

Cato-Meridian  
Elementary School  
PK - 6



2024-25  
Parent-Student  
Handbook

*Cultivating Minds, Character, and Skills*

**WELCOME!**



At Cato-Meridian Elementary School, we strive to provide a warm, welcoming, and inviting place to grow and learn. We hope people enjoy being here. We want our families to feel welcome to participate in helping our school become a great place for kids. A respectful environment is the basic expectation for our school. We hope that you and your children will develop fond memories of your time at Cato-Meridian Elementary.



**Elementary School**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the Cato-Meridian Elementary School!

I am excited to work together to provide your child(ren) with an awesome school experience. I look forward to seeing many of you during the various functions throughout this school year.

This handbook was developed to help answer any questions you may have. If we have missed something, please feel free to give us a call at (315) 626-3439 x1800.

I wish you and your child(ren) a safe and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Danielle Mahoney

Elementary Principal

## School Telephone Numbers

Elementary Main Office.....**315-626-3439 x1801**  
Nurse Office .....**315-626-3439 x1831**  
Transportation Office..... **315-626-3439**  
**x6001**

## Office Staff

Principal .....Mrs.Danielle Mahoney  
Secretary..... Mrs. Julie Phillips  
Clerk .....Mrs. Vanesa Collier  
Counselor..... Mrs. Meghan Amidon  
Psychologist.....Mrs. Brittany Houppert  
Counselor.....Mrs. Jen Sabatino  
SRO.....Mr. Mark Lovell

# Daily Schedule

## School Hours (dropoff no earlier than 8:30 am)

PK - 6 ..... 8:35 - 3:15

## Lunch Schedule

Pre-K .....	10:50 - 11:20
Kindergarten.....	
11:40 -	12:10 1st
Grade.....	11:20 - 11:50
2ndGrade.....	11:10-11:40/11:20-11:50
3rd Grade .....	11:40 - 12:00
4th Grade.....	11:20 - 11:40
5th Grade.....	11:30 - 11:50
6th Grade.....	12:00 - 12:20

# Attendance

Your child's regular attendance in school is of great importance to his/her educational success. If, for any reason, a child is absent excessively, there will be personal contact with the home. Please understand that State Law requires that any student absence must be accounted for by a WRITTEN excuse from home.

If a child is to be excused earlier than the regular dismissal time (3:15 pm), a note should be sent to the teacher in the morning. The child will report to the office and the parent will sign the child out from the office.

Children will not be dismissed to anyone other than the legal parents or guardian unless the school has been notified by them to do so.

**Please be sure that any custody information is on file in the office.**

PLEASE REMEMBER:

- An absence requires a note.
- If picking up your child, please send in a note.

## Picking up Students at Dismissal

If you plan to pick up your child at school, write a note indicating your plans for that day and have your child give the note to the teacher. Planning ahead is much more beneficial for everyone. It helps eliminate confusion and minimizes the workload for the elementary office staff.

We *would like to avoid* early pickups between the hours of 2:45 and 3:10. Please remember these times when scheduling appointments. If you have to pick up your child-**ALL pick ups after 2:45 will be out back where end of day pickups are.** Please *do not* come to pick up your children earlier than 3:15 unless it is an emergency.

Students in grades PK-6 should be picked up **no later than 3:15pm.**

## Breakfast & Lunch Costs

While meals are free to all this year, ala carte items (snacks, water, extra entrees, milk alone, etc.) are not free and students must have cash or money in their account in order to purchase.

## Lunchtime Rules

- Children should wash hands before going to the cafeteria.
- It is expected that children will use good manners and be polite to the cafeteria personnel and to each other.
- Children are to remain seated while eating and wait for permission to leave seats.



- There is no giving away, trading or throwing food.

## Change of Address or Phone Number

Please keep the office informed of any change of address, telephone number, or email address during the school year. In the event it becomes necessary to contact you, this information is very important and should be kept current.

## Moving Out of the District?

If you are planning to move your child **out of the district**, please register them in the new school immediately. We cannot release your child's records until we receive a records request **from the new district**. Also, if you are moving **within the district**, please notify the office of your new address so we can keep our records current.

## Emergency Closings

All students must have an **Emergency Closing/Early Dismissal Form** on file designating home in an emergency or another address. Parents are asked to please return the completed form before September 15th.

## Emergency Contact Information

Please be sure to review and update the Emergency Contact Information throughout the year. Children do get hurt or ill at school, and we need to know who to contact in the event that we cannot get in touch with a parent or guardian.

# Emergency Closing or Delay of School

In the event of inclement weather or other emergency situations that might necessitate the closing or delay of school, announcements will be made on television channels 3,5,9 and 10. Parents/ guardians will also be notified via phone call, text message and/or email through our emergency notification system (parent square) with a message from the superintendent.

Please develop an emergency plan for the children in your family. Be sure that the children are aware of the arrangements in the event that no one is at home. It is also very important that you make sure your child's EMERGENCY DISMISSAL FORMS are kept up to date with the office.



## Bus Guidelines

As a Cato-Meridian student, your child will be expected to accept certain responsibilities in return for the privilege of riding the school bus. This handbook will explain these responsibilities to you, your children, and their teachers. Please understand that your child may lose his/her riding privilege if he/she fails to follow the rules and regulations for bus riders. These are outlined and explained; the first of your responsibilities is to read them carefully and discuss them with your child.



Please have students out at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to bus arrival. Parents/guardians of our elementary students, please be visible when students arrive home in the afternoon. If a parent/guardian is not present, students will be brought back to C-M and will be required to be picked up.

Please be advised, horn blowing is for emergency use only.

Please try to minimize bus changes, this can be very confusing to your children as well as the bus drivers and staff.

## **Rules and Regulations for Passengers (review with your child)**

For the welfare of all children, it is necessary that the rules and regulations be strictly adhered to.

- Observe the same conduct as in the classroom
- Be kind, USE APPROPRIATE language ONLY
- Please, no EATING or DRINKING on the bus
- Keep the bus clean
- Be respectful to your driver
- Keep your hands to yourself
- Be responsible with the school's property
- Please stay in your seat while the bus is in motion
- Please keep head, hands and feet inside the bus
- Bus driver is authorized to assign seats

## **Bus Riding Rules**

**Changing of Seats** - There will be no changing of seats once you are on the bus. The seat you choose is the one you stay in until you get off, unless the driver directs you to move. Do not hang over, kneel or stand on seats.

**Always face forward.**

**Use of Windows** - Windows may not be opened except when specific permission is given. No part of your body is to be put out of the window and no objects are to be thrown out. Emergency doors and windows are never to be tampered with or opened except in case of fire or accident.

**Fighting and/or Quarreling** - There will be no fighting or quarreling on the bus. Others may be injured and the driver's control of the bus may be impaired when such disturbances occur.

**Marring or Defacing of Buses** - We encourage parents to talk to their children about the respect of school property. Marring or defacing of buses can be an expensive offense to the school district. Parents will be responsible for expenses incurred due to marring or defacing property.

NOTE: All rules and regulations apply not only to regular daily runs but



also to field trips.

### **Bus transportation provided to all Pre-K to Grade 6 students.**

Pre-K students are to be transported by a parent/guardian until they are 4 years of age.

\*\* It is very important for each child to learn a bus routine. We ask that students maintain a consistent weekly schedule. Changes increase the opportunity for error and interfere with the safety of the transportation system. A form for bussing was sent home for each student. Changes must be made in writing. (A new form may be picked up in the elementary office if necessary).

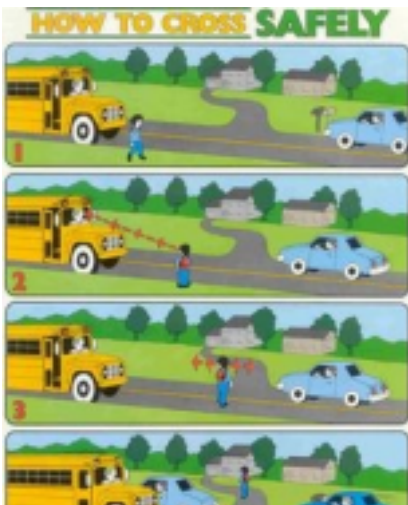
No telephone calls for bus changes will be accepted. Please email [cmesoffice@catomeridian.org](mailto:cmesoffice@catomeridian.org) before 12:00pm. **Only in an emergency situation will we accommodate a switch in bussing.**

## **Busing for After School Hours/Activities**

Permanent Notes: If a child is to go anyplace other than their own home after school, we need a note on file in the office telling us where the child should go. This is called a "permanent note." Children need a permanent note for Brownies, Cub Scouts, dance, baby sitters, music lessons, etc.

## **How to Cross the Road Safely**

Crossing the road is the most dangerous part of a bus trip. Traffic SHOULD stop - BUT DON'T DEPEND ON IT! **Be extra careful!**



### **Remember...**

- Follow safe crossing procedures
- Never go back to the bus for a dropped or forgotten item.
- Stay away from the outside of the bus.
- Make sure all your belongings are in your closed backpack.

## **Dress Code**

Please encourage and guide your child to come to school appropriately dressed. Hats/head coverings, sunglasses are to be worn outside only. Flip flops and sandals are potentially hazardous and, therefore, not recommended. Appropriate dress lends itself to a positive school atmosphere. You may reference Board Policy #7312 and the Code of Conduct for specifics relative to apparel.

## **Safety Drills**

State law requires that schools conduct Fire Drills, Lockdown Drills and Bus Safety Evacuations each year. Instruction related to fire safety as mandated by the state is provided by the school to the staff.

## **Lost & Found**

Each year many items including watches, wallets, articles of clothing, etc. are lost and turned into the lost and found. Many of these items are never claimed. Periodically, we put them in the main entrance and ask the children to see if any articles belong to them. At the end of the year, remaining items are donated to charity or used in our nurse's office.

Upon suggestion from the school physician, no articles of clothing should be held for more than two weeks, due to the danger of communicable diseases.

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks are provided to students without charge.

Children are responsible for the condition in which books are returned. A book returned in poor condition due to neglect or carelessness will result in a nominal charge to the student. If books are lost, the child will be expected to pay a similar fine.



# Playground Rules

- Adult supervision is required for use.
- Use equipment properly. **Please pay attention to the age specific signs that are posted.**
- Be aware of others to help maintain a safe environment (try not to run into others).
- Appropriate footwear required to use equipment, no bare feet or flip flops.
- No shoving or pushing.
- Do not use equipment if it is wet.
- Only go down slides, not up.
- Play carefully.
- Do not jump off equipment.



# Health Services

The nurse is available during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. each school day. The school nurse attends to the medical needs of students by maintaining student records, being a liaison between home and school, assisting with school physicals and administering medication.

The nurse must have a written statement and prescription from the student's physician. The school nurse's role is not to diagnose serious medical problems; this is the role of your family doctor. In accordance with New York State mandates, all students in grades 1,3 and 5 must have a physical examination. During the months of October, November and December, the school physician will administer examinations. If you do not wish for your child to have a physical exam at school, your private physical is due one calendar month after the start of the school year.

# Immunizations

All public school students must have a record of the necessary immunizations on file in the Health Office. Students lacking any of the required immunizations will be notified by the school nurse.

Failure to comply within 2 weeks from the start of school will result in suspension from attendance in school (New York State Law).

Guidelines for immunizations are located on our website.

[www.catomeridian.org](http://www.catomeridian.org)  
Click on Schools,  
Elementary and then School Nurse.



## **Medications During School**

Periodically, it becomes necessary to review the regulations concerning the school nurse giving medications to students. The following is in accordance with the regulations of the Commissioner of Education for the New York State Department of Education.

When it is necessary for your child to take medication during school hours the nurse may give the medication if there is:

- A written parental request.
- A written order form.
- A supply of medication in the original pharmacy bottle with a label containing the name of the child, name of the medicine, dosage and hour to be given.
- Over the counter medications should have the name of the child written on the bottle.

Until these requirements are met, the school nurse cannot administer the medication.

Please note that all medications brought into the school building are to be delivered to the Health Office by parent or guardian.

Please do not allow your child to self-medicate unless the nurse has

a written order from the physician that states that they may carry their medicine and self-medicate. Generally, this privilege is given to responsible older students in the Junior-Senior High School.

Under no circumstances is a child to bring or possess medication.

School health personnel cannot administer any internal medication without a physician's order and written permission from the parent. This includes: aspirin, aspergum, cough syrup, decongestants, stomach remedies, and cough drops. If your physician recommends that your child receive an over-the-counter medication, he/she will be glad to provide the order for your child to bring to the school nurse or the nurse/teacher along with the medication. If you have any questions, please contact the nurse at 315-626-3439 x1831 or the principal at 315-626-3439 x1801.

## **Parent-Teacher Organization (P.T.O.)**

Our Parent-Teacher Organization actively provides beneficial programs and services to our children and families throughout the school year. We encourage both your support and participation in this group.

Meetings are the **second Tuesday of each month** at 3:45 pm. Childcare is provided.

**V** valuable, is the work you do  
**O** outstanding, in how you always come through  
**L** loyal, sincere and full of good cheer  
**U** untiring in your efforts throughout the year  
**N** notable are the contributions you make  
**T** trustworthy in every project you take  
**E** eager to reach your every goal  
**E** effective in the way you fulfill your role  
**R** ready with a smile like a shining star  
**S** special and wonderful - that's what you are

If you wish to be involved with PTO, please contact Liz Turner at [ect0407@yahoo.com](mailto:ect0407@yahoo.com) or 315-857-1713.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

A parent-teacher conference gives you an excellent opportunity to become better acquainted with the school and the teachers. It is important that you and the teacher share your child's needs. These conferences are one of the most effective means of evaluating your child's progress.

Parent conferences are scheduled on November 20th. You will receive more information from the classroom teacher. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time during the school year.

## Open House

Each family of our school community is invited to attend our annual Open House. This evening is designed to give the student an opportunity to informally share his/her classroom with his/her parents. We have found this experience to be extremely important to the child. Open House is scheduled for October 3rd. It begins at 6:00 p.m. and ends at 7:30 p.m.

## Guidelines for Behavior of Students:

**8:30 a.m.** Enter the building. Walking is the rule. There will be a supervisor on duty to assist and direct children to classrooms.

Children are to go directly to their classrooms in an orderly and quiet manner. Upon entering the room, children should organize their belongings in spaces provided and prepare for the school day. No child is to return to the hallway without the teacher's permission.

Students who are getting breakfast, may enter at 8:20 a.m.

**8:40 a.m.** - Announcements, Pledge of Allegiance.

**General School Rules:** (Please review with your child)

- Children are to treat each other and any visitor to the classroom with thoughtfulness, and be respectful, responsible, and safe.

- General classroom rules and regulations are developed by each individual teacher with the students. Behavior is to be such that one does not interfere with the productive learning environment, safety or comfort of others.
- At no time is a student allowed to take that which belongs to another. Personal belongings are not to be loaned or given to others at school. Please do not take anything that is not your own.
- Please walk while in the hallways.
- Use of lavatories outside of the classroom - all children should be made aware that these lavatories are public facilities. Any improper use of these facilities e.g. throwing paper on floor; excessive water on floor; graffiti - will result in a disciplinary action.
- All materials, supplies and books provided by the district are to be treated with care and respect.
- As part of our school wellness policy, children are encouraged to bring beverages other than soda, bring healthy snacks and lunches.
- All students should be aware that any physical coercion (fighting) is unacceptable. A physical confrontation can potentially lead to injury. Fighting is prohibited on school property and will result in disciplinary action.
- Any and all language considered to be of an inappropriate nature is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.
- Be respectful. Be responsible. Be safe.

## Teaching Staff & Support

### Pre-Kindergarten

Mrs. Peckham.....	5
Mrs. Richards.....	7
Mrs. Braudrick .....	3

### Kindergarten

Mrs. Brown.....	8
Miss Wilkinson.....	4
Mrs. Hunt.....	6

### 1st Grade

Miss Green.....	25
Miss Greenfield .....	24
Miss Modafferi .....	31

### 2nd Grade

Mrs. Ford.....	32
Mrs. Krupa .....	35
Mr. Talty.....	33
Mrs. Vadala .....	34

Mrs. Hould..... 28,30

**3rd Grade**

Mrs. Cady.....38  
Mrs. Dashnau .....37  
Mrs. Pilipczak.....40

**4th Grade**

Mrs.  
Ekross.....  
42  
Miss Verbridge-Day.....48  
Mrs  
Slater.....44  
Mrs.Hilton-Weeks.....46

**5th Grade**

Miss Morris.....210  
Mrs. Ozolins.....208  
Miss Trytek.....209

**6th Grade**

Ms.Labeille.....204  
Mrs. Medina.....202  
Mrs.  
Kent.....203  
Mr. St. Amour.....250

**Physical Education**

Miss Marriam .....Gym  
Mr. Weslowski.....Gym

**Art**

**Music**

Miss Hill.....23/112

**Library Media Specialist**

Mx. Landon.....212

**Teaching Staff & Support**

**Special Education**

Ms. Besner.....1  
Mrs. Evans.....207  
Mrs. Holdridge.....1  
Mr. Kroll.....205  
Mr. Nichols.....211  
Ms. Pickett.....9  
Mrs.  
Thacker.....22

**Speech**

Mrs. Hoskins.....27  
Mrs. Stewart.....27

**RTI - ELA**

Mrs. Cunningham .....39  
Mrs. Fassinger.....39

**RTI - Math**

Mrs. Morris.....41  
Mrs. Carvey.....41

**Literacy Coach**

Mrs. Taylor.....232



## **Math Coach**

Mrs. Mavretish.....232

## **School Nurse**

Mrs. Lindsley

## **Teaching Assistants**

Mrs. Alberts

Miss Anastas

Mrs. Colbert

Mrs. David

Mrs. Grady

Mr. Hannah

Mrs. Horner

Miss Knox

Miss Kuhlmann

Mrs. LaVere

Mrs. Lees

Miss Miller

Mrs. Moore

Miss Rodriquez

Mrs. Sherman

Mrs. Simons

Mrs. Titus

Mrs. Vincent

## **Teaching Aides**

Miss Strong

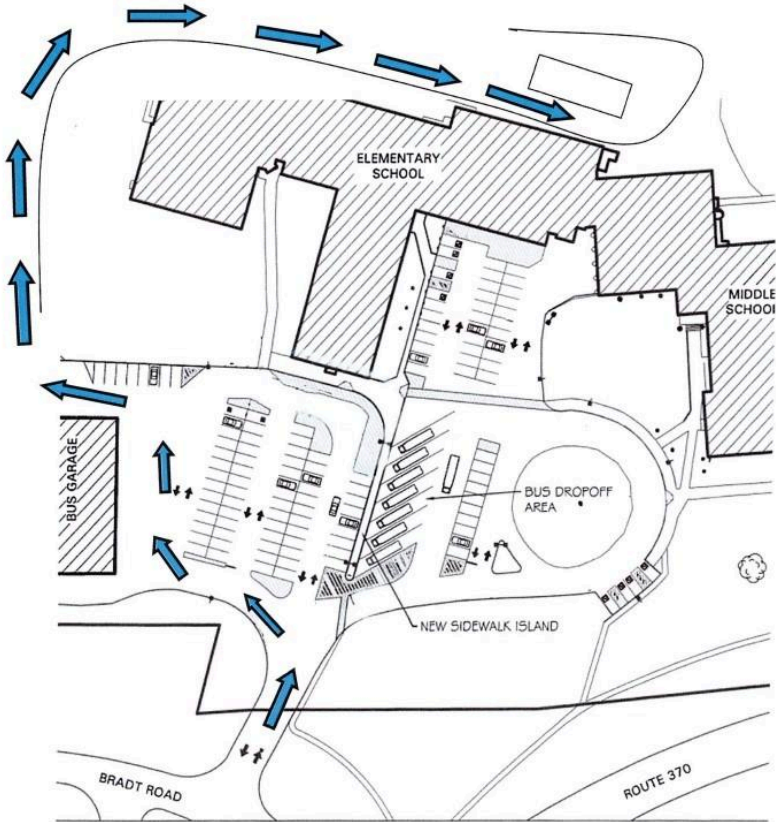
# **Administration**

Superintendent of Schools..... Dr. Terry Ward  
Assistant Superintendent.....Mrs. Elizabeth Kupiec  
Director of Student Services/Athletics.....Mr. Robert Wren  
Junior-Senior High School Principal ..... Ms. Jennifer Kelly  
Elementary School Principal .....Mrs. Danielle Mahoney  
Director of Pupil Personnel.....Mr.  
Tyler Baker Director of Curriculum, Instruction and  
Assessment.....  
.....Mrs. Jennifer Dorschel  
Director of Technology.....Mr.  
Lucas Smith

# **Board of Education**

President.....Kathleen Bratt  
Vice President.....Timothy Hulbert  
Board Member.....Kristin Cox  
Board Member.....Harmon Kent  
Board Member.....Jennifer Kyle  
Board Member.....Eric Peckham  
Board Member.....Nathan Wallace

# Cato-Meridian Elementary School Parent Drop-off / Pickup



 Pickup and drop off

# **District Contact Information**

**Phone: 315-626-3439**

District Office .....	Ext. 5001
Business Office .....	Ext. 5003 or 5004
Elementary School Office (Pre-K - Gr. 6).....	Ext. 1801
Junior-Senior High School Office (Gr. 7-12) .....	Ext. 3801
Director .....	of
Athletics.....	Ext.3806 Buildings
& Grounds/Maintenance .....	Ext. 1891 Food
Services .....	Ext. 1851
Personnel Clerk .....	Ext. 5003
Special Education & .....	
Pupil Personnel Services.....	Ext. 3805
Tax Collector .....	Ext. 5001
Transportation (Head Bus Driver).....	Ext. 6001

## **Cato-Meridian District Mission Statement**

We prepare all students for success  
through a variety of opportunities that  
help them learn and grow toward their potential.

# Cato-Meridian Central School Calendar 2024-2025

Adopted by the Cato-Meridian School Board of Education on 2/12/2024

## Cato-Meridian Central School Calendar Adopted by C-M BOE 2/12/2024 2024-2025

Aug. 29 – Prof. Dev. Day

SEPTEMBER 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

OCTOBER 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JANUARY 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY 2025						
u	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

MAY 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE 2025						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Color Key:	
	First Day of School
	Holidays/Recess Days
	Professional Development
	Parent-Teacher Conf./Prof. Dev
	2 Hour Delay for Prof. Dev.
	Regents Exam Days
	3-8 NYS Assessment Days

Instructional Days	
September:	20
October:	22
November:	14
December:	15
January:	18
February:	15
March:	20
April:	17
May:	21
June:	18
Student Days:	180
Prof. Dev. Days:	4
	184

- Aug. 29: Professional Development Day
- Sept. 2: No School (Labor Day)
- Sept. 3: First Day of School
- Oct. 3: 2-Hour Delay
- Oct. 14: No School (Columbus Day)
- Nov. 1: Professional Development Day
- Nov. 11: No School (Veterans Day)
- Nov. 25: Parent/Teacher Conf./P.D.
- Nov. 26: Professional Development Day
- Nov. 27-29: No School (Thanksgiving)
- Dec. 23-Jan. 3: No School (Christmas)
- Jan. 20: No School (Martin Luther King)
- Jan. 21-24: Regents Exams
- Jan. 29: Lunar New Year
- Feb. 7: 2-Hour Delay
- Feb. 17-21: No School (Winter Recess)
- Mar. 14: Professional Development Day
- April 14-18: No School (Spring Recess)
- May 26: No School (Memorial Day)
- June 3-4, 18, 20, 23-26 – Regents Exams
- June 19: No School (Juneteenth)