

# Windermere Boulevard School Family Handbook



**Children Our Future,  
Diversity Our Strength...**

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Windermere Boulevard Elementary School. Whether you are enrolling your child in our Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) or in our Intermediate Education Center (IEC), you will find that we are committed to providing the best education possible to each and every student who walks through our doors. We are aware of the faith you place in us when you send your child to school and we take that charge seriously.

While your child is with us, we will encourage, support, and motivate them to grow academically and socially. We know that great gains are made when home and school work together. We look forward to working closely with you during the upcoming year as we strive to ensure that your child has a successful school year.

Julie Flanagan, Principal  
Intermediate Education Center

Mary Lavin, Principal  
Early Childhood Education Center

**Learning Together, Caring Together...**

# STAYING IN TOUCH WITH SCHOOL

## **Mailing Address:**

Windermere Boulevard Elementary School  
291 Windermere Boulevard  
Amherst, New York 14226

**Fax:** (716) 838-3764

## **Important Phone Numbers:**

Windermere Main Office	361-4100
Windermere Health Office	362-4136
To Report a Student Absence	362-4249
District Office	362-3000
Community Education	362-3080
School District Transportation Office	362-3035
First Student Transit	684-9440

[District Web Site](http://amherstschoools.org): [amherstschoools.org](http://amherstschoools.org), Click “Windermere” for news, information and calendar.

**E-mail:** All teachers have e-mail. The address is the initial of the teacher’s first name followed by the teacher’s last name @ amherstschoools.org

Example: Joan Doe, type: [jdoo@amherstschoools.org](mailto:jdoo@amherstschoools.org)

**Voice Mail:** If you would like to leave a voice-mail message for a teacher, all teacher voicemail numbers are available on the Amherst website, [amherstschoools.org](http://amherstschoools.org). Please click the Staff Directory icon on the home page. Enter the teacher's first or last name and click Submit.

## **Aspen Family Portal:**

Aspen is our district wide student information system. It is a great way to stay informed about what is going on at Windermere and inside your child’s classroom! There is a school-wide Windermere page and a classroom home page which contains specific information regarding daily activities, upcoming events and classroom curriculum. There is a link to Aspen’s Family Portal on our website at [amherstschoools.org](http://amherstschoools.org). You will also find very helpful video links to guide you through your Aspen journey!

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## School Hours

**Arrival:** Students should not arrive at school before 8:20 a.m. Prior to that time, there are no adults who can provide supervision. **The official school day starts at 8:45 a.m.**

**Dismissal:** Dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m., with walkers and children who are being picked up by an adult. Bus students are escorted to the buses beginning at 2:50 p.m. Buses leave the school grounds by 3:05 p.m.

## Unscheduled School Closings

There may be an occasion when school cannot be opened due to bad weather or other unpredicted emergencies. School closing information is posted on the District website. When the Amherst Central School District is closed, all evening activities such as sports after-school program and Community Education classes are also closed.

You may also listen to the following television or radio stations for information.

Television channels: WGRZ (2), WIVB (4), WKBW (7)

Radio Stations: WBEN (930AM), WBLK (93.7FM), WECK (1230AM), WKSE (98.5FM), WJYE (96.1FM), WNED

## **Attendance, Illnesses And Tardiness**

Regular prompt attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Each child must come to school promptly every day and be in the classroom ready to learn by 8:45 a.m. In addition, the child should remain in school for the entire day until dismissal at 2:45 p.m.

Irregular attendance and tardiness create confusion for the child and a feeling of being out of step with other classmates. In order for the school to provide an excellent academic program for all students, please insure that your child attends school promptly and regularly. We encourage students to ride the bus to minimize tardiness.

Acceptable legal absences from school are:

- Sickness/health treatment
- Illness or death in the family
- Impassable roads
- Religious observance
- Presence required in court

All absences require an excuse written by the parent/guardian or physician on the day the student returns to school. The child's absence from school is considered illegal until the written note, signed by the parent/guardian or physician, is given to your child's teacher.

If a child will be absent or tardy (arriving after 8:45 a.m.) the parent calls 362-4249 to inform us. If we have not received a call and the child is not in attendance at school, we will then try to contact the parent/guardian and any other emergency contact person provided. If any emergency contact numbers change during the school year, please be sure to update us.

## **Dropping Children Off In The Morning**

School begins at 8:45 am. ~ children are permitted in the building at 8:20 a.m. Dismissal begins at 2:45 p.m. with walkers going to the gym.

Parents dropping off their children are asked to use the Cambridge Street circle. Children should exit their vehicle on the passenger side and step immediately onto the sidewalk. Children then can enter the building on their own and proceed to class. No cars should be parked in the circle. Parked cars will be ticketed.

Parents who would like to walk their children into school should park in the main parking lot off Oxford and escort their child into the front entrance facing Windermere Blvd. We ask that parents allow children to walk to their classroom on their own; this reduces the congestion in the halls and increases your child's independence. Be assured that there is adequate supervision in the halls by school staff.

## **Picking Up Children In The Afternoon**

When parents are picking up a child, they must wait on the left side of the main entrance front foyer. Parents will need to sign out their child and may be asked to show identification. Any non-parental adult picking up a child must be granted written permission by the parent or guardian. Any change in the usual dismissal instructions for a child requires a note to the teacher.

## **Picking Up Your Child Early**

If a child needs to leave school prior to 2:45 p.m., the parent/guardian must send a note with the child the morning of the early dismissal. When picking up the child, the adult will sign them out at the Attendance Office and will be asked to show identification. The child's classroom will be called, and the child will come down for early dismissal. Written notes must accompany every late arrival/early dismissal.

## **Visiting The School**

To ensure the safety of our children, all visitors, including parents, must sign in and out at the Main Office. Visitors will be given a visible tag that should be worn at all times while in the school building. All school employees are required to wear identification badges as well.

Parents are encouraged to visit the school and volunteer in our classrooms, cafeteria and library/media center. Additionally, there are many classroom specific events, field trips and learning activities where “extra hands” are needed. Please contact your child’s teacher to set up volunteering in the classroom.

## **School Bus Information**

Bus schedules and pick up locations are established during the summer and families are notified by mail. Amherst Central School District contracts with First Student Transit, Inc. for bus service for all our students.

Bus drivers are responsible for the safe transport of all students to school. If a child creates an unsafe situation on the bus through improper behavior or interferes with the pleasant, safe ride of others, disciplinary action may be taken. This could include the disciplinary action described under Code of Conduct. In addition, the child’s bus privileges may be suspended for a period of time. If this situation should arise, the parent/guardian will be notified.

If you have specific bus transportation concerns, you may call First Student at 684-9440 or District Office Transportation Department at 362-3035.

## **Parking**

All visitors to the school should park in the Oxford parking lot in front of the school, NOT in the front loop. There are several spaces designated in the front of the parking lot for dropping off and picking up relatively quickly. There should not be parking in the area reserved for the small bus drop-offs.

**Cars are not to park in the front bus loop.** Cars parked in the front U pose a safety hazard and create difficulty for the arrival and departures of buses. Likewise, no cars should be left unattended in the Cambridge Circle. The Cambridge Circle is for dropping off only.



## **Lost And Found**

Any item found on school property is put in a Lost-and-Found bin in the Health Office. Please feel free to stop by to look through the bin for any missing items. It is helpful for you to mark all of your child's personal items with their name.

Each year many articles of clothing are never claimed. At various points in the school year, these unclaimed items are donated to charitable organizations.

If your child misplaced an item on the school bus, you can call First Student at 684-9440 to ask about lost items.

## **Theft or Loss of Personal Property**

Students are discouraged from bringing toys and personal items such as CD players, jewelry, electronic games, cameras and card collections to school. These items should remain at home. Children are provided with ample materials to explore in the school environment. If a student chooses to bring an expensive item to school, they do so at their own risk. The Amherst Central School District shall not be liable for theft or loss of personal property on school grounds.

## **Cell Phones**

Please do not send your child to school with a cell phone. If a student needs to contact home and it is deemed important, your child's teacher will assist them using a school phone. If a student uses a cell phone at school, the phone will be taken and turned in to the main office. Parents will be notified.

## **Birthdays**

If you wish to have your child celebrate his/her birthday in school, we will do so as close as possible to the true birthday. Please send a note a few days before so that we can plan for the event. You may send cupcakes, cookies, and birthday napkins and we will sing to your child. Favors, gifts or decorations are not permitted by school policy. Summer birthdays will be celebrated near the end of the school year. A notice will be sent to you in the spring if your child has a summer birthday.

## **Special Parties**

Parents will be asked to supply the treats for one of these. Typically, classes celebrate on Halloween, before winter break, Valentine's Day, in the spring, and again at the end of the year with some sort of celebration in June.

## **Dress Code**

Dress that creates a disruption to the learning environment is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing, hats and attire bearing the expression, insignia of alcohol, drug and tobacco product advertising
- Hats or hoods
- Extremely short garments and see-through garments are not appropriate. Blouses or shirts that reveal underwear or expose a student's midriff or back are not allowed.
- Halter-tops, spaghetti strap tops or muscle shirts may not be worn at any time.
- Flip-flops (Sneakers are preferred)

# Windermere's Code of Conduct

Part of a student's education at Windermere Boulevard School includes learning to be a caring, respectful, self-disciplined citizen. In order to provide a safe and caring environment, students are expected to learn and follow the C.A.R.E. Rules.

## **WBS's C.A.R.E. Rules (Caring Attitude, Responsibility, Excellence)**

1. Treat all people with kindness and respect.
2. Keep Windermere Boulevard School a safe place to be.
3. At school, work your hardest and do your best.

## **WBS's School Rules**

1. We follow adult directions.
2. We keep our hands, feet, and objects to ourselves.
3. We listen and speak nicely to others.
4. We do our school work neatly and on time.

Staff actively reinforce these positive behaviors. They take the time to teach what it means to be a good and caring friend. In our school community we expect everyone to treat each other with kindness and respect. If a student has difficulty following our Care Code and School Rules, we will: respond in the following ways:

Explicitly teach expectations to ensure the student understands.

A reminder about the expectation will be given.

If a student still is having difficulty, a logical consequence will be put into place (i.e. make up work, stay behind to clean up or finish expectations...).

If the child continues to have difficulty or if they hurt another child, they will meet with their principal.

Parents will be contacted by teacher or principal.

When there is a significant behavior—detention or suspension may be assigned.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the full District Code of Conduct, including Dress code, by going to [www.amherstschoools.org](http://www.amherstschoools.org)

# STUDENT SERVICES

## Health Services

A school nurse is available during schools hours. There may be times when your child will become ill at school. According to New York State Education Law, any child with an undiagnosed rash, temperature over 100 degrees, vomiting or any communicable disease will be excluded from school until diagnosed and/or treated. In the event of illness, the school will contact a parent/guardian/designated person listed on the emergency card. Notify the school immediately of any changes in the Emergency Card information so that your child can be picked up from school as quickly as possible. The Health Office is not equipped to “hold” students for any length of time. Consequently, the timely pick-up of sick children is imperative for the well being of all students. If your child shows symptoms of illness before coming to school, your child should *not* be sent to school.

Under certain circumstances, the nurse may administer medication during school hours if the parent/guardian submits a written request from the physician to administer the medication in school. Such medication must be in the container prepared by the pharmacist or the original container in which it was purchased. The medication must be delivered directly to the school by the parent/guardian. Students must *not* have any medication with them during the school day whether it is in their pockets, backpacks or lunch boxes.

## **Cafeteria Services**

Since children who eat well-balanced meals are more successful in school, Windermere Boulevard School is committed to providing nutritious and appealing meals for all students. Breakfast is served everyday from 8:20 a.m. through 8:45 a.m. Lunch is served during a 30-minute period. Breakfast and lunch prices will be listed on the monthly menu that is sent home. For your convenience, pre-payment can be made through the cafeteria. Cash or check. Credit card payments may be taken at [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com).

**The free or reduced lunch program** is offered at Windermere as stipulated in federal guidelines. Applications are sent home at the beginning of each school year. In addition, applications may be obtained in the Main Office, cafeteria, or available on our website. Those who qualify for free or reduced lunch are automatically eligible for a free or reduced breakfast. Applications must be renewed each year. Applications are also taken if your income changes during the year at any time.

**Our school received Title 1 federal funding** which helps to provide additional academic support for students. These schoolwide programs could encompass:

- Academic Intervention in both reading and math
- Speech and language support
- Social skills support

All teachers at Windermere are highly qualified and have the necessary qualifications and NYS certifications to serve students appropriately.

# **Parent Involvement - Home and School Working Together**

## ***For Sound Beginnings and Bright Tomorrows***

Whether a parent, guardian, staff member or student, we have all likely arrived at Windermere seeking the same thing. We share a vision that our children be well, lead a good and happy life and develop and apply their unique abilities and gifts towards a successful life and citizenship. Our belief is that Windermere offers a program, standard and commitment which will move our children in that direction.

At Windermere, the importance of this partnership is reflected in the School's design. Following is a sampling of ways that home and school work together. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to ensure the quality of your child's education and future.

Teachers rely on you to provide the unique perspectives, insights and understanding of your child that only a parent can. The bridge between your home and your child's school creates a team that affords your child comfort and confidence, enthusiasm for school, a custom educational fit made possible by joint parent and teacher efforts, and an opportunity to learn together.

### **Information sharing between Parent and Teachers**

Communication between home and school is essential. It is both the parent and the teacher's responsibility to keep each other informed. Written communications (notes, homework notebooks, etc.), email, and phone communications are all important and useful ways to maintain regular discussions about your child's needs, successes, and academic progress. Conferences can be arranged and are encouraged when either home or school has concerns.

## **Open Door Policy**

Both Principals welcome and encourage your input on school matters of importance to you and your child's education. Topics pertinent to the classroom, school day activities and instruction should be addressed with the teacher first.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are scheduled twice per year, generally in December and March and provide a personal classroom visit so a parent and teacher may review a student's status and strengthen the home-school relationship.

## **Classroom Visits and Volunteers**

When you wish to help out in the classroom, observe or contribute a particular resource or talent, simply contact the teacher to discuss the options.

## **Library and Other School Volunteers**

Volunteers are needed on an annual basis. To offer your assistance in the Library Media Center, please contact Media Specialist (362-4152). Other volunteer interests should be expressed to the principals.

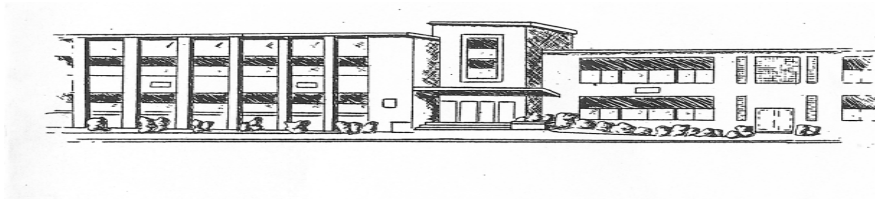
For more detailed information regarding our **Parent Involvement Policy** and our **School-Parent Compact**, please see our website at [www.amherstschoools.org](http://www.amherstschoools.org)

## **Before & After School Program**

Before and after school care is offered by Just for Kids. Their contact information is as follows:

**(716) 639-8500**  
**[www.justforkidsonline.org](http://www.justforkidsonline.org)**

## ABOUT WINDERMERE...



Opened in 1951, Windermere Boulevard Elementary School (WBS) is located in the Eggertsville section of the town of Amherst in Western New York. As neighbor to the State University of New York at Buffalo, it is one of the most diverse schools in the Buffalo area. Its Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade student body numbers are close to 700 and includes children from 10 to 20 countries in any given year.

The school is organized into the Early Childhood Education Center (PreK – grade 2) and Intermediate Education Center (grades 3-5), each having a dedicated principal and together, a staff of over 125.

Windermere is one of two elementary schools, along with a middle school and high school that make up the Amherst Central School District; a District noted for its high academic standards, child-centered program and commitment to student success. The District's Pre-Kindergarten program, started in 2004, is also housed on Windermere's multi-faceted campus.

Situated in a residential area, Windermere sits on 15 acres, complete with playing fields, a playground and courtyard. The building contains a 500+ seat auditorium, a gymnasium with climbing wall, and an indoor swimming pool. We also have a state of the art library media center.

In addition to classroom instruction, all children at Windermere have the opportunity to participate in programming such as vocal and instrumental music, technology, art, library/media services, and physical education. Individual needs may also be met through our Academic Intervention services, Enrichment program, ENL, and/or pupil personnel staff (social workers, psychologist, speech therapists, nurse). Regular opportunities also arise for students to participate in after-school clubs and activities.