new system.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is extremely important for all students to be successful in school. The school day begins at 7:45 a.m. It is

recommended that children arrive by 7:40 a.m. Children arriving after 7:45 a.m. are tardy and must stop at the office to receive a tardy notice before going to the classroom. For more information refer to the attendance flyer in the first day packet and the district student-parent handbook regarding "Student Supervision and Dismissal." A child who is not present at 9:00 a.m. is counted absent for the day. A child who arrives after 9:00 a.m. should be accompanied by the parent and a written note explaining the reason for the absence.

School Policies & Procedures (continued)

HEALTH APPOINTMENTS: It is recommended that health appointments be made after school releases at 2:45 p.m. However, if a student is absent for **part** of the school day due to an appointment with a health care professional, **a note from the health care professional must be provided** to the office upon the child's return, and the partial absence will not be documented as a tardy or an absence. If a student is absent for the **entire** day due to an appointment with a health care professional who provides a note, it will count as an Excused Absence.

MORNING PROCEDURES: Please drop off students at the main entrance of the school, not at other entrances. Students will only be allowed to enter at the main entrance as other doors on the front of the building are locked and not monitored. Students in grades 1, 2, 4, and 5 will report to the gym. Students in grades K & 3 will report to the cafeteria to sit at designated tables. ECC & PPCD students report directly to the classroom. If you choose to walk your child into the building, please park in the parent lot located in front of the school. The side lot is for faculty parking. The back driveway is only for day care buses and school buses. Please never park and exit your vehicle in the front or rear loop as these areas need to be kept free for emergency vehicles. Multiple teachers will be in the gym and cafeteria beginning at 7:15 a.m. to supervise students waiting in these areas. **Since there are no duty personnel in the school until 7:15 a.m., your child should not arrive on campus before that time.**

AFTERNOON PROCEDURES: At the end of the school day (2:45 p.m.), teachers accompany students to the bus/daycare van area, YMCA Prime Time, or parent pick-up area. Students waiting to be picked up remain with their teacher along the front covered walkway until dismissed. If you arrive early, please wait outside the glass doors for your child as teachers are unable to dismiss students in the hallway. Parents who wish to pick up their child without

exiting their car may pull **single file** into the right lane along the red curb. **The left lane is for moving traffic only.** Please do not pick up students or park in the left lane. Any children remaining at 3:00 p.m. are brought to the office to contact their parents. If you wish to talk to your child's teacher, please park your car in the parent parking lot as conversations held in the pick-up lane block the flow of traffic.

DAY CARE: Prime Time, a program offered by YMCA, uses Blattman's gym to provide childcare from 2:45-6:30 p.m. Multiple local day cares also provide transportation between their sites and school. Students who ride day care vans in the afternoon are supervised in the cafeteria, then picked up by day care vans in the bus loop located on the side of the school. Please stop by the Blattman office for contact information for YMCA or local day cares serving our students.

EARLY PICK UP: Early pick-up is discouraged and considered a "partial day absence" under the state compulsory attendance laws. Under the rare circumstance that your child must leave before 2:45 p.m., the parent must come to the office to have the student released from class. Students will only be released to individuals listed on the emergency health card and proper identification will be required. For the safety of all children, we will not release students to individuals who are not on the emergency health card or individuals who do not have proper ID. It is therefore important for parents to update the medical emergency card information as changes occur.



EARLY NOTIFICATION OF DISMISSAL CHANGES: PLEASE NOTIFY YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER OF ANY CHANGES TO YOUR CHILD'S DISMISSAL PLAN IN WRITING AND **WELL IN ADVANCE.**

Our goal is to ensure every child gets home safely, and having a **consistent dismissal plan** and **communicating any changes to that plan well in advance** helps us ensure children are at the correct end-of-day location.

If the teacher has not received notification from a parent/guardian regarding a dismissal change, the child will be sent home according to the plan on file with the classroom teacher.

Please do not ask your child to verbally deliver a message regarding dismissal. Please also keep in mind that children sometimes forget to give the teacher a written note, teachers may not see an e-mail or hear a phone message until after school is dismissed at 2:45, or there may be a substitute teacher without access to the teacher's e-mail. **The earlier you provide notification, the more confident you can be that your child will be dismissed according to your directions. Same-day changes are best communicated by calling the office at 397-4600 no later than noon.**

EMERGENCY CHANGES: If there is an emergency that requires a last-minute change of your child's dismissal plan, **please speak with a member of the office staff by calling 397-4600.** We will be vigilant in getting the message to your child and his/her teacher as quickly as possible. We do ask that you please reserve last minute phone calls for emergencies only. With approximately 570 students, messages can quickly accumulate at the end of the school day with limited time to disseminate, risking the chance of a message not being delivered before students have already been dismissed.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us ensure students arrive and depart safely each day!

PJB “Bear Essentials”

Belief: All students can achieve their personal best.

Philosophy: All students have the opportunity to reach their full potential socially, emotionally, and academically.

Principle: Education is a partnership between the home, school, and community.

Concept: Each student sets goals for learning, service, and responsibility.

Strategy: A supportive learning environment encourages student success.

Design: Teachers will present content in a variety of ways to accommodate the diversity of learning styles.

Action: Educators must continually

engage in professional growth to empower students to become life-long learners and meet the diversity of learning styles.

Audit: The educational partnership will engage in reflective practices for evaluation.

Evaluate: On-going review of school-wide performance data will determine student achievement.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences are encouraged throughout the school year as questions or concerns arise. All teachers will arrange a conference during the first grading period. Most parents want face to face conferences, while others prefer phone conferences due to working schedules. Please feel free to inform your child’s teacher which method works best for you. It is to everyone’s advantage that you discuss concerns with the teacher or parties involved before calling an administrator. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, you are free to call an administrator. A parent or teacher may request a conference any time during the school year; however, these conferences must be pre-scheduled. The teacher cannot be expected to stop

instruction with the class when a parent unexpectedly arrives. Conferences must be face to face when discipline problems persist or the behavior is of a serious nature.

CONFERENCE TIMES

8:30-9:15	Third Grade
9:20-10:05	Fourth Grade
10:10-10:55	Fifth Grade
11:30-12:15	Rotation Specialists
12:15-1:00	Kindergarten
1:05-1:50	First Grade
1:55-2:40	Second Grade



Breakfast and Lunch Information

MEALS: Parents may purchase student meals in any quantity. By purchasing meals in advance, your child will not lose lunch money. This should be handled in the mornings before school begins with the cafeteria manager, Lisa Mahan, or **deposit money into your child’s meal account online** by logging onto: www.nisd.net/parentconnection/ Using this online payment system, you may also register to **receive e-mail alerts when your child’s balance is low.**

LUNCH TIME VISITORS: Parents and grandparents are welcome to have lunch with their child. Please remember to

sign in at the office and get a visitor badge. Parents may bring lunch to their child, but due to the state’s nutrition policy, parents may not bring in food to share with other students. Special tables are designated as Guest Tables for family members who come to have lunch with their child. For safety reasons, only the child of the guest may join him/her at the Guest Table. All other students are to remain at the designated table for their class. For space and safety reasons, parents are asked not to



Medications

All medication should be taken directly to the school office by the parent.



Medications are not allowed to be kept in the classroom nor may students administer their own medication. This includes over the counter items such as cough drops, Tylenol, etc. If it is necessary to send medication via the child, the parent is encouraged to call the school nurse the same day. Parents are reminded that they are responsible for the medication until it is delivered to the clinic. Leftover medication must be picked up by the parents. Students may take home only empty containers. If you have questions or concerns, please contact nurse Nancy Deschaine.

sit at the table designated for the class.

BIRTHDAY TREATS: If parents wish to recognize their child’s birthday with treats for the class, these items must be purchased from the school cafeteria and shared during the child’s designated lunch time. Items available through the cafeteria include cookies and various ice cream treats. Arrangements can be made through the cafeteria manager Lisa Mahan. Other types of birthday celebrations are not allowed during instructional time. Each child will receive a Birthday Bear Tag in recognition of his/her special day.

Online Student-Parent Handbook

It is important for you to read the online handbook carefully as it contains the policies and procedures for all NISD elementary campuses. In the First Day Packet, there are two pages that require your signature. "Parent Information Release Authorizations," explains the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and requires that you answer 3 statements, then sign and return that page. ***Please consider this information carefully.*** If you check "no" to the first statement, your child's name will not appear in the Blattman School Directory and his/her picture and name will not be included in the Blattman Yearbook. Also included is an explanation of Northside's policy regarding the acceptable use of the District's electronic communication system. Students will not be allowed to use the campus computers until this form is returned with your signature. **We ask that these pages be returned with your signature no later than Friday, August 28.**



E-Mail

E-mail is an extremely useful tool for communication. Used efficiently, it can promote improved home/school communication. However, excessive e-mail may actually inhibit responsive communication and distract from teachers' other responsibilities such as working with children and planning / preparing for diverse student needs. The following guidelines for staff and families are provided to help ensure e-mail enhances our ability to work together for our children:

- ~ Use e-mail to communicate general information or questions (i.e., attendance, scheduling, special events, deadlines, brief comments/questions).
- ~ In-depth conversations or dialogue regarding a child are best held in person.

Conferences should be scheduled to ensure full attention can be given to the discussion.

~ E-mail topics should be in regard to the parent's child and not include other children.

~ Do not expect instantaneous turnaround. During instructional time, teachers are focused on the children, and therefore cannot read and respond to e-mail as quickly as it arrives in the Inbox. E-mail may be read before school, after school, or during a teacher's conference time, keeping in mind that teachers may also have duty or meetings at those times. We recognize that parents also have many other priorities beyond e-mail and may not be able to respond immediately.

Bear Facts Night

Bear Facts Night provides parents the opportunity to meet their child's teacher, view the classroom, and receive information regarding classroom procedures. All parents are invited. Please join us for an evening full of valuable information as you learn all the "Bear Facts!"

BEAR FACTS NIGHT

September 1, 2009

5:30-6:30 p.m. for

Kinder, 2nd, and 4th grade classes

AND

6:45 - 7:45 p.m. for

1st, 3rd, and 5th grade classes

~Emergency messages requiring immediate attention (such as an emergency change in a child's dismissal plan) should be called in to the office to better ensure the information is transferred in a timely manner.

~The lack of cues and feedback make e-mails easy to misinterpret. If needed, seek clarity through a phone call or face-to-face interaction.

~ Allow at least 24 hours for a response. Staff members and parents alike may receive a great many messages each day, yet have many other responsibilities. It may also take time for the e-mail recipient to gather sources and thoughts to provide a considerate response.

Additional Information

LOST AND FOUND:

Misplaced items are placed in a rack located near the cafeteria. **Parents are encouraged to write the child's last name in all jackets, sweaters, hats, gloves, etc.** Please check the lost and found periodically for missing items.



TOYS: Toys including electronics, iPods and collectable cards may not be brought

to school unless requested in writing by the teacher for a special activity or event. If a student does bring a toy to school without teacher authorization, the teacher will collect the toy until a parent can pick it up.

DRESS CODE: Shorts, skirts, culottes, and dresses must be mid-thigh or longer in length. Any clothes that are suggestive or which cause distraction will not be permitted. No cut-offs, tight fitting pants, or exercise/bicycle shorts are allowed. Over-sized or baggy pants are also not allowed.

Students may not wear tops or shirts with "spaghetti" straps or large cut-out armholes. Tennis shoes are the preferred shoe at school for safety reasons. Flip flops are popular but expose the foot to many dangers. While wearing flip flops, children often trip while running, so this type of shoe is not allowed during P.E. classtime. Tennis shoes with retractable wheels are not allowed at school because they also pose a safety concern.