

# Providence Elementary School 2015-16



## PARENT HANDBOOK 2015-16

### Address

3616 Jermantown Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030

### Attendance Line

703-460-4444

### Cafeteria

703-460-4421

### Health Room

703-460-4410

### Main Office

703-460-4400

### FAX

703-460-4497

### SACC

703-460-4460

### Website

[www.fcps.edu/ProvidenceES](http://www.fcps.edu/ProvidenceES)

### Notes From Providence

Welcome to Providence Elementary School (PES)! This *Parent Handbook* contains some basic information about school policies, practices and procedures. Much of this is copied directly from FCPS regulations and guidelines. These rules and policies are outlined with one goal in mind: keeping your child(ren) safe, healthy, happy, and effectively taught at school.

Other information about Providence can be found on our website or on our Facebook page. The *Parent Handbook* is distributed to all students/parents in hard copy at Open House or the first day of school. It is available electronically on the PES website. Information relevant to the first days and weeks of school was mailed home to all families on August 28, 2015. If you have any questions, please call the office.

### SCHOOL HOURS

8:30 to 3:15 Monday - Friday  
Students should arrive at 8:20 to be in their seats at 8:30. We do not have supervision for students prior to 8:10.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER - SCHOOL HOURS

#### TWO-HOUR DELAY

10:30 to 3:15 Monday - Friday  
Students should arrive at 10:20 to be in their seats at 10:30. We do not have supervision for students prior to these times.

Announcements on FCPS school delays, closings, and emergency closings if the school day has already started are made on Apple Channel 21, [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu), and local TV and radio. If you subscribe to "Keep In Touch" on the FCPS website, you will receive an email announcement.

### 2015-16 FCPS SCHOOL YEAR

Sept. 8	School Begins
Oct. 9	Student Holiday
Oct. 12	Columbus Day Holiday/ Student Holiday
Oct. 30	2 Hours early dismissal / 1st Grading Period Ends
Nov. 2-3	Parent-Teacher Conferences/ Student Holidays
Nov. 25	2 Hours early dismissal
Nov. 26-27	Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 18	2 Hours early dismissal
Dec.21 - Jan.1	Winter Break
Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Holiday
Jan. 19	Student Holiday
Feb. 4	2 Hours early dismissal 2nd Grading Period Ends
Feb. 5	Student Holiday
Feb. 15	Presidents Day Holiday
March 21-25	Spring Break
March 28	Student Holiday
Apr. 21	2 Hours early dismissal 3rd Grading Period Ends
Apr. 22	Student Holiday
May 30	Memorial Day Holiday
June 23	2 Hours early dismissal / Last Day of School

Dates for specific Providence events are announced in the Panther Press monthly newsletter and the PES website throughout the year.

### SCHOOL SPIRIT

Our school mascot is a panther, and our colors are red, white & blue. Spirit wear can be purchased through the PTA: [www.ptaprovidence.org](http://www.ptaprovidence.org)

### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Principal – [Jesse Kraft](#)  
Assistant Principal – [Janice Suitte](#)  
Assistant Principal – [Dan Phillips](#)  
Administrative Assistant – [Barbara King](#)  
Student Registration- [Aggie Buckley](#)  
Office Assistant - [Mary Beth Turner](#)  
Office Assistant – [Beth Donohue](#)  
Office Assistant – [Monica Tatis](#)  
Health Room Aide – [Lori Gregg](#)  
Cafeteria Manager – [Mei Tsui](#)

### OTHER CONTENTS

#### Read on for information on these topics:

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Visiting School  
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## ATTENDANCE/ARRIVAL TIME

Virginia law requires regular school attendance by every child and places the responsibility for attendance upon the parent/guardian. Parents are requested to notify the school office by either calling the school attendance line (703) 460-4444, emailing [ProvidenceES.Attendance@fcps.edu](mailto:ProvidenceES.Attendance@fcps.edu), or sending a note prior to when a child is to be absent or tardy. If your child is absent due to illness, please indicate the type of illness in your phone call or note.

**Students are tardy if they arrive at school after opening time (8:30 A.M.), and parents must sign the students in the office prior to going to the classrooms to obtain a late pass. PLEASE NOTE: STUDENTS MAY NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:10 A.M.** Supervision is **not** provided before 8:10 A.M.

When students are absent or tardy, their attendance records will document whether the absences/tardy is excused or unexcused.

Regulation 2234 defines excused and unexcused absences. Reasons for **unexcused** absences and tardiness include, but are not limited to, family and/or student vacations; childcare situations; nonschool-related activities; missed school bus; oversleeping; alarm didn't go off; missing a ride; ride was late; car trouble; traffic; weather conditions; working on homework/project; and studying for a test; parent/guardian's fault. Family vacations should be scheduled not to conflict with the school calendar. In accordance with regulation 2234, students with five unexcused absences will be referred to the attendance officer.

## BAND, STRINGS & CHORUS



Like all Fairfax County elementary schools, we are able to offer elective (optional) music programs (Band, Strings, & Chorus) during the regular school day. Strings is open to 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Band and Chorus are open to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. With parent permission, students may choose to join either band or strings, and the teachers will work with each student to determine their instrument if they are a beginner. Teachers can also direct parents to sources that rent and sell instruments. Instrument instruction occurs once per week during the normal "specials" time (block of time each day dedicated to PE, art and music). Band and Strings students will still attend one general music class and one instrument class each week.

Students who are not in Band or Strings would attend two general music classes each week. Students and parents who sign up for Band and Strings should realize the significant commitment to practicing at home that will come with placement in this program. Behavior issues may prevent a student from continuing in these programs.

Chorus class occurs on weekly and is an opportunity for students to develop their vocal instrument. There is also a commitment to practicing at home. This program does involve a pull-out from class. Some makeup work may be required of students who go to chorus. Behavior issues may prevent a student from continuing in this program.

## BICYCLES AT SCHOOL



We would love to encourage students to ride bicycles to school. We have a bike rack right off of the walkway leading to the front door where students may lock their bikes. The law requires that children up to the age of sixteen wear a bike helmet and obey traffic laws. Students should walk their bikes when on school property and lock their bike securely on the bicycle rack. FCPS is not responsible for the possible loss of personal property including bicycles. Any parent may make the decision to allow his/her child to ride a bicycle to school and should determine the appropriate route. School administration does not have door to door responsibility for students while they are on their way to and from school. If your child plans on riding their bike to school, please obtain a Bike Riding form from the school office.

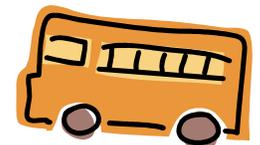
## BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Although a birthday party for any one student is not permitted in the classroom, if you wish to bring cupcakes or other individually packaged treats as a snack to share on your child's birthday, you must coordinate this with your child's teacher prior to the event in order to avoid disruption to the instructional program of all the students. Only treats as described above are acceptable. Students will have permission to pass their birthday treats to their classmates at lunch in the café. Gift bags, flowers, balloons and sodas will not be passed out. This is to preserve our learning time.

Party invitations will not be delivered in the classroom, unless every classmate is invited. We appreciate your cooperation.

## BUS RIDERS

The right of students to ride on school buses is conditional, based on their good behavior and observance of the following rules and regulations. These rules were established to maintain the safety of all students as they travel to and from school. Any student who violates any of these rules will be reported and runs the risk of having his/her bus privileges suspended.



- Students shall obey the driver who is fully in charge.
- Students shall obey and respect the directions of patrols on duty. Patrols will report all safety violations to the patrol sponsor.
- Students must be on time. The bus cannot wait for those who are not on time or stop once the bus has pulled away from the stop.
- Students shall respect the rights of others and refrain from using loud voices or bothering other students.
- Students are prohibited from bringing toys, live animals, or oversized items that would block the aisle, cause loss of passenger seat space, or obstruct the driver's view.
- Students may not change their seats once they are seated on the bus. They may not move about when the bus is moving. They may not put their hands, arms, or any object out of the windows or throw anything out the window.

- There will be no exchanging or eating of food on the bus. **NO GUM** is allowed on buses.
- Students who make any marks on the bus, windows or seats will be suspended from bus riding immediately and will be responsible to pay for the damages that occur.
- When at the bus stop, students must stand on the sidewalk or the side of the road, out of the way of traffic. At no time should students cross or play on private property. Transportation passes cannot be issued for students to ride a bus they would not normally ride.

Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at a bus stop unless there is an adult there to meet them. If there is no adult, the bus will return the student to the school.

If a student is riding a bus from a child-care arrangement and not the home address, a *Request for Exception to Ride* Form must be completed and approved before the child may ride the bus. This form is available in the office and will not be processed by the FCPS Department of Transportation until after October \_\_; therefore, other arrangements must be made until a decision is made on your request.

### CAFÉ INFORMATION

Breakfast will be served beginning Thursday, September 10 and lunch on Tuesday, September 8.

	<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Elementary Students (K-6)	\$1.75	\$2.90
Reduced-Price Meals	No charge	No Charge
Milk, 1/2 Pint	\$0.60	\$0.60

You may wish to deposit money into your child's account to avoid bringing money back and forth from home and school. Each child will have a specific PIN number that they enter when purchasing food. Parents wishing to deposit money into this account may do so online at [www.myLunchMoney.com](http://www.myLunchMoney.com), during Open House, or money may be given to your child's teacher to be delivered to the cafeteria in the morning **before the lunchtime lines begin**. Checks should be made payable to "Providence Food and Nutrition Services" with your child's name and teacher's name written on the front of the check. When your child's lunch account is nearly depleted, you will receive an automated phone message informing you of the current balance and the need to add money to the account ASAP. Families of students who do not buy lunch regularly will not receive this call if they carry a low balance.

If a child forgets his/her lunch, cereal and milk will be provided that day. For information and applications for free and reduced-price meals call 703-813-4844.

If your child is bringing his/her lunch, **please print your child's name on the lunch box or paper bag (no glass containers)**. Please do not bring lunch from fast food restaurants for your child to eat in the cafeteria. Parents are always invited to eat lunch with their child (ren). All parents must sign in at the front office before meeting their child in the cafeteria.

### CELL PHONES

Students may possess cell phones; however, PES students must have them turned off and in their backpacks. Regulation 2601 states disciplinary action may be taken if a student uses unregistered, personally owned electronic devices in any way

that violates the FCPS Acceptable Use Policy or the directions of the school. This includes, but is not limited to, any beeper, cell phone, or other similar device that is capable of sending and/or receiving audio, video, picture, electronic-mail, or text messages. In the event of a violation of this provision, the student shall be subject to disciplinary action hereunder, and the portable communication device used or possessed by such student shall be subject to confiscation by school officials. Principals may elect to return the portable communication device to the student's parent or guardian or to return the portable communication device to the student and contact the parent or guardian. There is no insurance to cover loss of personal property.



### COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

Expect to see a yellow or white "Tuesday Communicator Envelope" from your child's teacher in your child's backpack every Tuesday. This "Tuesday Folder" will contain important written communication from the school (flyers, monthly newsletter, class work, tests, etc.). The envelope must be signed and returned the following day. The school sign in front of the building will also post upcoming information such as PTA meetings, concerts, etc. Each month we will send home a principal newsletter that includes PTA information, but we will also send flyers and reminders weekly in the Tuesday Folders. You may call your child's teacher, but please know that the phone will go directly to voicemail during the school day. Given the demands of teaching their classes, we expect that you give teachers 24 hours to return your call. You may find that email is faster. All staff members emails are on the PES website.

In addition, we encourage you to register with FCPS Keep In-Touch. The FCPS Keep in Touch (KIT) system offers users the opportunity to receive specific topics, community outreach messages, and information about specific schools via a free subscription service. Please go to the following link to subscribe: <http://www.fcps.edu/kit/>.

We highly encourage all PES families to "Like" our *Facebook* page, which is updated almost daily with reminders, pictures, and other posts that will keep you connected to PES. Link to our *Facebook* page from the PES website.

FCPS Parent View is also available. Students, parents, and teachers can use *FCPS 24-7 Learning* to access call information, explore links to enrichment activities, and much more. Access all of your children's class sites, review and update emergency information in weCare by registering for your own FCPS 24-7 Learning account! Keeping your email information up-to-date in weCare ensures that you will receive Keep in Touch notifications.

### DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS

If changes need to be made to your child's normal dismissal arrangements, advanced written notice should be given to the office. When making arrangements for play dates, the parents of both students involved must send a notice to the office prior

to the date of the change and no bus transportation will be provided.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES & TOYS

Students are **not** permitted to bring balls, yo-yos, collection cards, handheld game consoles, and other toys or electronic devices to school. They will be confiscated and returned to a parent or to the student on the last day of school. This rule applies while riding the bus and waiting at the bus stop. In addition, skateboards and heelers are not permitted on school grounds.

One exception: PES promotes a “Bring Your Own Device” policy whereby students, with parent and school permission, may bring their personal computer or tablet or smart phone to school in order to do assignments. Permission forms can be obtained from Ms. Shelton, our technology specialist. [gcselton@fcps.edu](mailto:gcselton@fcps.edu)

## EMERGENCY CARE CARD

The purpose of the Emergency Care Card is to locate the parent/guardian of a child in the event of illness or emergency. **WE MUST BE ABLE TO LOCATE YOU AT ALL TIMES DURING SCHOOL DAY.** Any change in the information that you provided on the card since the beginning of the year should be sent to the office as soon as possible (moving, new job, new phone number, new babysitter, etc.). Please list the phone numbers of two emergency contacts who will know where you are for emergency calls and who may pick up your child when he/she is ill and you are unable to pick up your child.

## EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

Late openings, early closing, or the cancellation of school due to inclement weather (ice, snow, excessive heat, etc.) will be made by the Superintendent’s Office by 5:30 a.m. when possible and announced via local radio and television stations as well as through the FCPS website and “Keep In-Touch” email notification system (if you are signed-up for this service).

**PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION.** Providence receives this information in the same manner that is available to all families (via the radio, television or FCPS websites).

## EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

Providence has many great events. Our staff hosts a Family Heritage Night in the fall, where families teach each other about their cultures and share cultural foods. Students may give performances that highlight their heritage as well. We hold a special Thanksgiving Lunch during school in November that we hope you’ll attend. We also hold a S.T.E.M. Family Night where students and parents can participate in a multitude of fun learning activities using technology, experiments, engineering skills and mathematical reasoning. In April the community comes out en masse to work in our courtyard for “Service Saturday” – we plant and transplant trees, build structures to support our diverse gardens, raise crops, etc. Come join us!

Our PTA holds many incredible events, including a Bingo Night, Dance and Fun Fair. These events require volunteer participation in order to happen. Some require a small cost in order to participate. See the PTA website for more information or for contact information so that you can volunteer!

## FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) provides a comprehensive, sequential Family Life Education (FLE) program for students. The FLE program is designed to provide students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to make healthy, responsible, respectful, and life-enhancing decisions related to human growth and development, relationships, substance abuse, and emotional and social health. Parents/guardians may choose to opt **out** their child of all or part of the Family Life Education program. Students opted out are provided with non-punitive alternative instruction, and every effort is made to foster respect for family choices. Detailed information about grade level programs can be accessed at <http://www.fcps.edu/is/hpe/file.shtml>. If you want to opt out your child of any or all FLE instruction, please download the opt out form, fill in the appropriate information, and return it to your child’s teacher by **October 1, 2015**. Program questions may be addressed by contacting Elizabeth Payne, FCPS Health and Physical Education Coordinator at 571-423-4550.

## INTERIMS & PROGRESS REPORTS

The school year is divided up into four quarters, each lasting approximately 9 weeks. A progress report for each student is sent home at the end of each quarter. This progress report contains information for each subject area taught and levels for citizenship and study skills. We will send home this report in the Tuesday Folder. All parents need to sign the official envelope that the progress report comes in. Send the envelope back with your child. You may keep the progress report. All elementary schools in FCPS use a progress report that does not include traditional letter grades, but instead provides very specific info on achievement in key areas for each subject. You may access info on this system at:

<http://www.fcps.edu/is/elemprogreport/faq.shtml>

Interims are reports to parents that may be sent home at the half-way point of each quarter. At Providence, all teachers will send home an interim during the first quarter – even if the child is making great progress. Only students who need to work toward improvement will have an interim sent home during the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters. Always sign your child’s interim and return it to school ASAP so that the teacher knows that you’ve received it.



Specific dates for interims and progress reports will be publicized in the Panther Press, our monthly newsletter. Look for it in your child’s Tuesday Folder.

## KISS AND RIDE SAFETY PROCEDURES

See appendix for map and K&R procedures.

## LOST AND FOUND

Please label your child’s jacket, coat, book bags, lunch box, etc., with a permanent marker to avoid these items from becoming lost. Students who lose items at school should check the Lost and Found. Lost & Found items NOT claimed will be donated.

## MEDICATION

The school is not permitted to administer any medication (including aspirin, etc.) unless a parent has filled out a "Medical Permission Form" which may be obtained in the clinic. To protect the safety of all students. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING MEDICATION OF ANY KIND (PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION) TO SCHOOL. PARENTS MUST BRING ALL MEDICATION TO SCHOOL.** Any questions may be directed to the school clinic aide at 703-460-4410.

## PARENT INFORMATION LINE (24-7)

Call anytime and leave a message.

Parents and guardians may request general information about Fairfax County Public Schools, receive help in communicating with a child's school, or ask a question.

A school system employee will respond to callers in their preferred language within 24 hours, Monday 11.5

Responders will provide parents with the requested information, arrange for them to speak with the appropriate school employee, and/or connect them with the appropriate resources. For more information: [http://www.fcps.edu/is/fam/parent\\_info\\_line.shtm](http://www.fcps.edu/is/fam/parent_info_line.shtm)

## PATROLS

Selected students in grades 4, 5, and 6 serve as safety patrols. They work with a patrol sponsor on staff to help students during arrival and dismissal. Student safety patrols may have a regular "post" in the school building, on the bus or at the bus stops, or at Kiss & Ride. The process for patrol selection includes a student's statement of interest with parental consent for consideration, recommendations from teachers and bus drivers, and a review of progress reports and discipline history. In the event that we have too many patrol candidates for limited positions and both candidates have equally excellent progress reports, we would defer that post to the older student. Patrol applications are made available to all 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in May for the next school year.

## SCA

Our Student Council consists of all of our students. They are represented by classroom representatives and an elected board of upper grade students. The SCA reps and board meet monthly with staff sponsors to plan student events such as Spirit Day themes, to lead service learning projects, and to advise us ways to make Providence a better place.

## SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

We welcome parents and visitors to Providence. Like all Fairfax County Schools, for security purposes, external doors are always locked. Visitors must ring the door bell on Door #1 to gain access. Next, all visitors must report directly to the main office and sign in before visiting anyone or any part of the building. A visitor's identification sticker will be provided in the office. We ask that you help us by directing and/or reporting anyone to the office who is not wearing a visitor sticker.

## STUDENT DRESS

Students should dress comfortably for 'work'. The FCPS' School Board states that parents have the basic responsibility for the dress and grooming of their children. Regulation 2613 states: *"All students are expected to dress appropriately for a K-12 educational environment. Any clothing that interferes with or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene or clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct, such as gang symbols, the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia, or clothing that contains threats is prohibited. Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste, and decency. Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff, or undergarments, or that is otherwise sexually provocative, is prohibited"*

*Examples of prohibited clothing include, but are not limited to: sagging or low-cut pants, low-cut necklines that show cleavage, tube tops, halter tops, backless or blouses with only ties in the back, studded belts, chain belts, clothing constructed of see-through materials, and head coverings unless required for religious or medical purposes. Parents or guardians of students requiring accommodation for religious beliefs, disabilities, or other good causes should contact the principal. Students not complying with this code will be asked to cover the noncomplying clothing, change clothes, or go home. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action."* The current version of Regulation 2613 provides additional details. At PES, **NO** hats are worn inside the building. We expect that students will dress appropriately for Physical Education class which requires that they wear sneakers. Flip flops are not safe footwear. **NO GUM** is allowed on school property, including buses.

## STUDENT ILLNESS

Please help us to safeguard the health of your child as well as the health of all the children at school by adhering to the following guidelines:

### **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE/SHE:**

- has vomited at home or on the way to school
- has a temperature that is above normal (98.6 is usually normal)
- has head lice in hair
- has symptoms of pink eye (conjunctivitis) or any other communicable disease
- has an unidentified rash

Children will be sent home for any of the above conditions. Students who are observed with any of the above-mentioned health concerns will need to be taken home until they are well and/or no longer have symptoms of a communicable condition. Providence takes every effort to ensure a safe and clean learning environment for your children. To prevent the spread of head lice, please inspect your children's heads on a routine basis and notify the school if you suspect your child may have lice.

## TEXTBOOKS/CALCULATORS

Students are responsible for lost or damaged textbooks or calculators. Parents/Guardians will be expected to pay the replacement cost for such items (Fairfax County Public School Regulation 5922) if they are lost or damaged.

## TELEPHONE USE BY STUDENTS

Telephone use by students, except in cases of emergency, is discouraged. If something is left at home (lunches, books, homework, etc.), please bring it to the office and it will be given to the child at an appropriate time. This will prevent interruptions to classroom instruction. If you need to reach your child during the day we will get a message to him/her, but unless it is an emergency we will not interrupt instructional time to call your child to the phone.

## VANDALISM

Deliberate and malicious damage to school property shall be paid for by the student(s) responsible for the damage or by his or her parents or guardians, in accordance with Sections 8.01-43 and 8.01-44 of the Code of Virginia and Fairfax County Public Schools Regulation 73.06.4.

## VISITING SCHOOL

When visiting school during school hours, parents must always sign in at the front office and wear a visitor's sticker. This is to ensure all children's safety. Even parents who volunteer regularly must adhere to this procedure. Parents are invited to have lunch with their children whenever they like (sign-in required) during their child's regular lunch time. Visiting classrooms outside of a special event (class play, class party, etc.) requires an appointment with teachers and administration. Parents wishing to observe a classroom must make arrangements with the administration and a time limit will be enforced. This is to negate potential disruptions to learning for all students in the class.

## VOLUNTEERING

One of the best things about Providence is our strong group of parent volunteers! At the teacher's request, parents may volunteer to help in their child's classroom. Younger siblings/non-school aged children should not accompany volunteers. Staff members and the PTA may also request for volunteers for school-wide events. Please sign in and out at the front office whenever you volunteer.

## WALKERS

If your student will be walking to school, please know that Fairfax County Public Schools states that parents are responsible for selecting their children's walking routes to and from home. Parents are also responsible for providing supervision that is appropriate for the student's age, the student's maturity, and conditions on the route. We want to make certain that all students arrive at school and home safely, so it is important

that all WALKERS obey crossing guards, walk on sidewalks when able, and walk directly to and from school.

We hope you found this Parent Handbook helpful. Thanks for doing your part to make our a school safe and happy place to learn!



