

CLARK & WILKINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Parent/Student Handbook
2009-2010



**P.O. Box 420
Amherst, New Hampshire 03031**

WELCOME

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Students,

It is with pleasure that we welcome you to Clark-Wilkins School. We look forward to working with you and encourage you to express your ideas and concerns with us. Communication among students, parents/guardians, the community and the school is key to our mutual success. We believe that learning is a lifelong process, and that it takes the cooperation of everyone concerned working together to promote a safe, positive and effective school experience for our children.

The Amherst School Board, Clark-Wilkins School Administration and Staff are committed to providing a safe and comfortable atmosphere in which children can learn. This includes showing respect for one another and the school facility, encouraging a sense of self-responsibility and taking pride in working to the best of one's ability. Within this environment, we also are committed to:

- Developing each student's full academic potential;
- Cultivating good character, citizenship and self-reliance;
- Helping students to build positive self-esteem and desire to become life long learners;
- Encouraging collaboration among staff to provide learning experiences relevant to all students' needs;
- Implementing curriculum in ways which will motivate and challenge students to learn;
- Involving students in programs that promote healthful living;
- Establishing a school and community partnership.

We hope that you will find this handbook helpful in answering questions regarding policies, procedures and practices at Clark-Wilkins School.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

ABSENTEE REPORTING

If your child will be absent from school, we ask that a parent/guardian call the school office between 7:30 and 8:30 AM. The school nurse must document communicable illnesses for the State, as well as, track frequency and types of illnesses within the school community. Both schools have voice mail. You can leave a message anytime before 7:30 AM. Please leave your name, your child's name and indicate the reason for absence.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL

School hours are 8:30 AM - 2:45 PM at Clark School and 8:30 AM - 2:50 PM at Wilkins School. Children should not arrive at school before 8:15am. It is essential that your child arrives to school on time. Kindergarten: Morning sessions run from 8:30 AM - 11:00 AM. Afternoon sessions run from 12:15 PM - 2:45 PM. Afternoon kindergarten drop-off time is from 12:00-12:15 PM on Davis Lane. Parents who arrive after 12:15 PM should drive to the front of Clark School and escort their child to the front office. To keep classroom interruptions at a minimum, please leave items to be delivered to the classroom in the school office. They will be delivered at an appropriate time.

CHANGES IN ARRIVALS/DISMISSALS

All late arrivals and early dismissals **must check in at the school office**. A NOTE FROM PARENTS is required for a change in dismissal arrangements. Changing buses is discouraged for safety reasons, but if you are asking that your child ride a bus to a different address you must include the date, student's first and last name, teacher name, bus number and address to which your child is going.

BICYCLES

Students riding bicycles should not arrive before 8:15 AM. Bicycle racks are provided for the purpose of parking student bikes for the day. Bicycles should be walked on school property at all times. For the safety of our students we recommend they wear appropriately sized bicycle helmets. The school cannot assume responsibility for damage to bicycles.

PARENT PICK-UP

As the school year progresses, your child will need a note for parent pick-up (if this is a change from the routine). Please be on time to pick up your child.

RECESS

Recess in grades 1-4 consists of one 25 minute period each day. Children should come to school prepared for outside play. Winter gear must include hats, mittens, boots and snow pants. We discourage children from bringing items from home as we supply appropriate play items (balls, jump rope, etc...). If you allow your child to bring a personal item to school please understand that the school will not be responsible for lost or broken items. Please no trading cards, electronic items (cell phones, video games) knives, water pistols or other dangerous items.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

It is important that students take the time to learn about playground safety. Doing so will protect all children from unnecessary hurt and risks during their recess times. **Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible.**

TEACHER CONFERENCES and REPORT CARDS

Appointments for parent/teacher conferences may be scheduled during Open House in September or by calling or e-mailing your child's teachers. Report cards are distributed four times a year. Please examine the card carefully, sign the envelope and return it promptly. Teachers may also send home progress reports at any time during the school year.

CHILD ABUSE

In compliance with NH laws: It is the policy of the Amherst School District that any teacher or other school employee who suspects that a child's physical or mental welfare may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report such to the Division of Children and Youth Services. Adopted: 2/28/91

GLOBAL CONNECT

In the event of a school emergency, all parents/ guardians will receive communication via our global connect system. This system automatically dials phone contacts, leaving a voice message regarding the emergency, which may include weather-related school attendance. During these times, please limit calls into the school buildings.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If you have any further questions or concerns, please listen to the following radio and/or TV stations for information about school closings and delayed openings: WBZ, 1030 AM, Boston, MA; WSMN, 1590 AM, Nashua; WHOB, 106.3 PM, Nashua; WZID, 95.7 PM, Manchester; WGIR, 610 AM, 101.1 FM, Manchester; WMUR- TV, Ch. 9, Manchester; WNNH, 99 FM, Concord; WCVB- TV, Ch. 5, Boston, MA.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays will be recognized during lunch time in the cafeteria. The birthday child will be given a fruit popsicle treat from the school. This treat will replace birthday snacks from home.

FIRE DRILLS AND OTHER EMERGENCY DRILLS

The school holds regularly scheduled evacuation drills throughout the school year. Students must remain quiet and in line with their teacher throughout each drill. Evacuation directions and Emergency Response Procedures are posted in each classroom and other instructional areas of the school. The school also holds emergency drills such as Drop and Cover, Shelter in Place, Reverse Evacuation and Lockdown.

Clark-Wilkins Program Profiles

All Clark-Wilkins classrooms provide a nurturing, interactive environment. Children are encouraged to learn and develop at their own pace without fear of failure.

EARLY INTERVENTION

In an effort to promote peak academic performance and success for all children, our schools offer early intervention services. This may include supports and services offered by a variety of staff, such as: Literacy Teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, or Special Educator. It is our intent to offer a variety of multidisciplinary approaches to learning that will foster each child's physical, social, emotional and academic success. If you have questions about any support your child may be receiving, please contact your child's classroom teacher directly.

KINDERGARTEN PROFILE

Public kindergarten provides a common educational foundation upon which skills/concepts and learning strategies are promoted and enhanced which will lay the necessary base for success in first grade. The kindergarten curricular areas are an integral part of the skills and strategies continuum. All kindergarten curricula are consistent with our school district's educational philosophy, expectations and goals.

All academic subjects are taught in kindergarten: math, integrated language arts, science and social studies. Each classroom is set up with centers, some of which are: math, building, writing, reading, media, science/social studies, kitchen, art, water/sand/rice table, dramatic play, and circle/gathering center.

Morning sessions run from 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM. Afternoon sessions run from 12:15 PM to 2:45 PM. One-way transportation is offered; morning students will be provided transportation to school and afternoon students will be transported home.

FIRST GRADE PROFILE

The first grade experience aims to facilitate, through interaction with others, the extension of the child's world beyond her/himself. Through these interactions children learn to feel good about themselves and the school experience. This is one of the most important concepts of the first grade experience.

First grade provides a variety of appropriate experiences in the curriculum areas of language arts, math, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, health, library, and guidance. The child moves through the curriculum at a comfortable yet challenging pace. The program is designed to meet the individual needs of each student. The intent of the program is to provide the groundwork for teaching independent work skills and responsibility, two areas of great importance in providing a solid educational foundation.

GRADES TWO THROUGH FOUR

The focus in grades two through four is to continue to build on the developmental profile of each individual student. The continuum can be thought of as a building with supports being offered when necessary to assure success in the areas of language acquisition, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary (Five Essential Components of Reading). In addition, we continue building critical thinking skills and problem solving in the areas of math, science and social studies. Writing is essential in all curriculum areas.

THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

A school lunch, which includes milk, is available every school day. Milk may also be purchased separately. Students eat their lunches in their respective multipurpose rooms.

Each month a menu is sent home with your child. To establish an account for your child's lunch program, please access the SAU website, <http://www.sprise.com/dining> and use the MyNutrikids link. This website also displays the current menu and allows you to track your child's account balance. Please keep your child's account current, as lunch options are limited when there is a negative balance. If you have any questions, please contact Louise Guay at lguay@sprise.com. Financial assistance is available, please contact the school nurse.

HEALTH PROGRAM

Clark-Wilkins Nurses
Deanna Cordts, RN
Nancy Panasiti, RN

Through school nursing, essential and valuable contributions are made to the educational program as it strives to serve the needs of all children. Through the active and sincere efforts of home, school and community good personal health can be promoted. Increasing student awareness of the values of a healthy environment can inspire personal commitment for maintaining and improving the health of all people.

The purpose of school health services is to support the educational process within a comprehensive school health program. The school nurses act as specialists in the coordinated delivery of school health services which include: promotion of healthy decision-making, prevention of illness and injury, determination of the health status of students, provisions for early intervention and health screenings. School nurses also serve as health resources to the classroom teachers. In addition, they work closely with community and state agencies in the fields of health education and welfare. Each school has a fully equipped health office, staffed with a registered nurse. Please feel free to contact the nurse to discuss any health concern you may have.

MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

Physicals: All students must have a physical exam within one year prior to entrance into the public school system. Forms may be obtained from the school office.

No medical examination shall be required of a child whose parent or guardian objects for religious reasons. In this case, a Religious Exemption Form needs to be completed and submitted. Forms are available in the school office.

All incoming students who move or transfer into the Amherst School District must have proof of a physical examination from their previous public school within 30 days of admittance. If the parent or guardian is financially unable to fulfill this regulation, the building principal should be contacted.

Immunizations: The State Public Health Agency requires that all children shall provide proof of proper immunization prior to the first day of school. Such immunizations shall not be required if the parent or guardian presents a Religious Exemption Form, which shows such immunizations are contrary to his religious tenets and teachings. Such forms are available in the school office. No immunizations shall be required prior to school entrance if the parent/guardian presents written documentation from a physician stating that immunizations will be detrimental to the child's health.

Required Immunizations

- DTP: Diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. A minimum of three doses providing that a least one dose was administered after the age of 4. Adult type if over 6 years of age.
- TOPV/OPV: Trivalent oral polio vaccine. A minimum of three doses provided at least one dose was administered after the age of 4.
- MMR: Measles, mumps and rubella. Vaccine administered after the age of 12 months. A second dose of Measles is required prior to entry into seventh grade.
- TB: Tuberculosis (intradermal). Screening administered between 0-6 years of age and periodically during the school years to detect the presence of tuberculosis. Not required but highly recommended.
- HEP B: All children born on or after 1/1/93 require three doses.
(These requirements are subject to change at the discretion of The New Hampshire Department of Public Health's Immunization Program)

Activity Restrictions: All students are expected to play outdoors during recess except in extremely cold weather or rain. If a child is not well enough to play outdoors at school, home care is recommended.

Exceptions are as follows:

1. Students who have medical issues which require an activity restriction. They must have a physician's note excusing them from physical education and/or recess. The note should specify which restriction is applicable. This note must be signed by the health care provider and indicate the following:
 - a. The type of restriction (physical education, recess or both).
 - b. The length of time the restriction(s) is in effect.
2. For safety reasons, students who attend school with a cast, splint, and/or crutches will not be permitted to participate in physical education or outdoor recess without a physician's note stating they may do so.

Pediculosis (Head Lice) Checks: All students are examined periodically for pediculosis, a condition that is commonly found in school age children, due to the close nature in which children interact. If a child is found to have pediculosis, a parent/guardian will be contacted. The child will be dismissed and the parent/guardian will be given instructions regarding treatment of the child and home environment.

It is the policy of the Amherst School District that the child MUST be NIT-FREE in order to return to school. Children dismissed for pediculosis may not return to school or ride the bus until they have been re-examined by the school nurse and reentry into school is authorized.

Medication Policies and Procedures: State law requires certain policies and procedures be adhered to in the administration/assisting of medication dispensing in school. These policies are also implemented for safety reasons.

1. ALL PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION REQUIRES A WRITTEN ORDER* FROM A PHYSICIAN INDICATING THE FOLLOWING:**
 - Name of medication
 - Dose
 - Route of administration
 - Time to be given (Medications ordered three times a day usually do not need to be taken at school ask your physician.)
 - Duration of order (All orders automatically expire at the end of each school year and must be renewed at beginning of each school year.)
 - Physician's name (printed please) and signature
 - Physician's telephone number

* A prescription label does NOT suffice as a physician's written order. The order must specifically state the medication is to be taken in school.

**There are medication authorization forms available in the school and health offices

2. OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS are discouraged unless recommended by the physician. Any that require a dosage different than the recommended dose on the label requires a Physician's written order. Any that are taken, must be brought to school in a new unopened bottle. The school health office has a very limited supply of acetaminophen.
3. A medication authorization form must be signed by a parent/guardian for ALL medications (prescription AND non-prescription).
4. **All medications must be transported to school by a responsible adult. Medication must not be transported on the bus.**
5. All medications must be brought to school in the originally labeled container (most recently dated pharmacy label if prescription). Loose pills or liquids in home labeled containers **MAY NOT** be administered in school.
6. The FIRST DOSE OF ANY new medication should be given at home. This is to insure that any unanticipated side effects will most likely occur when the child can be closely monitored by you.
7. Under no circumstances are children allowed to keep medication of any kind on their person. **DO NOT** send in loose pills, cough drops, inhalers*, epipens*, etc. in lunch boxes or school bags. If a child is found with unauthorized possession of medication, he/she will be sent to the nurse or principal, and an attempt will be made to reach you to pick up or administer the medication.

* A special responsibility form must be signed by your child's physician and you if your child needs to carry an inhaler or epipen.

Please keep your child home if they have:

1. **Conjunctivitis:** The state mandates that children with conjunctivitis be excluded from school until they are symptom free; have been treated for at least 24 hours; or have a physician's note stating they are non-contagious and can return to school.
2. **Coughing** that may disrupt the class.
3. **Diarrhea:** A student should be diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. **Fever of 100 degrees or more:** Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
5. **Rash:** Other than poison ivy or eczema. Unless we have documentation from a physician stating your child's rash is not contagious, children with a rash of unknown origin cannot be permitted to attend school.
6. **Sore/Strept Throat:** If your child is cultured for suspected strept throat (especially if they are started on antibiotics pending the throat culture results), please keep them home until you get the culture results. If the results are positive, the state mandates that they be excluded from school until they have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours or have a note from a physician stating they are non-contagious and may attend school.
7. **Vomiting:** Students should not be vomiting for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Clark-Wilkins School Wellness Practices
November 2009

In support of the Amherst School District Wellness Policy JLCF, Clark-Wilkins is instituting the following practices and procedures related to the wellness plan. The full policy may be reviewed by accessing the SAU#39 web site and the policy section of the Amherst School Board.

- Birthdays will be recognized during lunch time in the cafeteria. The birthday child will be given a fruit popsicle treat from the school. *This treat will replace birthday snacks from home.*
- All food items provided through the school lunch or breakfast program, or any school function including classroom parties or celebrations must meet or exceed nutritional standards established by the USDA.
- The amount of fats, sugar, and sodium per serving will be minimized to comply with the recommended guidelines. This includes food or beverages brought in for school-wide or individual celebrations, such as classroom parties.
- All food brought in to be shared must be accompanied with an ingredient label. If there is no ingredient label available then the food item will not be distributed.
- Classroom celebrations may not include more than one food or beverage item that does not meet recommended nutrition standards.
- During events involving food, movement activities are also encouraged to promote the strong, positive connection between food and movement.
- The schools will not use foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance of good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment.
- Whenever possible, snacks and celebration foods should include fruits, vegetables, yogurt, or other healthy foods.
- In recognizing the large number of children and adults with food allergies, any event involving food must take into account the needs of individuals with food allergies. Classroom parties will be planned by the room parent and teacher. Party foods/favors or supplies not arranged by the room parent or teacher will not be distributed at the party.

Some ideas for healthier snacks are:

Cheez its	Cheerios
Goldfish	Jello
Pretzels	Rice Krispie treats
Crackers	Fruit
Teddy grahams	cheese and crackers
Vegetables and dip	bagels and cream cheese
Popsicles	natural fruit snacks
Popcorn	

TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Beth Cregan, Technology Coordinator

Technology Education at the elementary school level is intended to provide students with Computer Literacy. Computer Literacy is defined as the knowledge and skill a person needs to appreciate and use computers as a tool. Students will develop an understanding of the impact of technology in society. The computer is an interdisciplinary educational tool. Not only is the computer an aid for learning and reinforcing life skills, but also the understanding of computers (how they work and their role in society) is a life skill in itself. Problem solving skills and communication skills are reinforced, and alternative ways for students to learn can be developed by integrating computers into the present curriculum at all levels.

Our goal is to provide a computer literacy program that will make students feel comfortable with computers and give them the ability to use computers as a tool to increase their learning in school. In Grade 2, students will learn about the uses of various pieces of hardware and use instructional software as an educational support tool. In Grade 3, students will begin to acquire skills that will allow them to utilize both hardware and software through the integration of instructional software with the curriculum. Students in Grade 4 will continue to use instructional software as an educational support tool. In addition, they will learn basic typing skills and the use of the special function keys on the keyboard.

INTEGRATED ARTS PROGRAM

ART

Amy Parker - Clark

Mary Prescott-Ninness - Wilkins

The Art programs at Clark and Wilkins, grades K -4 help children learn the characteristics of the visual arts. The National Standards for Arts Education are incorporated within our own curriculum framework to insure art excellence. Appropriate concepts and problems solving tasks are introduced and reinforced. Students learn how to work with various tools, processes and media. They learn to coordinate their hands and minds to respond to the natural world and stimuli all around us. Children shall communicate with the language of art through using effective material, assemblage, and manipulation. As children move through the early grades the students will be given the opportunity to further develop observation skills and learn the visual connections relating to objects, people, places and events establishing a visual vocabulary. Natural inquisitiveness is encouraged and the value of persistence is nurtured.

Learning to use the elements of design, composition and spatial aptitude increase in challenge and match appropriate developmental expectations for each grade. Group projects and grade level events are often integrated and connected with other curricula to insure class unity and school spirit and allow effective sensory information learning. An individual portfolio system is used to save all student work. Artwork is sent home at the end of each year. The Art Shows for both schools are annual events representing work from all the children. At Wilkins each child will also have one project digitally archived for a long term growth record.

MUSIC

Karie Swift - Clark
Robert Allwarden – Wilkins

Music education is a medium which aids in the total development of each student. It provides opportunities for individual growth as well as involvement with group activities. The objective of the program is to provide a high quality, sequential and well-balanced music education for every child.

The Clark and Wilkins School music program focuses on six areas of study: reading/writing, playing, listening, creating, moving and singing. There is a strong Orff-Kodaly emphasis, including one forty minute period per week at Clark and one forty minute class period per week at Wilkins. All children engage in grade appropriate activities, designed to promote musical literacy and enjoyment in all six areas of study. Music is continuously integrated with regular classroom studies, as well.

Parents receive one formal invitation to observe music classes during the school year; but may visit at any time. Special programs occur at each grade level during the year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Linda Narducci - Clark
David April - Wilkins

The Physical Education programs at Clark and Wilkins Schools utilize a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that are designed to focus on three major areas that contribute to ones' physical health and well being:

1. **Movement Concept** development includes the following areas of study: Space Awareness, Effort Concepts such as Time, Force, and Flow, Relationships to Objects, to People and to Body Parts. .
2. **Skill Theme** development includes: Ways of Traveling, Chasing, Fleeing and Dodging, Jumping and Landing, Balancing, Transferring Weight and Rolling, Kicking and Punting, Throwing and Catching, Volleying and Dribbling and Striking with short-handled and long-handled implements. Games, Dance, and Gymnastics are intertwined throughout the program.
3. **Wellness Concept** development includes: Health Related Fitness Screening in the areas of Cardio respiratory Endurance, Flexibility ~ Muscular Strength and Endurance and Body Composition. Emphasis is on the concepts of fitness and the development of positive attitudes toward lifetime fitness.

Our goals are to help children find a variety of ways to enjoy being physically active so that they will be able to get all of the physical, emotional, intellectual and social benefits that come to someone who is physically active throughout his or her life.

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

Franna Eaton, Reading Specialist, Curriculum Coordinator - Clark
Fay Deysher, Reading Specialist, Curriculum Coordinator - Wilkins
Katy Kennedy, Literacy Coach, Clark-Wilkins

A broad variety of literacy experiences are provided to the children in the classroom environment which enhances the children's skills in becoming active and independent readers, writers, listeners, speakers and thinkers. This integrated language arts approach utilizes literature to develop reading strategies and skills. All of the elements are taught as an integrated whole rather than fragmenting the skills into isolated parts.

The literacy curriculum enhances the success of each individual, thus varied supplemental services are offered. Support services are available from Literacy teachers and the Reading Specialists. In addition to the reading enrichment offered in the classroom, **Junior Great Books** and other literature groups may be provided to support student needs and interest.

LIBRARY SERVICES PROGRAM

Kathleen McIntyre, Librarian and Coordinator
Sara Martina, Library Associate, Clark School
Sherry DeFranco, Library Assistant, Wilkins School

Our school libraries serve an important part of the Clark/Wilkins educational program. All students visit the library. This time is used for stories, planned library skill activities, and book exchange. All books are checked out for one week, but can be renewed. No overdue fines are charged, but prompt book return is always encouraged. Payment is required for damaged and/or lost books.

The library has a planned curriculum of study that has specific goals and activities designed for each grade level. A few of these activities include the study the Randolph Caldecott Award, the John Newbery Award, and the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award, storytelling of fairy tales, folktales and tall tales, reference books, card catalog usage, and the enjoyment of books and stories of many popular authors.

Special library events during the school year including two Book Fairs and Writing Festival Week.

MATH PROGRAM

Jennifer Eccleston, Coordinator

The Elementary Math Curriculum for the Amherst School System was carefully developed for grades Kindergarten through four. The vision of the program is to provide effective and creative learning experiences while producing mathematically powerful thinkers and problem solvers who are confident and feel comfortable using mathematics in their daily lives. Our vision includes five primary societal goals that are consistent with the New Hampshire K -12 Mathematics Curriculum Framework:

- all students will develop a firm grounding in essential computational skills;
- all students will develop strong mathematical problem solving and reasoning abilities;
- all students will develop positive attitudes about mathematics;
- all students will develop the ability to use appropriate technology to solve mathematical problems; and
- all students will develop the ability to communicate their understanding of mathematics effectively (NHSDE, 1995, p.3).

The Amherst Mathematics Curriculum is based on the belief that students learn mathematics by doing mathematics, by exploring and discussing concepts in the context of physical situations. What emerges from these experiences are learned skills which are anchored in understanding and clarity. The students not only know the basic procedures, but also know how to apply them to new situations. Such a curriculum has the following characteristics;

- students are actively involved in doing mathematics;
- problem solving, thinking, reasoning, and communicating are everyday activities; -manipulatives are used to connect conceptual to procedural understanding;
- calculators and computers are used in appropriate ways;
- there is as much emphasis on application as on acquisition of knowledge and skills;
- a broad range of content is addressed; and
- central mathematical concepts are understood.

The Mathematics Curriculum Committee recommends meeting the needs of all students in the regular classroom, at the student's grade level, through the use of heterogeneous cooperative groups, where there is a mixture of strengths and needs, creativity, energy, and learning styles. While in cooperative groups, children learn from each other, providing immediate feedback, gaining new perspectives, and learning communication skills. The curriculum allows for the academic growth of all children through a variety of materials.

The Mathematics Curriculum encourages authentic assessment which looks at the processes and projects of students' math learning. Authentic assessment allows all students opportunity to display their knowledge because it is flexible and meets the needs of all learning styles. Some forms of authentic assessment include exhibitions, observations, interviews and questions, student writing and journals, benchmark tests, free responses, portfolios, self-assessment, and peer evaluation.

SCHOOL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Kristen Forsley, Clark-Wilkins School

Ann Shen, Wilkins School

Jane Lindsey, Wilkins School

The Counseling program at the Amherst Elementary Schools is designed to help all students develop their educational, social and personal strengths and become responsible, productive citizens. It is developmental, proactive, and preventive in nature and focuses on the needs, interests and issues related to the various stages of personal growth. The goals of the counseling program are to help the student:

- adjust to the school environment and experience success in the learning community.
- increase self-awareness and encourage a positive self-image.
- develop communication skills to express ideas and feelings and to utilize these effectively in interpersonal relationships.
- foster development of positive behavioral and social skills which facilitate and/or augment the learning process.
- develop the ability to handle personal issues through talking things out, generating options and making healthy choices and decisions.
- assist in milestones and transitions which may be developmental or crisis induced.
- begin the process of career exploration.

SCIENCE PROGRAM

Gail Polio & Alice Giarrusso, Coordinators

The science curriculum exposes students to units of study in the areas of life, physical and earth science. The curriculum is based on the belief that an effective science program plays an important role in the intellectual development of the student. It adds to the student's store of self-knowledge, knowledge of the environment and of the world at large.

The goals of the Science curriculum are to foster and build upon a student's curiosity towards the world around them. Development of process and critical thinking skills are integrated in order to promote fundamental scientific inquiry. A variety of approaches and experiences are employed in order to accommodate the diversity of needs and learning style of each student at his or her level of development.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES

Jaime Richardson, Curriculum Coordinator

Our Social Studies curriculum is an integrated school program which helps students to develop informed and reasoned decisions based on being a good citizen in a culturally diverse world. The curriculum draws upon the disciplines of economics, geography, history, political science and sociology as well as math and natural sciences. The curriculum utilizes a student-centered series. Each grade level focus of study progresses in a sequential order from year to year. The content studies in K-4 are: family, neighborhood, communities, and regions of the United States and integrated studies of other countries. This content serves as a vehicle for developing skills.

While teaching content areas, the five fundamental themes of geography are directly applied in student learning throughout the curriculum. Teachers have the flexibility to incorporate a variety of methods and materials to teach the content areas. Music, anthology readings on tape, computer software, literature books and hands-on activities are just a few examples of what our new series provides for teacher use.

Our Social Studies program in grades two through four has been supplemented with Junior Achievement. Junior Achievement educates and inspires young people to value free enterprise, business and economics in order to improve the quality of their lives. In addition to showing students the relevance of education to the workplace, it also prepares them for secondary school and lifelong learning.

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

Renea Sparks, Director of Special Instructional Services
Amy Sarsfield, Assistant Director
Janet Davis, Clark-Wilkins Special Education Coordinator

The Special Services Program at Clark and Wilkins Elementary Schools is designed to provide individualized academic help for children before they experience difficulty. The emphasis is on a diagnostic-prescriptive teaching approach. This approach combines identification of a child's learning strengths and weaknesses with the teaching of the basic skills needed to function and become successful in the regular classroom.

The support services are delivered in the form which best suits the child's educational needs. The support may be given on a one-to-one or small group basis, in or out of the classroom.

Parents/Guardians are an essential part of each child's academic success. It is an expectation that the home/school connection will be one which focuses on the ever changing needs of the student. Collaboration between home and school is essential and welcomed.

ELEMENTARY INCLUSION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Clark and Wilkin Schools are pleased to offer a special education program called the Elementary Inclusion Partnership Program (EIPP). This program primarily serves children with disorders on the autism spectrum and provides services for students in grades K-4 who demonstrate significant challenging behaviors and significant developmental, academic, and functional deficits. The EIPP Lead Teacher and program assistants, using research based intervention protocols and specialized training, provide support to classroom teachers and their students who require intensive services. The structure of the EIPP enables teachers, paraeducators, and parents to provide comprehensive and inclusive educational support to students. Educational and behavioral consultation is provided to the EIPP.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Cherina Cohen – Clark-Wilkins

A successful volunteer program provides a variety of learning experiences for children and helps to support a strong home-school relationship for both teachers and parents. All those involved; children, educators and volunteers, benefit greatly by its existence. It is both a privilege and a serious commitment.

Volunteers, at Clark and Wilkins Schools, are welcome in the classrooms and specialists' areas, such as: art, music, physical education, computer education, extended education, library and health office. Room mother volunteers for each classroom organize special projects and holiday parties.

Each volunteer assignment will vary according to the teacher's needs. Generally, a one hour commitment weekly or bi-weekly is required. Classroom assistance may include:

1. Giving individual help to a student.
2. Setting up demonstrations or bulletin boards.
3. Assisting with special activities such as plays, projects, etc.
4. Listening to children read.
5. Working with or reading to small groups.
6. Preparing material for special projects.
7. Assisting in learning centers.

Parents unable to volunteer in the classroom may assist their child's teacher at home by typing journals, preparing materials for special projects, and placing classroom book club orders. Scheduling information is sent home during the first few weeks of school.

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Amherst PTA is an organization that devotes itself to enhancing the educational experience of all the students in the Amherst School System. The two major areas in which we work to achieve this goal are fundraising and service. The PTA meets on the second Tuesday of each month at Wilkins School.

Major PTA fundraisers include a magazine drive in the fall and a play production in the spring. The funds raised from these events are used to provide supplemental materials and programs for all students. These materials and programs are enrichment in nature and serve to broaden the child's educational experience.

Our service efforts include many school related events for students and parents. Past events have included speakers, authors, entertainment, and experiential activities. The PTA welcomes those of you who are new to the Amherst School System and would encourage you to attend our monthly meeting.

AMHERST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RULES

The Clark-Wilkins Behavior Intervention Team is working toward improved school climate and behavior through unified, clear, concise, and consistent school-wide expectation and responses. We collaborate to develop and implement initiatives toward this end.

BE SAFE

BE RESPECTFUL

BE RESPONSIBLE

Every attempt is made to teach students about the importance of the above. When a student breaks a rule he/she may conference with a classroom teacher or other staff member. In the event of a major infraction or a pattern of misbehavior, the child will be referred to the Assistant Principal or Principal. The following guidelines are a reference:

Minor: Name calling, running indoors, inappropriate hand gestures, non-compliance to adult request, disrespect to peers or adults.

Major: Physical aggression (kicking, punching, slapping, head banging), threatening with words or objects, repeated occurrences of "minor" behaviors.

In the event a child is referred due to a major infraction of the rules, parent(s) will be contacted and a behavior report will be sent home for review/signature. Thank you for your support in reinforcing the core concepts of safety, respect and responsibility.

Playground Rules

BE SAFE

Be aware of games and activities around you.
Seek adult help as needed.
Do not talk to strangers.
No rough play.
Stay in designated areas.

BE RESPECTFUL

Follow game/activity rules.
Be a good sport.
Respect peers and adults.

BE RESPONSIBLE

Use equipment properly.

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION

First Student
211 Mont Vernon Road
Milford, NH 03055
672-3355

The bus schedule for the new school year is published in the Milford Cabinet one week prior to the opening of school. If you have questions about lost belongings, bus rides, stops, etc., please call the bus manager at 672-3355.

SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT

BUS RULES

BE SAFE

- Wait safely in line.
- Walk to and from your seat.
- Stay in your seat at all other times.
- Do not put hands, head, or belongings out the window.

BE RESPECTFUL

- Listen and obey the Bus Driver.
- Use quiet voices when talking.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Keep all belongings in your backpack.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Keep the bus clean.

The school board and staff members are very concerned about safety as we transport pupils. Cooperation from both parents and students is requested as we work to keep the buses safe for all concerned. Students using district provided transportation should understand that they are under the jurisdiction of the school from the time they board the bus until they are delivered at school or are delivered at the stop nearest their home.

The district reserves the right to install video monitoring on buses to assist in maintaining compliance with disciplinary procedures.

The bus driver has the responsibility to maintain orderly behavior of students on buses and will inform the student if his/her misconduct is being written up and reported. The driver will then report the misconduct via the bus company manager to the student's principal. No student shall be put off the bus while traveling to and from school. Parents shall be notified and the daily trip completed before the student will be denied transportation service.

The school principal or designee will have the authority to suspend the riding privileges of students who cause disciplinary problems on the bus and fail to conform to the rules and regulations approved by the School Board. (See RSA 189:9-a.) Parents of children whose pattern of behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of school bus riding privileges in accordance with the following procedure:

Bus Disciplinary Procedure

1. Once the first offense is confirmed, the parents will receive a statement of reprimand. The statement will also include a warning that future infractions will result in bus suspension. A call or letter home is optional depending on the situation. Flagrant violations of the Bus Regulations will result in immediate suspension from riding the bus.

2. If the Principal has reasonable doubt about the guilt of the student, he or she may meet with the Bus Company Manager and/or driver and the student to clarify the reported misconduct.

If a pupil has been denied the right to ride a school bus for disciplinary reasons, the parent or guardian of that pupil has a right of appeal, within ten (10) days of suspension, to the authority that suspended this pupil's right. If the appeal is denied, the parent or guardian may appeal to the next level. If this appeal is denied, the parent or guardian may appeal to the School Board.

Bus Regulations

Students may be suspended from using district transportation according to the following schedule:

1. Throwing things on, at, or out of the bus: (2-10) day suspension.
2. Smoking: (10) day suspension.
3. Spitting at anyone or anything: (2-10) day suspension.
4. Possession of drugs or alcohol: (10) day suspension.
5. Unauthorized use of emergency door: (10) day suspension.
6. Damaging the bus or equipment: (2-10) day suspension and payment for damages.
7. Use of inappropriate language, obscene gestures, excessive noise, fighting, wrestling, or acts of physical aggression: (2-10) day suspension.
8. Sticking head, hands, feet, etc. outside the bus: (2-10) day suspension.
9. Disobeying the bus driver: (2-5) day suspension.
10. Leaving the bus prior to student's appropriate destination: (2) day suspension.
11. Riding unassigned bus: (2) day suspension (exceptions made with bus pass from Principal, or his/her designee to bus driver or high school ID).
12. Changing seats while the bus is in motion or annoying other riders: (2) day suspension.
13. Any action that creates a safety hazard for the passengers of the bus: (1-2) day suspension.

Bus Passes

The school must receive written permission from the parent or guardian granting permission for a student in grades K-4 to ride a bus different from his or her own. The date, destination, and student's name should be included on the permission.

Bus Carry-On

To insure the maximum level of safety for all bus students, large items such as SKIS, MUSIC INSTRUMENTS (those which cannot be held on one's lap), and SCIENCE FAIR PROJECTS are not permitted to be taken onto the school bus unless they can be appropriately secured. No hazardous materials, glass, or live animals are permitted.

Bus Safety

Students are expected to be at their bus stop 5 minutes before the bus designated arrival time. Bus drivers have exacting schedules and will not wait for late arrivals. Students should remain well back from the road (approximately ten feet) while waiting for the arrival of the bus. Rushing toward the bus before it comes to a stop is dangerous. Misconduct at the bus stop will be reported. Students shall enter the bus in an orderly fashion, go directly to a seat, and remain seated until their destination is reached. They should then leave the bus in an orderly fashion.

If students must cross the road after exiting the bus, they should walk 10 feet (five giant steps) past the front of the bus and look at the bus driver. S/he will indicate when it is safe to cross. STUDENTS MUST NEVER STOP IN FRONT OF THE BUS TO PICK UP A DROPPED SCHOOL PAPER OR BACKPACK.

DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS IN A SAFE/DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE

The Board requires that the student body be annually notified of school rules, including RSA 193-B, the Drug Free School Statute, RSA 193-D, known as the Safe School Zone Law, and RSA 193-13, the law governing student suspension and expulsion from school. A summary of each of these laws follows.

RSA 193-D, Safe School Zone

Under the Safe School Zone statute, a student may be suspended or expelled for acts of theft, destruction or violence occurring on school property, bus stops and routes and at school-sponsored events regardless of the age of the student, for:

- a. Homicide
- b. Assault (simple, second degree)
- c. Sexual Assault
- d. Criminal Mischief
- e. Possession or Sale of a Weapon/Firearm
- f. Arson
- g. Burglary
- h. Robbery
- i. Theft
- j. Sale or Possession of a Controlled Drug

RSA 193-B, Drug-Free School Zone

Chapter 193-B, Drug-Free School Zone, makes it unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, prescribe, administer, dispense, or possess with intent to sell, dispense or compound any controlled substance or its analog, within a drug-free school zone at any time of year. Drug-Free School Zone means an area inclusive of any property used for school purposes, whether or not owned by the school, within 1000 feet of school property, or within or immediately adjacent to school buses.

RSA 193:13 Suspension and Expulsion

A student may be suspended or expelled for an act of theft, destruction or violence as defined in RSA 193-D and 193-B as well as for gross misconduct or neglect or refusal to conform to the reasonable rules of the school as stated in RSA 193:13. A student shall be expelled by the school board if the violation involves bringing or possessing a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code in a safe school zone as defined in RSA 193:D: 1 without written authorization from the superintendent. This statute allows the superintendent to modify the expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO POLICY

It is the policy of the Amherst School Board to control the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco in the Amherst Schools. The goal of this Policy is to limit any undesirable influences or effects upon the students or staff.

Practice: School Administrators and their designees are authorized to determine whether a person has violated any of the provisions of this Policy.

No person shall possess, have under his control, sell, dispense, or purchase, administer, transport, possess with intent to sell or conceal alcohol or any controlled drug or substance represented to be a controlled drug or alcohol while in the school building, on school grounds or enroute to, from, or at school or school-sponsored events except insofar as the above is required for legitimate medical purposes.

No person shall ingest, inject, inhale, or otherwise introduce into the human body nor be under the influence of any controlled drug or alcohol while in the school building on school grounds or enroute to, from, or at school or school-sponsored events except insofar as the above is required for legitimate medical purposes.

No person shall possess, have under his control, sell, dispense, purchase, transport or conceal any drug paraphernalia as that term is defined in RSA 318B: 1, x-a or objects used for the containment or dispensing of alcohol while in the school building, on school grounds or enroute to, from or at school or school-sponsored events except insofar as the above is required for legitimate medical purposes.

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe or where facts and circumstances give rise to reasonable suspicion that a person has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school as outlined in this Policy and that a search will turn up evidence thereof, a search conducted by school officials will be permissible if its scope is reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex and nature of the infraction.

Any person found to have violated any of the provision of this Policy shall be suspended up to ten (10) school days except that any person having a second violation of the above or found to have sold or distributed or intending to sell or distribute alcohol, controlled drugs, substances represented to be alcohol or controlled drugs or drug paraphernalia shall be suspended for a minimum of ten (10) school days and such case shall be referred to the School Board for determination of the necessity of further action against the violator of this Policy, whereupon, the School Board may, in its discretion, impose suspension for the entire school year.

Violation of this Policy may be reported to the local police.

There is a state ordinance prohibiting smoking in any public school or on school grounds.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Federal Laws regarding special education include Public Law 101-476, the "Individuals with Disabilities Act" (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The New Hampshire state law is RSA:186 C.

Children between 0 and 3 are entitled to early identification with the Area Agency through Part H funding, providing programming that is appropriate to meet the child's needs.

A child/student can be identified as a student with a disability due to:

1. Autism
2. Deafness
3. Deaf-blindness
4. Developmental delay
5. Early Identification (Birth-3)
6. Emotional Disturbance
7. Hearing impairments
8. Mental retardation
9. Multiple disabilities
10. Orthopedic Impairment
11. Other Health Impairment
12. Specific learning disability
13. Speech/language impairment
14. Traumatic brain injury
15. Visual impairment

If a child is found to have one or more of these conditions AND IT SUBSTANTIALLY INTERFERES WITH HIS/HER ABILITY TO LEARN AND PERFORM IN SCHOOL, then the child is entitled to special education and related services. The kind of help and special education services a child may need depends on the nature of the handicap and the degree to which it affects his/her ability to learn.

RTI: Response-To-Intervention

What is RTI?

Response-To-Intervention is a process which includes the provision of systematic, research-based instruction and interventions to struggling learners. It assumes that the instruction/interventions are matched to student needs and that the monitoring of progress is continuous. Furthermore, RTI is designed as an early intervention to prevent long-term academic failure. As such, RTI can replace and/or augment the I.Q. discrepancy model in the identification of learning disabilities. RTI is considered a general education service, but can also be implemented in special settings.

Response-To-Intervention Team

Each week representatives from our staff meet to collaborate with colleagues and discuss students who present with academic, social, or behavioral concerns. When the team meets, we brainstorm accommodations and supports necessary to facilitate student achievement. The team's varied membership (guidance, classroom teachers, learning specialist, literacy coach, school psychologist, occupational therapist, speech/Language pathologist, para educator, and administration) allows students to benefit from a variety of perspectives and professional training.